

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

MEETING OF 11 MARCH 1981

QUESTIONS
AND
ANSWERS

1 to 109

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, has Government now obtained particulars of United Kingdom bank charges and if so has it been able to compare those with local bank charges?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, in reply to question No 130 of 1980 from the Hon Mr Restano, I said that it was not considered appropriate for the Government to intervene in the level of charges raised by banks for their services. Having looked further into the matter my view is that it would be invidious to make comparisons in the House on the charges made by different banks in Gibraltar. Bank charges vary between local banks as they do between banks in the United Kingdom. I do not consider that it would be a practical proposition to suggest the pegging of local charges to those of any bank or group of banks in the United Kingdom or any other country. The community should rely on the banks' own sense of responsibility and on the forces of competition to ensure that charges are kept fair and reasonable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 1 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, in question No 130 of 1980 the question was whether bank standing orders which were charged for by banks in Gibraltar was an item which was not charged for by banks in the United Kingdom and the Hon Financial and Development Secretary did say at the time that he had not yet received the particulars of United Kingdom bank charges to be able to reply to that question. Is he now saying that the particulars have indeed been received, that comparisons have been made, but that he feels it unwise to air those comparisons in this House?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Hon Member then agree to discuss this matter with me outside this House?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I would be happy, Sir, to meet the Hon Member if he so wishes.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

11.3.81

NO. 2 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will the Financial and Development Secretary state what progress has been made during the last year to computerise all Municipal Bills?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, all electricity and water bills have been computerised except for bills for water supplied to shipping. These can be more conveniently dealt with under the previous system.

The programme for the Computerised Telephone Billing System is at present being written and the computer will be fed with the basic information shortly. It is hoped that it will be possible to run in parallel the manual and computer systems for the Telephone Accounts in the second Quarter 1981 and to rely on fully computerised telephone bills thereafter.

Work on the Rates System will start as soon as the Telephone Billing System is completed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 2 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Has there been any slippage in the programme, Mr Speaker?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, the programme was not done as quickly as the Government would have wished. The reasons are that the Computer Manager has had to train staff as well as to write programmes and with hindsight I think that we should have had an analyst programme writer as well as a Computer Manager, this would have speeded up the writing of our computer programme. At the moment for the telephone system we have, in fact, gone out to an expert locally who is writing the programme for us in order to speed up computerisation of the system.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is it not a fact, Mr Speaker, that in March of last year the Government stated that the telephones would begin to be computerised in July of 1980?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, I have not got a record of the House of that time before me but if the Hon Member says that that was said I am sure it was said. What, in fact, did happen was that we did not begin to write the programme for telephones until the end of the last quarter of 1980.

HON G T RESTANO:

What staff is at present employed, Mr Speaker, in the computer department?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, I would need notice of that question and I will let the Hon Member know in writing.

3 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government give a full explanation with regard to the £5,000 reallocation from sub-head 17 to sub-head 25 under Head 20, Warrant 20 of the Statement of Reallocation No 7 of 1980/81 of the Consolidated Fund?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir. The sum of £5,000 was reallocated to sub-head 25 Ex-gratia Payments of Head 20, Public Works Annually Recurrent by Reallocation Warrant No 20 of 15th January, 1981, to make an ex-gratia payment in settlement of an action which had been issued against the Government in the Supreme Court of Gibraltar in respect of flooding at a garage on the night of 10 December, 1975. On the advice of the Attorney-General's Chambers the ex-gratia settlement of £5,000 was offered without admission of liability. The offer was accepted by the plaintiff who had originally claimed the sum of £9,494 plus costs.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 3 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, has there been a reduction of services from sub-head 17 - the up-keep of sewers and drains - because of this transfer of £5,000?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the total amount that is requested at estimate time for the sewers etc, obviously includes quite a number of various things such as materials etc, and these are liable to fluctuation, sometimes the quantity of materials taken is less than is required and this is what has happened this year.

HON W T SCOTT:

So there was, perhaps, an overestimate at budget time?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would comment that estimates are estimates, they cannot be correct to the exact percentage. I think, a fluctuation of 5% is quite reasonable.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 4 OF 1981

CRAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, Sir, with regard to the Consolidated Fund Statement of Reallocation No 7 of 1980/81 Warrant No 19, Head 20, will Government give a detailed explanation of the £83,000 reallocated to Sick Leave for Workmen and further will Government explain why this amount has not been spent on the different sub-heads?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the sum of £83,000 has been reallocated to sub-head 7B, Sick Leave for Workmen of Head 20, Public Works Annually Recurrent to meet an estimated shortfall of this sub-head.

If the Schedule of Supplementary Estimates now before the House is approved, a total of £176,000 will be available in this sub-head,

Provision in Estimate	-	£70,000
Reallocation Warrant No 8	-	£ 9,500
Reallocation Warrant No 19	-	£83,000
Supplementary Schedule No 4	-	<u>£13,500</u>
		<u>£176,000</u>

Based on a labour force of 900 men and an average wage of £15 a day, provision is made for an average of 13 days sick leave per annum. It has been possible to reallocate funds from the other named sub-heads because these are expected to show savings; labour costs have been lower as a result of absences on sick leave.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 4 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Does the Government not agree that coming to the end of the financial year, the amount of £83,000 for Sick Leave constitutes a substantial element, was Government aware of this?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, provision is made for sick leave at the beginning of the financial year based on an estimate of previous absences on sick leave. One cannot control sick leave except by the entitlement of ten days uncertified sick leave per annum which employees are allowed after three years and the six calendar month sick leave on full pay in any period of four years which they are also entitled to under the Public Service Regulations. The Government has done its best to control the uncertified sick leave concession and 34 persons had this withdrawn during the leave year 1981. The Government is conscious of the need to control this but it is a very, very difficult area to control.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Financial and Development Secretary, did I hear him correctly to say that as far as the estimates were concerned the provision for sick leave was estimated at an average of 13 days a year per person in the work force? Can the Financial and Development Secretary tell the House all these supplementaries and reallocations, what does that work out at in terms of an average of the year? Is it more than 13 days?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sorry if I have misled the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition. The figures of £176,000 which is the total which will be sought from the House with the Supplementary Schedule No 4 provides for 900 men at £15 a day with an average of 13 days sick leave.

NO. 5 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, in respect of the Improvement and Development Fund Statement No 4 of 1980/81 Reallocation, will Government make a Statement detailing the items under Head 101?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the reasons for the reallocations of funds within Head 101 Housing are given in Statement of Reallocation No 4 of 1980/81. I can however add the following information:-

- (a) £42,861 reallocated from Subhead 4 - Lime Kiln Steps GIB/46 (Phase B) to Subhead 15 - Lime Kiln Steps Phase 1A.

Additional funds were required for Phase 1A to demolish part of the buildings found to be structurally unsound.

- (b) £40,000 reallocated from Subhead 7 - 22 Road to the Lines to Subhead 10 - White Stores. This latter project when approved in August 1978 was estimated to cost £300,000. Although the final account has not yet been received, the latest information is that the total cost will be in excess of £357,000. The additional funds are required because of delays in obtaining building materials (facing bricks and roofing tiles), essential additional works and delay in handing over the site because of difficulties in reproviding stores on site.

- (c) £19,500 reallocated from Subhead 12 - Castle Ramp/Road to the Lines Phase I to Subhead 14 - Gas Works.

It has been decided to proceed with Phase III of the project. This phase entails (i) the completion of filling in of the gasometer tanks, (ii) formation of the access road, and (iii) regrading ground to profile for future housing development.

- (d) £5,200 reallocated from Subhead 19 (New) Waterworks - Flat to Subhead 18 - 52/58 Flat Bastion Road - Demolition.

Funds were required to meet the cost of boring trial holes on the site available for redevelopment following the demolition of 52/58 Flat Bastion Road.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 5 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I notice here that the sum of £59,500 from subheads 7 and 12 - Castle Ramp and Road to the Lines - is now no longer available to that project. Does that mean that there has been a delay in that modernisation programme?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the contractor on that project has not submitted the final account as was expected when supplementary funds were approved earlier in the year. This is, unfortunately, because of ill-health and it is not expected that the bills will be in before June of this year and for that reason it was possible to move funds from the subheads to where they were required rather than seeking supplementary provision.

HON W T SCOTT:

So at some future stage in the course of the House we will be looking for some supplementary estimates to put back into subheads 7 and 12?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, it will be a revote in the 1981/82 estimates.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am a little puzzled with the explanation with regard to Lime Kiln Steps because looking at Head 101 in the approved estimates, there was only provision as far as Phase B was concerned, as I see it here in Lime Kiln Steps, of a total of £5,000 for 1980/81. There was provision for Phase 1A of £80,000 and a balance to complete of £270,000 but as far as Phase B is concerned there seems to be no provision for balance to complete and only £5,000. I do not know whether it will come out later on but there does not seem to be anything in the approved estimates.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I take it that the Hon Member refers to the (a) £42,861 reallocation at Lime Kiln Steps. In my copy of the estimates Improvement and Development, Head 101, sub-head 4, Area Re-Development Schemes, Lime Kiln Steps GIB/46 Phase A, projected expenditure to 31.3.81 was £5,000. I think probably it would be easier if I either wrote to the Hon Member or spoke to him on how this additional amount is built up.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 6 OF 1981.

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, as it is now four months since Government has been considering introducing TV Licence Stamps, is the Minister now in a position to say whether the Government has taken a decision on the matter?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and
Postal Services)

Sir, the introduction of the TV Licence Stamp Scheme has been accepted in principle. The Government is now considering whether the Scheme should be limited to TV licence prepayments only or whether it should be extended to cover other licences and/or bills due to Government and, also, whether a General Savings plan linked to the Gibraltar Government Savings Bank, should be incorporated in the Scheme. Work on matters incidental to the introduction of the Scheme, such as the Stamps which are to be used and the format of the Cards on which the stamps are to be affixed, has progressed satisfactorily. The Hon Member can rest assured that a statement on the matter will be made as soon as I am in a position to do so.

11.3.81

NO. 7 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, will Government state the present position regarding the report produced by Alexander Howden Brokers Limited on reinsurance and will Government summarize the various options to them under the report?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the options open to the Government as set out in the Alexander Howden Report are a conventional policy, direct insurance with normal excess; direct insurance with self insured retention and the setting up of a captive insurance company which would be wholly owned by the Government. The Government considers the last of these options the most attractive but, after further consultation with the Crown Agents, it is seeking the views of an independent expert in the fields of risk analysis and captive insurance before taking a final decision.

11.3.81

NO. 8 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, does Government propose at the next Budget Session to amend the provision of the Income Tax Ordinance so as to lighten the heavy taxation burden on the average wage earner or salary earner in Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, with your permission I propose to answer this question together with Question Nos 9 and 10.

11.3.81

NO. 9 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, has Government now made a study in depth on the Income Tax Ordinance as promised in this House and if so will Government make a statement on its conclusions?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, with your permission I propose to answer this question together with No 10.

11.3.81

NO. 10 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government ensure that allowances under the Income Tax Ordinance are reviewed in the forthcoming budget by no less than the increase in the Index of Retail Prices?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, Members will recall my answer to Question No 224 of 1980, by the Hon A T Loddo, in November, 1980. At that time, I informed the House that an in-depth study into all aspects of income tax legislation was in hand. This study is now in the closing stages and, as stated in November, its findings will enable the Government to take decisions in connection with the 1981/82 budget. It is within this context, and that of the overall financial situation of the Government, that consideration will be given as to what extent, if any, relief to tax payers can be given under the provisions of the Income Tax Ordinance.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 8, 9 AND 10 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I thank the Financial and Development Secretary for that answer and I suppose from his answer that we must wait for the budget before we hear the conclusions of the study in depth. Is that the position?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Financial and Development Secretary whether whatever the Government decides to do on this study in depth, whether the Government will make available to the House, whether the Government implements the study or not or the recommendation, whether the Government will make available to the House the conclusions of the study?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, without wishing to pre-empt what I will say in the budget speech I think that I would indicate in that what options the Government has examined and what conclusions it has reached.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Hon Member not agree that in fact failure to review the allowances in line with the Index of Retail Prices is effectively an increase in taxation because of the erosion of the purchasing power of money over the last twelve months?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I would agree, Mr Speaker, that what the Hon Member has just described would be that there would be an element of fiscal drag in the budget.

HON P J ISOLA:

Would the Financial and Development Secretary agree that the problem revealed in the question of my Hon Friend Mr Bossano would not be there if both he and the Government had agreed with the Opposition amendment at budget time of £100 additional increase in personal allowances which the Government and the Hon Mr Bossano felt unable to accept?

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member is allowed to ask me questions am I allowed to answer them?

MR SPEAKER:

Order. The Hon Financial and Development Secretary may wish to answer the Hon Mr Isola's question.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, if I understand what the Hon Member has asked correctly then my answer is I cannot agree with him.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition wishes to ask me.

MR SPEAKER:

He is not asking you, he is asking the Financial and Development Secretary.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Hon Member interested in knowing what the Financial Secretary thinks that I am doing in the House or what I think I am doing in the House?

MR SPEAKER:

The Hon Leader of the Opposition was asking a question from the Financial and Development Secretary. It so happens that you were in agreement with what the Financial and Development Secretary did at the time and therefore you were brought into it.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I ask the Hon Financial and Development Secretary then, Mr Speaker, whether he would agree that to have increased the allowances last year by £100 as proposed by the Leader of the Opposition on the wrong assumption that there was a greater surplus

MR SPEAKER:

No, that is completely hypothetical because it was not done.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr. Speaker, I don't think it is any more hypothetical than what the Leader of the Opposition wanted the Financial and Development Secretary to say.

MR SPEAKER:

On what the Leader of the Opposition was asking a decision was taken by this House, on what you are saying it was not.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Financial and Development Secretary agree that had the proposal put forward by the Opposition last year, which was unacceptable both to myself and to the Government, been accepted, it would have been totally irrelevant to the concept of indexation of tax allowances which is the subject of the question relating a review of the allowances to the Index of Retail Prices?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, yes, I think that had we agreed that additional £100 as proposed by the Opposition at the budget last year, the same questions would have arisen now.

11.3.81

NO. 11 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether War Pensions which are not taxable in UK are taxable in Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, there are two types of war pensions in payment. These are: wound and disability pensions and war widows' pensions; both are exempt from tax in the UK. Only the wound and disability pension is exempt in Gibraltar under Section 7(1)(j) of the Ordinance.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 11 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Would, in fact, the Financial and Development Secretary then consider the possibility of extending the same provisions to the case of the pension that is not taxable in the United Kingdom in view of the fact that this must be something affecting a very small number of people and the loss of revenue would be quite small?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, this has already been done.

11.3.81

NO. 12 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether the Tender Board is now working to the policy in the use of land for private development which was recently agreed in this House?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir. The Treasury Tender Board is now guided by the terms of the motion recently carried in this House.

11.3.81

NO. 13 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether there are any delays in the granting of Development Aid and if so, what are the reasons?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir applications for Development Aid Licences are dealt with as expeditiously as possible. A number of applications do not include sufficient information on the proposed development and this must be provided before the application is processed and a decision taken.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 13 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Financial and Development Secretary agree, Mr Speaker, that in view of the importance of maintaining a flow of work for the construction industry in its present slack state, the requirement of the application of Development Aid should be made absolutely clear to those who apply so that in fact if that is the matter that is delaying the granting it should be avoided?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir. On the other hand the Government cannot proceed with an application if when it asks questions there is a refusal to answer them.

11.3.81

NO. 14 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, would Government not agree that the 'Duty Paid' sign displayed at the Departure Lounge at the Airport, far from being prominent, is in fact ridiculously small and will Government take immediate steps to ensure that an alternative more prominent placard is installed so that tourists are made well aware that the items for sale there are duty paid?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, the sign has been replaced. I had in fact asked the Public Works Department to take the necessary action at the end of January.

NO. 15 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, is Government finally in a position to inform this House as to when physical work will commence on the erection of the new roofs at the Varyl Begg Estate?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, in view of questions 17 and 18 of 1981, I would with your leave propose to answer this question after question No 18. I think this would serve the best interests of clarity.

Preparatory work commenced on 6 November. That has been completed and aluminium and steel materials have been approved and ordered. Further work will be undertaken on site next month and the erection of the new roofs will commence in May.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 15 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Why has not this been a continuing process, Mr Speaker?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It has been a continuing process, the measurements have been taken, the steel materials have been ordered, they have to be fabricated etc and this is what is taking a little time.

HON W T SCOTT:

By continuing process I mean physically work on the site. I gather that although it started very well with quite a number of men there has been a withdrawal of labour.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Simply because the first work was the removal of the drying area walls. After that was done no further work could be done until the actual steel and aluminium turned up.

HON W T SCOTT:

So that is the extent of the problem at Varyl Begg, there is no other problem other than that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not to my knowledge, no.

NO. 16 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, will Government state the present position as regards reprinting the Laws of Gibraltar following Question 17 of 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the Government has already accepted in principle the need for a revision. In March of last year I said that I intended to make firm proposals to Government during 1980 with a view to having a reprint commenced in 1981. Following a decision in Council of Ministers there will be some provision in next year's estimates to make a start on the revision.

In the meantime, 6 individual Ordinances were reprinted in 1980.

Last December I also wrote to all heads of Government departments asking them to let me have returns of those Ordinance that, by reason of heavy amendment and public demand, they would wish to see reprinted. These returns have been obtained and I am determining an order of priority for reprinting as many individual statutes as is feasible during this present year. I am in consultation with the Bar on the matter. So far we already have 4 of these Ordinances in the process of reprinting.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 16 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I understand from Question No 17 that a revision would be commenced in 1981 not in 1982.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think I said that following a decision which Council of Ministers took last year there is some provision in the next financial year, meaning 1981/82, to make a start on the revision.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can we have any idea when there will be a new bound volume of the Laws of Gibraltar?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am bound to say I think it will take some time. My experience of reprints is that they normally take three years so I think it is going to be some time.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there any provision for a different form of binding of these new Laws?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, perhaps if I can elaborate a little. Subject to the terms being settled, we do have in mind a Commissioner to undertake this work and no doubt he will have his own views on the format of the Laws. My own view as to how reprints should be presented is this, that I tend to favour bound in alphabetically ordered volumes with annual measures and reprints bound in each year thereafter. I think these are documents which are after all part of archives and I think it is important that they should be duly presented but that is my view at this stage and the Commissioner no doubt will have his own views and I will discuss it with him.

NO. 17 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government state whether the agreement made between the parties involved in the Varyl Begg Estate dispute is being implemented in full and does Government envisage any slippage in the implementation of the agreement?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, with your leave, I should like to answer this question after No 18 which deals with the state of the agreement so I think that would serve to clarify the matter.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, there is no objection whatsoever but if this was going to be the case, why were not the questions put in the right order for answer? That is what I do not understand.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, from the practical angle when they come in they are classified more or less as they are likely to be answered but the full import of the questions is not appreciated at the time, otherwise I would not be intervening as I have done sometimes instead of doing it at the end. It is just that the whole spectrum of the thing is not appreciated initially. They are classified in order to go out to Heads of Departments and they are given a number and though they are classified more or less by subject matter an analysis is not then made as to how the thing will be answered.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, may I just clarify. I think it would be helpful if I were to deal first with the agreement itself and then with progress under the agreement.

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

In the statement I made to the House on this subject on 4 November 1980, I said that the contractor would come on to site to commence preliminary work within two weeks of 27 October, 1980. I also said that the construction of the new pitched roofs would take approximately eighteen months to complete.

In the event the contractor came onto site on 6 November 1980 and undertook preparatory work. The contract for the construction of the new roofs stipulates that the completion date is to be 1 May 1982, which is less than eighteen months from the date on which I made my statement.

The Government does not envisage any slippage in this timetable.

NO. 18 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government confirm that the agreement made between the Government, the Consultants and the Contractors in respect of the Varyl Begg Estate has now been formally drawn up and signed by all the parties and will Government make a copy of this agreement available to the House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, the resolution of the Varyl Begg Housing Estate dispute involved settlements with the contractor and the consultant architects respectively.

In the case of the contractor, heads of agreement were concluded on 29 October, 1980. The terms were announced by me in the House on 4 November, 1980. They involved the settlement of the difference between the Government and the contractor over the existing roof and roof related defects, the reservation of the Government's position over other defects and the processing of those other defects by the contractor, and agreement on the terms of the new contract to be undertaken by remedying of roof related defects. By their nature, and as I indicated at the time, their incorporation in detail into formal documents and the completion of the financing arrangements required further time.

These matters have now been completed. A deed of settlement of the existing differences and the construction contract for the erection of new pitched roofs and related works were executed on 12 February, 1981.

In the case of the consultant architects, the heads of agreement were concluded on 28 October, 1980. These were of their nature more comprehensive than those with the building contractor could be.

Following the conclusion of the contract with the contractor, a formal deed of settlement and agreement for architectural services with the consultant architect has been prepared and is with the architect for completion.

As I said in the House on 17 December, 1980, these will be made available for perusal by any Hon Member of the Opposition who wishes to read them.

MR SPEAKER:

We might perhaps answer all the questions and then supplementaries can derive from there.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am quite happy to ask supplementaries as long as I am asking on this.

MR SPEAKER:

Precisely, but provided you realise that you will have no further right to ask supplementaries on this one when we answer the other questions.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 18 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

I thank the Hon and Learned Attorney-General for that answer. Is it correct to say that the consultants have been dragging their feet rather more than the contractors because what possible reason could there be for the settlement agreement with the consultants not to have been signed today which is now over four months since the agreement was announced, is there some problem?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, there is no problem and I do not think it is really fair on the consultants to say that they are dragging their feet. The working out in detail of the construction contract was quite a major exercise and that took some time, final talks took place late January/early February and the way I have been proceeding is to get that completed and because the consultant has been helping us in negotiations with the contractor I have left concluding the formal terms of settlement with the consultant until we have settled matters with the contractor. I am satisfied that our heads of the agreement with the consultant are sufficiently clear for us to be covered in the meantime.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I take it then that the deed of settlement that has been sent to the consultants for signature does enshrine all the terms that have been agreed that there is no possibility of them disagreeing with the substance of the deed?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I really don't think there is any possibility of that at all.

NO. 19 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government state what avenues are available to patients who require the service of the ENT consultant when he visits Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, all Medical Practitioners in Gibraltar are notified of the visits of the ENT consultant to enable them to refer cases to him. Government Medical Officers do this via our local ENT specialist, who decides which cases merit further referral; private practitioners do so direct.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 19 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister agree that some private patients go to see the consultant privately because they are not referred in the first place by the local ENT specialist?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, I do agree.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would he also agree that those patients are almost always treated and sometimes have operations performed by the ENT consultant?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would he then not agree that in some cases also where operations are required for, perhaps, personal reasons, patients would prefer to be referred to the ENT consultant and they are not referred to the ENT consultant?

HON J B PEREZ:

No. I think the Hon Member is missing one particular point. If a patient goes to the Health Centre Doctor and the Health Centre Doctor refers him to our own ENT specialist and in the case mentioned by the Hon Questioner the ENT specialist refuses to refer either because he feels that he is competent to deal with that particular case himself or he feels there is no reason to get a second opinion, the patient can then elect to go on a private basis provided he has a letter of referral from the Health Centre Doctor. It is a question of choice.

HON G T RESTANO:

It seems then, Mr Speaker, some of these patients who do go privately are eventually operated on by the ENT specialist. Would he not agree that in several cases

MR SPEAKER:

We must be careful. We are not questioning the judgement of professional people as to whether a patient should be referred. What you are saying is that the fact that they have ultimately been treated by the specialist means that the person who refused to refer him was wrong.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am wondering whether sufficient weight is given to the wishes of the patient to be referred to the consultant and if the Government would not agree that the fact that the operations are carried out by the consultant would warrant, perhaps, a certain amount of investigation by the Minister as to whether the procedure at the moment is being carried out correctly.

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, I am satisfied with the present arrangements that we have today in regard to visiting consultants because the procedures that must be followed is that no general patient is excluded because there is a private patient. Let us take, for example, the ENT consultant. He normally comes to Gibraltar on a five day visit. He must see all the general patients first before he can see the private patients and we know that is being done because we have a person there so I do not see any need to investigate the matter further because I have looked at this matter quite closely.

HON G T RESTANO:

I don't think the Minister has got the point, really. The point is that some of the private patients have to go privately because they are not referred to the consultant through the Health Scheme.

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, if our local ENT specialist refuses to refer it may well be, I don't know, either because he feels he can deal with that case himself or there isn't anything wrong with the patient. If the patient doesn't accept our own local specialist's diagnosis then if he wishes to go privately he is free to do so.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, has a patient in the general Medical Service a right to insist on the visiting consultant seeing him rather without having to pay for the privilege?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, he is seen by our own local specialist. The visiting consultant only comes to Gibraltar as a back-up service to our own specialist and it is only in cases where our local specialist feels that he ought to get a second opinion or he cannot deal with that particular case either due to expertise or for whatever reason, that the visiting consultant sees a particular patient.

HON P J ISOLA:

But how far is the public allowed the privilege, which I would have thought is very common in medical practice, of a patient asking for a second opinion and not being dependent on the opinion of one doctor only? In other words, does not the Government consider it desirable, in the interests of medicine generally and on the right of people in the Health Service, that they should have some right to insist on a second opinion if they feel they are not very happy with what they have heard without having to pay for it?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, I don't agree, Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

The Minister does not agree so therefore what the Minister is saying is that a patient in the Health Service has no right to ask for a second opinion even though the opinion is available from the visiting surgeon that comes to Gibraltar?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the point I must make once again is that when a patient is referred

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to labour the point. I think you have given the answer, you do not agree that people should have a second opinion.

HON J B PEREZ:

People can have as many opinions as they like.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am not asking for many opinions, I am asking for a second opinion.

HON J B PEREZ:

I am satisfied, Mr Speaker, that the system is working well. We have one specialist, you cannot have two opinions from the same man.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, we are talking at cross purposes. What the Hon Leader of the Opposition is saying is that a patient will not be seen by the consultant unless he is referred to the consultant by the local practitioner and what the Leader of the Opposition is now asking is that when the local practitioner makes a decision not to refer, should the patient not have a second opinion.

HON J B PEREZ:

Let me put it another way, Mr Speaker. It is a rare occurrence when our own local specialist refuses to refer a particular patient to the visiting consultant when the patient insists in wanting a second diagnosis.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I question that and that is precisely why this question has been put in because people do and are going to see the consultant privately, paying for it, because the local practitioner will not refer them to the consultant.

HON J B PEREZ:

We are not talking about the local practitioner, we are talking about our own local specialist. If he has a particular case which he feels competent to deal with himself, there is no reason why that person should be paid out of tax payers money to get another opinion for something which is relatively simple for our own local specialist to deal with otherwise we might as well not have our own local specialist and have visiting consultants coming.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, in view of the fact that the visiting consultant spends five days in Gibraltar and has plenty of time apparently to deal with all the private patients available, will the Minister consider giving directions within the Health Service that patients who would like a second opinion should as far as possible be given this facility which is normal all over the world.

HON J B PEREZ:

First of all, Mr Speaker, the Hon Leader of the Opposition has made a semi statement in the question where he says since the visiting consultant has plenty of time to deal with private patients. Let me tell the Hon Member that that, in fact, is not the case. In the last visit of the ENT specialist, the visiting consultant, he did not see any private patients because he did not have time. On normal occasions when visiting consultants come, they only dedicate about half a day to private patients if and only when they have seen all our general patients.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, just for information, could the Minister state in what way the visiting consultant is paid, for the amount of time spent in Gibraltar or on the number of persons that he sees?

HON J B PEREZ:

They are paid a lump sum irrespective of the time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister, if that is the case, can he explain how by not allowing people to have a second opinion how that increases the cost in view of the fact that the consultant specialist whose visit to Gibraltar is paid for out of public funds still appears to have time to see private patients?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, it is not up to the Minister to allow patients to have second opinions, it is up to our own local specialist and I have already told the Hon Member that in most cases where the patient insists on a second opinion from the visiting consultant, invariably, and that is the experience that I had in the last year, invariably this is done.

HON G T RESTANO:

On a matter of clarification. The Minister has said that on the last two occasions, I think, at least certainly on the last occasion, no private patients were seen. This is a big departure from what has happened in the past where he has seen about 74 patients.

MR SPEAKER:

You are making statements.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is it going to be the practice now that five days will be totally dedicated to national health patients?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the procedure is that we have a certain number of patients that have to be seen that are referred to the visiting consultant by our own local consultant. We then get in touch with the visiting consultant and we tell him we have X number of patients. Then the visiting consultant comes to Gibraltar and if we have, let us say, 10 or 18 patients, he will say he will come for two or three days, to see our own patients not his private patients. If he comes for three days and he has seen our 18 patients and he has an afternoon left over there is no objection to the visiting consultant seeing any further patients.

MR SPEAKER:

That is the end of the matter. Next question.

11.3.81

NO. 20 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, would the Minister for Medical and Health Services inform the House what records are kept at St Bernard's Hospital for patients who are treated there privately?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, there is no differentiation made between records kept at St Bernard's Hospital in respect of private or general patients.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 20 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I know I am not supposed to make a statement but I can assure the Minister that that is not the case because I went through this experience only two weeks ago where I was told that there were no records kept of my son because he was a private patient. Can the Minister explain this?

HON J B PEREZ:

I will undertake to investigate the matter fully for the Hon Member.

NO. 21 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, since in the near future senior members of the medical staff at St Bernard's Hospital are due to retire, would Government accordingly make this House aware of: a) how many senior doctors or consultants will retire and when b) what appointments it intends to make c) when such appointments will become effective d) how such appointments are to be made, and e) are any new administrative or operational posts to be created?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Two senior members of the Medical Staff are due to retire during the course of the year. The Medical Specialist will be retiring on the 30 September, 1981, the Consultant Anaesthetist will do so on the 1 November, 1981.

These vacancies were advertised both locally and in the United Kingdom in November, 1979, and attracted a good number of suitably qualified applicants.

Following the usual procedures and on the recommendations of the Public Service Commission replacements for these two posts have already been selected and will be taking up their appointments in due course.

It is not envisaged that any new administrative or operational post is to be created in the near future.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 21 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, are any other Senior members of the staff likely to retire within the next 24 months?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, I think the Director of Medical and Health Services will be retiring at the end of 1982, round about November, 1982.

HON G T RESTANO:

When that particular post of Director needs to be filled will any new administrative post or operational post then be made?

HON J B PEREZ:

This is a matter, Mr Speaker, which I am carefully looking into.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister, in view of the importance of the Medical Specialist to the Medical Service and, in fact, to the public of Gibraltar, can I ask him the years of experience that the doctor who is being appointed has as a Specialist or in general practice?

HON J B PEREZ:

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, is the Hon Member referring to the two replacements? I am afraid I haven't got that information with me.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Minister not agree that it is of vital importance to the general welfare of patients in Gibraltar that the persons appointed should be persons of maturity, experience and specialist skills?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, this is a matter really which I am sure there is no doubt in my own mind that the Public Service Commission looked into when they came to select the two replacements both for the Medical Specialist and the Anaesthetist.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Minister give this information to my Hon Friend as soon as he has it available because it is of very considerable interest to the Opposition, obviously?

HON G T RESTANO:

Since the Director of Medical Services fulfils a double function, one of Director and one as a surgeon, would the Minister say that the replacement of that post will be a similar one or whether it is thought correct that a man with the responsibilities of Director should also have a responsibility of carrying out operations?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I have already said that I am, in fact, very closely looking into this particular matter and I take the point made by the Hon Member.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Sir, how many patients, on a monthly basis, during the last six months have required the attention of the staff of the KGV Hospital broken down into a) inpatients b) outpatients c) private practice?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, the following statistics shows the number of outpatients seen at the KGV Psychiatric Unit during the period in question:

SEPTEMBER	-	122
OCTOBER	-	120
NOVEMBER	-	104
DECEMBER	-	61
JANUARY	-	120
FEBRUARY	-	84
		<u>611</u>

As regards inpatients, on the 1st September 1980, there were 27 patients undergoing treatment in the Chronic Ward and 16 patients in the Acute Ward, a total of 43 patients. During the period 1st September 1980, and 28th February 1981, there have been 12 admissions, 10 discharges and one death in the Chronic Ward, leaving a total of 28 patients at 28 February 1981, and 57 admissions and 54 discharges in the Acute Ward, leaving a total of 19 patients on the 28 February 1981. The total number of inpatients in the Unit on that date was 45.

In reply to the Hon Members question on private practice I can say that there has been no private inpatient during the period in question. In fact, modern psychiatric thinking is such that the possible privileges that could accrue to a private patient, ie seclusion, could be in conflict with the treatment indicated and it is therefore actively discouraged. On the other hand the ordinary ward patient often requires a manner of treatment consonant with the privileges enjoyed by a private patient.

Private outpatient consultations are held both at the Unit and elsewhere and the number seen during the whole of the period in question amounted to 50.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government give its views on the advisability of employing a psychiatrist?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

The Government is satisfied that the present arrangements provide suitable cover in the field of psychiatry.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 23 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

On what basis is this view arrived at, Mr Speaker?

HON J B PEREZ:

On the basis of the present complement of staff that we have at KGV.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister agree that there is nobody with psychiatric qualifications at present employed by the Government?

HON J B PEREZ:

I do not agree, Mr Speaker.

HON G T RESTANO:

There is somebody with full qualifications, psychiatric qualifications, is that what the Minister is saying?

HON J B PEREZ:

What the Minister is saying is that the Government is satisfied that the present Superintendent of the KGV Psychiatric Unit is a man who has qualified by experience and not only is that view held by Government but the view is also held by the visiting consultant who has, in fact, attested to this in writing and steps are being taken to try and obtain consultant status for this particular person.

11.3.81

NO. 24 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government give its views on the advisability of employing a Clinical Psychologist?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, I am grateful to the Hon Member for raising this question. I can confirm that the question of employing a Clinical Psychologist has already been considered by the Government. The conclusions reached, however, are that although it would be useful to have such a post, it is considered that the scope and workload at present would not be high enough to justify its creation, neither does the Government consider that any aspirant to the post would gain sufficient experience and job satisfaction with the number of cases that could arise here in Gibraltar.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 24 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Given the fact that in the previous question the Minister said that a consultant's appointment was being asked for for the specialist at the KGV Hospital, would he not agree that any such consultant would normally have a Clinical Psychologist working under him in a hospital of this nature?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, if we had employed a Clinical Psychologist which I have already said in a question we thought desirable, the estimated workload for that person has been estimated only one day a week and we therefore do not feel it necessary or advisable to recruit a Clinical Psychologist.

11.3.81

NO. 25 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Have doctors at the Health Centre now been provided with telephones in their private offices?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Yes, Sir.

11.3.81

NO. 26 OF 1981

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 psychiatric treatment?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, since February, 1980, the Community Paediatrician has been consulted on six occasions in relation to students in need of psychiatric treatment. These cases were then referred to the Superintendent KGV Psychiatric Unit for treatment.

11.3.81

NO. 27 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state how many Stalls within the Public Market although tenanted are in fact not operational and can Government state for how long this has been the position in relation to each stall?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

There are five stalls within the Public Markets which are not being used for the sale of market produce although the rents in respect of same are fully paid up. The position concerning each stall is as follows:

Stall No 3: This general groceries stall was last used in February, 1980.

Stall No 5: Last used for the sale of meat etc in December, 1978, although the refrigerator is in use on a daily basis.

Stall No 8: This small meat stall has not been used for sale for the last eight years although as in the case of Stall No 5 the refrigerator is in use.

Stall No 13: This fruit and vegetable stall has not been used since November, 1980.

Stall No 18: This small stall was converted into a chacuterie store in 1975 and is still being so used.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 27 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister, did he say that that stall is still being used as a chacuterie store?

HON J B PEREZ:

Stall No 18 - this small stall was converted into a chacuterie store in 1975 and is still being so used.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, does the Minister agree that stalls in the Public Market are there basically for people to sell their goods from as cheaply as possible to the public and that for this reason the rents in the Market are extremely low?

HON J B PEREZ:

Not only does the Minister himself agree but the Government itself is, in fact, not satisfied with the situation and we have already taken the opportunity to get the Attorney-General to draft certain amendments to the relevant Ordinance in order that this situation will not continue.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Minister then not agree that if persons apply for a stall to actually do business within the Public Market with the public, that in that sort of situation those applications should be treated favourably and people who are just paying their rent but not using the stall should be given notice to quit and are there any legal problems in the way?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, I have already said that I agree with that and that is precisely why the Attorney-General has already been requested to make certain amendments to the present Ordinance in order to put a stop to this situation and to look favourably at persons who actually wish to operate the stalls.

11.3.81

NO. 28 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state its position in relation to abatement notices served by the Government on persons who have created rubbish piles in Gibraltar but who are prevented from removing them due to the existence of an industrial dispute and does Government consider it fair in such circumstances to proceed against persons who are unable to abate a nuisance because of an industrial dispute?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Following the Gibraltar Licensed Victuallers Association's efforts to remove their own accumulations which, it is understood, met with some opposition from the Unions concerned, and in view of the fact that negotiations between the Government and the Transport and General Workers Union had already commenced, the Government postponed the service of any abatement notices in order not to upset the goodwill which brought the negotiations about. There are, therefore, no abatement notices pending and hence no proceedings are likely to follow.

As to whether such proceedings would have been fair in the circumstances the answer is 'yes' since the accumulations should not have been created by the persons concerned in the first place. It is understood that the Union objection lay in the employment of a third party to remove accumulations and not in individual traders taking their own business trade refuse down to the destructor. It would seem, therefore, that the individual traders themselves were not being prevented from removing their own trade refuse.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 28 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, I will not enter into argument on a hypothesis that was not incurred. I am right, therefore, in saying that although the Government considers it would have been fair to serve abatement notices and to prosecute in Court later on those who had left their rubbish out, they are not going to do it, is that the position?

HON J B PEREZ:

I have said that no abatement notices were in fact served so therefore there are no proceedings pending which is, in fact, what the question pre-supposed that abatement notices had been taken out which they have not.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am asking the question to the Minister because he himself volunteered the statement that it would have been fair for the Government to have proceeded and my question now is that even though the Government considers it fair to have prosecuted these people for leaving the rubbish out they are not going to do it, is that the position?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, what has happened in the past has already passed.

11.3.81

NO. 29 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government explain why it has been found necessary to re-allocate £38,500 for underestimating of installation costs and purchases of spares towards the (new) Hire of Generating Plant?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government has found it necessary to re-allocate this amount of money to meet the cost of certain items which had not been foreseen in respect of the original estimate and others which were underestimated. These refer specifically to the question of insurance against all risks in the case of the former and higher costs of installation and civil works in the case of the latter.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 29 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how is it that this was underestimated? Surely, when Government purchased the skid-mounted generators they must have known what they required, what needed to be done, how is it that such a large amount was underestimated?

MR SPEAKER:

The reasons have been given.

HON G T RESTANO:

Could we have a breakdown of that figure, Mr Speaker?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, could the Hon Member say what he wants a breakdown of, of the underestimation or of the certain items which had not been foreseen?

HON G T RESTANO:

Of the whole £38,500, Mr Speaker.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the £38,500 forms part of a major sum. I can give him a breakdown of the total summary of what it has cost but not of the £38,500 specifically.

HON G T RESTANO:

Since the reallocation has been made, Mr Speaker, presumably it has been towards certain costs. Does the Minister not have a breakdown of those reallocations? Is he unable to say exactly what that reallocation comprises?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is certainly impossible to itemize this cost specifically. I am quite willing to give him the whole total of costs for his information.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I would have thought that if £38,500 needed to be re-allocated it is that there has been certain underestimation under the different Heads.

MR SPEAKER:

You want the breakdown of the whole figure?

HON G T RESTANO:

Yes, the Minister said that he would be prepared to give them.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker. The overall cost:-

Local Costs

(A)	Wages up to 20.2.81		£11,491.84
	<u>Materials</u>		
	Unallocated Stores to Jan 1981	£2,723.33	
	Purchased locally	<u>6,417.77</u>	9,141.10
(B)	Woodlands - Hire of Generators (up to 31.3.81)		63,524.50
	" - Purchases (cable, lugs etc)		5,757.25
	" - Plant (Radiator Inhibitor)		488.71
	" - Insurance (full)		13,451.00
	" - Spares eg Filters, Injectors		3,477.76
	" - Misc Expenses		340.00
	" - Witnessed test by PCR		3,601.00
	Gib Underwater Contractors Ltd		3,307.00
	J H Ramagge		4,948.00
	Monteverde Transport		891.50
	Simons (Gib) Ltd - Contract Payment		12,933.00
	Whatlings (Overseas) Ltd (Louvre Screens)		1,800.00
	Expenses of Service Engineer		682.39
	Yorkshire Imperial Plastics (PWD Indent)		484.70
	Bank Charges		<u>197.59</u>

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, this sum of £38,500 which the Minister has mentioned, this is additional to the £27,000 that we are being asked to vote later on in these proceedings in respect of the hire of new generating plant; so the total is something like £65,000 being used for the hire of generating plant, an extra £65,000 as against the original estimate of £81,500, so the cost has gone up about 100%, is that the position on what the Government estimated?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, in answer to the first question, the amount sought in the supplementary estimates is for an entirely different reason.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister say whether he had any indication that there would have to be re-estimation of the amount to be charged at the time when we voted the original £80,000?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I have said before that some items had not been foreseen in respect of the original estimate. I think this answers the Hon Mr Haynes' question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does he mean to say that he didn't have any idea at all that there would be extra amounts to be paid?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, some items were underestimated and some other items were more expensive than we originally had catered for and this accounts for the necessity to reallocate this sum of money towards the hire of new generating plant.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister not agree that we are now getting very much closer to the original purchase figure for the four generators after only two months of having the generators in Gibraltar?

MR SPEAKER:

I will allow a yes or a no and no more because we must not go into that detail.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

May I ask a question, please? Coming back to the original question by my Hon Colleague which is divided into two parts, the installation cost and the purchases of spares. Can I ask the Government to say whether the spares element of that cost is for the skid-mounted generators themselves or for the ancillary equipment to them?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, these are routine spares, in fact, they are running spares, they are filters, injectors, etc and they amount to £3,477.76. As far as I know they are for the generators and not for the ancillary equipment.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I would like to refer the Government to a statement that was made by them when they first announced the hiring of these generators and we on our side of the House were saying that Government should purchase the generators and not hire them. One of the reasons given at the time was that Government thought it more equitable to hire the generators because the cost of the spares would not come into it and I question now and I ask the Government if there has been a change?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Mr Speaker, there has not been a change.

MR SPEAKER:

You are not being questioned about whether the amount that you are being charged for the spares is equitable, you are being questioned as to whether Government is responsible for the spares or not on the hire agreement.

HON P J ISOLA:

The question is, Mr Speaker, is the Government liable to pay for any spare parts that may be required for the skid generators notwithstanding that they are on hire to the Government?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government is not responsible for any major breakdowns in the generators and this is why we are fully insured but these are running spares that we need constantly like filters, injectors, etc.

MR SPEAKER:

For which Government is responsible?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

For which Government is entirely responsible.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the position then, Mr Speaker, under the agreement, that the Government pays a hire charge, pays for the insurance of anything that may go wrong in major breakdowns, pays for spares that may be required while the skid generators are here and pays for normal repairs of the skid generators, is that the position? That is certainly not the position that was revealed to this House when the announcement was made in favour of hiring as against purchasing because it seems to me that the Government has been hiring but is in the position of a purchaser.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I feel to a certain extent we are debating the point.

MR SPEAKER:

No, you are being asked a simple question.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Government is responsible for minor spares. Government is insured, it has got full insurance against anything going wrong with the temporary generating plant even as far as if the Opposition were to plant a bomb under it.

MR SPEAKER:

I would ask you to withdraw that.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

It was merely a facetious comment. Any major breakdown will certainly be covered by the insurance and will certainly be the responsibility of Woodlands.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister saying in effect that the Government has had to pay £13,000 insurance so that if there is a major breakdown the insurance company pays and not Woodlands? Mr Speaker, is the position then that the Government is in the position of an owner although it is only a hirer? I think the House is entitled to clarification, this seems to be a major turnaround from the position that was announced in this House.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked simply that if the hirers are responsible for major repairs why should Government be responsible for the insurance?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, we are responsible for full insurance because certainly things can go wrong with these generating sets which are unforeseen. As far as I know and as far as I am aware this covers the full insurance of the four sets from the United Kingdom to Gibraltar as well.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Minister, in view of the fact that this is a very important matter from the point of public funds, in view of the fact that there is an item in the Supplementary Appropriation Ordinance dealing with another £27,000 required for the skid generators, could we ask the Government Ministers and more especially the Financial and Development Secretary who after all is responsible to the House for the expenditure of public monies, could we ask him please to come fully documented so that they are able to answer questions on this all important matter?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 30 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can Government explain in view of the statements made by the Minister at the meeting of the House in December, 1980, how it is that whenever any minor fault occurs in Engine No 13 there are extensive power cuts in Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

No statement made during Question 359 of 1980 by me to this House in December could have been taken to imply that power cuts were avoidable. In fact I stated that if in addition to No 13 Engine another engine or engines were to be out of service at the same time there could be a shortfall in the generating capacity.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 30 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I will quote from the Hansard where the Minister did say that: "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". That is Question No 359 of 1980, page 4, so the question I think still arises and is still pertinent, Mr Speaker, could we have an answer?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member is quite correct in quoting from Question No 359. He obviously forgets how Question No 359 goes on. I said that we would be able to compensate for No 13 but then the Hon Mr Peter Isola wanted me to provide definite details and I said: "The Hon Member is talking about No 13 but we would 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".

MR SPEAKER:

What you are being asked is whether the recent power cuts have been as a result of not only No 13 but of other machinery breaking up at the same time.

HON G T RESTANO:

The question, Mr Speaker, is of course following the excuses that are given to the people of Gibraltar when there are power cuts and we are told that Engine No 13 had a minor breakdown. The question is, why does this occur? The question, Mr Speaker, is quite clear. How is it that whenever any minor fault occurs in Engine No 13 there are extensive power cuts in Gibraltar?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I shall then read the answer to the next question.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether the power cuts that we have been experiencing recently has been attributable exclusively of No 13 Engine. That is what you are being asked.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, in the majority of cases the loss of an engine is normally not noticeable but since No 13 is the largest set the loss of it is felt to a higher degree. If any other engine or engines are out at the same time and the load is high and there is no help from the Dockyard as well, power cuts inevitably ensue, there is not much that we can do about this. As the Hon Member knows we expected No 11 to be recommissioned and it has not been recommissioned as expected and No 8 had a broken column

MR SPEAKER:

In other words what you are saying is that the power cuts are not attributable exclusively to minor repairs to No 13.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister point to a single occasion since he made his statement on December 17 to the House, of a single occasion when No 13 has been out of order and there have been no power cuts since that date? Has there been one single occasion that No 13 has stopped operating and there have been no power cuts since the 17 December, 1980?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Sir, 14 of January - No 13 was out, our shortfall was 1.5, we had some capacity to spare there but unfortunately we had power cuts of very short duration.

HON P J ISOLA:

But you had power cuts. Therefore, Mr Speaker, will the Minister not agree that his statement to the House on the 17 December was somewhat misleading in view of the fact that every time that Engine No 13 has even hiccuped we have had power cuts in Gibraltar, that is just factual.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I qualified my statement, in fact, I shall read my statement again: "The Hon Member is talking about No 13 but we would 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". He is asking for the same guarantee this time as he was asking for last time. What I have said is that we would be able to cover No 13 as long as the other engines were available. No 11 did not come

back as expected, this deprived us of something like 2.2 and No 8 engine broke down a week before Christmas and this deprived us of another 1 megawatt. Therefore, unfortunately, we are not able to cover No 13 because of shortage of electricity due to other plant.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I was not asking the Minister for a guarantee today, I know that he is incapable of guaranteeing, the Government is not able to do so. We know that the Generating Station and the engines seem to be in absolute shambles but what I am asking the Minister is that in fact, for whatever reasons he may give, it has not been possible to cover for No 13 engine on one single occasion since he made the statement to the House in December in which he also mentioned the skid generators which have been in operation.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, we are now debating. Next question.

NO. 31 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can Government explain why Engine No 13 is subject to so many breakdowns and is this due to the fact that Engine No 13 has been overworked during the last twelve months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, in the majority of cases, loss of an engine is normally not noticeable but since No 13 is the largest set its temporary loss is felt to a higher degree. Following any major overhaul, snags of a minor nature are inevitably encountered and require rectification.

The operation of engines is maintained within limits so that the parameters specified by the manufacturers are not exceeded. No engine is run under overload conditions, quite the reverse, in fact, since load limits are set so that for instance exhaust valve temperatures are never higher than the manufacturers recommended valves. Hence No 13 engine, as indeed any other engine, has not been overworked during the last 12 months.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 31 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Can the Minister say how many overhauls it has undergone in the last 12 months?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member should well know that No 13 had a major overhaul during the last 12 months and it is due for a major overhaul every two years.

HON G T RESTANO:

How long does this major overhaul take to complete?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, if I remember correctly the major overhaul takes approximately 12 to 13 weeks. I think this one took 12 weeks.

HON G T RESTANO:

I wonder why it is that immediately after a major overhaul of 12 to 13 weeks duration that engine No 13 should break down so frequently. What is the reason for that, Mr Speaker?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, there are two things I would like to say about this. First of all he said "immediately after the overhaul". This is not quite true, the overhaul was before Christmas and the problems we have had with No 13 have been after Christmas. I explained this in the first part of my answer. I said: "In the majority of cases, loss of an engine is normally not noticeable but since No 13 is the largest set its temporary loss is felt to a higher degree. Following any major overhaul, snags of a minor nature are inevitably encountered and require rectification".

HON G T RESTANO:

Does that mean that now those little faults that always appear after major overhauls have occurred that there will not be any more minor faults?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 32 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can Government explain why there has been inordinate delay in getting Engine No 11 in the Generating Station back into service?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Government cannot agree that there has been inordinate delay in rebuilding Engine No 11, although it is true that work is behind schedule. There are a number of reasons for this:-

- a. Bedding down the main and large end bearings is a laborious task requiring that the bearing metal be manually scraped so as to adjust the actual size to within very small tolerance limits. In this type of work accuracy is essential.
- b. The manufacturers normally insist that individual components be checked and adjusted to within specified limits. Again this requires that items such as cylinder liners be honed using special tools.
- c. Modifications have been made to improve the coupling between block and column and a certain amount of redowelling was also found necessary.
- d. To maintain the rest of the plant in service has required at times that both manpower and materials be redeployed as necessary.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 32 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Was all this new to the Minister in November when he stated that No 11 engine would be recommissioned by winter?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, certainly I think that we were somewhat optimistic about the date that we could get No 11 back. We have had two engineers from the manufacturers working on the engine almost continuously. Overall I feel that the manufacturers do not consider the time period unreasonable considering the amount of work done and, in fact, I must inform the House that even a new engine takes at least about six months to erect, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is it not a fact that the crankshaft arrived in July, 1980, and is it not so that if it did arrive in July, 1980, it is not just six months but it is now nine months?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the crankshaft was unfortunately delayed and work started in mid-August, 1980.

HON G T RESTANO:

But that is still 7 or 8 months.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

11.3.81

NO. 33 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government explain why there appeared to have been spillage of fuel from the skid-mounted generators which stained the wall at Smith Dorrien Promenade?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The stain on the wall at Smith Dorrien Promenade is not the result of fuel spillages but the result of an unfortunate and inadvertent error which resulted in a quantity of fuel overflowing whilst fuel supplies were being taken. Investigations are proceeding to determine the manner in which the stains are best removed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 33 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how much fuel overflowed, has that been calculated?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I believe it was enough to stain the wall.

HON G T RESTANO:

For how long did that overflow continue?

MR SPEAKER:

It is not an overflow, it is spillage.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, with respect, he said that it was not a spillage it was an overflow. I want an answer. For how long was there an overflow?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

It was just a matter of minutes.

HON W T SCOTT:

Was the vehicle owned by Government or was it owned by a private company?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

My understanding is that it was owned by a private company.

HON W T SCOTT:

Will the cost of the removal of the stains therefore be up to the Government or the private company?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I can check on this and I will give the Hon Member the answer but as far as I know it will be borne by Government but I will check on it and I will give the Hon Member the correct answer.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government give this House the figures in units and value of electricity borrowed or lent between the Gibraltar Government and the Ministry of Defence during 1980 by quarter and the first two months of 1981 and will Government furthermore give details of cash transactions for this period which may already have been made or which are outstanding to date?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The Quarterly export figures from the two generating stations during 1980 were as follows:-

	<u>ISGS - KB</u>	<u>KB - ISGS</u>	<u>Balance to ISGS</u>
1st Quarter	748,800	258,900	489,900
2nd Quarter	253,000	98,600	154,400
3rd Quarter	632,300	83,800	548,500
4th Quarter	489,200	39,400	449,800

This yields a total in favour of ISGS of 1,642,000 units and represents about 3% of the total units generated by King's Bastion during this period. Only approximate figures for the first two months of 1981 can be given since accounts are rendered quarterly and these are:

102,200	12,200	90,000
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These figures can be taken to represent the total amount of energy transferred via the interconnector.

Under the Interconnector agreement units are charged at the weighted average price, which implies that quarterly charges are based on the average weighted price per unit for the preceding year with retrospective adjustment at the end of each year. This ensures that the amount paid is not more and not less than the amount received by the department from consumers.

Thus during the period in question £15,075 were paid in retrospect adjustment for the 900,000 units supplied during the financial year 1979/80, in addition the following payments

May 1980 : £23,340.00 for the 1st Quarter, 1980

November 1980 : £47,302.50 for the 2nd and 3rd Quarters, 1980

were made and a further £28,050 is due for the units supplied during the fourth quarter. All this totals £113,767.50.

NO. 35 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

In view of the fact that Government was able to ensure a continuous supply of electricity during the Christmas period, will Government explain why it has not been able to do so since then?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The loads experienced during Christmas as a result of the mild weather were lower than expected and substantially below the demands made on the system during the cold spell in November, 1980, and January of this year. Therefore the availability of plant in excess of requirements and assistance from HM Dockyard on a few occasions resulted in continuous supplies during the Christmas period, however, a major breakdown suffered by No 8 engine a week before the Christmas period, the delay in re-commissioning No 11 engine and minor faults in No 13 engine leading to outages of this engine of short duration have been the cause of the recent power cuts.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 35 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Has No 8 been recommissioned now?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Mr Speaker, No 8 has a broken column. We brought out a specialist in metallocking from the United Kingdom, he has looked into this and, regrettably, the engine cannot be metallocked and it is still at present out of commission.

HON G T RESTANO:

When is it expected that it will be back in commission?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it may not be economical to repair No 8 in the light of the proposed new power station about which I shall be making a statement later on in the House.

HON G T RESTANO:

Am I to understand then that this will be touched upon by the Minister in his statement because otherwise I have a few other questions to ask?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Mr Speaker, I said that it may not be economical to repair it considering the proposed statement which I shall be making later in the House about power development.

HON G T RESTANO:

When will that decision be taken, Mr Speaker? This is the first time that we have heard that one of the newer engines, it is the newest one in the old station, may be scrapped. When will a decision be taken whether to scrap it altogether?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the decision is under review as to what we are going to do about No 8 engine. This as as much as I can say at the moment to the Hon Member.

HON G T RESTANO:

I take it then that in the old station there are now three engines working, is that correct, Nos 4, 5 and 7?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, the Member is quite right, we have Nos 4, 5 and 7.

NO. 36 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government confirm that it is not possible to place international calls from the public telephone at the City Hall after 8 pm?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

No, Sir.

On 5 December, 1980, in pursuance of the answers I gave to Question No 149 in July, 1980, I wrote to the Hon Mr Restano and explained the position. I stated that two shifts are worked, from 8.00 am to 4.00 pm and from 2.00 pm to 10.00 pm. I went on to say that the City Hall is, however, closed at 9.00 pm whenever this is necessary in order to enable people already in the City Hall to effect their calls by 10.00 pm. I concluded by saying that the Government was starting to instal electronic type coinboxes from which international calls could be made. Two such coinboxes have been installed, on a trial basis, at Bayside Marina and Ocean Heights for clients. The trial has been successful and full use has been made of the coin boxes. Subject to planning permission it is now intended to instal another one at the Piazza, for public use. This service will continue to be developed. Emergency calls can be made from Waterport Police Station.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 36 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, in fact, if somebody between now and the time that the new public electronic box is available wants to make a telephone call and they call at the City Hall as the normal place, they are redirected as to where they have to go to make a call?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, the Hon Member is quite right. They should be directed if it is an emergency call to the Waterport Police Station.

HON J BOSSANO:

Who decides if it is an emergency call, Mr Speaker? If somebody wants to make a telephone call, presumably, at that time of the night it must be something that they consider to be fairly important. They are sent from the City Hall to Waterport as the nearest telephone from which they can make the call. Why not the Central Police Station which is round the corner if it is considered necessary to do it from a Police Station?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Certainly, the Central Police Station would be nearer but unfortunately this was an arrangement we arrived at with the post at Waterport and we have carried this on. What we intend to do really is to instal more and more public boxes throughout Gibraltar so that eventually people can make use of this public facility and our eventual aim is really to do away with using the City Hall as a telephone station for many reasons, one of them being the safety of the building as there is a lot of expensive equipment there.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, isn't the Minister in fact recognising that the present arrangements are unsatisfactory and temporary and would he not agree that until what he proposes actually materialises we need to do something to provide a service on a temporary basis that is suitable for the needs of the people who haven't got a telephone in their own house?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

I agree with the Hon Member. A lot of people have got telephones in their own houses and most of the people who use the City Hall are either visiting naval personnel or non-Gibraltarians wishing to call their families, these are the people who haven't got telephones in their homes. What I shall endeavour to do is to make sure that the City Hall is open for this type of people. The problem with the naval personnel as I said before is the fact that they do become drunk and from the safety angle this is very unwelcome and I shall endeavour that this public telephone kiosk at the Piazza shall be given as much priority as we can.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if we think of the main category of users being workers living on their own who are not allowed to have their families in Gibraltar, would he not agree that there is a need to give those people an opportunity to phone their families in cases of need? That is a clear case where people living on their own in Gibraltar may want to contact their family and they should have the means of doing so, would he not agree?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I agree that the Hon Mr Bossano is quite right. Unfortunately, these are the people who have the least number of telephones. Fortunately they are in a minority but I can assure the Hon Member that I shall endeavour to do my best to make sure that this minority is catered for in the way which I mentioned before.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is he saying that people are still going to be re-directed to Waterport or is he saying that he is going to look at the possibility of improving on that? What is going to happen between now and the time that the public booth is available, this is what I would like to know?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, first of all I shall look into the whole matter because the Hon Mr Bossano has brought it up. If I am unable to do anything about the City Hall then I shall make sure that people are redirected to Waterport and I shall make sure that a suitable notice is put outside the City Hall so that people can go to Waterport and this I can do. The other thing I can do is to make sure that as soon as we obtain planning permission the proposed telephone kiosk will be erected in the Piazza.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I suggest that the Police be asked to cooperate and that people be able to place calls from Waterport Station and Central Police Station?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

When the question of the security of the building was considered and the question of having service until midnight, in fact, the service is not until 8 pm the service is until 10 pm, the point is that they don't take any calls after 9 pm so that by closing time those that are pending have finished. At the time the matter was taken up with the then Commissioner of Police and they thought that the operational part of the Police Station would not be able to take it and that is why an arrangement was made that they would take reasonably essential calls from Waterport Police Station. They must take charge of the cash and the Police are reluctant to deal with too many calls except in circumstances that are fully justified.

11.3.81

NO. 37 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, in view of the fact that power cuts have occurred since December notwithstanding the installation of the skid generators and the assurances given by the Minister will the Chief Minister reconsider and recommend to the Governor a public commission of inquiry along the lines proposed in the motion of the Hon Gerald Restano in November 1980 in view of the great public concern at the obvious inability of the Government to ensure a continuous supply of power to the people of Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir. The reasons I gave in November for the Government's decision to appoint a Committee of Inquiry into the Electricity Department, rather than a Commission of Inquiry, remain valid today.

The House will wish to know that, pending the appointment of a Chairman of the Committee, which is being pursued, the question of the appointment of other members as specialist advisers has been raised preliminarily with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and will be finalised when the Chairman has been appointed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 37 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, I don't want to flog a dead horse too much but will the Chief Minister not agree that the fact that the skid generators were mounted and we were told there would be no more power cuts if everything went normally, the fact that we were told that No 11 engine would be in commission by the middle of January and we are still waiting for it, the fact that we were told that faults on No 13 could be covered and it is shown that it has not been covered, does not the Chief Minister agree that the Opposition and, indeed, the people of Gibraltar, have a serious grievance on the question of power supply and that their grievances can only be vindicated by a proper Commission of Inquiry that is seen to be appointed with wide terms of reference and seen to be entirely independent?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Sir, the preliminary statement of the Questioner is one-sided and not accepted but I will not traverse the whole of it because we would be here all day and we have had that in previous questions so I dispute all the statements made in the preliminary remarks of the Question. I should remind Members that this was fully discussed in the motion in November last year and the motion passed in November was to the effect that the Committee of Inquiry into

the Electricity Department would be set up as soon as the inquiry into the Public Works Department had been completed. The Report of the Public Works Department Inquiry was submitted to the Government on 4 March and efforts to find a Chairman for the Electricity Department Inquiry were instituted in January of this year. Suggestions have been put to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office about the other members and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will be asked to go ahead as soon as the Chairman has been appointed and these suggestions can be cleared with him. It is not easy, Sir, to find a Chairman for this type of inquiry, it is necessary to find a person who is not publicly associated with any political party but who has knowledge of public affairs and Government Departments, who is of the right calibre and who has the necessary time. I think we may be getting nearer, we did get almost near to one but unfortunately it did not materialise and I will be having the appointment made as soon as possible. We do not think, for all the reasons that we have fully debated in the House, that it is in the best interest of Gibraltar to have the inquiry that was then proposed and was not passed but of the forward looking and of course in-depth inquiries into the whole situation which we hope we can do as soon as we have a Chairman.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, will the Chief Minister not agree that the facts or the history of events since the statement or since the motion in November, 1980, and since all the assurances that have been given in this House and the statements that have been made both publicly, as far as the Government is concerned and in this House, since that date, would he not agree that that would justify rather wider terms of reference for his Committee of Inquiry than the ones proposed at that time?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Sir, the question of the terms of inquiry will be looked into before the appointment of the Chairman and reviewed in the light of anything that has happened since then, otherwise the answer is no, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

How does Government arrive at maintenance allowances for sponsored patients and their relatives who have to stay in hired accommodation in the United Kingdom?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, the maintenance allowance for sponsored patients and their escorting relatives who have to stay in hired accommodation in UK is assessed according to their income, subject to a maximum figure per week. Although capital assets are disregarded, any income derived from such assets is taken into account.

Since April, 1980, the maximum allowance has been £63 per week, and it was intended to increase this to £80.50 as from April, 1981. However, increases in the cost of board and lodging in UK were causing undue hardship in some cases, and this prompted Government to agree to this higher maximum being brought forward to the beginning of February, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 38 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister consider that £80.50 per week is a realistic figure for somebody who is staying in hired accommodation in, say, London?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, it is realistic based on the costs that we have now.

HON G T RESTANO:

How does the Minister consider that a person can live on £80.50 a week in hired accommodation and over and above that have to pay for his food and transport and so on?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

The cost of public transport between the hotel and the hospital in the United Kingdom is paid by Government in most cases.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would not the Minister agree that £80.50 is not a realistic figure for somebody who is staying in London? I think most of us have been to London and I am not talking about five-star hotels, even small hotels, £80.50 for a week does not seem to be able to cover costs. Would the Minister reconsider the £80.50 and make proposals for increasing that figure?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

At this stage I am not making any proposals for increasing this figure. I am satisfied that in most cases it is adequate. If undue hardships is caused the Department of Labour and Social Security approaches private charities who do help out but I am satisfied that it is adequate.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am sorry to hear that, Mr Speaker. The other aspect I would like to go into on this one is that this, of course, is the maximum amount. Without obviously going into details of individuals, what would a person who has been assessed, shall we say, £25 per week; what sort of income would he require . . .

MR SPEAKER:

No, the system is there and I do not think that is the sort of information that can be given in this House.

HON G T RESTANO:

I think he said, Mr Speaker, in his reply that there is a means test.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, it is quite elaborate, if the Hon Member is really interested he can come to my office some time and I will give him the details.

HON G T RESTANO:

Alright.

NO. 39 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, will the new Minister for Labour and Social Security make a statement to the House on his policy of the obvious inequality that exists as far as Income Tax is concerned between those persons in receipt of Elderly Persons Pensions and those persons that are in receipt of a Social Insurance Pension or a Retirement Pension - all State Pensions?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

I would remind the Hon Questioner that the Old Age Pension is a contributory pension, and the Transitional Retirement Pension is payable to a small and gradually decreasing number of persons who had a satisfactory employment record and who were in the social insurance scheme at its inception but who, because of their age, were unable to contribute enough to qualify for an Old Age Pension. The Elderly Persons Pension on the other hand, is entirely non-contributory and payable regardless of whether the claimant has been in employment or not.

The policy of the Government in this respect has been explained by my predecessor at great length in the House. I would also remind the Questioner of the reply given by the Hon the Financial and Development Secretary to Question No 2 of 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 39 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister not accept that the three pensions that have been put in this question are all State Pensions and does he not accept that the Social Insurance Pension and Retirement Pension are received tax free whilst the other State Pension, the Elderly Person Pension, which happens to be the smallest of the three, is fully taxable? Does he consider that to be equitable and are we to have the same unenlightened approach to the whole question of pensions from the Minister as from his predecessor?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, we are making statements. Let us start asking questions.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I have an answer?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, it appears that the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition has been such a long time away from Government that he doesn't know how Government works. It doesn't work on the whims of any particular Minister. What we are doing here is a consensus of Government as to how we should do it. I would indicate that in an answer to a previous question it was more or less intimated that the whole thing would be looked at globally in the context of the budget and taxation.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister then inform the House whether he is proposing any changes to Government, to his colleagues, more enlightened changes than we have had to date on this issue?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the position then that the Minister considers it fair that of the three State Pensions two should be received by the recipient tax free and the other one should have the full weight of the Income Tax legislation, does he consider that fair?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, it is not a question of whether I consider it fair or not. I have just said that I am not prepared to give my advice on this, I cannot take it out of context of the whole budget.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Minister telling the House that this matter is being reconsidered by the Government in connection with the budget? Can he give some ray of hope to those who suffer the inequity of the present system?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I would refer the Hon and Learned Member to Question No 2 of 1980.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 40 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, does the new Minister for Labour and Social Security propose to put right what his predecessor refused to do ie to put right the position of a number of elderly person who were never able to get into the Social Insurance Scheme for reasons entirely outside their control?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, I do not accept the inference, from the wording of the question, that there is necessarily anything to be put right.

Having said that, I should also point out that whatever this administration may or may not have done in this matter in the past, has been a decision of Government as a whole and not of my predecessor as Minister for Labour and Social Security or of any other individual Minister.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 40 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I don't think my question has really been answered.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, in my opinion it has been answered quite clearly.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer has been that he does not consider that there is anything wrong and therefore he has nothing to put right.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister not agree that at the time of the introduction a number of elderly persons were able to buy their way into the scheme and benefit from it immediately and others were excluded for a question of weeks and never had the opportunity, does he consider that a fair and equitable manner of dealing with senior citizens?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, this question has been dealt with by my predecessor for such a long time, it has been a question of debate after debate, it is not a question of it being a whim of my predecessor it is a consensus of the Government that this is as far as we can go and we are not changing it and when the Hon Mr Scott comes into power I will press him to do it and let us see what he does to our Insurance Scheme.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, we are well aware of the question of consensus of the Government but doesn't the Minister consider it his duty as a Minister to initiate policy in his Department and what he is being asked is whether he is prepared to initiate policy to put right the position of a number, and now I think it must be a rapidly decreasing number of persons, who at one stage were not in a position of being Government servants and therefore could not be financed by the Government as those were and people who missed it by a few weeks?

MR SPEAKER:

The answer has been no.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am asking the Minister whether he as a Minister is prepared to initiate this.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I will not initiate anything where there is a consensus of the Government.

NO. 41 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, does Government consider that there is sufficient staff at the Family Care Unit to cater for the needs of the Community?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Government does not consider that the staff of the Family Care Unit of the Department of Labour and Social Security is sufficient to meet all its essential commitments towards the community, and it is for this reason that on the 26 February approval was given to recruit two Trainee Social Workers - one to replace the Welfare Assistant who has also only very recently resigned, the other one as an addition to the establishment.

Preliminary steps are now being taken to recruit suitable persons with a view to their going to UK for training in due course. The position should therefore show some slight improvement in the near future, albeit the full effect of this minimal increase in staff may not become apparent for some time, until both recruits have returned from training.

The position will be kept under constant review and if further strengthening of the staff is necessary this will be done.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 41 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Was this the result of the recommendations after the staff inspection?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister try and bring in temporary staff to do away with the overload in the Family Care Unit?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, we are talking here of professional people, we are not talking of temporary staff such as charwomen.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, if you need expert staff you can hire them temporarily. Haven't we had doctors brought out on a temporary basis or on a consultancy basis?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister totally oblivious to the needs of the Family Care Unit as regards the number of outstanding housing problems?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I am completely aware of the situation and this is why we are doing something about it already.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the staffing problem has resulted in a large number of people who claim to have social problems and have accordingly gone to the Family Care Unit and they have not been attended and they cannot be attended.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

As I said, Sir, we have increased the staff and this should alleviate the position and I also said that we will keep this under constant review.

HON A J HAYNES:

But the Minister seems to be aware that his temporary measures will not in any way alleviate the present problem, it will not substantially affect the backlog of unreported social problems. What will he do to ensure that these social problems are immediately dealt with?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, it is up to me to judge when a situation requires immediate action and I will do it as soon as possible. I am not going to go into a debate right now on the aspects of my Welfare Section, I have said that we have taken some steps and it is going to be under constant review.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister not consider that a person who claims to be suffering a social problem and wants to be classified as a social case, isn't that a matter of priority?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes, there are so many priorities every day but we have to keep a constant review on the question of the number of welfare officers, there is also the problem of accommodation once we make the Welfare Unit bigger, of further finances, cost of training staff. It is no use employing people unless you can provide accommodation, you can provide the proper training, the proper supervision etc, etc. I have told the Hon and Learned Member that I will have it in constant review but I am not prepared at this stage to change anything that I have said.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is this a matter of priority for this Minister or not? Is the problem of a person who comes and says: "My life is in a desperate mess, my children are extremely sick, my marriage is on the rocks" is that a matter of priority for this Minister or not?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Of course it is and they are dealt with as expeditiously as they can be.

HON A J HAYNES:

And is it also not a fact that the nature of these problems requires immediate attention?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

My Welfare Officers are very expert and they can judge which are the more immediate problems.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I think there is misinformation here. As I understand it it is first come first served, the report will not be accelerated in favour of any particular case.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member is just referring to housing which is just one aspect of the many welfare problems that we have.

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to solve the problem at question time.

HON A J HAYNES:

I would like some information as to the Minister's policy.

MR SPEAKER:

Not under the question as to whether the Family Care Unit is properly staffed.

NO. 42 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state if the Gibraltar Official Employers Apprentices Board has met this year and if so what progress has been made with regard to the amended motion passed at the November 1980, meeting of this House dealing with Industrial Training?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the Gibraltar Official Employers Apprentice Board has met once so far this year - on 29 January - when a preliminary discussion took place on the amended motion passed by this House on 11 November 1980.

I would remind the House that this motion only dealt with school leavers who qualify for an apprenticeship with the Official Employers, but are not offered one only because of insufficient vacancies.

As came out in the course of the debate on the motion, the matter raises quite a number of difficulties and it seems unlikely that either the United Kingdom or Gibraltar Government employing departments will be able to be of much assistance, as the number of apprentices or trainees that they can take on is limited by financial considerations, by the fact that there must be sufficient suitable craftsmen available to undertake the training, and by the need to maintain a balanced workforce in keeping with their expected commitments.

The intention at present, therefore, is to offer one-year very basic training in the construction trades generally at the Construction Industry Training Centre provided that the youngster in question has not refused an offer of apprenticeship in a trade for which there may have been an unfilled vacancy, and on the understanding that there is no commitment to employ him in any capacity subsequently. The matter will have to be kept under review in the light of numbers affected and on the demands which they may make on the resources of the Training Centre at Landport.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 42 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

I am grateful, Mr Speaker, for that reply but will the present Minister for Labour assure this House that he will be continuing the policy of his predecessor by making the target which was mentioned on September, 1981, by adhering to it as a start of this scheme?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I will monitor this scheme personally to see how it works.

11.3.81

NO. 43 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government give a breakdown of unemployment figures in the different categories as at 31st January, 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

With your permission, Mr Speaker, I propose to answer this question together with Question No. 45.

11.3.81

NO. 44 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government state what figures it has available, as at 31st January, 1981, for job vacancies?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the number of vacancies notified by employers, which remained unfilled on 31st January, 1981, was 16.

NO. 45 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government give the end of the month unemployment figures for the months of January and February giving a breakdown by sex, trade and nationality and the comparable figures for last year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The end-of-month figures of persons registered as unemployed in January and February of 1980 and 1981 are shown in the table which I am circulating and which also concerns Question No 43.

As will be seen, the tables are broken down as requested, and their preparation has been rather time-consuming. I would ask the Hon Mr Bossano and the Hon Mr Scott (and I am referring to his previous Question, No 43 of 1981) to get in touch with me at their convenience and let me know the sort of figures that they would like to receive on a monthly basis. I am sure this could be arranged without too much trouble, especially if they do not need the information broken down almost by individuals, as in the table which I am circulating on this occasion and which is time-consuming.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 43 AND 45 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

I am grateful for that reply particularly when it deals with monthly information being passed on to Members on this side of the House and in fact it would place us in a better position not to wait 2 or 3 months and get 2 or 3 months figures but if I might perhaps come back after we have had a few minutes to look at it, Mr Speaker, I would be grateful. The form was changed somewhat in the reply to previous questions on this subject that I have had, the format has changed considerably.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, am I right in assuming that the classification by trade is, in fact, taken to be the last employment in which the person unemployed was engaged?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

That is so.

HON J BOSSANO:

As regards, Mr Speaker, the non-EEC nationals, are people who are unemployed in any way limited to being offered employment in the category in which they were last or are they free to take up employment in any field?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

As far as I can gather the policy is for the category for which they were first employed especially if they were a tradesman is to find them work in their appropriate trade.

HON J BOSSANO:

I accept that it is preferable to find them work in their appropriate trade but are they in fact limited to the trade in which they were employed previously or they are free to take up other employment if it becomes available?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

They are limited, in fact, because you might have a labourer who has been unemployed a longer time and a tradesman coming along and because he has been a tradesman he is employed as a labourer before the labourer, in fact.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is it limited to trade or is there a similar limitation by industry For example, if somebody is employed as a labourer, say, in the quota for the hotel trade, is he free to obtain employment as a labourer in the public sector or in another industry?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

A labourer is a labourer no matter in which industry he is.

11.3.81

NO. 46 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government give the number of work permits issued to new entrants in the months of January and February giving a breakdown by sex, trade and nationality and the comparable figures for last year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, four employment permits in respect of new entrants to Gibraltar were given in January, 1981, and 6 in February, 1981. The corresponding figures for 1980 were 25 in January and 27 in February.

A breakdown of these figures is given in the table which I am circulating.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 46 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister confirm that the policy is being maintained of not giving permits to new entrants for as long as there are suitably qualified unemployed people in the same categories?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

That is the policy of the Department and it is adhered to as much as possible.

11.3.81

NO. 47 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government make representations to the Moroccan Government to ensure that Moroccan subjects working in Gibraltar do not suffer long delays in Morocco waiting for a renewal of their passports?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the delay experienced by Moroccan subjects working in Gibraltar in having their passports renewed by the Moroccan Authorities was raised with a representative of the Moroccan Ministry of Labour last year.

It appeared that the length of the delay depended on such factors as the province in which a particular worker lived and the extent to which he had been able to obtain the required personal documentation beforehand (eg birth certificate etc). It was stated that workers living in the Tangier province were already issued with a temporary travel document for the period during which the new passport was being prepared and the possibility would be explored of extending this facility to workers from the other provinces.

The Government are not aware of any current cases of undue delay. If the Hon Questioner has any particular case in mind he should bring this to the attention of the Director of Labour and Social Security and the matter will be taken up again with the Moroccan Authorities.

11.3.81

NO. 48 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government make a statement regarding the position at present of the transfer of the Technical College?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, early in February Government made a statement concerning the present position with regard to the transfer of the Technical College. An indication was given at the time that Government had made firm proposals to MOD (Navy) for the transfer of the buildings (excluding the Medical/Dental Centre) and the land on which the buildings stand together with a proposal for meeting the running expenses of the new College of Further Education. These proposals have already been transmitted to the Ministry of Defence in London and a reply is still awaited.

NO. 49 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, can Government confirm that it has brought to the notice of the Ministry of Defence the contents of Question No 277 of 1980 with regard to Lower St Michael's Cave?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, yes, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 49 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, can the Minister give any more information on the subject or not?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, there appears to have been some misunderstanding as regards Question 277 of 1980 about which the Hon Member was asking as to the opening up of that particular part of the cave. We are not entirely sure if the Hon Member means Lower St Michael's Cave which comes under the MOD or if the Hon Member means new St Michael's Cave.

MR SPEAKER:

The question is directed to Lower St Michael's Cave.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, but I think the Hon Member may not mean that one, Mr Speaker, because Lower St Michael's Cave is not subject to vandalism because it is under the control of MOD and guided tours are taken down there by Official FHQ guides. The Hon Member may be referring to another Cave which is known as new St Michael's Cave which is part of St Michael's Cave, that is to say, our St Michael's Cave, where there seems to have been some vandalism and if that is the one he refers to I would really like to have more clarification on this.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I spoke to the Director of Tourism on the subject not so long ago and it concerns both Caves. I was not aware that New St Michael's Cave was termed as such I thought I had made myself clear, at least I thought I had, to continue using the name Lower St Michael's Cave but making sure the reference to the question was there. What information can the Minister give me on either of the Caves?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the information I can give is that about 5,000 people go down Lower St Michael's Cave every year on guided tours organised by FHQ, not by the Gibraltar Tourist Office, that is Lower St Michael's Cave as I know Lower St Michael's Cave. A letter was sent to FHQ on 23 January this year and the reply that came back was that in fact they were not very clear as to which one we meant. I am aware that the Hon Member did have a chat with the Director of Tourism on this but we still don't know because there is no vandalism caused at Lower St Michael's Cave but vandalism has taken place on what is known as New St Michael's Cave which is a portion of our St Michael's Cave which people can go down by means of a rope.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am referring to Lower St Michael's Cave and the allegations of vandalism are made from my own knowledge and in fact it is fair to say that there is hardly a stalactite or stalagmite of a small dimension at hand intact, they are nearly all broken, and on my own visits over the years I have noticed deterioration and when I talk of vandalism as I say I talk from my own knowledge and it includes some very large stalactites.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I take the point. In fact, the letter from FHQ does make reference to this and to avoid vandalism a certain amount of bits of stalagmites and stalactites were piled up at the entrance for the hunters to take away to try and avoid vandalism to the stalactites or stalagmites.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, there are other ways of preventing vandalism other than by giving them the broken pieces, surely?

MR. SPEAKER:

Your question was whether it had been brought to the notice of the Ministry of Defence and you are quite entitled to ask whether further assurances will be sought.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I take your point, Fortress Headquarters have been informed. As I understand it you were in some quandary as to which Cave I am referring to. I will make it clear that it is Lower St Michael's. I accept that New St Michael's is also in trouble but I would like reference to be made to both and could the Minister pursue the matter with FHQ?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I can assure the Hon Member and, indeed, the House, that people are allowed access to Lower St Michael's Cave by organised tours. There is an element of danger involved and it is only when escorted by FHQ qualified guides that a party of people are allowed to go down there but as far as I know no one is refused to go down there if they go as a conducted tour.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, it is not just FHQ guides who can take you, there are also Navy guides, RAF guides and Gibraltar Regiment guides, there are four types of guides. Could the Minister liaise further on the subject with Fortress Headquarters to find out if they have any better solution for protecting these Caves and will the Minister make a report at a later stage?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I can certainly go back to FHQ but according to our information there is no damage caused at Lower St Michael's Cave because as they are conducted tours obviously a guide is with people there whom certainly wouldn't allow the chipping off of stalactites or stalagmites.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister saying that there is no vandalism in Lower St Michael's Cave?

MR SPEAKER:

I am not going to allow that because we are not discussing whether there is or whether there is not, what we are discussing is whether the Minister brought to the attention of the Ministry of Defence the matters raised in the last question but we are not going to argue whether there is or there is not vandalism.

HON G T RESTANO:

The Minister has just said, Mr Speaker, that there is no vandalism because there are conducted tours.

MR SPEAKER:

That is the information he has been given.

HON G T RESTANO:

Question No 277 of 1980 was put precisely because the Hon Member on my right thought that there was vandalism and he wanted to prevent a heritage from being destroyed.

MR SPEAKER:

As a result of what the Hon Member has said here now the Minister has given an assurance that he will go back to the military authorities.

HON G T RESTANO:

I just wanted to confirm whether he has been saying that there has been no vandalism in Lower St Michael's Cave which I think I have just heard him say.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, yes, I am guiding myself by a letter sent to me by Lt-Col Campbell-Lammerton on behalf of the Brigadier who says: "All visits are supervised and so far the guides have not reported any vandalism. In addition to the guides Major Pass visits the Cave three times a month and he has found no evidence of any vandalism". I am afraid I have never been to Lower St Michael's Cave, Mr Speaker.

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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Funds earmarked are as follows:

1. Main Consumer media, production support and sundry advertising	91,700
2. Coupon Response	3,000
3. Brochures, posters, leaflets, placements, cruises	32,000
4. Trade and sales promotions	12,400
5. PR visits (journalists) and expenses	3,200
6. Updating audio visuals	4,800
7. Agency fee	2,900
	<u>150,000</u>

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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, it is not possible, at this stage, to estimate how much in cash terms will be paid in commission to Bermans Exhibitions Ltd on the sales of souvenirs connected with the Exhibitions as these are in the process of production.

This commission will be paid to Bermans Exhibitions Ltd for as long as the exhibition is in being.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 51 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I wonder if the Minister could explain what is meant by "for as long as the exhibition is in being".

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, so long as the figures are there. If the figures are removed or we decide not to have an exhibition then, of course, the commission would cease to go to Bermans on the sale of souvenirs.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does the Minister mean that he has given a sort of undertaking in perpetuity that we shall have to pay this 5% commission for as long as this exhibition is on?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

In perpetuity is a word I very much try to avoid using but as long as the exhibition is there, yes.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does the Minister feel that it is fair to tie up the hands of Government in this respect for so long when perhaps they would like to change the whole mode of doing business in this respect?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the question is that this was a venture that we didn't know how well we would do out of it. I think in a subsequent question the Hon Member may be quite impressed at what has occurred as a result of the Bermans exhibition. I think it is fair, quite honestly, that somebody who has invested money in the exhibition should have some return for their investment.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will 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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Sir, Bermans Exhibitions will provide, free of charge, the services of their staff (one person for models and one for costume supervision) for a once yearly visit to carry out inspection and adjustments where necessary.

The Government will pay their fares and expenses in Gibraltar, as well as any replacements of items damaged or stolen.

All the items in the exhibition are fully covered by insurance against such eventualities.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 52 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does the Minister not feel that in view that they are really making money in other respects on the exhibition, this maintenance should be carried out of their own expense entirely?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Is the Hon Member saying that now because I have informed him that we are doing well out of it, Mr Speaker? It was a completely new idea and one didn't know how well this would turn out to be and therefore when one draws up an agreement or contract they must be give and take on both sides if good faith is to be shown.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Doesn't the Minister feel there is a lot of give and very little take?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think the Hon Member will find that there is more take than we are giving, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 53 OF 1981

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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir. The Gibraltar Government Tourist Office in London was established to promote tourism in Gibraltar. This important job, I am glad to say, is doing well. It is not in my view necessary to add a political dimension to its functions. Any need for good political public relations in the United Kingdom is full covered, mainly by the Leader of the Opposition and myself, primarily through our close contacts with Foreign Office Ministers and officials and Members of Parliament, I consider that Gibraltar's political standing in Britain has never been higher than it is today. I believe also that there exists great goodwill towards Gibraltar in Parliament, in the Government and in the United Kingdom press and that this goodwill is reflected in the country at large.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 53 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does the Chief Minister think that there is no need for a constant effort in view of the present circumstances of Gibraltar to have somebody on the spot all the time to guide the press, something which we lack very considerably in the United Kingdom?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Giving that dimension to the Tourist Office would mean putting civil servants in charge of what is a highly political and delicate situation which would best be in the hands of people who are at the head of things in Gibraltar.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Surely, Mr Speaker, doesn't the Chief Minister believe that it is possible to find a man who is competent? Does the Chief Minister believe that we haven't got in our civil service a man who is competent enough to carry out those duties, of course, under the directions of the Government of Gibraltar?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I don't think the Hon Member is logical or in fact makes any sense in what he says because I didn't say that we couldn't find anybody. What I said was that it would necessarily be in the hands of civil servants and I made no aspersions but I have just made the contrast between that and the need for political approach. If the Hon Member is trying to look for a niche for himself in London I can tell him that whilst this Government is in office he will not find it.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I can look after myself without the Chief Minister having to give me a hand, I can assure him of that, but what I am trying to do, Mr Speaker, is look after Gibraltar which I, because I am there, can sense the need for this and what I am suggesting is that a good public relations man politically oriented is the person that we need. Does the Chief Minister believe that this is possible?

MR SPEAKER:

Order. We are making statements.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

All I am asking the Chief Minister, Mr Speaker, is whether he believes that it is possible to find a man who is well versed in public relations and can somehow project the image of Gibraltar in the United Kingdom, isn't that possible?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I didn't say one couldn't find one if you looked for one but we are not looking for one. I think that that is not the mission of the Tourist Office.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Perhaps, Mr Speaker, the Chief Minister doesn't want to do it or is not allowed to do it, I don't know.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I have given that reply on my own and I don't need any directives. I don't know whether he receives any directives, I receive none.

NO. 54 OF 1981

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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Based on current numbers of visitors to the Exhibitions, it is estimated that the following sums will be payable to Bermans Exhibitions Ltd:

35%	of the additional charges for the first year	£14,880
30%	" " " " " " second year	£12,750
20%	" " " " " " third year	£ 8,500
15%	" " " " " " fourth year	£ 6,380

Then after that, Mr Speaker, we keep all the money.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 54 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

And the Minister is happy that the deal we have done in this respect is economical from the point of view of the Government?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I can assure the Hon Member that between now and the fifth year Government would have made £307,000.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can the acting Minister for Tourism state what is the position with regard to the Tourist Advisory Board?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

I chaired a preliminary meeting on Friday 5 December, 1980, at the Tourist Office with the present members of the Gibraltar Travel Association. Representatives from the Gibraltar Trades Council and the Licensed Victuallers Association were also invited to attend. The draft terms of reference of the Board were tabled and those present were asked to consider them. Further meetings were held with representatives of the Gibraltar Travel Association and suggested amendments to the terms of reference are being considered.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 55 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Can the Minister state when he expects the Advisory Board finally to be a working concern?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

As a working concern I would not dare say, Mr Speaker, I can say that good will has been shown on both sides to try and come to an agreement on the draft terms of reference and I hope that within the next 3 or 4 weeks we will be able to draw up the terms of reference.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am very pleased, Mr Speaker, to hear that.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, what is the difference of opinion on the terms of reference? What are the areas?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The Tourist Board is, as far as we understand, an Advisory Board and the terms of reference which we submitted on being considered by the Association of members present they came back with terms of reference which were far beyond Government's possibilities of accepting, that is to say, they wanted to formulate policy and not only policy but expenditure and the control of staff and of course that cannot be because it is not a Board of management, it is purely an Advisory Board.

HON G T RESTANO:

How did the terms of reference differ, Mr Speaker, from the terms of reference of the original Travel Association?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

There is much more involvement, Mr Speaker. In the Travel Association there was very little that they had in the sense of recommending or making recommendations to the Minister. Under the new Committee one would expect to have consultations in anticipation to commitments.

HON G T RESTANO:

What, in fact, were the proposals which the Minister made, shall we say, on the expenditure side and what was the

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to go into that.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, it seems to me, from the answer that the Minister has given, that there has been a divergence.

MR SPEAKER:

The question asked: "Can the acting Minister for Tourism state what is the position with regard to the Tourist Advisory Board". He has given the position and we are not going to discuss, under this question, the actual matters dealt with by the Committee.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would it not seem, Mr Speaker, that these areas, for example, expenditure, are the areas which are holding up full agreement between the two parties?

MR SPEAKER:

It might well be so.

HON G T RESTANO:

What I would like to know is what exactly those divergences are.

MR SPEAKER:

It is one thing to be told that there are divergences and the areas where there are divergences, it is another thing to ask the particular expenditure and the particular details of the divergence.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am not talking about actual expenditure, Mr Speaker, I am talking about the broad principles. The Minister said that one of the areas of disagreement was on expenditure, in broad terms, and I would ask him to expand on this.

MR SPEAKER:

And that is what I am not allowing.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would he not agree that we have a right to know on this side of the House?

MR SPEAKER:

You may have a right to know but you must ask the question in such a way that you are entitled to the information you seek. Under the guise of a supplementary under this question you cannot do it.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask, is there any expenditure that the Minister would not give the Committee any power to control?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the Committee cannot have control of any amount of money, that is a matter for this House to control and the Council of Ministers but they can certainly be consulted and they can advise and recommend as to how they feel money ought to be spent or even what amount of money ought to be spent but the ultimate decision of the policy of Government falls upon Council of Ministers and this House.

HON G T RESTANO:

I take that point, Mr Speaker, and therefore I would have thought that the Advisory Board would have accepted that point of view. Have they not accepted that point of view?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I thought I had made that clear, Mr Speaker. The question is that their terms of reference were far too wide and our terms of reference were too narrow and it is within that middle balance that we are trying to find agreement, hopefully, within the next couple of weeks. I think that progress is being made and I hope it will not be too long before we are able to agree to the terms of reference.

NO. 56 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state judging by Hotel occupancy so far how the Tourist trade is doing this winter?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and
Postal Services)

The statistics available from Hotels for November and December, 1980, indicate a drop of 18% for November and 4% for December in all arrivals in hotels and 24% and 2% respectively in guest nights sold.

Visitor arrivals from all sources for November and December, 1980, were 14,305 compared to 16,711 for a similar period in 1979, a drop of 14%.

Generally our estimate is that winter will be down by about 30% on 1979.

These decreases are not peculiar to Gibraltar and so far as we know similar recession is being experienced in other resort destinations.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 56 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Since it appears that this was more or less foreseen, did the Government take any action to try and if possible stop the fall that we have experienced?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I don't think this Government can stop what has happened in the United Kingdom. The Hon Member is well aware of the recession in England. I can assure the Hon Member that I have found on this particular last trip that I went that there are a number of instances which one can attribute, one is late bookings.

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to go into detail.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I can assure the Hon Member that we have taken a lot of steps, Mr Speaker, to try and contain the situation.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

What steps were in fact taken? It does not matter who or what is responsible, it might be the weather, whatever it might be, what steps have been taken or were taken to try, if possible, to cushion the effect?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

We brought our advertising forward to September to try and hasten up particularly for this middle part of the winter. As the Hon Member knows I have personally attended two trade promotions to try and instil interest to Gibraltar and two days after I returned to Gibraltar the Tourist Office Manager went to South Wales and to Chester on a tourist promotion visit. We certainly have put a lot of beef into going around, visiting Travel Agents, and our Field Sales Officer is on the constant move all round England to try and promote Gibraltar.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, the question is what was done before this happened, not now, when we all know what has happened. I understand that the hoteliers and people concerned in the trade could see this coming and as far as I know they were warning the Government time and again. What actual steps were taken to try and improve the situation? Was more money spent on advertising? Was this House asked for supplementary funds for more advertising? Was anything done?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I can tell the Hon Member that in September last year I was in London and I was strongly advised that no matter what amount of advertising we put in the recession was such and the competition was such that, if anything, we would only be losing taxpayers money and the end product would not be to our benefit.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Minister is saying therefore that really it is because of the advice he got in London that he didn't do anything at all about it?

MR SPEAKER:

No, next question.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am asking.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, next question.

NO. 57 OF 1981

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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and
Postal Services)

As compared to 1980 the forward bookings for next summer are on average down by 28%.

However, advance enquiries from the main Tour Operators in Gibraltar are higher than usual and are confident that the situation will improve later on and that summer 1981 will be better than summer 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 57 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is this because he expects a change of Government in England, perhaps?

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask on this drop of 28%? Can the Minister attribute this drop of 28% which must obviously be worrying for the Minister to any given factors?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, a very simple one, Mr Speaker. Invariably, people have to deposit say £100 in the month of January to come out in the month of July and at the rate of interest today people are not paying the deposit and are becoming what is known in the trade as late bookings and one finds that people invest their money and the £300 or £400 which they have allocated to holidays is, of course, to their benefit. We are having much more response from people who make their minds up and book a week ahead and not six months ahead as was previously the case.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister consider that the very attractive rates given for tourists for holidays in America has a great bearing not only on tourists to Gibraltar but tourists to the rest of Europe? Would he agree that these attractive rates to America have a considerable bearing on the drop in bookings for Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I don't only say that it is the attractive rates offered by America or the Far or the Middle East, the strength of the pound is also an important factor.

MR SPEAKER:

We are asking a question which is not relevant, that is a supposition but, anyway, if you can answer it concisely I will allow it but let us not discuss the whole matter now.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I think it is common knowledge, Sir, that the strength of the pound, as you know, has lowered the price of certain European countries by some 30%.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can I put it another way, Mr Speaker. Are not the air fares to America in comparison to the length of travel to Gibraltar considerably lower and does the Minister not consider that this is a very great contributory factor to the loss in trade?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I couldn't argue to the contrary. You have charter flights and Mr Laker can fly you to America for £70. The day we can find somebody who can operate a plane to Gibraltar for £50, well, God bless him.

HON G T RESTANO:

It is not a question of when we can find, has Government done anything to try to find somebody?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, next question. We are not going to discuss every single item under the guise of one particular question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government state why no charges are made by the Post Office for carrying out services for other Government Departments?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, this service can best be described as an allied service not chargeable to departmental expenditure. This is a service rendered by one Government Department to another.

The Government system of accounts does not provide for precise costings and inter-departmental charges except for public utilities. Any move to cost all services provided by one department for another would lead to additional staff requirements and work and slow down the pace of Government business. There are no strong arguments in support of the suggestion that the Post Office rather than any other department should charge inter-departmentally for its services.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 58 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

In terms of cash, can the Financial and Development Secretary give an indication what the costs involved are?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I am sorry, Sir, I cannot because this would need a survey over a period of several months to see how much departmental mail went out through the Post Office. Of course, post going overseas is stamped, it is only that within Gibraltar which goes through free.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I was thinking of other things, Mr Speaker, such as perhaps the actual selling of Social Insurance Stamps at the Post Office.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government pays a social insurance contribution.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the Questioner is suggesting that the Post Office should charge to the public for the service rendered to the Labour and Social Insurance Department for the sale of stamps.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, perhaps I am a little confused but I seem to have got lost. The question relates to the Post Office carrying out a service for other departments and we seem to have switched foot slightly and moved over to services to the public and the point I would have thought is that this is a public service and so far as I know in no country when you buy a 2½p stamp do they charge you 3p, ½p being for the services of supplying, it all comes within the cost of the service.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, what I am saying is that certain services are rendered at the Post Office counter which are not directly concerned with the Post Office itself. For instance, let us suppose that it requires one extra clerk just to sell the social security stamps, doesn't the Financial and Development Secretary accept that that is a cost that is borne by the Post Office which is a service which is not directly concerned with the Post Office and that it is really a service which is being given to another department of Government?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I thank the Hon Member for the explanation, I am now with him. Yes, I agree that this is a cost which is for a service being provided for another department but the point is that inter-departmentally very often it is not worth charging because of the cost in accounting that would arise to assess these costs and I think that with the Post Office we are at that stage. The Treasury does from time to time look at services which are provided from one department to another. For example, recently we have been looking at printing and stationery where costs are met from the Secretariat vote for a certain department, as to whether we could charge or allocate these and we have decided that with the amount of work involved it is not worth it, the administrative cost is too high against the advantage which is, of course, that if you are using an allied service you are rather more profligate with that than you would be if you are being charged for it and it is a nice balance and we have got to keep an eye on it which we do.

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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and
Postal Services)

Sir, the need to rent transport owing to breakdowns in the Departmental Fleet, arose on the following occasions:-

June 1st - 6th, 1980

July 10th - 31st, 1980

August and September, 1980

December 26th, 1980 - January 9th, 1981

The total cost of hire amounted to £1,093.80.

In normal circumstances the need to hire transport should not arise again as the vehicles provided for in the Estimates 1980/81 were delivered on 20th January and 3rd February, 1981.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government state why it has not purchased a small generator for use in the Post Office during power cuts?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

The purchase of a suitable generator for use in the Post Office during power cuts was considered. The project, which necessarily would have had to include certain works on the electrical installation, to enable the switch-over to take place, was not proceeded with in view of the improvement of the situation generally.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 60 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

In view, Mr Speaker, of the last few power cuts that Gibraltar has experienced which I know about even if I am not in Gibraltar, would the Minister realise that this is almost becoming endemic and in order to provide a good service at the Post Office should they not do what business people are doing and have their own generator?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am delighted to hear the words "even if I am not in Gibraltar". Mr Speaker, it is a general policy matter, there are other services within Government which would equally require generators, collection of bills and what have you and therefore, Mr Speaker, we would be burdened with a tremendous cost if every Government Department was to be fitted out with a new wiring set-up and a generator to provide electricity and the power cuts are not so bad, I can assure the Hon Member.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, has the Government made a survey of the loss, generally, as a result of the Post Office being out of action during periods of power cuts however short they might be? I would have thought it was quite significant.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I can assure the Member it is not significant, there is no loss at all as far as I am concerned, Mr Speaker. The service has gone on, I agree, with some inconvenience but the Post Office has not had to close down as a result of the power cuts.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is it not a fact that things like registered letters have not been able to be dealt with during power cuts?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Not as far as I know, Mr Speaker. If they have not been registered at 10 am they have been registered at 11 am but they certainly have not been sent back and not registered. There may have been some inconvenience, I am not prepared to argue that point.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Perhaps the Minister could find out because notwithstanding I am away from Gibraltar I understand that that has been happening.

HON G T RESTANO:

My understanding definitely is that during power cuts people who have gone to the Post Office to register letters have been turned back. What I would like to ask the Minister is what his knowledge is of what services have been interrupted by the Post Office during power cuts?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, on a point of order, that is not the question that was originally asked for, it is a completely different thing.

MR SPEAKER:

It must in itself be inherent to the question the fact that the service is being affected due to the lack of light and that is why a generator is needed.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the question as I understood it from Mr Isola is, has Government had a survey of the loss and that is not the case. What I was saying is that there has been no loss. There may have been an inconvenience, that is what I was saying. The Hon Mr Restano has brought an entirely new concept into this argument.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am glad that the Hon Minister should say that I have brought in a new concept but perhaps he could answer my question.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am not aware that people have been sent away and that letters have not been registered, I am aware that somebody may have been told, "I am sorry, I can't see to it now, come back in half an hour or an hour's time when the power is restored".

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, that circumvents the point of that particular question which is, if somebody goes to register a letter and he is told to come back an hour later, an hour later may be too late to catch the plane that is leaving, say, on a Tuesday and it has to wait till Thursday and that does involve losses to people. I don't know whether the Minister will agree or not.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am sure the Hon and Learned Member opposite will have to agree with me that power cuts do not take place at half past 10 in that particular part of Gibraltar every single day.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I haven't had an answer to my question about the interruption of services to the general public.

MR SPEAKER:

You have had an answer. The Minister said that to his knowledge there has never been an occasion where a person has not been able to register a letter although there have been occasions when there has been delay.

HON G T RESTANO:

I think what he said was that to his knowledge somebody may have been told to come back in an hour's time and I think that is the whole purpose of this question about the Post Office purchasing a small generator because in the same way as traders along Main Street have had

MR SPEAKER:

But the answer has been that they are not prepared to purchase a generator whatever the inconvenience.

HON G T RESTANO:

But initially, Mr Speaker, if I may say so, the Minister said that there was no need for a generator there and I would like to suggest to the Government, I would like to ask the Government

MR SPEAKER:

Order. I am very aware of what the Minister said. The Minister has said that there is inconvenience at the Post Office the same as there is inconvenience in other departments, that it is an expensive thing to do because you have got to rewire the whole department and he sees no reason why the Post Office should be treated differently to any other department. That is the answer and we are not going to go round in circles.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask another question. How is it that the Government cannot invest in this sort of equipment when most of the shops down Main Street have had to do it and they have done it for the interest of tourists and clients generally? Why has the Post Office been the one exception along Main Street which has not invested, and I am told that it is not a very great investment, in this sort of equipment?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Because the Post Office happens to be the only building that Government, as far as I can recall, happens to own in Main Street.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is there not a tourist interest in giving people from Cruise Liners a service, they can't tell them to come back later.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, no more questions. Next question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, with reference to Question 394 of 1980 will Government state whether the abandoned flats now sealed at Casola Buildings were emptied of rubbish before being sealed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Yes, Sir.

When flats are vacated at 17/19 Rosia Steps (Casolas Building) or elsewhere any rubbish left behind by the outgoing tenant is removed as the flats are properly locked up and made secure.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 61 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Is that a factual answer or a policy answer? Does the Minister know that in fact the buildings were emptied or is he assuming that they were emptied?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, when I have a question from the Hon Members they are treated with the respect that I think they are entitled to have. The answer given to me, I don't go round houses checking, I can assure the Hon Member is a factual answer.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, referring to Question No 394, does that mean that the work to be effected at Casola Buildings has now been completed?

MR SPEAKER:

Under the guise of one particular question we are not going to discuss the whole question of Casola Buildings under any circumstances. You have asked a specific question and you have been given a specific answer.

11.3.81

NO. 62 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government reveal the latest waiting list figures for housing?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, the figure now stands at approximately 1,750.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 62 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

So there appears to have been no change since November, is that correct, Mr Speaker?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, there has been a slight increase. There were 1,700, considering that we accommodated some 50 between November to date, we find ourselves another 50 up so there have been another 100 new applicants.

NO. 63 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, with reference to Question 272 of 1980 will Government publish a list of the first hundred applicants in the various units of housing as at March 5th, 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, as I explained in answer to Question 272/80, waiting lists are not drawn up until and unless these are required for allocation purposes because pointages fluctuate from day to day and these lists might tend to give some people false expectations.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 63 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I was aware of Question 272, that is why I referred to it. I would nevertheless like to see a list of the first hundred applicants in the various units of housing at a particular date. I am not asking for the Minister to adopt what is after all a DPBG policy which is to have it published always but I was asking in full knowledge of his difficulty with reference to Question 272, for a list of the first hundred applicants. May I add, Mr Speaker, that Question 272 doesn't refer to expectations about to be dashed. It simply reads: "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. 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". Sir, I would like to know one specific instance of one day for my own purposes but I would nevertheless like a list for any given day.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the Hon and Learned Member said that this was a DPBG policy, he is wrong, it was an IWPB policy that goes back to 1972 and the three Housing Ministers who held office in the 2 years and 10 months none of them were able to come out with a list because it is impossible to do so and make that list public and I have tried on numerous occasions, Mr Speaker, to explain why it is impossible and it is so difficult because a person at the top of any requirement, a 3RKB or 4RKB could well find himself number 14 tomorrow. I see the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition nodding his head in agreement because I think he understands it. Well, if he understands it, Mr Speaker, he must realise that it is an absolute waste of time for my typist to be typing out 100 names of seven different categories of houses from bedsitters to 6RKB and by five o'clock that afternoon it is futile because the following morning when it is published Mr A is no longer at the top of the list, he is No 14, so it serves no purpose at all. I tried to explain that time and time again, Mr Speaker, but I am afraid it is water off a duck's back.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer is no.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

It can't be done, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

It can't be done or doesn't he want to do it?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am not prepared to waste tax payers' money. It was worked out in answer to a question asked some two years ago before the Hon Member joined this House, that it would entail something like seven typists to carry out an exercise that would not mean anything to anybody.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, just a minute ago the Hon Member did suggest that the questions posed by us were treated with all due respect but this question is not being treated with due respect.

MR SPEAKER:

We are making statements.

HON A J HAYNES:

I would like the Minister to reconsider and to produce those lists.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Who to, Mr Speaker, may I know, please?

HON A J HAYNES:

To the general public or to me.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Must I repeat that it would mean nothing to the general public because the list that I draw up today, the 11th March, would mean nothing to Mr A on the 12th March. I think the Hon Member must accept that. Why should I put typists and my Department through the whole rigmarole of bringing out something which is absolutely futile.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer is no so let us not waste time. You have been told that you are not going to get that list.

HON A J HAYNES:

I can accept the answer of a straight no but I cannot accept in silence the statement that goes with it. I just absolutely refuse to.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Minister on matters of expense? Would it be so expensive to produce a list of the first 100 applicants from the various housing units, say, on the 1st day of each month, as an exercise, so that perhaps the point that he makes of very sharp fluctuations would then appear, I presume? Would it not be a good idea to satisfy Members if that sort of exercise is done, perhaps then there would be more confidence in the way housing is allocated?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am somewhat alarmed because I think the Hon and Gallant Major Peliza when he was Chief Minister was very keen about the publication of this list. In fact, I remember Miss Conchita Anes making a particular issue of this at election time in the 1969 Elections but it is an absolute impossibility, it can't be done and if the Hon and Learned the present Leader of the Opposition doesn't know probably the Hon and Gallant Major Peliza might enlighten him on that side as to the impracticability of this particular scheme.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member allow me to visit his Department and make my own list?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Most certainly not, Sir. I will certainly give him information of specific cases if he wants it but not to go round thumbing the files.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 64 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government undertake to house all those who are evicted by Government as "squatters" and who as a result of the Legal Proceedings for eviction become homeless?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

People who take the law into their own hands, squat and are eventually evicted by the Court, cannot expect to receive preferential treatment over other social cases who are lawfully and patiently waiting to be accommodated.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 64 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

The term 'homeless' seems to have eluded the Minister who so clearly defined it for me in answer to Question no 158, when he was asked: "Will you reveal the figures of homeless people in Gibraltar?" the Minister answered: "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". What I am asking the Minister, Sir, is to make provision for these people who are homeless under his definition which is where I am taking it from.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I didn't put the squatters there, they have opted to go there and broken the law. They cannot be termed as homeless because they have broken the law. The law is there and we cannot give them preferential treatment over other social cases that have not broken the law, under no circumstances.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am saying these people should not necessarily be allowed to stay where they remain but this comes back to the other question in which this subject was touched, Question No 369.

MR. SPEAKER:

We are quoting from Hansards and we are making statements at question time. I must repeat this is question time, it is exclusively for the purposes of seeking and extracting information and it must be concise and precise.

HON A J HAYNES:

I take your point, Sir. The only reason why I was seeking to elucidate the matter is because there seems to be a misinterpretation of the question and since we are dealing with a subject which has been the subject matter of previous questions, I would like to

MR SPEAKER:

That is the danger of allowing follow-up questions within the six months period and I am going to be more strict from now on if this is going to happen but, anyway, go ahead.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, it would appear therefore that Government are neither prepared to make a Family Social Care Unit report before undertaking legal proceedings or where the person has been evicted make a report then. Is Government totally inhuman as a landlord?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, that is not seeking information. I will not allow debate on questions. If you want to ask a question which is going to give you information you are free to do so.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, may I then repeat the question in the light of the points which I have made. Will Government undertake to have all those who are evicted as squatters who as a result become homeless, ie the true social cases?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Certainly not in preference to people who have not squatted.

NO. 65 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government reveal the number of housing units presently unoccupied whether as part of the modernisation scheme, or because they are unfit for human habitation, or because they have not yet been allocated?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, 261 units are unoccupied at present. This figure is made up as follows:

The Modernisation Programme		175
Unfit for occupation	14	
Scheduled for demolition	<u>24</u>	38
Awaiting rehabilitation -		
Government Quarters	14	
Varyl Begg Estate	27	
Others	<u>7</u>	<u>48</u>
		<u>261</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 65 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the 48 units awaiting allocation, how long have they been waiting allocation?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Awaiting rehabilitation, I think I said, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does this include flats, did the Minister say, in Varyl Begg Estate, Laguna Estate, Glacis Estate?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That is right.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister indicate the sort of rehabilitation that is required for flats in Laguna, Glacis and Varyl Begg, as far as they are fairly recent Government developments?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

In the case of Varyl Begg, I think that the ones that we are talking about are the ones that we have not been able to put people in or in fact people have had to be moved from. The normal rehabilitation is mainly on electrics and what tenants sometimes alter that requires putting back into shape, i.e. louvred windows being taken away, holes knocked in walls for serving hatches and floor tiles, door knobs and one thing and the other, Mr Speaker.

HON G T RESTANO: /

Mr Speaker, with regard to the 38 which are apparently unfit for human habitation, could we have some sort of breakdowns of this 38? What sort of areas do they find themselves in?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I haven't got a detailed breakdown. The 38, as far as I understand, are places like Casolas Buildings where we have moved two or three people, 6, Lower Castle Road, which is falling down of its own accord. I think at Willis's Passage there was another one that required immediate attention. I can't recall any others off-hand, Mr Speaker.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Would Government take immediate steps to ensure that parking of cars in front of the Health Centre on Smith Dorrient Avenue adjacent to Casemates Hill is prevented as such parking constitutes a danger hazard to vehicles driving up Casemates Hill?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

It is not conceded that parking does take place regularly in a way which constitutes a danger hazard. Vehicles do sometimes park outside the Health Centre but away from the junction but often these belong to doctors who claim there is a need to do so for emergency purposes. Other vehicles are moved on by the police, who will continue to give the matter attention.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 66 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Minister does not agree that this constitutes a general hazard and I contend that it does. Would the Minister have the pavement enlarged, perhaps, or create other impediments to parking so that there is not just a yellow line where cars sometimes park on but create such a thing as an enlarged pavement to ensure that cars cannot park physically?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I don't know about an enlarged pavement but what I can say, Mr Speaker, is that in the past few months only three slight accidents have occurred in the vicinity and none of these has any relation to vehicles parked near the Health Centre. On the 4 March when Police specifically visited the scene due to matters raised in this question six vehicles were parked in Line Wall Road outside the Health Centre but away from the junction. Three of these vehicles were reported by the Police and the other three belonged to doctors.

HON G T RESTANO:

The Minister has said that doctors park there but because it happens to be a doctor, surely, it is just as likely to create a danger hazard for other vehicles, whether it is a doctor's vehicle or anybody else's vehicle, does the Minister not agree with this?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, of course I agree with that but I think that the Hon Member himself raised in the meeting of the 17 December the matter that he wanted Government to consider allowing doctors to park up in St Bernard's Hospital and also the staff and the nurses so I can't see the consistency that he wants us to overlook St Bernard's Hospital and yet no doctors are to be allowed to park outside the Health Service whilst in attendance.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, this of course is a completely different case. The parking spaces up at St Bernard's Hospital, to my knowledge, create absolutely no danger hazard to other vehicles.

MR SPEAKER:

We are now debating the question:

HON G T RESTANO:

He has brought it up, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

I think what you were asking in the previous question was that parking spaces should be given to doctors and nurses in the Hospital within the legal parking and not on the 'no parking' areas.

HON G T RESTANO:

Yes, absolutely. I think the Minister's comment is quite irrelevant to this. This is a danger hazard to other vehicles, what I was asking in December about St Bernard's Hospital created no danger hazard at all to any other vehicle. May I have an answer, Mr Speaker?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, yes, he may have an answer and that is contained in the first paragraph or sentence of my reply and that is that it is not conceded that parking does take place regularly in a way which constitutes a danger hazard.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does the Minister not agree that a vehicle driving up Casemates Hill, the driver has his view impaired if there are vehicles parked almost up to the corner between Casemates Hill and Smith Dorrien Avenue?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member goes there and has a look at it as I did he will find that whether the driver going up Casemates Hill opts to go left or right, exactly the same view is permitted on both sides whether there are cars parked to the right or not.

11.3.81

NO. 67 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has the Minister for Housing and Sport now obtained the costs to purchase electronic breath testing machines and if so would he inform the House what those costs are?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, the cost would be about £2,000 per machine in the United Kingdom. Two machines would be required if it were to be decided to introduce this type of test.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 67 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Has the Government considered whether to purchase those machines or not?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

We have not considered, Mr Speaker, it is not considered to be of need in Gibraltar.

HON G T RESTANO:

Did the Minister say he had not considered or that the Government had considered not to buy them?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The Government will not buy this, Mr Speaker, it is not considered that we require an uplifting of our present under the influence of drink or drugs laws.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can the Minister state how he arrived or how did Government arrive at that conclusion?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

We arrived, Mr Speaker, on the advice received from the Commissioner of Police and other authorities who have not shown a particular desire or interest in this new instrument in Gibraltar.

HON G T RESTANO:

Presumably the advice of the Stipendiary Magistrate has not been taken. He was the one who first, I think, brought to the notice of the general public the need of such equipment in order to enforce the law?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, yes, Sir, I remember the case vividly. The Commissioner of Police is not particularly interested or keen in this nor do we have evidence of its requirement in Gibraltar.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask, Mr Speaker, the advice of the Commissioner of Police is therefore contrary to the sort of advice

MR SPEAKER:

No, it is contrary to the Stipendiary Magistrate's advice.

HON G T RESTANO:

The Minister said that it is contrary to have these machines according to the advice of the Commissioner of Police. What I am asking is, how does the Commissioner of Police arrive at his advice seeing that it is not the sort of advice that Police in the United Kingdom give?

MR SPEAKER:

I do not think it is fair to ask the Minister how the Commissioner of Police arrived at this advice. He must have considered the matter and given an overall answer but I don't think the Minister can answer for the Commissioner of Police.

HON G T RESTANO:

Surely, the Government must have considered the advice of the Commissioner of Police and presumably the Commissioner of Police must have given reasons for giving his advice.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. What the Minister has said is that on the advice of the Commissioner of Police who has considered the matter, it has been decided not to introduce them.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask what reasons have been given to back up the advice of the Commissioner so that the Government accepted this advice? What statements have been given, what reasons have been given by the Commissioner to back up this advice that we don't need this sort of equipment in Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the drink and drive problem in Gibraltar virtually doesn't exist. The number of people that are taken to Court under drink and drive are so few that it is not warranted to be of need.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 68 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state why they allow derelict trailers to be parked in public thoroughfares?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, this problem continues to receive constant attention (as detailed in answer 376 of 1980).

During the month of February, 1981, over 60 offences connected with trailers were reported with a view to prosecution.

The difficulty with derelict trailers is that the police do not have the necessary equipment, but take every possible measure to persuade the owners to remove them. If owners do not co-operate they are reported.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 68 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Can the Minister state if any more drastic action has been taken by the Police to ensure that in future the owners do act more promptly?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, as I said in the answer there have been over 60 offences connected with trailers just during the month of February, there certainly has been a purge on a clean-up of trailers. I can inform the Hon Member that a total of 41 trailers were found out of which 11 trailers are in an obviously derelict state and, of course, they will be disposed of either by throwing them over the cliff or in some other manner.

THE HON A T LODDO

Will the Minister confirm that in the 1980/81 Draft Estimates, provision has been made for wooden benches to be installed at the Victoria Stadium?

(The Hon A T Loddo in asking the question said "1981/82 Draft Estimates")

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, I think, with respect, the question has been wrongly read.

HON A T LODDO:

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, it must be a typing error.

MR SPEAKER:

The question reads: "Will the Minister confirm that in the 1980/81 Estimates".

HON A T LODDO:

1980/81 has gone already.

MR SPEAKER:

That is the way it was asked.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, certainly as regards 1980/81, it was not included because we are talking in the past tense. We have made provision in this year's estimates to try and get Public Works to do it.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for that.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

11.3.81

NO. 70 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state the length of time it normally takes the PWD to repair Post Office vehicles?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the length of time normally taken by PWD to repair Post Office vehicles is no different from that taken to repair other Government Departments' vehicles and is totally dependent on two main factors:

- (a) the type of repair required, and
- (b) the availability of spare parts for the repair.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 70 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister on the whole satisfied with the length of time taken obviously not just with these vehicles but with vehicles, generally, as that will affect the cost of having to rent other vehicles?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir.

NO. 71 OF 1981

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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the Development and Planning Commission has recommended that urban design improvements to the Town should commence shortly. (In this connection the Director of Public Works and Chief Planning Officer travelled to the United Kingdom recently to discuss a pilot scheme with the Joint Centre for Urban Design at Oxford). The pilot scheme, which is seen as the first of a number of areas within the City Centre, will centre around Cornwall's Parade and its tributaries ie Bell Lane, City Mill Lane, Cornwall's Lane, Horse Barrack Lane and Castle Street.

The approach to this scheme, and all others to follow, will involve a public participation exercise with the landlords of the buildings in the area as well as the traders, in which economic, social and commercial factors will be considered at the same time as the improvement of the visual environment.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 71 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am very pleased to hear that, Mr Speaker, and I hope it is a success but can the Minister give an indication of when it is likely to start?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I should hope within the next two or three months.

NO. 72 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

When does Government envisage the new Public Works Garage to be in full operation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the transfer of the Public Works Garage to the new garage/workshop complex was completed on 27 February, 1981. The majority of the plant and equipment is now functioning.

The garage/workshop complex should be fully operational by the end of this month.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 72 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, can Government confirm that at a very late stage within this so-called planned phasing from the old garage to the new garage, certain complications arose which were not spotted until quite recently with respect to the width of the two bays and will Government make a statement on it?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, that is correct. The bays were found to be rather wider than is practical and it is already being arranged that they should be made narrower.

HON W T SCOTT:

And the Minister in saying that the new garage will be in operation by the end of this month has obviously taken regard to the narrowing of those bays?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

Not too narrow, I hope.

NO. 73 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, does Government not agree that there has been a reduction of Services under Head 20, subheads 1, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17 and 18, Warrant No 23 of the Statement of Reallocation No 7 of the 1980/81 of the Consolidated Fund and will Government give a detailed explanation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The Government does not agree that there has been a reduction of Services. However, on Treasury instructions, whenever Supplementary Funds are required every possible effort is made in the first instance to find possible savings within the particular Head of Expenditure.

The savings found in this case within Head 20 were as follows:-

<u>Item</u>	<u>Services</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Reasons</u>
1	Beaches	£ 3,000	During the course of the year, less materials and stores were required than allowed for in the estimates.
6	Rock Safety	£ 6,000	Less works required than originally anticipated.
10	Roads	£ 5,000	Savings due to labour from this Section having been engaged on I & DF projects, ie Roadworks, Car Parks etc
11	Garages/ Workshop	£12,000	More works were carried out for other Departments.
13	Cleaning of Highways	£ 4,000	Less maintenance required than originally anticipated.
14	Collection of Refuse	£ 5,000	Less maintenance and spares were required for the Refuse Collection Lorries than originally anticipated.
17	Sewers	£ 5,000	Four men originally provided for in the estimates for works on new estates were not engaged until December, 1980.
18	S W Distribu- tion	£ 5,000	Labour from this Section have also been engaged on I & D Projects.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 73 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Has there, in fact, under subhead 10 on the Maintenance Up-keep and Other Improvements to Roads, has this in fact included one in particular - Rosia Road, underneath Humphreys, is that contained within that subhead?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

What exactly do you mean by Rosia Road?

HON W T SCOTT:

The paving of the road.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, that is part of it.

HON W T SCOTT:

So that some money has been withdrawn and the project is nowhere near completion?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The project was not intended to be finished this year at all, it was only a small amount to be done each year. In fact, next year there will be a further amount in that project.

HON W T SCOTT:

Yes, but although therefore certain monies were allocated for that work, that work hasn't been done and it has been shifted on to another subhead. What I am suggesting, is that it is not a saving because the work has not been done.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, the money that was allocated for Rosia Road was spent on Rosia Road.

NO. 74 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government make a statement on the present situation with the disposal of refuse whilst the Destructor is under repair?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The present situation with the Disposal of Refuse is by dumping at Europa Point. This procedure dates back for many years and appears, unfortunately, to be the only practical alternative.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 74 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Does Government not agree that at least on the tourist side it represents a situation which is very damaging to Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I have already said that it is an unfortunate situation but the only practical alternative. The main thing is that when we need, very rarely, to do a general overhaul for the refuse destructor it is done in the non-tourist months. If there is a small breakdown during the tourist season we do our best to contain it as far as possible by keeping the refuse at the destructor site for as long as possible.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is there no other area within Gibraltar that perhaps such rubbish as is combustible could be burnt?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think, Sir, there is no reasonable area where it could be burnt and I think it would be rather a fire hazard

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is there no possibility of cooperation with the Ministry of Defence who, I understand, dump their rubbish way out at sea?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the majority of the Ministry of Defence rubbish is collected by us nowadays. What they do is that they dump some heavy rubbish out at sea. We have looked into the possibility of this but it is very expensive indeed.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, coming back to the answer that I got to looking for an area where controlled fire could take place periodically, the Minister in his reply said, "I think it would be a hazard". Can the Minister take steps either to confirm or deny his thoughts?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I will speak to the Chief of the Fire Brigade who I know is very much against open fires where a lot of combustible material can go up into the air and I will let the Hon Member know.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister state for how long this dumping has been going on now in terms of time? As a matter of interest, has there been any similar period of time in the last 20 years when dumping at sea has carried on for such a long period?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I cannot say within the last 20 years how long this has been necessary. I can try and find out although I think records may not be too easy to find but dumping at sea has been a feature of the refuse situation, to my knowledge, for at least the last 25 years.

11.3.81

NO. 75 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government make a statement on the present position with respect to the Refuse Destructor?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The present position with respect to the Refuse Destructor is that the Plant is now working normally, the only items requiring completion due to the fire damage are the roof sheeting and side glass panels of the buildings which are expected to arrive shortly from UK.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 75 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Sir, is the Minister therefore now saying that the plant is working normally and that refuse is being burnt there? Is that what he means by working normally?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, burning started last Saturday.

11.3.81

NO. 76 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government explain why it has not repaired the ornamental cupola of the Market Place Clock which is at a rakish angle?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

A scheme was prepared last year for the renovation and painting of the whole clock tower and shelter but, owing to other pressing works, this has been left in abeyance. However, essential repairs to the concrete columns were carried out some months ago.

The structure encasing the actual clock is in fairly good condition and only the ornate ironwork above the clock is showing signs of corrosion which has caused a slight tilt at the very top of the building. It is hoped that this will be corrected in the near future. There is no danger to the public.

NO. 77 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, is it correct that a certain building contracting firm was forced to make workers redundant in respect of the development of the Girls' Comprehensive School because they were unable to pursue the construction of the Girls' Comprehensive School due to the delays in the moving of the PWD Garage and has this resulted in any risk of liability on the part of the Government under the building contract of the Girls' Comprehensive School?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Four Indian workers were made redundant on the 19th January. However, that same day, under pressure from the Union, the contractors' redundancy notice was suspended. After further discussion with the Trade Union the contractor withdrew the notice on the 30th January.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 77 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

With respect, it doesn't answer my question, Mr Speaker. Is it correct that a certain building contracting firm was forced to make workers redundant because they were unable to pursue the construction work?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would think, Sir, if they made them redundant and then took them back there wasn't all that need after all to make them redundant in the first place. I do not know, Sir, exactly why these workers were made redundant by the company concerned. There were claims that they would like the old Public Works Garage to be given to them as soon as possible and this was done as soon as we could manage to do so.

HON W T SCOTT:

Which was many months after the programme date of handing over the Public Works Department Garage.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If you are aware of the programme date then you are better informed than I am.

HON P J ISOLA:

Doesn't the Minister know?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We said we would do it as soon as it was practical.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I think the Minister has entirely failed to answer the question. What the questioner is saying is, is there any risk of liability on the part of the Government by reason of the fact that the building contracting firm couldn't carry on working on site because the Government had not moved the Public Works Garage out and that was the reason, apparently, why they made workers redundant, they did not need the workers because they could not get on with the work. The fact that they take the workers back does not mean that the claim will not arise against the Government for paying workers for doing nothing because they can't do it because the Government is still in the Public Works Garage. What we are asking is, is there any risk contractually, as a result of this incident to the Government under its contract? Are we going to have any claims later on?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

As far as I know from my visits to that area, work continued on that site all the time and the four people who were made redundant I think just went back and worked at some other area on the site rather than actually knocking down the Public Works Department Garage which perhaps they had been scheduled to do in the first place. The Garage has now been handed over and as far as I understand no claims are coming forward.

HON P J ISOLA:

The claims need not necessarily come, Mr Speaker, now. We are asking the Government if they can assure us that there is no liability, no risk of liability on the part of the Government resulting from these particular incidents.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

As I have said, Sir, as far as I know, no claim has come forward and therefore I cannot see that there is any risk of liability as such.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could not the claim come forward at the end of the building period or the contract period, Mr Speaker, if the building firm wanted extra time would the penalty clauses be prevented from coming into effect by reason of the fact that the Government was not able to give possession or whatever of the Garage, that is why the question is asked. Any risk of liability, not necessarily today, it could be in a year's time or in a year and a half's time.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

They should give notice even now and I think furthermore if the four workers went back and were obviously employed somewhere else on the rest of the contract, they haven't really lost anything. As far as I know, Sir, the contractors for the building of the School were told they would get the Public Works Garage as soon as it was practical, they were given a date, they were requested to work their own schedules on the rest of their works to that date and that has been done. If there is any liability and some claim comes through at the end it will have to be looked at by Government but I would think that if they left it right to the end and did not tell us now it wouldn't have very much substantiation.

HON P J ISOLA:

This is probably a question which should have been answered by the Hon and Learned Attorney-General who obviously has not been consulted on the matter. What we are asking is, has this resulted in any risk of liability on the part of the Government under the building contract? We are asking a legal question, we are not asking for the Minister to tell us "I think and I know", we want an opinion on this. This is why we asked the question.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the question asked is very well put because how can one assess a risk? It is a matter for the consultant if and when the claim is made, surely, and then one must look at it.

MR SPEAKER:

The question which is being asked is in the knowledge of their contractual commitment with the contractor, do they feel that there is any liability?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has answered that several times by saying that there was no fixed date for the handing over except as soon as practical, and he has said that we haven't received any claim. We cannot say any more, we cannot look into a crystal ball to see what is going to happen in two years' time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, we are very sorry the Government is unable to answer. We don't know, the Government has got the contract, we haven't seen them. Our question is very simple, does the Government consider that there is any risk of liability on the part of the Government arising out of this incident having regard to the terms of the building contract?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, surely the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition doesn't expect us to comment on a risk if the claim has not been made, that would be conceding something that it was not necessary to concede.

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I to understand from that, Mr Speaker, that there is a risk of contractual liability arising out of this incident? If not why cannot the Government say categorically: "In our view, in our opinion, there is no risk of anything going wrong as a result of this in view of the terms of the contract". That is all we are asking, Sir.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would like to assure the Hon Leader of the Opposition that work went on apace all the time, it was not a case of work coming to a standstill as they may seem to have assumed on that side.

HON W T SCOTT:

The Member opposite is under a very grave misapprehension, of course we never thought that the work stopped, of course not. It continued in other sections of the site presumably but on that section of the site which is also up for development they were unable to make a start on it.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

As I said, in that other section they took back these four people and apparently found useful employment for them. I am sure the company did not let them just sit there doing nothing.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is it not a fact that because of that there was a strike because apparently the contractors wanted to make them redundant because there was no work?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question. We are not going to get any further on this one.

11.3.81

NO. 78 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government state whether long-term pumping tests have commenced in the deep drilling operation and will Government also state if the programme for catchment study and water seeping through the various tunnels has been finalised?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Long-term pumping test at the North Face Borehole site commenced in January, 1981, and is currently under way.

Fluctuations in the water level at the Orillon borehole have been recorded since January, 1981, and it is expected that test pumping at the borehole will commence in a week's time.

The catchment and related studies are still under way. The present drought has not provided the opportunity to collect meaningful data from these tests.

NO. 79 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government give the figures and costs for water production from available sources for the months of October, November and December, 1980, and January, 1981, and state what the stocks were at 31st January, 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The figures for water production from available sources for the months of October, November and December, 1980, and January, 1981, are as follows:

<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>OCTOBER</u>	<u>NOVEMBER</u>	<u>DECEMBER</u>	<u>JANUARY</u>
	M ³ (mg)	M ³ (mg)	M ³ (mg)	M ³ (mg)
Rainfall	2043 (0.45)	10482 (2.31)	273 (0.06)	-
Wells	10800 (2.38)	11067 (2.43)	12395 (2.73)	11474 (2.52)
NF Distiller	ANNUAL MAINT	ANNUAL MAINT	ANNUAL MAINT	3497 (0.77)
VTE Distiller	15499 (3.41)	16180 (3.56)	10446 (2.30)	5685 (1.25)
Importation	31136 (6.85)	20720 (4.56)	21571 (4.75)	28362 (6.24)
Stocks on 31st January, 1981, stood at 33,732M ³ (7.42) million gallons)				

The estimated costs of water production remain as those given in answer to Question No 298 of 1980 in 4.11.80. They may need to be modified and increased because of higher costs of fuel, power and chemicals.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 79 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Hon Minister, it seems to me rather unusual, there is a period which is in excess of seven months where the North Front Distiller has been out of action, from the end of May right up to some time during January of this year.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That is correct, Sir. That was a very big annual overhaul that it was given last six to seven months. The whole plant is now some 10 to 13 years old and a big maintenance has not been done. It is hoped that this will give it a new lease of life for at least another 3 to 4 years.

HON W T SCOTT:

Surely it shouldn't have been termed annual maintenance because otherwise one would expect a seven months maintenance period every year. I also notice that on the VTE Distiller the figures have gone down substantially. Can we have an explanation of that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes. The VTE came back on stream about April or May after its maintenance, it worked very well through the whole of the period but near the end it started to get a number of troubles every two or three days due to its requiring maintenance and it has now been closed down for its annual maintenance.

HON W T SCOTT:

Presumably we will be looking to something like 3 or 4 months break within the VTE Distiller during which it will be receiving its annual maintenance.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, it is scheduled to come back about late May or early June.

HON W T SCOTT:

In fact, Mr Speaker, we are now running through a situation where we can expect perhaps very little or no rainfall at all between now and November and if we do not get any rain within the next couple of months we will not get any rain until November, we are coming to a situation where the North Front Distiller has received its seven months maintenance but its performance is still questionable, the VTE Distiller is under the maintenance at the moment, there is no rainfall, the wells have something like a static production and the only way we can improve it is through imported water and is Government obviously then looking for a substantial increase in the water imports?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, during the last 10 weeks we have been working reasonably satisfactorily with the total water produced and the total demand. It is hoped, of course, that there will be some rain before the end of April, it is quite possible that April can be quite a wet month, I promise a very rainy Easter for everybody. The two Distillers should be working through the summer months and with the measure of importation we are getting at the moment we should be able to cope satisfactorily.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there any other possible source of water available to us for Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There are many other possible sources but they are not all practical. You could bring water from the United Kingdom but the cost is very expensive.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would it be possible to expand the catchment area?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There has been a long polemic for many years on whether one should expand the catchment area or whether one should increase the storage. However, the expansion of the catchment area, especially in a year like this where there is very little rain and it is not going to do much good any way and the total amount of water obtained from rainfall on an average year is only 10% of our total needs, you would have to expand the catchment area to such a colossal amount to make any significant impact and it is just not practical.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, in the light of the bad rain year we have had has the Chief Minister taken any decision to provide more water for the Town or not?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I believe in City Council days he used to hold a prayer meeting in the City Hall and the water used to come down very quickly, I think he is going to try and do the same thing again.

HON A J HAYNES:

Has the Chief Minister done anything to provide us with more water this year?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I cannot see that it is the Chief Minister's responsibility to provide water, I think that is the responsibility of the Minister for Public Works and as I said for the last 10 weeks we have been producing more than the actual demand and the situation at the moment does not warrant any undue alarm.

HON A J HAYNES:

Are you and the Chief Minister happy with the water situation?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I cannot speak for the Chief Minister, I would be much happier if we had a little more rain but at the moment I am not unhappy.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 80 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

In view of the fact that Government has spent about £350 in building two replica concrete seats at the small Piazza in Governor's Parade to appease some of the residents of the surrounding area, will Government consider building seats or providing benches in bus shelters?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

With one or two exceptions all the bus shelters are owned by a private company who have only provided seats at the major bus stops.

This is not part of the answer, Sir, but they are not replica concrete seats they are concrete seats.

11.3.81

NO. 81 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Does Government not agree that the faces of the Clock at Moorish Castle gives the impression of a derelict building and will Government state why it has not carried out the necessary work?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

A private contractor is responsible for winding and maintaining the clock. The Public Works Department provide the necessary assistance.

I am grateful to the Hon Questioner for bringing the condition of the clock face to my attention. I will look into its condition.

NO. 82 OF 1981.

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say how much of the £ $\frac{1}{4}$ million voted for by this House, Head 104, Sub-head 11 - Restoration of Communications with Spain, has in fact been spent to date?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Expenditure to date by PWD is £84,120. The Police has also spent £8,064 in Traffic signs.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 82 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Could the Minister say on what this money has been spent? I have not been able to notice any appreciable difference in the traffic chaos around the Fountain and the Laguna junction with Smith Dorrient Avenue.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the Customs and Immigration at Four Corners - £13,874 spent; the holding area of Four Corners - £12,915; the purchase of control booths - £15,656; the purchase of traffic barriers - £7,370; the purchase of crowd barriers - £2,628; the customs at Waterport - £4,514; improvement and cleaning at Landport area - £7,358; Alameda Car Park - £2,317; Security fence north of the runway - £11,262 and Key and Anchor Club - £6,236. The Police was extra, as I said, it was £8,064 on traffic lights.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, apart from that can the Minister say whether any money has been spent or whether the traffic lights which were promised for the fountain and the junction at Smith Dorrien Avenue and Glacis Road whether any money has been set aside for that and have these traffic lights been already ordered? Is there any progress in that direction because the main problem the traffic problem, doesn't seem to have been tackled at all in one year.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, we have got quotations but we have not yet ordered them nor spent any money on them yet.

HON P J ISOLA:

The Hon Member said that £7,000 odd had been spent on the Customs area at Waterport.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Waterport was £4,514.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister say how this has been spent because there is no noticeable difference around that area?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think it was money spent down at the wharf where people come ashore from the Mons Calpe.

HON P J ISOLA:

In view of the fact that there is still some one hundred and something pounds left of the amount voted will the Government use this money to improve the parking situation in Gibraltar or is it going to be just left over for next year?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think some of that money has been vired to another account, if my memory does not fail me, and of course it would come back as a revote should the need for the restoration of communications with Spain arise. I think it might be a little invidious to put it into other immediate heads, it should be left for what it is actually required.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister saying then that nothing will be done about these traffic lights until the frontier opens and if it doesn't open no traffic lights will be installed? Is that what the Minister is saying?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am not saying that come what may, whether the frontier opens or not, there will be no traffic lights, this would be something that would have to be looked into and costed on its own account rather than on the account of traffic from Spain.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I seem to remember, and I am sure I will be corrected if I am wrong, that when this was first announced at a press conference or television interview by the Hon Minister, he did I think divide it into two parts, the total effect once the border opened and the desirability of improving the traffic flow within Gibraltar which would perhaps even enhance the traffic flow of the border once it was opened. I am sure he said that.

MR SPEAKER:

What are we asking?

HON W T SCOTT:

When he said at the time that prior to the border opening Gibraltar required traffic lights, one that was mentioned was Waterport, and that this would be effective, in fact, before the border opened to improve the existing traffic situation in Gibraltar in any case?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us find out. Does the Minister recall saying that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, I think I said that with the advent of traffic from Spain it would be almost essential to have traffic lights at the Glacis area and at Waterport and without the advent of traffic from Spain it would be quite a good idea to have at least one set of traffic lights at the Glacis area. However, when this had been costed it was decided at the time that we didn't have the funds in 1980/81, I am not saying they are not going to be put in 1981/82, but we could not use money from the Improvement (Restoration of Communications with Spain) to put into something which had nothing to do with that head whatsoever.

HON W T SCOTT:

But yet this has happened already in the £4,000 odd that has been spent round the Waterport area.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That was hoping that the ferries would be coming from Spain.

NO. 83 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government confirm that the roadways within the Alameda Gardens are not open to privately-owned vehicles?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, only vehicles authorised by the Public Works Department are allowed to use the roadways within Alameda Gardens.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 83 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does that mean private vehicles authorised by the Public Works Department or does that refer exclusively to lorries and trucks from the Public Works Department?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Basically it means lorries and trucks belonging to the Public Works Department but permission is also given to the Park Supervisor and his family to use that road.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does the Park Supervisor and his family mean exclusively his immediate family because I can assure the Minister that I have seen on a great number of occasions more than three cars parked outside the residence of the Park Supervisor.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It should mean his immediate family and I will take steps to see that it does mean that.

NO. 84 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will the Minister inform this House when Tank Ramp is to be open to vehicular traffic?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, I would refer the Hon Member to my reply to Question 71/80 in which I stated that the roadworks would not be completed until the new underground services had been laid and building works finished.

To lay the final surface before the construction works are complete would be a waste of public funds as the surface would be liable to damage by constructional traffic. The laying of new services is almost complete and once the trench has been allowed to settle the final surface will be laid. This should coincide with the completion of the building works in June, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 84 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, but if I may also refer to Question No 71, the Minister said that he thought that it would be somewhere around November/December of this year, meaning 1980, and we are now in March, 1981.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The whole thing is geared to the slippage on the actual construction works. There were one or two difficulties which had to be overcome and it has been pushed back to, as I say, about June.

HON A T LODDO:

When I said this year I was of course quoting from Hansard, meaning last year. Mr Speaker, we can take it that now the new date is June, 1981.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If there is no further slippage it will be June, 1981.

HON A T LODDO:

Considering the incline I am not surprised there is more slippage.

11.3.81

NO. 85 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government give details of the extra remedial works required at Sacred Heart Terrace?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Mr Speaker, with your permission, I propose to answer this question together with Question No 86.

NO. 86 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say whether the refurbishing of Phasel of the Middle School at Sacred Heart Terrace is keeping up with the dateline for completion and will therefore be available for occupation after the Easter holidays?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The extra remedial works required at Sacred Heart Terrace are as follows:

- (a) The complete replacement of the timber suspended floor in the Lower Ground Floor. This was due to the discovery of dry rot on removal of some shelving at the request of the Director of Education.
- (b) This work has also resulted in the alteration of the 3 existing door openings to suit the new floor areas and demolition and construction of a new partition.
- (c) The repair and renewal, repainting of additional shutters and casements which were in a worse condition than originally envisaged.

In addition the Department of Education have requested the provision of notice boards and blackboards together with the removal of shelving etc not included in the original contract.

As a result of the above, the contractor has requested a four week extension of time to cover the replacement of the floor etc, it is anticipated that the contract will be completed and the building will be available for occupation at commencement of term after the Easter holidays.

This of course is dependent upon the prompt arrival of certain materials from the UK necessary to complete the works.

NO. 87 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state whether it is satisfied with the present condition of Jumper's Buildings and if not what measures are proposed for its improvement?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Temporary measures have been taken to make safe parts of the buildings which were thought to be in possible danger of structural failure. The buildings have been surveyed from a structural viewpoint and cores of the floor slabs have been taken for testing in the United Kingdom.

A report from a firm of consultants based on the results of the core tests and the structural survey, is expected during March. The report will make recommendations as to the manner in which the problems at Jumper's Buildings should be resolved.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 87 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I think there are other problems other than structural as regards, for instance, lighting. I don't suppose the Hon Member will need a report to decide on those matters. Will the Hon Member look into smaller or more trivial problems which seem to haunt that building?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I haven't been aware of anything to do with lighting as a problem but if it does exist I will look into it.

NO. 88 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

In view of the fact that the present development programme is due to end on March 31st, 1981, will Government state in detail what projects or parts of projects included in the 1978 to 1981 development programme will remain unfulfilled or incomplete and the value of such works?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

	Contract sum	Certified to date (Feb)	Value of work out- standing
St Joseph's 24 months contract May 80/May 82	£1,593,000	536,908	1,056,092
St Jago's 18 months contract June 80/Dec 81	£ 917,787	373,000	544,787
Naval Hospital Hill 18 months contract June 79/Dec 80	£ 433,000	291,530	141,470
Road to the Lines/Castle Ramp 21 months contract Feb 81/Nov 82	£ 520,000	19,000	501,000
Flat Bastion Road 18 months contract May 80/Nov 81	£ 430,000	155,000	275,000
Tank Ramp Development Phase 1 18 months contract Jan 79/ July 80	£ 374,758	302,720	72,038
Airport Terminal Extension 15 months contract project now out to tender			
Girls' Comprehensive School 24 months contract March 80/ March 82	£4,235,111	1,466,602	2,768,509
Lime Kiln Steps Phase 1A 24 months contract Feb 80/Feb 82	£ 547,000	326,477	220,523

That, of course, is to the end of February, we expect that there will be an expenditure in March of costs.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 88 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I right in saying that £5.58m appear to have been works not done and to that I suppose one must really add the value of the Air Terminal building which was projected for the 1978/81 programme. Has the Minister got any idea of the probable value of this development?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It will be between £ $\frac{1}{4}$ m and £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m.

NO. 89 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Does Government have any plan to move the Department of Education from its present position and when does Government intend to implement phase 3 of their programme in relation to the Courts?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Government intends to move the Department of Education to other premises, which in turn will provide the necessary accommodation to proceed with Phase 3 of improvements to the Supreme Court.

A Government Committee is looking specifically at the problems of the needs of the various Government Departments in relation to suitable accommodation that may become available in the future.

However, until such time as additional accommodation becomes available, no decision for the allocation of alternative premises to the Education Department can be taken.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 89 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I correct in thinking that the implementation of phase 3 in relation to the Courts must await the movement of the Department of Education out?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

As there appears to be no immediate plans to move the Department of Education we are not really talking even in the next development programme, is that right?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would not like to go as far as to say not the next development programme, we have three possibilities, St Jago's, St George's and Loreto. They should all become available, I would hope, on the finishing of the Girls' Comprehensive School somewhere round March, 1982, so there is a possibility that something might crop up around June, 1982, but I cannot promise any specific dates.

NO. 90 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Will Government consider not collecting any refuse of any kind on Sundays so as to ensure that the refuse collectors have at least one day of rest in every week?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Though on the face of it this would not appear to be undesirable, Government believes that both on Public Health grounds particularly in summer and because of the lack of suitable storage space in many of the buildings, collection of refuse on a daily basis leads to less practical problems.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 90 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, is that the real reason for the answer, may I ask, and if it is will the Government not agree that holding back refuse for one day is not a burden of any nature even in the hot days of summer compared to the obvious benefit of giving the refuse collectors a definite day when they don't have to work which seems to have started all the industrial action?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Despite this, Sir, the position is being kept under review but I would comment that Government introduced a scheme some years ago giving some of the refuse collectors a day off which they subsequently traded in for higher pay.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean that the working of 7 days a week is what the refuse collectors actually wanted or they have been given a benefit in return for their trading it in?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think they wanted it because of the emoluments it brought with it.

11.3.81

NO. 91 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Will Government make a statement on the situation with the refuse collectors and as to the steps that Government has taken to resolve this dispute?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

A claim was put by the Union on behalf of the refuse collectors for their conditioned hours to be based on a seven day week, for an improved productivity payment and for an improvement in their banding. Initially their position was that they would not negotiate on any other matter unless the seven day week was conceded. In order to press their claim they took action by refusing to collect trade refuse and thereby foregoing their productivity payment.

They have now withdrawn their claim to the seven day week and the action was expected to be lifted this morning and the backlog of rubbish cleared. Negotiations are in progress on the outstanding issues and a meeting on these was due to take place this morning and if I am asked a supplementary I shall be happy to answer it.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 91 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Minister able to explain why the dispute didn't end this morning?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, I think something else cropped up this morning and they had the meeting this afternoon. I understand that a settlement has been achieved, they will clear the rubbish that is laying around the streets by Friday and I am sure the trade will be pleased to hear that a new productivity agreement has been agreed with the men under which they will pick up eight boxes of cardboard refuse and five boxes of bottles every day.

HON P J ISOLA:

From each establishment?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

From each establishment.

HON P J ISOLA:

Are those the only terms of settlement or is the Minister able to make a statement on the terms of settlement?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, but obviously for this picking up of the trade refuse they will get an enhanced productivity payment.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is that all that is involved in the settlement?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, that is all.

HON P J ISOLA:

For how long has the rubbish been lying around in the streets?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think 5 or 6 weeks.

HON P J ISOLA:

And there has been no health hazard in that time?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There has not been a very great health hazard since most of the refuse was trade refuse which was basically cardboard and empty bottles although it was sprayed by the Public Health just in case.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

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?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Only two buildings have been erected by private developers in Naval Hospital Road in recent years. In neither case was planning permission given subject to a condition that garage spaces had to be provided. The schemes were approved on the basis of plans which included a certain amount of garaging but there does not exist in law any obligation upon a landowner to continue using land for the purpose for which planning permission has been granted. Since 1975, however, no material change of use can be made without the authority of the Development and Planning Commission.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 92 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

When the Minister refers to the new conditions would that apply to that particular building?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, it would not apply retrospectively.

NO. 93 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what is its present programme to develop Catalan Bay in order to provide more housing accommodation, how its programme differs now from previous Ministerial statements, when work will commence and how long it will take to complete?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

I would refer the Hon Questioner to the information given by the Minister for Public Works on the 17 December, 1980, in answer to Question No 402 of 1980.

All that I can add is that it is proposed to commence work at the end of September and completed within a construction period of 18 months.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 93 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, therefore the Minister will agree that there has been considerable changes from previous ministerial statements on the subject?

HON A J CANEPA:

The change, Mr Speaker, is due to this, that it has been intended to make a start on this project during the current financial year to carry it out with direct labour. Difficulties in recruiting the necessary supervisory staff coupled with the problems of the building industry have led Government to decide to put the project out to tender.

HON G T RESTANO:

I don't think that is entirely correct, Mr Speaker. Initially, and I quote from 1978 Hansard, the then Minister for Economic Development said that the work would commence some time after August, 1979. Also in his own statement made in November the Minister said that the work would commence in January, 1981. Here are two different statements and now we have a third one today. Will the Minister confirm that there has been serious changes from previous ministerial statements?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, arising from supplementaries to Question 402 of 1980, the Hon Mr Restano made clear that he was going to carry out some research on the matter. The Hon Mr Featherstone explained then that there had been changes in the plans to the extent that instead of proceeding with a Medview Terrace type of design, changes were made to the plans in order to provide 12 units in the first phase and he explained how delays occurred because of this in that there was a need for a new design for the production of new contract

drawings and documents with consequent delays in a starting date. In the intervening period between December and now, the Government has advertised both within Government and publicly in order to try and recruit an officer to supervise the direct labour force. We have found it impossible to recruit such a PTO II and in the light of that, in the light of the difficulties that in this intervening period became apparent in the building industry in that the industry required more work, the Government decided that this project should go out to contract. In doing so tender documents, working drawings and bills of quantity have to be provided and this entails a further delay of another few months.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask, Mr Speaker, is it still the intention that 12 units should be built?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is correct, Sir, 12 units in Phase 1.

HON G T RESTANO:

The bills of quantity that the Minister says had to be done again, were these not originally prepared when it was thought that the work would be done by job price contract?

HON A J CANEPA:

The work was never going to be done by job price contract, it was going to be done by the Government's direct labour force.

HON G T RESTANO:

Were not bills of quantity prepared for those jobs?

HON A J CANEPA:

Not if the work was going to be done by the direct labour force.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is the Minister saying then that the job was envisaged to be done by the Public Works Department but no bills of quantity had been done and therefore the cost of the project was not known?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is not the same, Mr Speaker, as when work is put out to contract.

HON G T RESTANO:

My question was, did the Government not know when it envisaged the Public Works Department carrying out this work what the cost would be if no bills of quantity had been prepared?

HON A J CANEPA:

The position, Mr Speaker, I understand, is that you need much more specified bills of quantity if you are going to go out to contract. That is the information that I have. I am not a technical expert on the matter I am not even responsible for the Public Works Department, that is the information that I have and I must go on that information. The Hon Member may be right and I may be wrong but I must give the information that I have.

HON G T RESTANO:

I accept that that is the information that the Minister has. Without being a technical man myself either, it seems to me odd that when a job goes out to tender bills of quantity are prepared so that one knows exactly how much the project is going to cost but if it is going to be done by the Public Works Department this doesn't seem to be done. Is there any reason for this?

HON A J CANEPA:

I imagine, Mr Speaker, that the manner of control is different. If the Government's own direct labour force is going to carry out the work there is less danger for instance that there might be claims later on as there would be in the case of a private contractor and therefore I think you have to guard against those terms by having much more detailed specifications.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how long will it take to complete, did I hear the Minister rightly when he said 18 months? Therefore if the work starts in September of this year by March, 1983, this job should be completed.

HON A J CANEPA:

I hope so but I don't think we are going to start before the end of September. I think it would not make a great deal of sense to start at the beginning or the middle of September, I think it should be the end of September. Since that is the kind of target date that we can reasonably aim at I think it should be the end of September or early October in order to try and minimise the extent of inconvenience this year to patrons of Catalan Bay beach.

NO. 94 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

What plans does Government have in relation to the PWD ex-joinery used as Stores in Library Street and further does Government not agree that this part of the Town area is not the ideal place to locate such Stores?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The use of the old Workshop in Library Street as a stores is a temporary measure pending the proposed acquisition of suitable premises, namely the PSA Depot at Ragged Staff, by the Government which will enable the Public Works Department to resolve its present storage problems. It is the intention, as soon as it is vacated by the Department, to invite tenders for the Library Street property for commercial and/or residential redevelopment. Government will of course ensure that the site is exploited to its optimum capacity.

NO. 95 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government inform this House if there has been any contract awarded to an investment company for the construction of the Woodford Cottage Development?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The answer is that no contract has been awarded to an investment company. It is still the intention to proceed with the development of the Woodford Cottage site as far as possible on the basis of a Housing Association Scheme.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 95 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

I ask this question, Mr Speaker, because an article appeared in one of the local weeklies that in fact mentioned the name of an investment company and they said that this was the reply given to them by Government.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am afraid Government cannot take responsibility for all that is published in the press.

HON W T SCOTT:

But I didn't see Government in fact giving a refusal.

MR SPEAKER:

It is not for Government in this House of Assembly to deny any allegations which may appear in the press.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, Sir, perhaps I may help the Hon Member, he may be confused with the Buena Vista site.

HON W T SCOTT:

I am grateful to the Chief Minister but I am not.

HON P J ISOLA:

Following the answer that the Government propose to continue with this scheme, is it not a fact that only 7 applicants applied for housing in the Woodford Cottage scheme and if that is a fact how is it that the Government is going to proceed, is Government going to put the whole development to tender and then sell the houses? How can the Minister say the Government proposes to proceed with it if there are only 7 applicants?

MR SPEAKER:

As far as possible on the basis of the Housing Association Scheme, that was the answer.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister how can the Government envisage carrying on with the development if there are only 7 applicants? Does Government hope to attract more people into the scheme?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, the 7 applicants are going to be invited to form a Housing Association and set the ball rolling but at the same time Government is going to re-advertise in their advertisement making it clear that it is not an essential that one must be able to offer up some accommodation if one is accepted for this Housing Scheme and it is hoped that the other number of applicants will be forthcoming. On the situation that the total number of 14 houses were not taken up but some 10 or 11 were taken up, Government might consider building the other 3 themselves.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, am I then right in thinking that nothing will be done as far as any building on the site until the Government has re-advertised and assessed the result of that advertisement?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Government is not going to do any building, it is the Housing Association that would do it but they are going to be invited to get in touch with my department so that everything can go ahead as expeditiously as possible. I do not think it would be wise to restrict their ability to build as soon as possible since inflation is continuously increasing the price of building and if we made them wait for another 6 or 9 months they will have to pay an extra amount which would be unnecessary.

HON P J ISOLA:

The Minister has said that the Government intends to go ahead, who is going to provide the funds for the actual bricklaying to start off?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The Members of the Housing Association.

HON W T SCOTT:

Who presumably were 7 and Government now hopes there will be 14 but what if there are only 7 and therefore the financial commitment of each of the 7 will be increased.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The total area is divided up into 14 spaces. Seven of those spaces are required for the 7 people concerned and they are being invited to form a Housing Association and to get on with the job of filling up those 7 spaces. There will still be an empty space where another 7 houses can be built and once again a tender will go out asking people who are interested to apply and informing them on this instance that it is not a prerequisite that they are able to offer up some other housing to Government. On receipt of that reply, if there are a number of people interested then Government will proceed to allocate to those people, if there are 7 then they will get the 7, if there are 5 or 4 then those 4 will get an allocation and the odd 3 houses left will be built by Government themselves with the intention of making them into quarters. If there should be more than 7 then of course there would have to be some form of ascertaining which 7 should be given the opportunity. If nobody applies then Government would have to have a rethink what to do with that space of 7 houses.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the position then that the 7 who have applied will be expected to finance all the building, that they will get the land free from the Government? Is that the position?

MR SPEAKER:

It has been phased into two phases; the first phase will be that which will be completed by the applicants who have been successful so far and the second phase will be re-advertised. Is that correct?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, that is correct, Sir. I would mention that this Housing Association, once it gets itself formed, will then have to find the cost of the land which is a moderate cost and also the cost of the building itself.

HON P J ISOLA:

So what is happening is that the Government is in effect giving up land to be used for normal housing at no cost to the Government virtually or rather for a little financial return, to private building. Can the Government tell us something about the people who have applied, have they given in accommodation?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Could I comment, Sir, that I have another Question No 99 and that supplementary is actually covered in the answer to that question.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I thought I heard the Minister insinuate that after the first 7 had been built, let us assume there were no more applicants, it was restricted to the 7 that you have now, that perhaps Government would entertain the building of individual units one at a time.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, I never said that, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

I didn't say you said it, I said you had insinuated it.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I don't think I insinuated that.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, isn't this a fundamental change from the original policy of the Government which was that essentially by offering this site to people who were giving up accommodation, they themselves would be helping other people who are not in a position to buy their own houses and isn't this a complete departure from that policy?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think that again, Sir, is part of my answer to Question No 99.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the position then that Government is going to allow 7 people to go ahead building their 7 units whether anybody else comes forward or not in the foreseeable future and would that not create or possibly lead to the creation of a situation where there is going to be a piece of land around which there are no builders and no plans. Would it not be better to wait until the Government has a full picture of the development before allowing 7 people in into the development and leave the user of the rest of the land in limbo?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Government feels that the 7 people who have applied should get on as soon as possible to form their Housing Association and to get on with building. If the other area of land gets applications quickly they can go ahead very quickly after this, if there should be no application that will be an empty piece of land which can obviously be put out to private contract.

HON P J ISOLA:

If the test of granting an allocation is no longer going to be the handing in of accommodation and no longer going to be the housing priority list, would it not be in the public interest then for the Government to try and get as much money as they can for those 7 plots of land by putting them out to tender? Why give 7 plots of land to people on advantageous terms when by putting it out to tender the Government might receive much more money? What is the purpose of doing it if there are no longer any conditions attached?

MR SPEAKER:

What the Minister has not made clear, perhaps, is whether the first 7 applicants are still subject to the conditions which were advertised.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, again, if I might wait until the answer to Question No 99.

11.3.81

NO. 96 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Have tenders for the Air Terminal Extension been put out in January as indicated by the Minister in reply to Question No 401 of 1980?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Going out to tender on the Airport Terminal Extension was delayed due to the under-staffing of the typing section allocated to the Quantity Surveyors.

The typing is now completed and the tender documents were ready by Friday 6 March. The tender has now been advertised.

NO. 97 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say whether a time limit for the development of Parson's Lodge has been set and from what date is it operative?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

A time limit for the development of Parson's Lodge has not yet been fixed as the scheme is still at the Feasibility Study stage. A dead line was set for the submission of this study and this was met by the Company involved. Some additional information is expected shortly which will enable the Government to decide whether the project is acceptable and economically viable and should be proceeded with. Any formal agreement entered into subsequently would, in addition to standard safeguards, set time limits for the execution and completion of the work.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 97 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Would the Minister make absolutely sure that we don't have a repetition of Engineer House?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am not aware, Mr Speaker, of what Engineer House was all about. All that I know is that I undertook to expedite the purchase of it and that that has been done and therefore it will be included in the next Development Programme but I am not familiar with the history of EngineerHouse going back 20 years, I don't know what happened at the time but I can assure the Hon Member that having regard to the manner in which land is disposed of nowadays I very much doubt whether there would be a repetition of that.

11.3.81

NO. 98 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether it has received any proposals for a land reclamation project on the East side of the Rock?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

No proposals have been received for such a project. Enquiries have, however, been received indicating interest in the 1968 reclamation proposals made then to the City Council which were related to the protection and development of the East Coast of Gibraltar for tourism. The scheme made imaginative and far reaching recommendations which raised major financial, infra-structural and engineering issues which have been up to the present beyond the financial resources of the Government to undertake and resolve. I may add that any submissions in this regard would be most seriously considered by the Government.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government reveal the numbers of housing units which will become available to them in accordance with the terms of application for the Woodford Cottage scheme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

I should like, for the record, to clarify the position with regard to the surrender by applicants of accommodation in connection with their participation in the Housing Association Scheme. The availability of such accommodation was not a precondition to taking part in the Scheme but would have been a preferential factor in the selection of applicants had the response exceeded the number of houses intended to be built.

Of the seven applications received two would involve the surrender of Government quarters and in the case of a third applicant, the acceptance by the landlord of tenants nominated by the Housing Department to two privately owned flats. There is also the probability of a flat at Alameda Estate reverting to Government for re-allocation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 99 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean that of the 7 only 4 units are likely to result to the Government and that the Government is therefore giving up a very valuable site in Gibraltar which could have been the subject of a more comprehensive building development for the sake of getting 4 flats and how can the Government say that this will alleviate the housing situation in Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The actual figure is 4 definitely, and possibly, a fifth.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

In view of the shortage of land wouldn't it be reasonable for the Government either to have a scheme whereby they give up part of accommodation or at least undertake themselves to build houses which will be economical for people to buy particularly to people who perhaps later on might be able to give up accommodation and not give precious land to possible developers who are going to take advantage of the fact that they are not paying the premium for the land that they should.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

They will still be paying some £8,000 for the land which is such a small sum and furthermore they are not developers it is for their own occupation. This was the whole idea of setting up a cooperative or a Housing Association and let people get on with the job for themselves and not be exposed to the vagaries and profits of a private developer.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Doesn't the Minister realise that perhaps this is the way we are going to finish up, by some developer, in fact, coming in?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I don't see how any of these 7 are going to be a developer.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister not agree that the time of architects and Quantity Surveyors and others in his department could have been more usefully spent getting up-to-date or getting together the plans for the Development Programme about which he answered me earlier on in this session which have shown quite big slippages especially with the Airport Terminal that has only just gone out to tender, that was in the 1978/81 Programme, could have been more usefully spent in hurrying up the scheme and getting the Development Programme under way and the money spent than using them on what has been proved to be a worthless exercise, of very little value to the real housing problems of the Community?

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, in answer to the previous Question No 95, the Hon Minister said, amongst other things, that the Government would entertain building 2 or 3 quarters themselves. Doesn't this constitute a total departure from the development as originally proposed in this House by the Government one of the reasons of which was that it could not entertain the development because of the cost element?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Seven sites have been applied for. Government is going to put out further advertising to see if the other 7 are also taken up. On the condition that the 7 were not taken up Government would be willing to consider joining into the Scheme and building 2 or 3 flats which would become Government quarters. There is a very dire need for Government quarters, we are paying rents to private landlords for certain people who come from overseas who we need, these rents are very high indeed and it would be quite economical for the Government to build 2 or 3 quarters in such a development and would prove eventually to Government's advantage.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is this not a total departure from the original idea of having this kind of Scheme?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, the whole idea of the Scheme was to try and get 14 people to apply, if we only get 10 we are not going to throw the whole thing out of the window, we are going to say to those 10 "go ahead", there is still a little bit of space left, we are going to try and find a reasonable way of using that space, one way could be to put it out to a private contractor and another way is for Government to use it themselves and we think the second way is the better.

HON W T SCOTT:

Are we to look forward to a situation therefore, Mr Speaker, if the Government has no further applications for the balance of the 7, and there are another 3, so I understand, in addition to the first phase, there are 17 in total, that perhaps, if they do not receive any further applications Government will build quarters for ten?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, I have not said that at all. I am afraid the Hon Member does not listen or he does not interpret what I say properly. I said if we get another 3 or 4, leaving 3 blank spaces, we would be willing to take up the 3 to complete the whole development. I have said if we get no applications Government will think again and possibly put it out to private tender.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does Government consider that the building of Government quarters should take priority over the building of houses in the housing priority list?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think they should go hand in hand since both are needed for the well running of Gibraltar.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister say that this is going hand in hand when all of 3 are going to be taken up by Government quarters? Where is the hand in hand there of the building of £62,000 houses?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think if we are building and modernising some 200 houses, 3 in comparison to that is a fairly good hand in hand.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can I ask the Government, Mr Speaker, what is the difference between allowing the other part of that land to be used for private development and what is happening now? Isn't what is happening now private development?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The Housing Association would give the houses to a number of people basically of Gibraltar which would be at a specific cost with no great profit margin incorporated. If they were to go to a private development I should imagine the private developer would be able to sell them to who he likes, possibly to people not of Gibraltar, people coming in from outside who could buy up the property and it would make no impact whatsoever on the Gibraltar housing situation.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is it then the case, Mr Speaker, that there is a condition put that the houses cannot be re-sold to a non-Gibraltarian?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I wouldn't like to say a non-Gibraltarian because I think there are a number of worthy persons who are what I would consider a great help and need to Gibraltar and they are not Gibraltarians and they might be interested in such a scheme. They would only be available to people who could qualify normally for housing allocation in the normal course of events.

HON J BOSSANO:

But is it in fact a condition that only people who are qualified to apply for Government housing can apply and that the houses cannot be re-sold to anyone who doesn't qualify?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

On the question of the development of the other site would the Government not think that if the only benefit that they are gaining is the limitation of the houses to a restricted market that if they cannot obtain people interested in the rest of the site on a similar basis, would the Government not think that it is worth reconsidering the use of that site with a view to developing it for public housing rather than let a private developer take it?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I think that is quite reasonable.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, the Housing Association formed for the original section of the development, will they be responsible in any way for the other development?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 100 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government make a statement with regard to the tenders received for the multi-storey car park and can Government state whether any tender has been accepted and can Government state the earliest possible date for such a car park to be in operation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

No statement can be made at this stage since the closing date for the submission of proposals for a multi-storey car park is 31st March, 1981. Considerable interest has been shown and 27 application forms have been taken to date.

Proposals received will be considered by the Development and Planning Commission who will select those schemes which are found acceptable on planning, architectural and economic terms. Those selected would then be invited to tender for the site on the usual competitive basis.

It is not possible at this stage to state the earliest possible date when such a car park will be in operation since one of the factors that will determine the commencement of the work will be the availability of alternative accommodation for the seven families who now occupy the Casemates Married Quarters before possession of the site can be given to the developer.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 100 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that not mean, having regard to the terms of the Government announcement on the matter, that the earliest possible date might well be some date about 6 years hence?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, I would not agree, Mr Speaker. I have told the Hon Mr Isola before publicly that he is very fond of doubling things when it suits him and halving them when it suits him as well. The position is that we cannot anticipate the construction of the required 7 quarters before the end of 3 years unless this period could be shortened by the developers undertaking the work themselves to specification and the MOD were agreeable to this course of action.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that not mean, Mr Speaker, that it seems it will take about 3 years before the present occupants are rehoused and have not the experts in the Ministry of Economic Development and Planning not pointed out to the Minister that physically pulling down or doing whatever to that building and building a multi-storey car park would take at least another 18 months?

HON A J CANEPA:

If that is the case, Mr Speaker, we are talking of $4\frac{1}{2}$ years and not 6.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am now very generous in my allowances for slippage where the Government planning is concerned.

HON A J CANEPA:

It is not Government, Mr Speaker, this would be done by private development. There is no slippage there.

HON P J ISOLA:

I don't know whether there is or there isn't.

HON A J CANEPA:

The private sector is much more efficient than Government.

HON P J ISOLA:

May I ask the Minister that we are really thinking in realistic and practical terms and perhaps he would give me an estimate in realistic and practical terms. We are not thinking of a multi-storey car park before $4\frac{1}{2}$, possibly, 5 years hence.

HON A J CANEPA:

It could be.

HON P J ISOLA:

If that is the case, Mr Speaker, where does the Minister for Economic Development and Planning propose to put all these cars that seem to be pouring out from the garages into Gibraltar? Has he no alternative plans?

HON A J CANEPA:

The alternative that I have is the site that Mr Isola knows all about and which he will not tell me about and this is a matter that we discussed at great length at the last meeting when questions were put precisely on that.

HON J BOSSANO:

If the Minister for Economic Development considers that the provision of this car park is an important element in the economic development to Gibraltar, does he not agree that the strongest representations must be made to the United Kingdom Government that such a development should not be held up because of seven service families?

HON A J CANEPA:

They would not be held up, Mr Speaker, if the developer undertook to reprovide these seven quarters but unless this is done the problem is that there can be no guarantee that Mrs Thatcher's Government will provide the pounds and pence which are required in the proposed bill of married quarters by the Ministry of Defence entailing, I think, some 70 quarters and the seven would be included in those 60 or 70 quarters so unless the money is forthcoming from the Ministry of Defence and they proceed and go ahead the only way to get around the problem, and this is a possibility I think that could shorten the time factor, would be by the developer on an agreed site, on a site made available by the MOD, if he were to build these seven quarters according to the specifications of the MOD and I would hope that MOD would be agreeable to that arrangement. That could bring the matter forward.

HON J BOSSANO:

Have in fact the MOD indicated their willingness to make a site available for these re-allocations?

HON A J CANEPA:

I don't think that the MOD has indicated from Whitehall that that is the case but my understanding is that the MOD representatives that we deal with from their own point of view they do not see any objection to that and I would hope that they would therefore put it to Whitehall.

HON J BOSSANO:

If the MOD effectively did its own construction would the re-allocation cost still not have to be paid too?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, but there would be some account taken of the extent of betterment as between whatever quarters were built and the condition and value of those quarters at Casemates.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Government in a position to enter into a contractual relationship with a developer?

HON A J CANEPA:

Would he amplify on that?

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Government in a position today or in a month's time to enter into a formal contract with a developer, is it cleared that far with the MOD?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, subject to the conditions which were laid down in great detail in the document that has been made available to applicants.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 101 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state the present position as regards the Port feasibility study?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The final report on the Port Feasibility Study was received on the 25th February, 1981. This is a comprehensive and detailed document, in two volumes, and Ministers and Officials concerned are at present engaged in an in-depth study of the report.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 101 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, if the report has cost £100,000 I am not surprised it should be in two volumes. I think we would expect nothing less, but will the Government make this available to the House?

HON A J CANEPA:

I regret, Mr Speaker, that I am not in a position to answer that question now.

NO. 102 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government give details of the proposed Development Programme prior to this year's budget debate?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Pending discussions with Her Majesty's Government, the Government is in no position to give details of the proposed Development Programme for 1981/86. A date for these discussions remains to be fixed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 102 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Minister agree that the nature of the proposed development programme has a great bearing on the budget and on the finances of Gibraltar for the forthcoming year?

HON A J CANEPA:

Indeed, Mr Speaker, I would very much agree but the extent to which the proposed programme can be carried out depends on the outcome of these talks with Her Majesty's Government and on the state of the Gibraltar Government's own finances as this will govern the amount of local contributions that can be made. There would therefore be little value in giving details at this stage.

HON J BOSSANO:

But presumably, Mr Speaker, in the draft estimates in the Budget, figures will be shown indicating what Government envisages its own contribution is going to be or would this not be the case?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, it wouldn't be the case.

HON J BOSSANO:

So in fact we shall have no indication in looking at the Budget how this relates to what may subsequently be introduced as a result of the development programme in terms of Government's own expenditure?

HON A J CANEPA:

Not unless there were to be some indication by Her Majesty's Government of what it is prepared to commit itself to provide prior to the estimates being circulated to Hon Members opposite.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister state whether the Government is in a position to hold discussions with the British Government on the development programme? Is Government's plan for the 1981/86 development programme sufficiently advanced to enable these discussions to be held in a meaningful manner?

HON A J CANEPA:

Very much so, Mr Speaker. The aid submission was in fact despatched to ODA on the 9th of February.

HON P J ISOLA:

In that case, Mr Speaker, ought not the Government to make strong representations to the British Government that these talks take place before the Budget session of this House otherwise the Government will have started off with a slippage on their development programme on the very first day?

HON A J CANEPA:

Why does the Hon Member assume that that has not been done, Mr Speaker?

HON P J ISOLA:

Because the Hon Member hasn't said it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 103 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government undertake to keep the Port free of oil and other debris?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The Government of course undertakes to do its best to keep the Port free of oil and other debris.

When the presence of oil in the harbour is reported to the Port Department, the City Fire Brigade and, when necessary, the Dockyard Fire Service, is immediately informed and the pollution is treated with dispersants. The Port Department has at its disposal an oil boom of approximately 400' in length. To acquire equipment to deal with any large scale pollution would be excessively costly. With regard to floating debris, the Port Department operates a small scavenger boat which under normal conditions can cope with pollution of this nature. However, because the refuse destructor has recently been undergoing maintenance, a substantial amount of rubbish has been finding its way into the harbour after having been dumped into the sea.

The Port Department has collected and disposed of certain amount of this rubbish, but does not have the facilities for tackling the problem fully.

The destructor came back into service on Saturday 7th March.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 103 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, as I understand it isn't part of the small oil pollution, I am not talking about a major disaster or a sunken ship, isn't part of the oil pollution in the harbour due to ships cleaning out their engine oil in the harbour?

HON A J CANEPA:

I don't think so, Mr Speaker, it could be but I think there is legislation against that and steps I think can be taken to perhaps fine them if they do that, I think that that is an offence.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is Government satisfied with the present state of the harbour, apart from the floating debris, the oil?

HON A J CANEPA:

I have had no reports, Mr Speaker, about any serious accumulations of oil. I think the debris is what has been worrying us of late. I realise that there is oil from time to time but not in large quantities, thankfully. I think the Hon Member will recall that he put a question on this matter some time last year. At that time I think certain oil slicks had been identified but I do not think that that is the position now. I am not aware that the Port Department has received any complaints on the matter.

HON J BOSSANO:

I am intrigued by the Hon Member's answer that the debris which is refuse being brought into the harbour is then collected and disposed of. Is he saying that they then take it back, dump it again and wait for it to turn out in the harbour once more?

HON A J CANEPA:

That re-cycling has not, in fact, been carried out.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

11.3.81

NO. 104 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state whether the yachts presently in the Destroyer Pens will be allowed to remain at their present berths or whether Government will undertake to reberth them elsewhere?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The yachts presently berthed at the Destroyer Pens cannot be allowed to remain there as the berths are urgently required for commercial use. May I add that the whole purpose of acquiring No 4 Jetty would otherwise be clearly defeated.

These yachts were berthed there by the Admiralty and they are in Admiralty waters. The Gibraltar Government is under no obligation to reberth them elsewhere.

There are no facilities within the Commercial Harbour for affording safe berthing to these yachts. However, the Government in cooperation with the Admiralty is trying to help find temporary berths for those yachts which have nowhere else to go.

NO. 105 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has Government received any representation in relation to the Shops (Time of Closing and Opening) Order and does Government propose to review the legislation originally enacted for the protection of shop assistants but no longer serving such a purpose?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Government has not received any representations with regard to the Shops (Time of Closing and Sunday Opening) Order, 1976.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 105 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Has the Minister for Trade not received representations for amending this legislation?

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, to the extent that the Minister for Trade is a member of the Government the answer is no.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Government consider looking into the advisability of amending such legislation?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

When I answered that the Government had received no representations I had already consulted my colleague, the Minister for Economic Development so I could answer safely 'no' knowing that it was a Government decision. As there have been no representations I see no need to change the Order.

HON G T RESTANO:

My understanding is that representations have been made from time to time but, anyway, again I would ask the Government whether they will look into the advisability of amending the legislation and if the Minister says that he has received no representations perhaps he can take this as being such.

HON A J CANEPA:

If the question is directed to me the answer is no.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Unless I receive representations I do not intend to make any alterations to the Order.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am asking now, Mr Speaker, that is the point, I am asking now whether Government will look into it.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, I will not look into it.

HON G T RESTANO:

Could he tell us on what he bases this answer?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

On the grounds that I have not received any representations from anyone concerned in the trade.

HON G T RESTANO:

As a result of the law as it stands today, presumably Government realises that there have been occasions in the recent past where trade has not been able to be carried out on a Sunday because of this law and would Government not consider that from time to time the legislation needs to be looked into especially when trade is perhaps going through a recession and all trade that can be picked up legally is good for Gibraltar as a whole?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I have already said no, Mr Speaker.

11.3.81

NO. 106 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government now in a position to inform this House as to when it expects the Report from the Committee looking into the Public Works Department?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

The Report was received on 4th March. It is being studied and will be published in the near future.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 106 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

I am grateful to the Hon and Learned Chief Minister for that answer. At least we will see one report submitted to Government that will be published.

NO. 107 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Will 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 again by the Government in December last year. There has been no change in the circumstances which prevailed when I answered a similar question in March, 1980, and the Government has again concluded that the curtailment of the shopping time available to visitors from Tangier would entail economic disadvantages for Gibraltar and that a change would not therefore be justified. The matter can be reconsidered if and when direct communications with Spain are restored or when any other new circumstances arise which would make a change desirable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 107 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, perhaps if the Chief Minister were to review the Time of Closing and Opening Order he might not find the problem so insuperable.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The position would still be the same because the time that people would be in Gibraltar is curtailed because of the change of time between Gibraltar and Tangier. Indeed, the trade is given freedom to open shops between 1 pm and 3 pm on days when there are cruises from Tangier.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does that mean then that if and when the frontier opens we no longer care about the sailings to and from Tangier?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

We will continue to care but we also hope that they will be able to cater for larger numbers than those coming from Tangier as well.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, as I see it the answer to the question does involve not just the economic interests of Gibraltar but the social and recreational, the question of the cost of electricity, people having to spend more money on electricity, more fuel required, etc. Surely these schedules can be changed. How can the Chief Minister say that advancing the clock by one hour, that is, at worst one hour less in Gibraltar, can make this enormous economic interest. Has Government actually made a study of this or has Government taken it just from the people who operate the ferry? Has the Chamber of Commerce been consulted on this, could I ask?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Two hours in the summer and again I do not accept the original opening remarks of the Hon Member. He preceded the question by a statement which is not admitted. The matter was discussed with the Chamber of Commerce and with all other persons interested. The statement which he made which is not at all valid is that there would be a saving in fuel. The saving in fuel would be absolutely minimal, less than one per cent, because that was looked into generally, when we made the first study of the matter. The point is that Morocco does not normally change time in summer and if it does it is for a very short while, they do not change the schedule and if we advance one hour then it is 2 hours in advance of Morocco and therefore the time available with the schedule as they are and they are not our schedules, the main schedules are the ones on the Hydrofoil which affect a lot of the shoppers. They will not change the time and therefore the people have less time, in fact, it may not be worth their while coming at all because even now they have 3 and a half hours and it is known that it is not inexpensive to come from Tangier to shop in Gibraltar nor is the value of the pound helpful for that either.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I cannot understand this advancement of two hours. In effect, the Gibraltar time has not changed throughout the years so it is an advancement of an additional hour, not two hours. It may be two hours ahead of Moroccan time but the advancement is, in fact, one hour. Has the Chief Minister not considered the obvious benefit to Gibraltar of an extra hour of light and of sun for people in offices, people in shops, during the summer and has he had any consultation with the operators, with the representative bodies not just the Chamber of Commerce, has he had consultations with the Trade Unions, they have all agreed, have they? So everybody has agreed that we should not change the time, is that the position?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could the Chief Minister then please tell the House who has agreed and who has not agreed?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

This is an annual exercise and we go through all the motions like last year and all the supplementaries are the same. The Trade Unions are in favour of a change but unlike what I was saying that because the Trade Unions want it we will say yes, then you would say that the Government does what the Trade Unions want, in this case the Trade Unions want it but the Government thinks that it is in the economic interest of Gibraltar not to have it and therefore we have decided not to change it this year. If there is a change in circumstances then we will do it but we did a very extensive exercise last year and the year before and we came to the conclusion, after receiving representations from the

trade, Trade Unions, Associations and everybody concerned, that it was in the better interest of Gibraltar not to put the hour forward. There are some people who think that there may be advantage in being able to listen to the two TV news at different times.

HON P J ISOLA:

The Chief Minister has been kind enough to tell me that the Trade Unions would like the extra hour and I am surprised the Government hasn't conformed but may I ask the Chief Minister whether the Chamber of Commerce has said they do not want it and the other bodies he has consulted?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, the Chamber of Commerce certainly said it was in the interests of trade not to change it and the Tourist industry, too.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I would like the Chief Minister to clarify the position as regards a potential shopper who comes over on the Hydrofoil, he will be here for a limited period of time, that will always be 4 hours or 5 hours, how can it make a difference to him whether in fact he is here between 3 o'clock and 5 o'clock or 4 o'clock to 6 o'clock provided during those hours the shops are open?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Because the times of departure are the times of the place from which the boat departs and therefore they maintain the same hours and they have less time here, it is as simple as that.

HON A J HAYNES:

It cannot be.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The departure time of the Hydrofoil from Tangier is 10 o'clock or 11 or whatever it is, and they arrive here and the departure time is 4 o'clock, local time, and it continues to be 4 o'clock local time and if we advance an hour they will go at the old 3 o'clock so they have one hour less. It is as simple as that.

HON A T LODDO:

On a point of clarification. The way I see it and I would like the Chief Minister to correct me if I am wrong. At the moment we do not have summer time, if I may call it that, this one hour extra summer time, European time, whatever it is, we do not have it at the moment because the Moroccan Government will not change the time schedule.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, no, if the Hon Member will give way. I think he is completely mistaken. We now have European time all the year round and in Morocco they have one hour behind our time. If we advance one hour then we are two hours ahead of them, and as I have said the scheduled services will not be changed. The time that they decide to leave is local time and that will be the time that will regulate their departure and if they say 4 o'clock and we now say that 4 o'clock will be 3 o'clock then they will have one hour less and if they say that it is 2 o'clock you have two hours less.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, that is what I was trying to ask. The Moroccan Hydrofoil will not change their time, and that is why we do not have a Gibraltar summer time now but if the frontier opens then the Spanish bus service or what have you, then they will want to change to their summer time so we are at the moment deprived of this because of the Moroccans and in future we might be dictated to by the Spaniards.

MR SPEAKER:

What is your question?

HON A T LODDO:

My question is, is it a fact that we are now deprived of this summer time because of the Moroccans and then we will be dictated to have it by the Spaniards? Is this the case?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I don't know whether it is open to have evening classes at John Mackintosh Hall, some people could go there to take useful simple arithmetic courses. The criterion that the Government is using now is in the interest of trade at a time when there is, so it is said, a depression and the bulk of the trade in Main Street is now maintained by trippers from Morocco. If there is an open frontier situation the matter changes dramatically not only from the point of view of trade but from the point of view of land communications when it would be very unsettling to just change one hour by crossing a piece of land, if it ever comes to that, and in addition of course it is expected that if the frontier opens the number of tourists that will come from Spain will be such that the considerations that are now so important in respect of the trade from Morocco will take second place.

HON P J ISOLA:

Have the Hydrofoil operators been approached on this matter by the Government or the agents?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

They have been approached locally, it was done by the department, it was done with the Chamber of Commerce and we found that they were not prepared to change the schedule and in fact we do this in December because if there is going to be a change it is advisable that the change should be advertised with as much time as possible in order not to confuse people.

MR SPEAKER:

That is the end of the matter. Next question.

NO. 108 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will the Chief Minister inform the House what measures he has taken since 1977 in connection with the imposition of a tax on Insurance Company premia as mentioned in his Budget speech of 1977?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I have never suggested either during the course of the 1977 budget debate or at any other time that the Government was considering imposing a tax on insurance premia.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 108 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I do not have the Hansard in front of me.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

For a change I do.

HON G T RESTANO:

I do not have the Hansard of his budget speech but I do have the Hansard of one of the questions which I put to him two years after the budget, perhaps, he has it there too, it is Question 63 of 1979 when we did ask about the control of insurance premia.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will tell you what I said in 1977 from the Hansard. For a change I am one up on the researcher of the House. In the general context, Mr Speaker, of my contribution to the budget debate, I said: "Far too much money goes out of Gibraltar, British gilt edged, UK national savings repatriation of profit. We are giving serious consideration to the introduction of Gibraltar's own national savings or development bonds married to the premium bond idea, as well as the possible imposition of some reasonable degree of control over the repatriation of bank profits and insurance premia. Many countries require insurance companies, for example, to retain for local investment some proportion of the premium income which they collect". That is what I said and that does not get anywhere near the imposition of a tax.

HON G T RESTANO:

Well, since 1977, Mr Speaker, what has the Chief Minister done to implement these ideas that he put forward then?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will be very happy to tell the Hon Member. I have said in this House that the Government would consider the possible imposition to some degree control expatriation of the profits with banks and other financial institutions as well as of insurance premia. It is not proposed to pursue this. As far as the Government is aware since then and coming on to four years ago, things have changed and loan finance is available to Gibraltar for development and for other general purposes and it cannot be suggested that the pace of development is hampered by lack of such finance. Recent discussions with banks, both locally and in London, have revealed the willingness to lend money to Gibraltar for development. I am confident that the same facilities would be available to the private sector provided of course that any scheme for development is economically viable.

HON G T RESTANO:

I note that the Chief Minister said that he has had discussions with the banks. But what about the insurance companies?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The situation has dramatically changed as we all know and there is no dearth of money for development. We do not impose restrictions for the sake of them. It was at that time being considered as a possible measure but the circumstances have changed and it is not proposed to pursue that now.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, since the Chief Minister made this statement which I suppose must have been a very serious statement since it came in his budget speech and that is supposed to be Government policy, why has he taken four years to inform this House that what he said then no longer applies today? Or is it a decision which has been taken in the very recent past?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

In 1978 I said when I was asked whether I had now taken a decision because we know that the researcher follows them up regularly and I tell my colleagues not to give any date for anything if you do not want to have the Hon Mr Restano on your back for the rest of your life. Again there was a question from the Hon Mr Restano in 1978 and I said: "I am glad, however, to have the opportunity provided by this question to make a correction to my previous statement on the matter. Whereas I mentioned only the repatriation of bank profits and indeed these are not necessarily excluded, the Government has borne in mind and I should have made this clear, some requirement for local banks or any other authorities deposit taking institution to retain in Gibraltar a reasonable proportion of the amounts". That was in 1978 and there were all sorts of supplementaries and then I finished up by saying: "The statement made in last year's budget speech was a statement of intent in respect of a matter which on the advice then given and on the idea then discussed seemed to

be desirable and it still seems to be desirable to limit the amount or rather to ensure that sufficient flow of funds are in Gibraltar". So for as long as we are satisfied that there are sufficient funds in Gibraltar there is no need to do that. It was something that on the advice then given and on the circumstances then prevailing I stated that we would be looking into it. We looked into it well enough and the answer now is that we do not propose to proceed. It was not that it did not have Government support, it was a statement of an idea that was being pursued and which circumstances have now made it obvious that it is not necessary to pursue it.

HON G T RESTANO:

That was a very long answer, Mr Speaker, for which I am grateful, but of course it has nothing to do with the question that I asked and that was why it was that the Government having changed its intention, shall we say, in this matter, did not make a statement to this House previously as, in fact, promised in 1979 when he said after having asked him why we had to wait for two years, he said: "Well, surely, you can wait for another year". Why hasn't he made a statement since knowing that there was interest on this side of the House in this matter as a whole?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I don't know, it may well be that the statement had is salutary effect in the right quarters.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can I have an answer to my question as to why we haven't had a statement from the Chief Minister before?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Because the matter has been gradually improving to the extent that I am now quite satisfied that it is not necessary. Perhaps I could advance next year's question by saying that I will give the same answer as I have given today.

HON G T RESTANO:

I hope that in future when the Chief Minister makes Government policy statements at the budget one will not have to wait on this side for four years before he reneges on his statement.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will say whatever I think at the time that I think is proper and if I have to correct it I will make a correction and I am not going to have Mr Restano tell me what I have to say in budget speeches.

NO. 109 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government confirm that the holder of a British Passport issued in Gibraltar is not considered a UK national for community purposes if born in Spain?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

The Declaration by Her Majesty's Government contained in the Final Act to the Treaty of Accession to the European Communities states that a person is a United Kingdom national for Community purposes if he is a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies by birth or by registration or naturalisation in Gibraltar, or whose father was so born, registered or naturalised.

A British passport issued in Gibraltar will be endorsed accordingly if the person to whom it is issued comes within the definition I have referred to.

It follows that the fact that a person is born in Spain does not preclude the person being issued with a passport so endorsed, if the person comes within the definition in the Declaration.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 109 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Would in fact a person born in Spain with an original Spanish nationality and married to a Gibraltarian and acquiring a British passport as a result of marriage come within that definition?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the passport itself is not the determining factor, the starting point is, is the person a United Kingdom and Colonies citizen by virtue of birth, naturalisation or registration in Gibraltar? And if the person comes within that then he is entitled to be considered a Community national and to have his passport endorsed accordingly. If I understand correctly what the Hon Member said, if a person is born in Spain as a Spanish national therefore he seems to be an alien.

MR SPEAKER:

What he is asking is that if that person marries a Gibraltarian and is issued with a passport does he come within the legislation? The answer is that by marriage he is entitled to be registered.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, in that case the entitlement arises by virtue of the registration not because of the fact that a passport happens to have been issued.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is this registration an automatic thing, in fact, or do they have to apply?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

For a wife, yes.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could the Hon Member look into this matter then and make sure that people are advised accurately on the subject because apparently people have been refused the appropriate endorsement in their passport on the basis of their place of birth.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I will be happy to look into it.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

MEETING OF 7 JULY 1981

QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

110 to 208

NO. 110 OF 1981THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government give the same protection to the printing industry as that enjoyed by other industrial sectors by including this industry in the schedule under the Trade Licensing Ordinance?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Mr Speaker, I must remind the House that the Government was prepared to include printing in the Second Schedule to the Trade Licensing Ordinance when a Bill for an Ordinance to amend the Trade Licensing Ordinance was taken through all stages at a meeting of this House held in March 1980. The Bill provided for the inclusion of printing in the Second Schedule but was amended at the committee stage on the grounds that it could be thought that to include printing in the Trade Licensing Ordinance might have interfered with the freedom of expression. That argument was put forward by the Hon Major Peliza and I believe I am right in saying that at the time it had the support of the House.

As I said during the second reading of the Bill I have referred to, the proposal to include printing in the Trade Licensing Ordinance stemmed from representations made by the printing trade at the time. The Gibraltar Master Printers Association have once again raised the question of protection under the Trade Licensing Ordinance. These representations were received on the 29 June and are being considered. Clearly the views expressed by the House in March 1980 regarding freedom of expression in relation to the inclusion of printing in the Trade Licensing Ordinance must be taken into account. The Government would not wish to proceed on this matter unless it felt that members of the Opposition would support the inclusion of printing in the second schedule to the Trade Licensing Ordinance.

NO. 111 OF 1981

THE HON G T RESTANO

Would Government make a comprehensive statement with regard to the importation and operation of gaming machines in Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir. The importation of gaming machines is not controlled. That is to say machines are imported under Open General Licence but are subject to the payment of import duty at the rate of 12%.

The operation of gaming machines is governed by the provisions of sections 3 to 5 of the Gaming Ordinance. Briefly section 3 prohibits the keeping of a gaming house; section 3A makes it an offence to keep a gaming machine on premises for the purpose of gaming; section 4 makes playing in a common gaming house an offence; section 4A, recently introduced, regulates the use of gaming machines paying out lottery tickets only. Section 5 enables the Governor to exempt any person from the provisions of sections 3, 3A and 4. The policy of the Government is not to allow the proliferation of gaming machines in Gibraltar. By gaming machines I refer to machines commonly known as "one armed bandits". As regards machines which only pay out lottery tickets the Government has adopted a more liberal approach as they contribute towards the sale of the Government lottery.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 111 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I welcome the statement that it is not the intention to proliferate the situation of these machines but would the Government agree for the public at any rate it is more a practice to have machines which pay out cash prizes than those that pay out lottery prizes.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Government then say whether a monopoly has been given to one company in Gibraltar to operate machines giving out cash prizes.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir. The International Sporting Club in 1958 tendered for and were awarded a contract to build a Casino. There was an agreement signed in 1961 which outlined the terms by which the parties agreed to be bound and, when the Casino was completed in 1964 a lease of 99 years was issued and the necessary exemption under section 5 of the Gaming Ordinance was granted from 15th November 1964, valid for 21 years. The exemption authorised the keeping of a gaming house including gaming machines and under present arrangements the Government receives 10% of the gross takings. The instruments upon which the rights and operations of the Casino depend do not grant it the sole franchise to run a Casino in Gibraltar and the Government is advised

that they do not have an exclusive right. In spite of this it was never the Government's intention to allow another Casino to be built.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, but my question was is there a monopolistic situation in Gibraltar with regard to gaming machines giving cash prizes. And I think the answer is yes. Would the Honourable Member confirm whether in fact in practice the answer is "yes, Sir"?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

In practice yes Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is it not rather unfair on the other operators who have to give lottery tickets as prizes and is this not perhaps rather unfair on the public themselves who perhaps prefer to have cash prizes rather than lottery tickets. Would the Government consider reviewing the situation with a view to allowing other machines which are already installed in certain areas in town, to give cash prizes?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is there any reason for this Mr Speaker?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Because the Government does not wish, Mr Speaker, to proliferate the use of gaming machines in Gibraltar.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am not asking for any proliferation, on the contrary, Mr Speaker, I am saying for those that are already installed.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, these are not the same machines the machines that are installed are not paying out cash prizes, if we did permit them to give cash prizes, there would be a proliferation.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I am sorry, they are already. It is a special alteration to the machines which has made them not give cash prizes normally those machines would have given cash prizes. So there is no proliferation of machines.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think perhaps the Honourable Member and myself are at cross purposes. I accept that there would be no proliferation of machines what I am saying is there would be a proliferation of gaming machines paying out cash prizes and the Government does not consider this to be desirable.

HON G T RESTANO:

I regret that Mr Speaker, but there is one final question. Has there been or does the Government have any idea whether there is likely to be any application to operate gambling machines at what used to be the Continental Hotel?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would need notice of that question.

HON G T RESTANO:

I give notice now, Mr Speaker, perhaps the Honourable Member could look into it and give me an answer.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, you will have to put another question.

MR SPEAKER:

When the Honourable Member said that he needs notice he means that this is a matter for which he needs notice and therefore it is another question. And basically I tend to agree that I have allowed supplementaries but that is something which has arisen from the original question but which I think requires a new question.

NO. 112 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state the present position as regards the option to be taken in connection with the Alexander Howden Brokers Limited report and will Government state whether they have any additional information to the answer given to Question No 7 of 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, a desk-type report on the Alexander Howden proposals was received from the risk analysts Ernest A Notcutt (Overseas) Ltd in early May. Alexander Howden were invited to comment on this report and their reply, dated 25th June, was received last week. Both the Notcutt report and Alexander Howden's extensive comments are being considered. These require careful study before any further progress can be made in this matter.

NO. 113 OF 1981

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say why people who have completed income tax returns have been given a "B" code and at the same time been invited to call at the Income Tax Office to discuss any grievance in this respect?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is extremely unlikely that any individual who submitted his income tax return and claim for allowance on the form sent to him on the 1st of July 1980 would have been given a "B" code for 1981-82.

A "B" code, issued to single persons who are not eligible for any other allowances, has this year been given to all individuals who have failed to submit a return of income and claim for allowances to the Income Tax Department.

Notices of coding are issued through the employers who are informed that any employees who consider they have not been given the correct allowances should call at the Income Tax Office to regularise their position.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 113 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I accept that it might be unlikely but I can assure the Honourable Member that I have two instances which I have taken up personally and if I have taken up two I am sure there must be more. Would the Member look into it?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I will accept that it is possible that some errors have cracked the system. What I would point out to the Honourable Member, Sir, is that 40% approximately of taxpayers in Gibraltar failed to complete their tax returns in 1980 and the only way in which the Department can get these tax returns is by imposing the discipline of issuing a "B" notice. This is not an unusual arrangement in any country where people fail to make a return of their incomes but I will look into the point for the Honourable Member.

MR SPEAKER:

Next Question.

NO. 114 OF 1981

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, Sir, can Government say whether any time limit was set for the development of the site formerly occupied by the Shell petrol station at the junction of Corral Road and Landport?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, the Government and the occupier of this site are in dispute and legal proceedings are being initiated. The time limit for development may be in issue in such proceedings. I should be grateful if the Honourable Member would agree not to pursue the question until such time as the proceedings have been determined.

NO. 115 OF 1981

THE HON G T RESTANO

Who is authorised to place trunk calls payable to Government Departments?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, there is no central control over the use of the trunk call services. Heads of Departments are committed to exercising adequate controls in order to operate within their budget allocation for public utility services.

The general practice is that only senior officers who have been authorised to do so by their Head of Department use the service.

NO. 116 OF 1981

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government confirm whether it has any intention to localise the post of Principal Auditor once the present incumbent retires?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

It is Government's intention to advertise in Gibraltar for a permanent appointment to this office when the present incumbent retires.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 116 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Will the advertising be only in Gibraltar or will it also be carried out in the United Kingdom?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The advertisement may be placed first in Gibraltar and in the United Kingdom but I reiterate that the intention is to make a permanent appointment.

NO. 117 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government undertake to set up a complaints department at the Secretariat to deal with all and any complaints directed against the Civil Service?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir. There is already machinery to deal with such complaints.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 117 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

What is that machinery?

HON ATTORNEY- GENERAL:

Sir, any person who is aggrieved by the conduct or the behaviour of a member of the public service is free, and always has been free, to complain to a number of people including the Head of Department, the Establishment Officer, the Administrative Secretary, the Deputy Governor and if necessary the Governor.

HON A J HAYNES:

I was thinking of something less formal by way of machinery. A sort of small advisory bureau as much as a complaints department just to ensure that, however large the civil service gets, small problems to the public are dealt with quickly.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am not quite sure whether that is a question or a statement, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether you feel it would be better that such a body should be set up to consider complaints.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The Government does consider at the moment that there is adequate machinery and that there is no reason why a complaint, cannot be made to the right quarter or why the public should not know how to make a complaint. After all if somebody is not happy about something it is the common thing to go to the Head of Department. The Government is broadly happy with the present arrangements. The possibility of an Advisory Committee is possibly a matter that can be looked into, though I wouldn't give any comment as to whether there is any merit in it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 118 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Will Government take steps to apply the same principles of censorship to Spanish speaking films as it does to English speaking films?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, Sir, the position concerning this matter was outlined in some detail by the Hon Minister for Economic Development and also by myself in answer to Question No. 336 of 1980.

The legal position is that Spanish films may be exhibited if they have a Spanish certificate that is equivalent to a British Board of Film Censors certificate; although in the case of Spanish films there is no standing legal requirement that persons under the age specified in a certificate may not be admitted to a cinema showing the film. Such a requirement could be imposed by way of a condition attached to an exhibitor's licence and in any case all films are of course subject to the general powers of censorship under section 5 of the Entertainments Ordinance.

In practice, exhibitors are voluntarily displaying the classifications in advertising and are voluntarily enforcing age limits.

So far as British films are concerned, it is the practice to require a review wherever there is doubt as to the suitability of the film. As previously mentioned, there are some practical difficulties in adopting this procedure for Spanish films because of the short time during which such films are available in Gibraltar but those responsible monitor their nature from time to time by attending the initial public screenings.

Government is satisfied that these arrangements are for the time being adequate to ensure a reasonable standard of acceptability but is keeping the position under review.

NO. 119 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has Government reached any conclusions concerning the replacement of the Director of Medical and Health Services on his retirement and if not what options are being considered?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, the question of the replacement of the Director of Medical and Health Services, who is due to retire in May 1982, is a subject which has been exercising our minds for some time now.

I have already held consultations with the present Director and other interested parties as to the terms in which the circular advertising the vacancy should be drafted and I am currently considering the advice which has been rendered to me in this connection. Further consultations will be necessary and I am not therefore in a position at present to state the options.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 119 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has just said that he has had consultations with the Director and other interested parties. Would he like to explain what he means by interested parties?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I have been in contact with the British Medical Association. I have also been in contact with the General Nursing Council. I have also been in contact with the Department of Health in the United Kingdom. I took the opportunity of the Delegation of the CPA. There were two Chairmen for Health; one for Jersey and one for Guernsey, and I have had a discussion with them and, before the Honourable Member brings it to my notice, I did also say that I was prepared to discuss the matter with him as well. I am nearly ready to be able to tell him what the options are but before we obviously do that I am prepared to discuss it with him, if that is what he is asking.

HON G T RESTANO:

No, that is not really what I am asking although that of course has been asked in the past. What I am asking is what options are being considered; what advice has been obtained from this long list of organisations which the Minister has been consulting and the Director too for that matter.

HON J B PEREZ:

I have already informed the House that I have not yet finished with the number of people that I intend to consult on this matter because it is a very important matter for Gibraltar because in fact the Director of Medical and Health Services, should we decide to retain a

Director of Medical and Health Services, has a very important function to play for the whole of the community and this is why I say I have consulted various people. I have given him the list of the people I have already consulted, there are probably others but I am not yet ready to give the Honourable Member the options.

HON G T RESTANO:

Has the Minister any idea when will he be in a position to give those options?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes Mr Speaker, at least before the next meeting of this House which will be in October.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

What progress, if any, has been made to the improvement of the filing system at St Bernard's Hospital?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

The question of the filing system has been under consideration by my department and has been discussed by the Board of Management. A number of suggestions for improvement have been put forward and these have been referred to the Establishment Officer with the request that the advice of the Management Services Unit should be obtained. It is hoped that their report will be available shortly.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 120 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Amongst those recommendations, Mr Speaker, is there any recommendation to change the site of the office where the filing system is kept today,

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, that is one of the recommendations. As I have explained in a previous answer to a question, said that the main problem as I saw it with the filing system was space and one of those recommendations in fact to move the records office elsewhere but we are also looking into the question of computerisation of records. This is why the Establishment Officer has been given the options, he will look at it and then prepare a report.

HON G T RESTANO:

Where will the records office be kept now?

HON J B PEREZ:

This is a matter which is being looked at.

HON G T RESTANO:

It is a recommendation which has been made by the Department. I would like to know where it is intended to have the records office.

MR SPEAKER:

No. The Minister has said the recommendations have been that they should be moved not where it is going to be moved to.

HON G T RESTANO:

Well I am asking has there been a specific recommendation and if so to where is that office to be moved?

HON J B PEREZ:

There has not been a specific recommendation to move a place from A to B. There has been a recommendation that we ought to move it elsewhere.

HON G T RESTANO:

So in that case who has to decide where the new site will be?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member missed the point that I made. It may well be that we will not have to move to a larger space if we computerise the records but this is something that the Establishment Officer will be looking at and prepare a detailed report so that I can consider what is the best alternative available to us.

NO. 121 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will the Minister for Medical and Health Services state whether he has made any progress to recruit a seventh doctor for the Health Centre?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, after consultation with the Health Centre doctors and following a detailed report prepared by my department, Council of Ministers have recently agreed to the enlargement of the complement of doctors at the Health Centre by one.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 121 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

I am pleased to hear that statement at last, Mr Speaker. When will the advertising be made for this post?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker let me say that before I left for the United Kingdom with the six man delegation of the House, we gave instructions to the Establishment to advertise the post, unfortunately this morning I have yet not been able to check whether it has been advertised whilst I have been away, if not, it should be advertised in the very near future.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Are problems still being encountered at St Bernard's Hospital on account of unauthorised persons making use of the car park earmarked for doctors and staff?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, I am very grateful to the Hon Member for giving me the opportunity to make a statement on the situation prevailing at the hospital garage earmarked for the use of doctors and other authorised staff at St Bernard's Hospital.

As the Hon Member knows from publicity in the local press in the recent past, a great deal of difficulty has been experienced in maintaining this car park free from intruders in the past. Matters improved as a result of that publicity but I regret to say that the improvement was shortlived. In the more recent past difficulties have again been experienced with unauthorised people trespassing in this area and a great deal of abuse has been showered upon members of the hospital staff when attempts have been made to advise trespassers about the intended use of the car park. A number of devices used to prevent unauthorised persons from making use of the car park have been vandalised.

It does not appear that the persons concerned appreciate the fact that it is absolutely essential that this car park should be readily available to doctors and nursing staff to be able to park their vehicles in response to emergency calls and very often a lot of valuable time is wasted in convincing these persons to remove their cars when these doctors and nursing staff respond to emergency situations and find that they have nowhere in which to park their vehicles with the consequent risk to life involved. Other means of being able to achieve this objective are currently under consideration but I trust that in the meantime through the medium of the publicity that this reply to the Honourable Member's question will receive those persons who insist on abusing the use of this car park will appreciate that whatever restrictions are placed in the use of the car park are solely and entirely with a view to serving the public including the relatives of these persons when in need of urgent medical attention.

I once again appeal to the public spiritedness of those persons visiting the hospital and others not to block this car park with their vehicles since it could well be that at any given time the emergency that the doctors and the nursing staff are responding to could well affect their own relatives, and it would then be useless to blame the medical services for the consequence of their own irresponsible actions.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 122 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker I am very grateful for that reply and I too hope that the persons who use the car park who are not authorised to do so can be convinced, but I doubt it very much. Has the Government considered at any time placing a porter at the entrance of that garage to prevent anybody who is not supposed to park there from doing so?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, there are two particular points which the Government is considering. One is the question of porters and the second is that we have asked for different quotations for an electronic device or something which cannot be broken by the said people concerned. We have, as far as I can recall, in the last four months replaced a possible number of about five different padlocks but these keep on being broken by the people. But, yes, this is one of the things that we are looking at. Either that or the electronic barrier but it must be one which cannot be vandalised otherwise we are wasting our money.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, since it is quite an important matter because patients could be affected, would the Government treat this with urgency and if it is considered that the porter should be placed there which I think probably is the only machinery which cannot be vandalised, they should implement that policy quickly.

HON J B PEREZ:

We are in fact dealing with the matter as a matter of urgency.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 123 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what agreement has been reached with tobacco importers with regard to advertising generally and health warnings?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, the agreement between Government and the Tobacco Importers, which is still in the process of being finalised, is a purely voluntary one and is intended to provide for health warnings to appear on all cigarette packets sold in Gibraltar and on cigarette advertisements.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 123 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker will there be any voluntary agreement to cut advertising on the news media?

HON J B PEREZ:

Not at this stage, Mr Speaker, I must point out to the House that the whole basis of this particular voluntary agreement was in fact that we had to comply with EEC directives which in fact require what I have already outlined to the House. But the question of cutting down on advertising on cigarettes is not in fact part of Government's policy at this precise moment of time. We believe that we ought to do one thing at a time. In other words one has to learn to walk before one runs.

HON G T RESTANO:

So therefore if it is to comply with EEC directives, surely it is not a voluntary agreement it is a statutory one if we are to keep to EEC directives, is that correct?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, because the EEC directives say that a particular Government has to do all it can within its power to promote or to endeavour. The EEC is not a mandatory one which requires legislation. But let me add that in fact, as far as I am concerned as Minister for Health I prefer to have an agreement on a voluntary basis rather than legislation because one gets much better cooperation and let me add now and say in this House that the cooperation from the importers of tobacco in Gibraltar has been fantastic. We have had various meetings and every has run, and in fact is running, very smoothly. I think this is working because it is being done on a voluntary basis. No legislation will be required unless of course importers come back and say that they prefer the legislation. Then of course we will look into it.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister not agree that it might be preferable that the money which is being used for advertising on the news media, which

is not of course good for young people and so on, be used for further sponsoring of, say, sporting associations.

HON J B PEREZ:

Of course I would agree.

MR SPEAKER:

No, that is irrelevant. It is not for the Minister to decide how the importers use their advertising money.

HON G T RESTANO

I only asked, Mr Speaker, in so far as that is what happened in the United Kingdom, where there was voluntary agreement between the government and the manufacturers of cigarettes and tobacco and advertising on the media there was cut down. The money that was to have been used for that was in fact used to sponsor other associations. I am asking whether it might not be preferable to carry out that here too.

HON J B PEREZ:

I said yes the only thing is that one must start somewhere and the way I started it was at least to get a voluntary agreement on the question of the health warning. That is step number one but I agree with the Honourable Member it is preferable if instead of the tobacco importers spending an amount of money in promoting and advertising the question of cigarettes that they should give it to sport. Of course I agree but one has to do one thing at a time.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I take it then, Mr Speaker, that the Minister will be taking it up with the tobacco importers once he has finalised the health warning.

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes.

NO. 124 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

What are Government's charges in respect of trunk calls when the number being called is connected to an answering machine?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

A trunk call which is answered by a device in the subscriber's absence is charged in the normal manner.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 124 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Is it not a fact, Mr Speaker, that from here we have to use the trunk operators because the new international dialling system is not in operation yet and it is the normal practice for operators before connecting the person making the trunk call of ensuring whether the number is the correct number and would it not be preferable for the person making the trunk call to have the option whether to accept that call or not?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am afraid not. These are the CIDT regulations covering international traffic and paragraph 85 says that in the manual or semi automatic service the chargeable duration is determined as follows:

"Station calls: The chargeable duration shall begin as soon as the call is taken up between the callee and the call number and somebody has answered the ring at both stations whoever answers the call." Then paragraph 87 article 87 says "When a subscriber line is connected to the absent subscriber service or to a device which answers the telephone in the subscriber's absence and may possibly record a message or a exchange data in the absent subscribers service or the device is assumed to be equivalent to a person answering for a subscriber at the latter's express wish. The call shall therefore be set up and charged in the normal manner." Now in the normal manner in Gibraltar if you ring UK it means you are charged for a minimum of three minutes.

Now if somebody knows that an answering machine is going to answer in the UK this can be got around by the fact that you can put a personal call in which the operator then has to get the person involved and then if there is an answering machine the operator will tell the caller what has happened and it is up to the caller to decide whether to listen to the answering machine or leave a message or not. He can then cancel the call and there is no charge to him.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is it a fact Mr Speaker, that for the reverse, for somebody calling Gibraltar, for example, from a public telephone box, his charge, if he is connected to an answering machine and does not want to call, and he puts the receiver down, is much lower than the other way because on that sort of telephone the minimum is one minute whilst here the minimum I think is three minutes? Is that correct Mr Speaker?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I am surprised that the Honourable Member is not up to date with regulations, in fact, I have the British Telecom Guide, November 1980. Calls from UK to Gibraltar and it does say "Operator assisted calls." Because we must compare like with like.

MR SPEAKER:

No. No. We are not going to start talking at cross purposes. You are being asked a simple question. Due to the fact that in England there is direct dialling and therefore the caller can put down the telephone if he does not get an answer or he gets an answer from a machine, is it not a fact that in Gibraltar since the minimum charge is three minutes the cost therefore to the Gibraltar caller will be higher than to a London caller? That is a simple question.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No. There are two things involved here one is direct dialling and one is operator assisted calls. For operator assisted calls the minimum charge is three minutes and this is what happens in Gibraltar. With IDD the system is different. But you have to compare light with light and not an operator assisted calls and IDD, which is obviously. .

MR SPEAKER:

No, I do not want to have another supplementary. What you are being told is that since we have not got IDD in Gibraltar is it not a fact that it is going to cost a Gibraltar call more because the minimum charge is three minutes. That is what you are being asked.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Of course, Sir, it is cheaper because they have IDD from UK to Gibraltar and not from Gibraltar to UK.

HON G T RESTANO:

Since it is not the fault of the Gibraltar subscribers that IDD has not been put into operation on this sort of call I would ask the Government to consider whether they could not reduce the minimum to one minute from three minutes.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it cannot be done because we have got to abide by International Regulations.

MR SPEAKER:

Right. Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO.

Will Government consider installing public telephones at our beaches?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are public telephones at all our beaches however at present four of the six are undergoing repairs. The public can however make use of the beach picket telephones for emergency calls.

Now since the question was prepared I checked up yesterday afternoon and I found out that out of the four of the six under-going repairs one had been repaired so there are now three out of the six.

The following are in working order: Sandy Bay
Montagu Bathing Pavilion
Eastern Beach

and the following are out of order which is: Camp Bay
Little Bay
and Catalan Bay

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 125 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Are those three which are out of order been out of order for a long time?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, they have been out of order on and off for some time. In fact the department is looking into it and are trying to get them repaired so that they can be used. Let me say that it is sometimes much simpler to go to the beach picket telephones which are all working and be able to get service from the beach picket.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, if they have been out of service for so long, surely, knowing that these are required during the summer bathing season, the Minister should have made sure that these are repaired before. This is just pure inefficiency! Why haven't they been done before the summer?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the main thing is that these beaches are adequately covered by the beach picket telephones. These are public telephones, they tend to break down on and off because of the corrosion from the salt water especially and we are continuously fixing them. The fact that there are some out of action now does not reflect whether we are not doing anything at all about it. We are and I give the Honourable Member an understanding that I will endeavour to make the other three workable.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I am surprised that the Honourable Member is not up to date with regulations, in fact, I have the British Telecom Guide, November 1980. Calls from UK to Gibraltar and it does say "Operator assisted calls." Because we must compare like with like.

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MR SPEAKER:

No, I do not want to have another supplementary. What you are being told is that since we have not got IDD in Gibraltar is it not a fact that it is going to cost a Gibraltar call more because the minimum charge is three minutes. That is what you are being asked.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Of course, Sir, it is cheaper because they have IDD from UK to Gibraltar and not from Gibraltar to UK.

HON G T RESTANO:

Since it is not the fault of the Gibraltar subscribers that IDD has not been put into operation on this sort of call I would ask the Government to consider whether they could not reduce the minimum to one minute from three minutes.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it cannot be done because we have got to abide by International Regulations.

MR SPEAKER:

Right. Next question.

NO. 126 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO:

What is Government's policy generally with regard to telephone booths?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, with the advent of International Direct Dialling (IDD) drawing closer, Government's policy is not to increase the number of telephone booths which are prone to vandalism but to introduce renter-type coin boxes at suitable places where the coinboxes can be looked after e.g. Hospital, Airport, Health Centre, Post Office etc.

We have already connected two renter-type coinboxes at the New Marina and Ocean Heights on a trial-basis with considerable success.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 126 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Since, Mr Speaker, most of the booths have been vandalised and most of them are without any equipment whatsoever inside what is the point of keeping these booths?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, that is a different question altogether. I, at the House, if I remember rightly, definitely said that I will not spend any further money on booths which are being vandalised continuously and will try to find a better system of renter-type coinboxes which can be used by the general public.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am not arguing against that, Mr Speaker, I am asking what is the point of keeping those booths there now? Why not remove them? They are a terrible eye sore.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, eventually as we develop this system some of them will be removed, the ones which are severely vandalised, and at the same time more renter-type phone-boxes will be put in but I am afraid that, with the staff at present, we cannot do everything in one go.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 127 OF 1981

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can Government issue the list of those countries which have to date taken advantage of the service enabling direct dialling to Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, the following countries have made use of the automatic transit facilities of the London International Exchange to route telephone traffic to Gibraltar:

1. United Kingdom
2. France
3. Netherlands
4. Eire
5. Denmark
6. West Germany
7. Hong Kong
8. Switzerland
9. Jordan

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 127 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, can the Minister provide the list or, if he doesn't, go more slowly so that we can take down the countries.

MR SPEAKER:

You will be getting the answer within the next five weeks.

Perhaps you can read it in similar way that it can be heard.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

First, the United Kingdom,

Second, France,

Third, the Netherlands,

MR SPEAKER:

No, No. Let us do it at a reasonable pace neither one nor the other.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

4. Eire
5. Denmark
6. West Germany
7. Hong Kong
8. Switzerland
9. Jordan
10. Belgium
11. Cameroons
12. Yugoslavia

13. Egypt
14. United Arab Emirates
15. Kuwait
16. Sweden

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I notice that a lot of very prominent countries are not in this list. Is the Government doing anything to encourage those countries, who are not in this list, to use this service?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, we are encouraging other countries to use this service. Some countries, especially the new ones do not know that this service can exist but I will say in addition there are over 50 countries which have semi automatic transit facilities to Gibraltar. So this in fact quickly covers the world.

HON G T RESTANO:

In what way has the encouragement been carried out?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Certainly, this is easy. Between correspondence with the Superintendent of Telephones and the countries involved. Not only that, through other venues like Cable and Wireless.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, could the Minister say if there has been any country which has objected to joining us and if so for what reasons?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

We are talking about the automatic not on the semi-automatic? There is only one country which we have had problems with and this is Morocco, because they do not have the equipment necessary to be able to switch on to our system and have automatic direct dialling. In fact for the time being Morocco will have to continue with the semi-automatic type of telephone service but I hope that Morocco will eventually come up to scratch and we shall be able to have direct dialling with Morocco as well.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So if there are no objections from any of the other countries I suppose they will all join eventually, will they?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that remark by Mr Bob Peliza. We should get all the other countries to join this eventually just like the UK have done and the list increases as you go along. Eventually, from Gibraltar, once we get IDD, we shall be able to contact 99.9% of countries throughout the world directly.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Could the Minister make sure that eventually means before in fact the operation starts so that when we do start we have all those countries connected already?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, at the moment we are really going into the programme and the system of IDD and these particular points that the Honourable and Gallant Major Peliza has brought up, quite rightly, have been looked up and are being looked up expeditiously.

HON P J ISOLA:

In view of the fact that it is obviously antiquated and out of date that countries should not be able to telephone Gibraltar directly as they do to every country in Europe, could not his department, I know the world is very large, make a particular effort to get in any country in Europe that is not already in, such as Italy for example, Austria, and also very very specifically the United States of America and Canada because one gets lots of complaints from individuals from these countries who tell you there are no facilities, nobody seems to have heard of the facilities. Is there not a need to tell these countries that we are getting complaints at this end that they cannot dial automatically. Would not the Minister agree to make a special effort to at least get Europe, North America and Canada into this more modern system?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, in fact I checked up on this just before coming to the House and most USA/Canada traffic comes direct via Satellite. I have had people ringing up from the States and I have been able to ring up directly. As regards Northern Europe is concerned some of the countries are re-routed through the Spanish network which obviously means that you have to use semi automatic dialling unless you really want to go the long way and go through London. Northern countries like West Germany, the Netherlands go through the London network, through the Cable and Wireless Satellite. But I shall endeavour to do what the Honourable Member suggests.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister bear in mind and could not these countries be told that with the use of the Spanish network there is no way they are going to get through to Gibraltar quickly through that network, I have had a personal experience from Greece on that if I may tell the Minister. I eventually had to be put through Germany which got me through straight away whilst through Spain there was no way of getting through. So perhaps these countries could be told of the improved service that they can get by going through the other network.

HON DR G R VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the point is taken.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, may I add a personal experience. In all telephone booths in Denmark and Holland the International Dialling Number for Gibraltar is very prominently set out.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state whether the maintenance programmes to engines at the Generating Station is being carried out fully and effectively and if so whether we can expect a winter free of power cuts?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The maintenance programme to engines at the Generating Station is being carried out normally.

A backlog has inevitably built up and discussions are taking place in order to catch up to the planned schedule.

Once the maintenance programme is completed, a winter free of power cuts is to be expected, however, it is impossible to forecast any unexpected outages due to engine breakdowns which could result in a loss of generating capacity.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 128 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

What is this particular backlog due to, Mr Speaker?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, this backlog was due to delays in recommissioning No 11 engine which meant delays in labour availability for the planned maintenance programme.

HON G T RESTANO:

So what, in fact, is required to be done yet?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

What is required to be done? I have mentioned in paragraph 2, there is a backlog and discussions are taking place in order to catch up to the planned schedule.

HON G T RESTANO:

My question was what does the backlog consist of?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

I have said what the backlog is due to.

MR SPEAKER:

No. You are being asked what it consists of, perhaps they are talking about a matter which you may not be able to answer, but you are being asked, do you know what the backlog consists of?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

The backlog simply consists of that some of the engines, which were scheduled for some summer overhaul have had to have their dates put back. This is what has happened.

HON G T RESTANO:

May we know which engines have yet to be overhauled and which ones have been repaired or maintained correctly and properly and what is the work schedule that is going to be carried out, shall we say, between now and

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect to the questioner. We are not going to get involved with the detailed maintenance of each particular engine. Let us be clear on that one.

HON G T RESTANO:

I do not want the actual details but I want to know, as there are five engines in the Generating Station, I want to know whether two of them or three of them or four of them or all five of them need to be maintained by winter?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, No 13 engine needs a top overhaul. No 12 engine is presently undergoing general overhaul and new turbo-chargers and coolers are being fitted. No 10 engine has been finished except that it needs the cylinder heads changed. No 11 engine, as you know, has been recommissioned. No 9 engine needs a top overhaul and changing of the cylinder head and its overchargers and then we have the two small engines, 5 and 7. No 5 needs a complete overhaul of the air and auxiliary valves and re-tightening of the cylinder heads and in No 7 engine it is also necessary to service all the air and auxiliary valves and re-tightening the cylinder heads as well. This is what is needed as far as King's Bastion North and King's Bastion South is concerned.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is the Minister confident that he will be able to have all these works carried out by winter?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I can say this. I am sure that everybody down at the Generating Station is trying to help and I am confident that the works, the scheduler works envisaged can be done before the winter period.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister if any of this backlog is due to the IPCS industrial action?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I am afraid this is an industrial problem but because of the IPCS industrial action no overtime can be done except under very special conditions of immediate urgency arising. This is cleared by the IPCS.

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to get involved. You are being asked whether the backlog is due to the industrial action and the answer is yes or no. Let us not get involved.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, to some extent.

HON P J ISOLA:

To some extent. Is this current action seriously affecting the situation because I understood the IPCS to have undertaken to Government that they would not do things that would seriously harm the public and there is nothing more calculated to harm the public than power cuts. So can we have a clear answer to that please, Mr Speaker? I think the public is entitled to know.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

As I said before, Mr Speaker, there is no overtime work except under very special conditions. These have got to be cleared with IPCS but one of the things that IPCS always said is that they regard the Generating Station as a very important element in the life of Gibraltar and that they will do everything they can in their power to help us as much as possible to continue the maintenance programme so that the people of Gibraltar will not suffer any power cuts during the winter.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean then, Mr Speaker, that the IPCS action is not unintentionally affecting the situation then? If they have said that, is Government satisfied that they are implementing it in that area?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it is affecting the situation somewhat because you cannot work regular overtime unless this is cleared by the IPCS. This is not a normal sequence of events so it is affecting the maintenance programme to some extent. But certainly one cannot lay the blame totally at the door of IPCS. I just hope that there is no escalation of the IPCS action at the present time which could seriously hinder our plans for this summer for the maintenance programme.

HON G T RESTANO:

Why is it, in fact, that maintenance cannot be done during normal working hours? Why is it that it has to be done during overtime? Is there a reason for this?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Sir. Mr Speaker, maintenance is done during normal working hours, unfortunately some other snags crop up and men have to be moved from one machine to another to be able to deal with that particular problem. The other thing during the summer is the leave problems which has meant that there are certainly less people available to deal with problems.

MR SPEAKER:

So maintenance can be done during normal working hours.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, it can be done.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has indicated the manner in which we may be subjected to power cuts, would it be right to assume that in the event of these power cuts the Services Generating Station will be relied upon?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I thank the Hon Mr Haynes for that question. The interservices Generating Station gives us as much help as possible depending on their own commitments.

HON A J HAYNES:

What I am getting at, Mr Speaker, is this. Has the interservices Generating Station indicated that they might not be in a position to help this winter? Are they overrunning their own engines to ensure that we have continuous electric supply or not?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is difficult to tell the interservices Generating Station what

MR SPEAKER:

No. You are being asked, because I do not want to enlarge on this, have you received any indication from the interservices Generating Station that they will not be able to help?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Sir, they do try to help us as much as possible.

HON A J HAYNES:

Have you received any indication that the interservices Generating Station may not be in a position to help whether they want to or not this winter? It is not that they will help when they can. Have you received any indication

MR SPEAKER:

No, you have been given an answer. They have not received an indication from the interservices Generating Station that they will not be able to help this winter.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can you quite say, as far as you are concerned, they are running normally as always and they have no particular problem that you are aware of? Is that correct?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker,

MR SPEAKER:

No. You must not answer that question. You cannot give an undertaking as to other Generating Stations in any manner or form. Next question.

NO. 129 OF 1981

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government take the necessary measures to improve public lighting at both Line Wall Road and Devil's Tower Road?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, provision was made to improve the public lighting in both these areas in the financial estimates for 1980/81 and 81/82. Design and all preparatory work has now been completed and the respective state of progress is as follows:-

Line Wall Road

New 90W SOX lanterns are to replace the existing 250W MBT lanterns - these lanterns were ordered in November 1980 and their arrival is expected within the next two months.

Devil's Tower Road

The new lighting scheme will consist of 40 No 90W SOX CO lanterns as opposed to the existing 22 No. All materials are now in Gibraltar and work has been programmed to commence shortly.

NO. 130 OF 1981

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government confirm and give details on the oil leakage from the King's Bastion Generating Station into the Harbour and will Government state what measures they are taking to remedy the problem?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Government can confirm that there is an oil leakage into the harbour.

The oil discharges at the RGYC outflow of the South Station water cooling system.

Investigations to date show that the oil does not come from the Station itself since there is no oil at the source of this outflow within the Station.

These investigations have shown that there is oil in the water table underground in the Queensway area and it is believed that the only feasible explanation for the oil leak at that particular point is that the outflow pipe, which has been in service for at least 80 years is broken in places and that, under conditions of low tide, when the sea is at or below the level of the pipe, the oil present in the water enters the pipe and is discharged to the sea together with the cooling water.

It is believed that there are two possible ways in which the oil can have entered the water table underground. The first that oil has accumulated in the water table over the years from the oil polluted waters, the second is that the oil underground, may come from leaks in the supply line which feeds the fuel to the Generating Station from a Coaling Island berth. This line is used for about 5 hours at intervals of between seven and ten days when it is pressurized under pumping pressure.

Tests so far have not located the fault or faults but further tests are proceeding at this moment.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 130 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

What measures are being taken to remedy the problem in terms of pollution?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, at the present moment we are looking into all aspects of this and how to remedy this pollution this year but this is as far as we have got at the present time.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 131 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government make a detailed statement with regard to the number of vacancies for Apprenticeships this year, the number of applicants and the passes attained by them and generally inform this House as to what it proposes offering those applicants who having passed the Entrance requirements and being considered suitable for Industrial Training, find that all vacancies for Apprenticeship training have been taken?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

With your permission, I propose to answer Questions 131, 134 and 135 together.

The Gibraltar Government is offering a total of 17 apprenticeships this year and PSA/DOE are offering 6. Insofar as HM Dockyard is concerned the number of vacancies which they will be able to offer is still under consideration by them.

Of 150 candidates for the engineering/shipbuilding apprenticeship examination, about 80 have attained an acceptable standard. Of 134 who sat the examination for the construction trades, about 90 have reached the required standard. However, because a very high proportion of candidates sat both examinations, the number who have reached the required standard in one or both examinations could be about 110. This figure would be reduced by those who may stay on at school, obtain scholarships, take up other employment, etc.

Turning to the last part of Question 131 - and as I said in reply to Question No 42 of 1981 on 11 March, 1981 - once all the apprenticeships have been taken up, Government can offer the facilities of the Construction Training Centre at Landport to those who could have obtained an apprenticeship but for the fact that all vacancies had been filled. Provided that the numbers who wish to avail themselves of this are not more than the Centre can cope with, the intention is to give these youngsters basic training for one year in one of the construction trades, similar to that given to first year apprentices.

This training would be provided free and regarded as an extension to their education, and there would be no commitment to employing them at the end of the year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTIONS NOS. 131, 134 AND 135 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

I am grateful to the Minister for that answer but can the Minister confirm that the first year in fact of an Apprenticeship Scheme is spent totally at the Centre?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No.

HON W T SCOTT:

There is, in fact, in-field training as it were, therefore, and can the Minister say in fact what numbers can the Centre cope with?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I think we could cope with up to about 50.

HON W T SCOTT:

So in fact it might be a situation where only half, or roughly half, of those young men who having past the apprenticeship exam are not being offered a scholarship can be catered for at the Centre?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, that is his opinion. My opinion is to the contrary, I think we can deal with the problem.

HON W T SCOTT:

Does Government not agree in fact that in the amended motion passed in this House there was a commitment by Government to re-train all of these young men?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

We emphasised that if all the vacancies had been filled, and this does not necessarily mean that all the vacancies will be filled, we will give opportunities to all the apprentices. I have said so already.

HON J BOSSANO:

The Government has said that the Dockyard has not yet decided how many. This is in fact a change because the original figure for the apprenticeships given by the official employers was a total of 40 and I imagine that the discrepancy between the 23 we have been given and the 40 is because the MOD may be considering reducing apprenticeships. Is that the case?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I will repeat my answer. Insofar as HM Dockyard is concerned the number of vacancies which they will be able to offer is still under consideration by them. What they are doing, I do not know. I am not HM Dockyard.

HON J BOSSANO:

I accept that the Hon Member is not HM Dockyard but the Hon Member is the Minister for Labour and Social Security and I imagine he must consider whether the Dockyard is going to have apprenticeships or not since if they do not this problem will be aggravated and therefore can he confirm that HM Dockyard had intended to provide 17 vacancies and that it is now no longer certain whether they will because of the Defence Review? Is this the case?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I cannot confirm.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is in fact the Hon Member then saying that he has had no knowledge to date, irrespective of any possible change about what the intentions of the Dockyard were, as to the number of apprentices it would take this year? That in fact when the candidates were asked to apply, is he saying that as Minister for Labour he did not know what the total vacancies available would be?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I think your figure may be correct but I do not remember.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would he then go back to the Dockyard and find out from them how it is that, having arrived in the Official Employers Apprentices Training Board at a global figure of 40, including the Dockyard, the amount that the Dockyard can put is no longer known? Can he find out from them what has changed?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I will repeat that the Dockyard are considering the whole question of apprenticeships, the whole context of the Defence Review.

HON J BOSSANO:

Then it is in fact that as a result of the Defence Review it is no longer certain that the number of apprenticeships that were being offered initially are still going to be there. That is the case then?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

The question is being studied by them.

HON J BOSSANO:

I am well aware of this but if the Dockyard said three months ago that there would be 17 apprenticeships this year and now they are studying, I imagine that that is because it is no longer certain that there are going to be 17 apprenticeships this year and that this is a result of the Defence Review. That is the question which the Minister was unable to answer a few seconds ago. Is that the picture?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I would interpret it as a natural deduction but it could also be interpreted that it might be increased.

HON J BOSSANO:

Highly unlikely. What I am asking the Hon Member, since he is in a position to do so, that he should get a definitive statement on the subject from the Dockyard rather than make assumptions which is what I have to do on this side of the House.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 132 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state the number employed by the UK departments and the total wage and salaries bill in April 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The numbers of locally-entered staff of the United Kingdom Departments on 1.4.81 were as follows:-

	Non- Industrials	Industrials	Total	Gross Wages/ Salaries Bill (in £m per annum)
Ministry of Defence	798	1925	2723	£13.297
PSA/DOE	112	612	724	2.675
	<u>910</u>	<u>2537</u>	<u>3447</u>	<u>£15.972</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 132 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Does the Hon Member have the comparable figures for the UK based civilian employees in the UK Departments?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir. The above figures do not include UK based staff whose salaries are paid from UK. Neither do they include the employees of organisations directly connected with the UK Departments, for example, NAAFI, etc.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Minister in a position to obtain such information?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I took this question to mean locally entered staff. I will try.

HON J BOSSANO:

I understand that the employment surveys, for example, produced by his department include the UK based in the figures that they produced and therefore for the sake of consistency when making use of these statistics I am sure he will agree. I am asking the question because it has not yet been published. Looking at the October 1980 statistics, for example, which is the last public figure, it will include a number

of people who are UK based in the figure employed in the UK department and consequently this figure will show a discrepancy. It is not because there has been a reduction, I take it, but because the UK based are not included here are included there. Therefore, what I am asking the Hon Member is information that he will have in the employment survey and if he can make it available to me outside the House I would be grateful.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 133 OF 1981

THE HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker there was a typing error which I would like to correct if I may when I read it out.

Has Government now given consideration to the possibility of raising the tax allowance of a single parent family with a dependent child to the same level as that of a married couple in the current financial year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, I take it that the Honourable Member is referring to the Income Tax allowance for single parent families. This allowance was increased by the Finance Ordinance 1981 from £400 to £500 for the current tax year. The Government also undertook to look into the merits of increasing it further to the level of the Personal Allowance i.e. £850. This is still under consideration together with other amendments to the Income Tax Ordinance.

7.7.81

NO. 134 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government say whether the MOD proposes to reduce the number of apprenticeships?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Answered together with Question Nos. 131 and 135.

7.7.81

NO. 135 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government say what provision is to be made for the training of school leavers who pass the apprentice training examination but fail to be offered an apprenticeship?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Answered together with Question Nos. 131 and 134.

NO. 136 OF 1981

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state how many times the Industrial Training Board met last year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The Industrial Training Board did not meet at all in 1980. In fact, appointments to the Board had lapsed in 1974. Due mainly to delays in receiving nominations for membership from relevant organisations, it has not been possible to re-constitute the Board until as recently as April 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 136 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member, now that the Board is to be reconstituted or has been reconstituted, agree that this might be a proper machine to consider activating in the context of a need for perhaps greater training facilities if there is an effect on the unemployment situation in Gibraltar.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 137 OF 1981

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government confirm that the vacancies for two Trainee Social Workers required in the Family Care Unit have been filled and will Government give an indication as to when this Unit will show improvement with regard to the needs of the community?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, two Officers have already been selected for appointment as Trainee Social Workers and they are joining the Department of Labour and Social Security on 15 July 1981.

After a reasonable period of induction and in-service training in the Department's Family Care Unit they will be required to go to U.K. for specialised training in the various aspects of social work, including probation work. On successful completion of this training, they will be appointed as Social Workers.

It is expected that by this time next year one of them will have returned from training and thus become fully effective.

In the meantime, after they take up their duties as trainees next week, their presence should begin to be felt as, gradually, they are able to work on their own.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 137 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there any indication that the department will lose any other social workers before these men return next year through pregnancy or any other reason?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 138 OF 1981

THE HON W T SCOTT

Can Government state what figures it has available for job vacancies as at 31st May, 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the number of vacancies notified to the Department of Labour and Social Security which were open on 31 May 1981 was 34, covering 24 different occupations. This, of course, is not a static figure, as vacancies are opened and filled every day. In fact, during the month of May, 47 notified vacancies were filled by Central Employment Exchange.

I am also able to give the corresponding figures as at 30 June 1981. On that day there were 45 open vacancies, covering a range of 22 occupations, and during June, 74 vacancies were filled.

NO. 139 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government ensure that all authorised requests made to the Family Care Unit for reports are complied with within six weeks of such requests?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

I assume that the "requests" mentioned by the Hon Questioner are the requests from the Housing Department for social reports on applicants for Government housing, and which are only one aspect of the duties of the Family Care Unit of the Department of Labour and Social Security.

In reply to Question No 137 I have explained the present staffing position of this Unit. The improvement which will result from the appointment of the two new Training Social Workers will enable more time to be devoted, amongst other things, to these social reports on applicants for Housing than has been possible in the recent past, to catch up on the backlog (there are about 70 at present) and to deal with new requests.

No assurance can be given that reports will be forwarded to the Housing Department within a specified time, but I can assure the Hon Questioner that my department is as anxious as anyone else to deal with these requests as expeditiously as staff and time allow, in the interests of the applicants themselves.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 139 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, not as anxious as men who make the request. Will the Minister state how long it takes for a report to be made and will the Minister further say when some of the reporting problems today will be likely to be heard or reported on?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No. I cannot give any specific time. We do not deal with housing reports alone, we deal with many aspects of welfare and they are treated as they come in.

HON A J HAYNES:

I am aware that the Family Care Unit deals with other matters and I am also aware of the quality of their work. They work very well. The problem is there are not enough men to handle the numerous requests and the Minister cannot say with a definitive knowledge the exact length of time it will take for a report to be made. Will the Minister confirm that for a person with a housing problem it will take in excess of nine months to have a report?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, as I said, I cannot confirm this.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister give any indication as to how long it takes for a person with a housing problem to have a report made?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister give a reason?

MR SPEAKER:

You have asked a question and he has given you an answer.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can he give me a reason?

MR SPEAKER:

No. May I say that that is the basic quality of a politician.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, what I am trying to say is, is there any sort of reason for this line of approach by the Minister?

MR SPEAKER:

No. You are quite entitled to ask supplementaries which are relevant to the question not as to the attitude of the Minister.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is it the shortage of staff the reason for the long delay?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I have said so.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the Minister has told you

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I will not give any commitment and I cannot give knowledge which I have not got. I am not a clerk and I do not go about asking how many days have you taken to do this thing.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, it is not a question here which I am asking for Government assurances and if he does not take the question seriously he might at least find out how long it does take and what motivates . . .

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to argue. Have you a supplementary to ask?

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister endeavour to enquire how long it takes for a report to be made and also how long it takes for a report to be made today? The reason why I ask, Mr Speaker, is that there is, as I understand it, a backlog. Can the Minister confirm that? Can the Minister say how many people are actually waiting to be reported on?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I have said 70. Any other questions I will need proper notification and I will answer properly in the House.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would the Minister consider employing extra staff for the year before these people come in?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 140 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government consider altering the system of grants for further education this year to ensure that all school leavers who obtain the minimum entrance requirements to qualify for a statutory grant in UK will be able to obtain a grant in September?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, at the present time the Educational Awards Regulations provide for minimum academic standards, based on Advanced Level results of the General Certificate of Education, for a mandatory award to be granted to enable a student to pursue a degree course in the UK. It is not felt appropriate to change the present legislation to enable all students who obtain the minimum entrance requirements for an establishment of higher education in the UK to obtain a statutory grant in Gibraltar.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 140 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the Government then does not consider it desirable to afford the same educational opportunities to school leavers in Gibraltar as even the reactionary government that exists today in UK is doing to school leavers in UK. Is that the situation?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, quite apart from the educational merits of ensuring satisfactory academic standards before granting scholarships, it should be noted that it will result in a significant increase in terms of expenditure on scholarships if all students gaining a place at a university or polytechnic in UK were to be given an award. Establishments of higher education in UK are desperate, very desperate, to recruit students at the present time and some universities and polytechnics accept students with very poor advance level results in order to boost enrolment figures and so attract the relevant grant from central government in London. This resolves in mediocre standards and high wastage rate; something which Gibraltar cannot afford in terms of the scholarship fund.

HON J BOSSANO:

What evidence does the Hon Member have for this and is he aware that the argument that he is using now was used by his predecessor some 5 years ago to refuse a grant to one of these mediocre students who finished up with a doctorate and a post graduate grant given by the University of Wales? Is he aware of the history of the invalidity of such an argument?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

All credit to the student. My answer will still be that I will not consider it at this stage.

HON J BOSSANO:

Will the Hon Member then admit that there is no evidence to substantiate the position he has taken? It is either pure political dogma or penny pinching which makes him take a position that deprives young Gibraltarians who could benefit from further education from doing so because they will not make the money available.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, if I were sitting there I would ask the same questions but I am sitting here and I am still saying no.

HON J BOSSANO:

I do not think it is relevant where one sits. The validity of the argument stands, of course, by its contents. Will the Hon Member admit that if there is no evidence to show that what is going to be produced is masses of mediocre students, if it is just a question of money, then what he is saying is that the Gibraltar Government is not prepared to spend the same amount of money in giving an opportunity to further education to school leavers in Gibraltar as a Conservative Government is doing to school leavers in UK. That is the position then?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, there is an element of a wastage rate of about 22%-25%. I see it as far more important if there is money available to spend it on students of Gibraltar who require remediate attention. I feel that it is far more important than getting more graduates.

HON J BOSSANO:

Does not the Hon Member realise that in this difficult times of employment the greater the educational attainment by school leavers the greater the prospect of finding employment? There is a direct relationship between the two. Is he not aware of that?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir. I think that as a sociologist he has got it the other way round. The under achievers are the ones who find it more difficult to find employment.

HON J BOSSANO:

What I am saying is that the higher the level the greater the prospect of employment and consequently I want them to encourage more people to go

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

By the under achievers I mean people who are ESN mild, educationally subnormal mild, and this is where I would like to spend the money rather than on 10 or 12 more scholarships.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon Member then saying that there is some magic finite figure of the amount of money available and that to give grants to people who would benefit from a university education would mean reducing the money available for people who are educationally subnormal. Is he making that as a serious statement that he expects this House to accept because I can assure the Hon Member that there are other areas of Government expenditure that can be cut and the educational vote can be increased if he is not aware of it?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 141 OF 1981

THE HON A T LODDO

What is the position regarding sponsored students to the MOD Schools?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, 90 children are at present being sponsored to the Services Primary Schools and a further 29 are on a waiting list pending places becoming available within the maximum of 90 which can be taken up under the sponsorship scheme agreed between Government and MOD some years ago. As a result of a significant increase in the sponsorship fee claimed by MOD for the period April 1980 Government felt the need to review the level of fees charged by MOD and to examine alternative ways of catering for the needs of the Protestant children at present sponsored to the two Services Schools. A paper is currently being prepared for the consideration of Government which will be used as a basis for negotiations with MOD shortly on the future provision for the Protestant children now attending the Services Schools under the sponsorship scheme.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 141 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, we are glad to hear the matter is being considered but if the matter is being considered can the Minister explain why letters were sent to Protestant parents children at school telling them what they would have to pay in September. Would he not agree that that is contrary to what was stated in this House by the Minister that there would be prior consultations with religious authorities concerned before any steps were taken to implement this?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, the letters were sent as an advanced notice of Government's intention at the time but it was also stated in the letter that we were making every effort to reduce the possible hardship that would fall on the Protestant parents to a minimum. Then we had further representations from all the Protestant religious bodies and this is why we are taking this line.

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I right in saying that it is government's policy to consult with the authorities before implementing?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am glad to hear that.

NO. 142 OF 1981

THE HON A T LODDO

Why have 5th year French students been issued with photocopies of their French literature book?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, one of the set books for 'A' level students taking French in 1982 was found to be out of stock. This particular book was ordered in September 1980 and is a French publication. In order to ensure that work could progress on this particular set book pending stocks being available for purchase the teacher concerned at Bayside School took the trouble to photocopy as much as was necessary from a single copy that was available in the school.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 142 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker I think that the teacher should be congratulated on his initiative.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I feel the same. The pity is that I do not think this should have been brought to the House.

MR SPEAKER:

Well there might be another reason.

NO. 143 OF 1981

THE HON A T LODDO

What is the situation at the moment regarding the moving of the Middle School to the Old Grammar School?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, I presume he means the St. Mary's Middle School because we have 3 Middle schools.

The south wing of the Old Grammar School building at Sacred Heart Terrace was recently handed over to the Department of Education following the completion of phase one of the building works of re-modelling the premises for use as a Middle School. The Castle Road Annexe at present St. Mary's Middle School will be transferred to the south wing of the Old Grammar School during the last week (this week) of the present Summer Term so that accommodation can be prepared ready for the beginning of the next school year in September 1981.

NO. 144 OF 1981

THE HON A T LODDO

Has Government received a reply to its proposals to MOD London reference the transference of the Technical College?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, a reply was received from MOD towards the end of March 1981 in response to the original proposals put forward by Government for transfer of the Gibraltar and Dockyard Technical College and its future running costs. The Government proposals were found to be unacceptable to MOD and counter proposals by MOD were included in their response. These counter proposals were found to be unacceptable to Gibraltar Government. Consequently the precise terms for the transfer of the site and buildings of the present Gibraltar and Dockyard Technical College and the basis of future recurrent expenditure in running the new College of Further Education are still a matter of negotiation with MOD. It is now extremely unlikely that the Gibraltar and Dockyard Technical College will be transferred in September 1981 as originally envisaged. The likely date of transfer if agreement can be reached on the transfer of the site and buildings and on recurrent expenditure will be some time in 1982 possibly at the end of the 1981/82 academic year.

NO. 145 OF 1981

THE HON G T RESTANO

Why is the converted modernised flat at No. 14 Flat Bastion Road still not occupied in view of the acute housing problem that exists?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, the flat referred to at 14 Flat Bastion Road has not been allocated because it has not yet been handed over to this Department, presumably because it is still not ready for occupation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 145 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

What is the reason for that flat not being available for occupation or not being ready for occupation, since it has been unoccupied for quite a number of years?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, as far as I understand that flat suffers from some roof water penetration and there is a problem of an unauthorised building that is being built upon it.

HON G T RESTANO:

An unauthorised building that is being built on top of it. Is any action being taken against the unauthorised building?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, it is not on top of it I should have said near it which provides the access for the Public Works Department. Action has been taken and the matter is being looked into, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

What has been the result of that action?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Well legal action has been taken I don't know the result of the action yet, Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

There won't be access to this flat until legal action is resolved because that will take a long time?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am sorry I do not understand.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean that access to this flat will not be available until the legal action has been resolved because that always takes a long time?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, when I say legal action I do not think it is court proceedings. I think there is some correspondence between the Surveyor and Planning Secretary and the person concerned.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is the Minister saying that the persons who have built this unauthorised building will not allow Public Works to move in to repair the flat. Is that the position?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That was the situation I think up to about 4 months ago, Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

So what is the position now then?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I understand, and it is not really my department, Mr Speaker, I understand that the person has now accepted that we obviously have a right of entry to carry out the repairs.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 146 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state why shop premises at Rose Shrine House are still not occupied and whether any flats there remain unallocated or unoccupied?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are 5 units still awaiting acceptance by prospective tenants.

Although this is not within my own responsibility I understand that the shops at Rose Shrine House are intended for the two tenants who had previously occupied similar premises in the old building. How the shops are to be allocated has now been agreed and the terms of the new tenancies will be communicated to the prospective tenants shortly.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 146 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

On the five units which are for acceptance by the prospective tenants I find it difficult to understand how, with the acute housing problem that there is, it should take so long for people to accept. What is the reason for this? I would have thought people who required accommodation would have jumped at any possibility of accommodation.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I would tend to agree with the Hon Member but may I explain that the five flats, one of which is the six roomed flat, have been offered to the three top persons on the list but have rejected it because of distance, or because the actual house consists of three storeys, the rooms are quite small and the flight of steps within the house are not convenient to the persons who were entitled to them under the Housing Allocation Scheme. Since the time of preparing this answer, a week or so ago, I understand that two tenants who will be giving up 4 rooms kitchen and bath-room of postwar standard, will be accepting smaller accommodation at Rose Shrine House. There is some delay because there have been offers to people who are over housed which, of course, will benefit the housing list quite substantially.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 147 OF 1981

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state the area and location of the units which in answer to Question 65 of 1981 were declared to be unoccupied?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Lists of the areas and location of the units that were declared in Question No 65 of 1981 to be unoccupied, and which amount to 164, are being circulated.

I think the House would not bear with me Mr Speaker, if I were to read out 164 dwellings and addresses so I certainly hope I have satisfied the Honourable Member.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 147 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

261 units are unoccupied at present. That was the answer given in March this year.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Well there are 164 at present. I should say that there have been some that have been rehabilitated and returned and of course they have been allocated.

MR SPEAKER:

Next Question.

NO. 148 OF 1981

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state their policy as regards allocation of the new housing units to be built and will Government say when the new units will be allocated?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The policy remains as follows:-

Medical Category	20%
Government Quarters Agreement	8%
Decanting of Pensioners	6%
General Allocation List	66%

All housing units built will be allocated as and when these are ready for occupation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 148 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister confirm then that there is no likelihood of these being allocated, in say two months time, or one months time, they will be allocated when they are built am I right?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

New housing, Mr Speaker? As and when they are ready. I can say I think that the Tank Ramp Housing complex will be allocated within the next week but I cannot possibly say when St. Jago's or St. Joseph's or Flat Bastion Road Complexes will be ready.

HON A J HAYNES:

Did the Minister say anything about social points being part of their policy in allocating houses in the list he just read?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Social points do not come into percentage. Social matters are dealt with and granted points within the general allocation housing list.

HON A J HAYNES:

Those are 66% you said.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That's right.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would the lack of a Family Care Unit Report therefore prejudice someone who is dependent on those special grounds?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the Family Care Unit Reports are invariably brought to the Housing Department's attention for pre-war accommodation. Not the kind of accommodation we are talking of here.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 149 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government give the number of Housing applications that are supported by medical certificates certifying bronchitis in children under 15 years of age?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, as has already been stated before there are at present about 1800 applications for accommodation.

To obtain the information requested, it would be necessary to examine each and every one of these applications to find out which have been awarded medical points, determine the nature of the illness or illnesses which merited the award of these, and work out the ages of those children under the age of 15.

It is regretted that the pressure of work in the Department is so great that it is virtually impossible for the staff to produce such detailed and exacting information in addition to their daily duties at such short notice. To do this, it would be necessary to close down the offices to the public and leave the daily work aside until the exercise had been completed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 149 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that medical certificates certifying bronchitis in children generally are very large indeed?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I do not read medical certificates. That is done by the Housing Advisory Committee. I would not say they are very large indeed compared to other certificates. Certainly not for under 15 years of age.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that there are a large number of children who suffer from bronchitis and are certified in that respect and that these certificates come to the notice of the Minister and I am talking about figures in the region of 200 to 300?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I cannot answer that.

HON A J HAYNES:

Perhaps, Mr Speaker, the Minister will investigate the matter especially when the majority of instances where bronchitis is certified in children it is due to damp and poor housing conditions. The appalling housing conditions of some people does

result in their children suffering from asthmatic bronchitis and other assorted illnesses. That is the reason for asking the question. I would like the Minister to at least assure me that it is not as bad as I believe it may be.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I cannot commit myself or my department into going into this kind of exercise. I do not agree that the immense majority of the medical certificates afforded to the Housing Allocation Committee are for bronchitis. If the Hon Member is trying to make a case for every single applicant that has a bronchitis certificate for a child under 15 because of damp conditions there are, in the scheme, points awarded for dampness but I cannot say

MR SPEAKER:

No, you cannot say.

HON P J ISOLA:

I can understand the Minister not being able to give this information but can the Minister consider his department making use of modern methods of filing that give this sort of information by using, for example, the computer that the Government has and feeding information from all the housing applications as they come in so that statistics such as this one, which could be of importance in reviewing the general situation in Gibraltar, can be easily ascertained without closing the Housing Department? Consideration might be given to that suggestion.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

One would always look with certain sympathy at modern approaches to decipher the final statistics or information that Government requires but again I cannot commit Government into a new computer system that would afford this information at this stage.

HON P J ISOLA:

I can understand that but surely it is obviously convenient to have a ready means of finding out, for example, how many three children family are on your housing list and what are the requirements for four children and have all that information readily available. I would have thought that was essential from the point of view of planning future housing development in Gibraltar and as the Government has got a computer I would have thought that, in the long term, it would be well worthwhile and much in the Government's interest to do this.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I wish to assure the Hon Leader of the Opposition that the department certainly has an up-to-date list of family composition within Gibraltar for the requirement of future planning.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 150 OF 1981

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state how many housing applications are still awaiting consideration pending evaluation of supporting medical certificates and how long does such evaluation usually take?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

There are at present about 23 medical certificates awaiting consideration by the Housing Advisory Committee. Under normal circumstances medical certificates are considered within a month from date of receipt at the Department. The Committee meets almost every Friday afternoon unless the Chairman is otherwise occupied and unable to attend.

NO. 151 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government take the necessary steps to prohibit the parking of boats on trailers in car parks?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Police already take steps to deal with such problems commensurate with their other more important duties, and when offences are observed or complaints received, offenders are strictly advised, or in the case of persistent or obstinate offenders, reported for prosecution. In the past 6 months 3 cases have been prosecuted on conviction at the Magistrates Court (at Alameda Grand Parade).

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 151 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Will Government give consideration to increasing penalties in respect of illegal parking as, for example, with containers? Is the Minister aware of a recent case of a container that was on Devil's Tower Road, actually on the road, for 2 or 3 months before the case came to court and then there was a fine of £15? Will the Government give consideration, in order to avoid these things happening, to amending the laws so that the penalties are much stiffer or the court has power to award very stiff penalties in these cases?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think the Government will, of course, consider increasing the penalties. The police have been dedicating themselves to a number of issues and, for instance, in 1981 it is projected that some 3888 traffic offences will be reported and some 5700 parking tickets will be issued. Last year, against 958 which I mentioned for 1981, there were something like 8192. So there is greater activity in trying to clean up Gibraltar by getting all these vehicles off the road.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will Government, since this matter is being considered also consider the possibility of not allowing in certain car park areas which are for cars, the parking of heavy duty lorries and other trailers and things like that which do find themselves in- to car parks?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, Government has considered this very carefully. There have been some areas which we have declared as car parks, for instance, Moorish Castle where goods vehicles are prohibited from parking at specific times.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 152 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Would Government make a statement on the use of the public highway as open air car parks by car dealers?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The practice is discouraged by the police who give regular attention to this matter. Many of the cars that appear abandoned are in fact licensed and insured. In certain cases police have reported blatant offenders, or obtained their assistance in removing and disposing of the unwanted second hand vehicles.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 152 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Would not the Government agree that it is immoral that car dealers should be making money out of the public highway and that car drivers who find it more and more difficult to find parking places should run the risk of parking in no parking areas and be subsequently fined? Would Government agree that this is an immorality?

MR SPEAKER:

No, you are not going to answer that. This question of immorality is a matter of opinion. Next question.

NO. 153 OF 1981

THE HON A T LODDO

Has Government purchased traffic lights?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Government has not purchased traffic lights as at present they are not considered essential. It may become necessary should the frontier re-open and plans for the acquisition and installation of traffic lights at certain venues have already been provisionally drawn-up.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 153 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, would not the Government agree that we should have the traffic lights before the frontier opens and so get our own drivers used to the idea of driving with traffic lights and not wait until panic stations arise?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, I do not agree. In fact traffic lights, in a place like Gibraltar, for our present set up could be a great hindrance. That is to say that we do not have a consistant flow of traffic from any particular lane and there are certain hours where traffic is moving solely in one direction, for example, Waterport roundabout. One could find that the exodus from HM Dockyard to the Glacis area would be flowing that way at a given time and if you had traffic lights giving a 3 minute interval for roads coming in, it would be much more cumbersome unless of course, and the Honourable Member may think so, it would be possible to have a computer but then the financial consequences would not today be justified.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does the Government then envisage that once the frontier opens there is going to be a continuous flow of traffic to such an extent that it would warrant having traffic lights?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, it could well warrant the direction of traffic. At present it does not.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 154 OF 1981

THE HON A T LODDO

Is Government contemplating the repeal of the law regarding the sounding of car horns within the town area?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

No. Blatant offenders are warned by the police. When the law was more strictly enforced in the past irate drivers used to bang on their car doors. This was more irritating to the public at large but was not an offence.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 154 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say how many cases have been brought before the courts for sounding their car horns inside the town within the last six months?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I said in my answer that the police were warning offenders. They do not prosecute and take cases to court.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, in view of the fact there is a law which is not being enforced and in view of the fact that the public by and large takes very little notice of warnings given by the police would government consider doing away with the law which is useless?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker. When I say police warn they would warn if they would remember who it was who sounded his horn two days earlier or a week earlier. They could be prosecuted if they were persistent offenders but we find that there are no persistent offender as such. If anybody blows his horn purely accidentally or in cases of emergency they are just warned and certainly not summoned.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, surely the law is that it is illegal to sound the horn therefore will the police prosecute or would the Government repeal the law?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the question of the sounding of horns is an offence in the city area. It is also an offence to sound the horn outside the City area if the car is stationary. In those instances the police would warn and possibly prosecute if they found somebody blowing the horn to call somebody's attention from the 14th storey of the tower blocks. However it is not done, Mr Speaker, people are warned and not prosecuted at this stage.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 155 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government ensure that cars removed from Casemates by the Police are not allowed to remain derelict in Market Place?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Yes, Sir. The Police have considerably stepped up action to remove derelict vehicles. In 1980, 623 such vehicles were removed by the Police and disposed of and in the first 6 months of this year 405 such vehicles have been dealt with.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 155 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

I am sure it is very laudable but I am referring in particular to cars removed from Casemates at the time when there is a parade and then trundled to Market Place and left there derelict of which, at the moment, there are three that have been there for the last six weeks. Will the Government ensure that the cars that are removed from Casemates are not allowed to remain derelict in Market Place?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think that the Hon Member should refer not only to Market Place because he happens to be in and out of there every day. There are derelict vehicles all around Gibraltar but I think the determination of the Police to stamp this out is quite meritorious. I will, of course, bring to the attention of the Commissioner of Police the three derelict cars at the Market Place at present.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 156 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

How many cases of speeding by motor cyclists have been brought before the courts within the last twelve months?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The problem of speeding motor cyclists is receiving increased police attention, and will continue to do so.

During the past twelve months ended 30 June, 1981, the following offenders have been reported for speeding offences:

motor cycles - 27

motor cars - 47

Total - 74

NO. 157 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Would Government consider bringing the law regarding motor cycles in line with that in the UK?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is not known what the questioner has in mind.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 157 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Perhaps, Mr Speaker, I may be allowed to explain.

MR SPEAKER:

Most certainly.

HON A T LODDO:

In the United Kingdom, on obtaining a driving licence, a motor cyclist is not allowed to drive a motor cycle with an engine capacity of more than 125 cc. This he has to abide by for a period of 12 months, after which he is allowed to drive a motor cycle of a larger engine capacity. Furthermore, in the United Kingdom any holder of a 'B' licence is entitled to drive a moped with an engine capacity not exceeding 50cc without the need to have a special motor cycle licence. The effect of this is two-fold. You get more people using smaller conveyances, there is a saving in fuel, there is less pollution

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not get into the reasons. You have stated what the law is.

HON A T LODDO:

The other very important one is that an 18 year old youth will not, on obtaining his driving licence, go out and buy himself a 600cc engine and go around with a potential death trap.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member has not got his facts right. In the United Kingdom a person who obtains

MR SPEAKER:

May I say that you knew what he meant when you started.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No.

MR SPEAKER:

In fairness to the questioner either you answer the question or you accept the statement. I am saying this because we are not going to start with an argument as to what the law in the United Kingdom is. I will not have it.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

It is not a case that I happen to know the law in England and I happen to know the law in Gibraltar about motor cycles that is exactly why I cannot answer the Hon Member's question.

MR SPEAKER:

The question that he has asked you, and if you know the law in England and if you know the law in Gibraltar, is whether you are prepared to bring the law in Gibraltar up to the law in the United Kingdom.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the thing is he is wrong in what he said. There is no difference in the law of Gibraltar other than in a provisional licence. They have to wear crash helmets, that is exactly what I thought he was aiming at in the question, not the question of a moped of under 50cc. As far as I know a person who obtains a provisional licence for a moped can only get a 'B' class licence for a moped up to 250cc. In England there are two classifications up to 250cc. A person getting a licence and going for a test on a moped is authorised to drive a motor cycle up to 250cc. I agree he cannot go out the following day and buy an 1100cc. That is the only difference. As regards mopeds, they must wear a crash helmet up to 35cc which is exactly the same as our law is in Gibraltar. The only difference is the provisional licence. Up to 50cc is one category of licence and over 50cc is the other category. That is the only difference that exists.

MR SPEAKER:

No. What you are being asked is whether you are prepared to bring the law of Gibraltar up to that standard.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I remember that the Traffic Ordinance in 1957 provided for motor cycles of a weight up to and not exceeding 200 pounds. I will look into this, it may have some merit.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 158 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

What is Government's view on introducing Traffic Wardens?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

This has been discussed from time to time in various contexts but is not considered a viable proposition at present.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 158 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, would not the Minister agree that by introducing traffic wardens it would free the police to do more police work and leave the trafficking in hands of the traffic wardens? Would it leave the police free to do far more police work than just parking tickets and the like?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I would have to agree if the increase in the volume of work was to be such that would require an additional traffic warden structure. Since the MOD passed the Gibraltar Police Force back to us there seem to be quite an adequate number of men to look after Gibraltar at present.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, in the possible event of the opening of the frontier, will the Government then consider the introduction of traffic wardens? Would he be prepared to contemplate this?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

We would go further than contemplate, we would consider it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 159 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Has Government considered introducing parking meters?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

This has been discussed in the past but is not considered a practicable proposition at present.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 159 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Presumably, whether and if the frontier opens again it will be considered?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Would Government consider introducing limits on parking times?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

It is not thought the introduction of such measures would improve matters.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 160 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, how can the Minister say that the introduction of such measures would not improve matters? I would think that it would improve matters considerably.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I can assure the Hon Member that limiting parking time would be extremely cumbersome. The police would have to keep observation of a particular vehicle, just half an hour, but would have to stay there for 24 hours or mark it with chalk but then people move the car two yards further up the road to a new parking and it becomes an absolute folly.

HON A T LODDO:

Would it not be a viable proposition to have traffic wardens?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No. I think that with the Police Force at present, in the past nine months it is quite common to see policemen around Gibraltar which was not the case a year ago.

HON P J ISOLA:

Do we understand from the questions the Minister has been answering on traffic wardens, controlled parking etc that the Government has really given up trying to control the traffic chaos that we have in Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Traffic is a problem that Government looks at constantly. It is not a question of just having a magic wand and thinking that traffic wardens or waiting time would solve the problem. We would have a graver problem by just limiting time or introducing traffic lights or introducing traffic wardens.

HON A T LODDO:

Would not the Minister agree that if time limits on parking were introduced it would ensure at least that cars would have to be moved and consequently cars that are decrepit and left derelict would soon have to disappear from our streets because, by being an offence and having to pay a fine, the owners would make sure that these cars which are useless in any case would be disposed of?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, we are talking of two different things. If he is referring to derelict cars or cars parked

MR SPEAKER:

We are beginning to argue and debate on question time. We must not do that.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

May I assure the Hon Member that at the moment Government sees that it is impossible. In the past there was a waiting time in certain areas and it was found to be an absolute mockery of the law because persons were moving their cars back by two yards or reversing and going back into it and it became a new parking and that was a total abuse. All you did was inconvenience individuals of having to come out of the shop, office or home and move his car every thirty minutes or so.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 161 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government prohibit the parking of cars covered with a canvas or plastic cover on the public highway?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Any cars so parked which are in breach of the law are dealt with in the same manner as any vehicle which is not covered up.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 161 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say how many cars that have been covered have been reported?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am afraid I cannot.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 162 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government explain why it has been found necessary to purchase 3 more patrol cars, 2 more motor cycles and 1 general purpose van for the Police Department and furthermore state what will be the full complement of vehicles for this Department after these purchases?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

The proposed purchases will not increase the present police vehicle fleet. The vehicles to be purchased are straight replacements for existing vehicles which are either broken down, past economical repair or at the end of their working life.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 162 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

That answers the first part, can I have the second part of the question?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The police vehicle fleet is and will remain as follows:-

motor cars	-	4
motor cycles	-	7
vans	-	3
ambulances	-	2
land rovers	-	2
		<hr/>
total		18 vehicles

NO. 163 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Taking into account the lack of support from possible contestants for the Miss Gibraltar, would Government consider diverting its energies and finance in this respect to the further promoting of the Gibraltar Song Festival?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

I do not agree that there is a lack of support on the part of eligible girls to participate in the Miss Gibraltar Contest.

Admittedly, the number of contestants is not as high as one would expect, bearing in mind the many attractive girls in this City of ours as well as the very attractive prizes to be won by them.

In spite of a sustained campaign, however, experience has shown that girls tend to come forward at the last possible moment, and indeed it is not unusual for an entry to be accepted minutes before the deadline set by the organisers.

The Government has supported the Song Festival in the past and in 1980 and 1981 by means of a cash grant of £3,000 in each case.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 163 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

The Minister does not agree that there is lack of support? Perhaps the Minister could listen to Radio Gibraltar and he would find out the appeals going out almost every day because precisely there is lack of support. Would not the Minister agree that the political reason for Miss Gibraltar entering the Miss World is no longer necessary when we keep seeing photographs of Miss Gibraltar and Miss Spain, best of friends, cutting cakes and generally, living it up together? Would not the Minister agree that it is far more important now to promote the far more prestigious Gibraltar Song Festival and let the Miss Gibraltar venture now fade into the background seeing the lack of support?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, there is no lack of support. I can assure the Hon Member that very shortly before the Miss Gibraltar takes place we will, like in every other year, obtain the necessary girls to form a Miss Gibraltar contest. There is a sense of shyness, I think, of girls coming forward and they all seem to want to come in at the last moment. I am sure that when one leads we will get others following. I do not agree that the political reason for the Miss Gibraltar contest, vis-a-vis the Spanish situation holds no water today. I think the publicity that Miss Gibraltar gets is much more, with great respect to the Song Festival, than

the Song Festival. For instance, we had this year's Miss Gibraltar in the front page of the Sun. At the moment, I think the Song Festival has its merits but I think the publicity that Gibraltar gets on the Miss Gibraltar situation is much greater than what we get from the Song Festival.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I would not agree with that but I would ask the Minister, what does he consider to be the adequate number? If my memory

MR SPEAKER:

No, I am not having it. I am not going to have under question time the viability of the Miss Gibraltar contest, under no circumstances.

HON W T SCOTT:

May I ask one question? In the event, unlikely as this may seem to the Minister, of not having sufficient contestants and there is no Miss Gibraltar contest either this year or next year, whether at least that money or part of that money which is normally devoted by the Government to that contest will be made available for the promotion of the Gibraltar Song Festival?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, I do not agree. I think that the Hon Member will agree that every single year there is a delay in the girls coming forward. There is no difference in 1981 to 1980 or 1979. I feel that Government makes a contribution towards the Song Festival of £3,000 which I think is quite reasonable.

HON W T SCOTT:

I am asking if in the event, unlikely as this may seem to the Minister, that there is no Miss Gibraltar contest whether the Government would seriously reconsider channelling part of that sum of money which normally is given to the Miss Gibraltar contest into the Gibraltar Song Festival by increasing what it already gives to that Festival?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

When the time comes we will look at it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 164 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government state why registered letters are not delivered to the address on the envelope but have to be collected from the Post Office?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Registered letters are delivered to the addresses shown on the envelope and a signature denoting receipt is obtained. However, at addresses where there is no one available to sign for the receipt of the letter at the time the postman calls, a note to the effect that a registered letter may be collected from the Post Office is left at the address in question. The only exemptions to the general rule concern addresses in blocks of flats which are provided with letter boxes in a central position within the block and Post Office Boxes. In these cases a note to the effect that a registered letter is awaiting collection at the Post Office is left in the letter box or Post Office Box concerned.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 164 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Would the Minister agree that the whole purpose of a registered letter and why people pay extra for that is to ensure that the addressee does get the letter? Does not he believe that by just dropping a little note in this box it could get mislaid and therefore that letter is never received notwithstanding that the sender has paid extra?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I hope the Hon Member understood what I replied. The letter is taken to the actual address. If there is no one there then, of course, the person cannot sign for the acceptance of a registered letter. A registered letter is so, so that the sender can ensure that the person receives the letter. If there is no one there then the letter cannot be received and the postman would have no evidence of its acceptance. In those circumstances, and in those circumstances alone, when there is no one at home, a note is sent to the letter box of this particular person telling him or her that there is a letter at the Post Office. Let me assure Hon Members there are instances where the letter is taken on two consecutive days. It is not just a once and for all. There are instances where people know that the good old lady of the house may be out and it is invariably taken on a second round except in the case of places like Varyl Begg where there are letter boxes. Then, of course, the postman does not take them individually but the notices are put in the Post Office box.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Perhaps the Minister does not know what I was referring to. First of all, I was very glad to hear that there was more than one occasion because I was going to press on the Minister to see whether he could do that, at least to go a couple of times, but that obviously is being done. As I understood it, and perhaps the Minister will correct me if I am wrong, in the case of the Tower Blocks and other places where there are letter boxes the procedure of taking the letter to the house is not followed. Does the Minister agree that in those cases, seeing that the sender has obviously paid more and also considering that they are sort of a bagful of them but obviously exceptional, the postman should literally go and follow the normal procedure of knocking at the door and getting the addressee to receive that letter and sign for it?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I would tend to agree to an extent but I would not say that they are just a batchful of them. There is an enormous amount of registered mail going round Gibraltar from within Gibraltar itself and from overseas. I would have thought that the Member would have thought that the modern trend is for notes to be put into letter boxes and for the persons to claim. I would not like to see, particularly in places like the Tower Blocks and perhaps the Hon Mr Bossano might support me strongly on that one, a postman having to go up 14 flights to deliver a letter right at the top.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does the Minister agree therefore that he is treating a registered letter in the case of the Tower Blocks and places where there are letter boxes the same as any other ordinary letter and consequently, in fact even worse, he is inconveniencing the addressee to have to go to the Post Office and not having it handed over to him? Is it not unfair and really taking money under false pretences, for an individual to pay extra for a registered letter and then find that it is being treated almost the same as any other letter, in certain circumstances? Could not the Minister consider, because I think it is only fair to the person paying extra and also to the addressee, to revise the whole position with regard to the Tower Blocks and other places?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I do not agree, Mr Speaker. It is not treated the same as any other letter. The sender will never check if another letter had got to its destination.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is it not what the Minister is saying, in effect, that the person who pays for a registered letter, the purpose of which is to ensure that it is delivered, has no guarantee of delivery if the addressee does not come for it to the Post Office? Therefore, he is not getting the service for which he is paying which is to ensure delivery at an address.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, he would get no assurance of delivery if there is no one at home.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Minister not agree that in other countries if a registered letter is not delivered after two or three visits it is sent back to the addressor and then the addressor knows it has not been delivered? In the present situation you could have a letter awaiting collection five or six weeks.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That is not so. If a letter is not delivered within 14 days it is sent back to the sender.

HON P J ISOLA:

If it is not delivered how can it be sent back to the sender?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Because the Post Office has it and as no one has come to collect it, it is sent back.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 165 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Is the acting Minister for Postal Services now in a position to issue a statement on the question of TV licence stamps?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, I would like, with your permission, to reply to this question since the scheme is being piloted by the Treasury and not by the Postal Authorities.

The matter is well in hand. The format of the cards to be used has already been agreed upon and it is hoped to have them printed soon. The public will be informed as soon as the cards are available.

Persons who wish to participate in the scheme will be issued with a card on which ordinary postage stamps of not less than 50p in value can be affixed at their convenience. The cards will contain general instructions for the guidance of users and may be surrendered when renewal of the licence falls due.

NO. 166 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government confirm that the non-allocation of further work on housing units at Tank Ramp has brought about redundancy in the construction firm already working in that area?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The work referred to is Phase II of the Tank Ramp re-Development Scheme. This project forms part of the new Development Programme 1981/86. The aid submission was made in February, 1981. However, until such time as the UK Government reaction to the submission is known and funds are made available, Government cannot put the projects out to tender.

As regards redundancy in the construction firm already working in that area, it is probable that in the event of the contractor having performed satisfactorily, Government would have considered negotiating with the same contractor for the next phase. However, for the reasons mentioned above and which were explained to the contractor on several occasions, it is regrettable that the schemes will not overlap and the opportunity for continuity lost. The redundancy can be attributed to the general reduction in the level of construction work.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 166 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Therefore, would not the Minister agree that this is regrettable? What we are finding is that because of his hiatus between the ending of one scheme and the beginning of the other, at the end of the day we shall be paying more for our housing because constructors have got to start all over again, when they already have their equipment and their name on the site. Would he not agree that this is introducing an additional cost element into a very costly exercise already?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I would agree with that.

HON J BOSSANO:

Does not the Minister think that therefore it is not sufficient to regret what is happening and wait for something to happen by itself? What we need to do is to alter the system that we have got to the extent that part of the development programme is being funded by the Gibraltar Government any way; that part should be identified and be got on with while we are waiting for the reply to the UK aid part of it.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That brings up a measure of complications in deciding which scheme, if we were to go ahead, should be the one that was actually taken on. It might not be the Tank Ramp Scheme and therefore this firm would have suffered the redundancy any way. Government has taken the view point that until we know the full implications of the answer to our aid submission we should not go forward on anything at the moment.

HON J BOSSANO:

I can accept this and I assume, and the Minister can confirm whether my assumption is right, that the Government is doing this in order not to reduce the possible impact they can make on being able to persuade ODA to put up money but apart from that does not the Government realise that in the serious situation of the construction industry there may be no construction industry left by the time they get the money? Is not the Government aware of the depth of the recession in the construction industry?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Government has actually gone ahead with certain schemes irrespective of the aid programme. One of them is the Catalan Bay project which will be going out to tender in September. I think that we have looked at the whole situation with reasonable sense of urgency. I do not think the construction industry will disappear overnight. After all they are doing, even on this year's estimates, some £16m of development work so I cannot see that they are going to vanish overnight. I think those allegations might have been more applicable if nothing came up perhaps by the end of 1982. I think at this stage it is rather premature to say that.

HON J BOSSANO:

I take it then that the Hon Member is not aware of the figures produced by his colleague, the Minister for Labour and Social Security, that shows that out of 196 people out of work, 92 are construction workers and that those construction workers, to the extent that 49 of them are non-EEC nationals, will not stay indefinitely in Gibraltar because in fact the law does not allow them to stay in Gibraltar once they have exhausted their unemployment benefit. Is he aware of that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think so. The construction industry has always been afflicted with this malice that sometimes there is more work and sometimes there is less and I think that one cannot, in all circumstances, ensure full employment in an industry which has never to my knowledge had full employment but has been subject to recessions and inflations of various types.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Minister then saying that the situation is not abnormal at present? How does he square that with the statements made by him and by his predecessor in this House, consistently year after year, that it was the inability of the construction industry to build more that was holding up the development programme? Is it not true that until very recently the whole argument was not that it was normal for the construction industry to have a lot of unemployed people? Quite the contrary that more work could not be done because there were not more people in industry.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If the Hon Member will look back over the last 10 years there have been periods when more people have been required than we had and there were periods when there were more people employed than actual work for them. It is a little unfortunate that our aid submission has not yet had the fullest attention that we would have hoped it might have had. Perhaps this situation will improve fairly soon.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Minister then aware that the level of employment in the industry today is the lowest since statistics started being collected in 1971? Is he aware of that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If you inform me I am not aware of it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 167 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

.. Would Government consider making grants available to tenants for the installation of refuse disposal units in existing housing estates?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Presumably the Hon Member is referring to domestic waste disposers intended only for disposing of food wastes.

No, Sir, Government is not considering making grants available to tenants for the installation of waste disposers in existing housing estates. These disposers must be fitted to sinks of larger outlet diameters than those normally in use. The wastes would increase the solid load on existing sewage stacks and indeed on the sewage system. Maintenance and repairs costs would be recurrent and high.

7.7.81

NO. 168 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Would Government consider installing refuse disposal units in new housing projects?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Government is not considering the installation of such disposers in new housing projects. Although an in-depth study has not been carried out, it is known that these machines require sinks of larger outlet diameters than those normally in use, they are noisy in operation, require a liberal flow of water, electric power and also increase the load on the sewage system.

When other than food wastes are inserted, serious jams can occur by foreign objects being trapped in the grinders. This would then involve dismantling the machine with resultant high repairs costs and disruption.

NO. 169 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say why Tank Ramp was not opened to vehicular traffic in June ultimo as stated in reply to question No. 84 of 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Owing to the requirement to maintain contractor access to the Tank Ramp site while Water and Electrical Department service renewal trenchwork proceeded, work has taken longer than anticipated.

Service trenchwork is now complete.

Pavement work is now well under way and it is anticipated that the road will be opened to vehicular traffic by the autumn.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 169 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, by the autumn of which year?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

1986.

7.7.81

NO. 170 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say whether they intend doing anything about the dilapidated condition of the Clock Faces at Moorish Castle?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

A survey was carried out in May and work was programmed for completion in late July, 1981. Indeed work started some days ago, and before this question arrived for answer.

7.7.81

NO. 171 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can the Minister say how many private cars are allowed to drive through and park inside the Alameda Gardens?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Two private cars, the property of the Park Supervisor and his son-in-law, both of whom live at the cottage, have permission to drive through the gardens, also any other supervisory staff, including the Cleansing Superintendent, who visit the depot there on official business.

Other vehicles which may require entry, as in the case of delivery of furniture, musical instruments etc to the Open Air Theatre, have to obtain prior permission.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 171 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

I can assure the Minister that there are more than two private cars parked in the Alameda Gardens outside the cottage. I would like to ask the Minister why is an exception made for these cars to park inside the Alameda Gardens when there is ample parking space in Alameda Grand Parade?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, instructions have been given to the Park Supervisor and his son-in-law that they are the only two people who may park inside the Alameda Gardens. If the Hon Member would give me the number of any other car he sees there I will see that they are prohibited in the future.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, could I then have the two registration numbers of the two cars that are allowed because otherwise I do not know which?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I will send it to you.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 172 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government explain why no lifeguards were employed between the official opening of the bathing season and the 16th June?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

In recent years Government has provided life saving services at the beaches from the date when school children start their half days. As the school half days this year commenced on Tuesday 16th June, the life saving services were commenced on the previous Saturday, that is, 13th June, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 172 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Does the Minister then feel that no life saving services are required at the beaches between the beginning of the bathing season and the time that schools go on half days?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

This is a question of striking a balance between the absolute need and the absolute costs. Government has felt that until the school children start going on half days there is not all the emergency to have lifeguards there on a permanent basis. There are, of course, beach attendants who are in many instances willing to help in case of necessity.

HON G T RESTANO:

One thing is cost and the other thing is necessity. Surely, for the prevention - and we are talking about people who may be in danger of losing their lives in the sea - the cost aspect should not be a stumbling block for the Government to introduce this service.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I do not agree with the Hon Member. If we are going to have lifeguards at any time when people go bathing then, of course, we must have lifeguards on a sunny day in December when people want to go bathing. Therefore, we should have lifeguards on a 365 day basis.

HON G T RESTANO:

No, Mr Speaker, we are talking about official bathing season.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Perhaps we should shorten the official bathing season as far as the beaches are concerned to the period when the schools start their half days to the period when they finish their half days.

HON G T RESTANO:

What sort of costs are we talking about? How much would it cost in fact to employ these people before the half days?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I cannot remember the exact figures now but I think that when we did reduce the service we saved between £10,000 and £20,000.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 173 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government give details of the time spent and the costs incurred in building a pavement along Rosia Road?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

I would refer the Hon Member to my replies to similar questions in 1979 (206 of 1979) and 1980 (300 of 1980) when small sections of the pavement in Rosia Road were built.

As previously stated these works are of low priority and labour is drafted to the site as and when available and fluctuates daily.

Works started on 1st June this year and the costs to 30th June are:

Labour	£1,549.40
Efficiency Agreement	110.00
Materials	527.00
Total	<u>£2,186.40</u>

NO. 174 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Has Government further considered the advisability of submerged breakwaters on certain sections of the Eastern seaboard to stem the loss of sand from beaches on that side?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, Government has not recently considered the construction of submerged breakwaters since these not only would be expensive to construct and maintain, but are of doubtful value in retaining sand.

The eastern foreshore has always been subject to shifting sands caused by winds and currents and hydraulic studies would have to be carried out over a period of years to ensure the correct design was adopted.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 174 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Is it not a fact that Government has been in possession of certain advices that were given to it, I think, dating back possibly to March, 1969?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, there was some study done. There was a small groin built which broke up after a number of years and has given part of the idea to the thinking that to do the whole thing would be extremely costly, extremely difficult to do and perhaps not fully effective. To be absolutely sure of it much further study would be needed.

HON W T SCOTT:

Does Government have any intention of commissioning this further study?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not at the moment but it is something we can always consider.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 175 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government now in a position to inform this House as to when the erection of all the new roofs at the Varyl Begg Estate will be completed?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The contract completion date is scheduled for May, 1982.

NO. 176 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government give the figures and costs for water production from available sources for the months of February, March, April and May, 1981, and state what the stocks were at 31st May, 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The figures of water production from available sources for the months of February, March, April and May are as follows:

SOURCES	FEBRUARY 1981 M ³	MARCH 1981 M ³	APRIL 1981 M ³	MAY 1981 M ³
Rainfall	309	3741	9926	2768
Wells	9182	8918	9290	8632
NF Distiller	15967	16624	19069	19006
VTE Distiller	5934	A N N U A L O V E R H A U L		
Importation	28987	30385	26596	29218

The stocks of potable water on 31st May 1981 stood at 61834M (13.6Mg)

The estimated costs for each source for the financial year 1981/82 are:

Rainfall £1.12 per M³

Wells £1.52 per M³

NF Distiller £4.48 per M³

VTE Distiller £4.43 per M³

Importation £2.90 per M³

If the average 16%-20% losses in water are taken into account, these figures have to be increased by this percentage to give an absolute cost.

7.7.81

NO. 177 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government now in a position to inform this House as to when Gibraltar may expect the Air Terminal Extension to be in operation?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Site possession and commencement on site:

is scheduled for the 14 July, 1981.

1st Phase completion which is the arrival hall, customs hall etc:

is scheduled for April, 1982.

2nd Phase completion which is the departure lounge etc:

is scheduled for November, 1982.

NO. 178 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government give the number of housing units due for completion within the next twelve months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Flat Bastion Road - 15 units (2 bedsits, 6/1RKB, 6/2RKB, 1/3RKB)
Tank Ramp - 10 units (1 bedsit, 3/2RKB, 6/4RKB)
Lime Kiln Steps - 15 units (5 bedsits, 4/2RKB, 6/3RKB)
St Jago's - 26 units (14 bedsits, 12 maisonettes)
St Joseph's - 50 units (26 maisonettes, 24 bedsits)

NO. 179 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Is Government satisfied that the foundry constructed in the Public Works Department garage at Varyl Begg does not constitute a safety hazard to the resident population?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The foundry at the Public Works Department Garage Workshop is not considered to be a hazard to the resident population of the Varyl Begg Estate.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 179 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the Minister aware that it does emit smoke and unpleasant pollution?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The equipment installed in this garage foundry is the same as that which has been in use for years at Queensway site. Prior to the re-siting of the Public Works garage workshop, the foundry was in operation next to the Services School at New Camp and we never had complaints from the neighbourhood. At the moment the present foundry has only been used once and only on a trial run to melt some distiller fluted tubes. The tubes contain some calcium sulphate scale which gave an alarming amount of smoke resulting in the neighbourhood estate becoming alarmed. This instant could be reason why this question was tabled. The metal furnace is diesel fired and chimney stags have not been finished yet due to the pressure of the workload at the blacksmith shop. Once the chimney is installed the metal furnace should work without causing a hindrance to the public.

HON A J HAYNES:

The Minister is aware then of the instance when certain flats were smoke clogged and so forth but has the Minister asked the Public Health to investigate the substance of the smoke to ensure that this is not a safety hazard?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

As I have already said the Public Health has been, more than once, consulted and the thinking is that the foundry does not constitute a safety hazard. At the same time when the full chimney is in operation it will even be less of a hazard than it is at the moment.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will there be no smoke then?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There may be a little smoke obviously at certain times if you have something which you are smelting which inherently produces a lot of smoke then there may be a case when there is a little smoke, yes.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 180 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government erect bollards on the pavement in the area from the Church to the new school at the Varyl Begg Estate to ensure a free passage for pedestrians?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

No, Sir, it is not considered that erection of such bollards will serve a sufficiently useful purpose.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 180 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

I was informed that the Minister had in fact agreed at one time to erect such bollards.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I have had consultations with the Varyl Begg Estate Committee who feel that, since there is hardly sufficient parking in the Varyl Begg area, to put bollards along that area would stop the use of the area as parking at night might create more congestion and eventually result in being more trouble than they would be worth.

HON A J HAYNES:

More trouble? Is the Minister aware of the dangers to pedestrians in that particular area where you have children, prams, the typical concentration of that part of one society which would naturally walk along that area? Children who would be obliged to walk on the road because there is no room on the pavement are endangered.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I do not see that there is any greater danger in that area than in any other area in Gibraltar. I think the whole thing would be that the cars should not be parked on the pavement during normal daylight hours but at night I think to prohibit the parking in that area would make more congestion and possibly would only exacerbate the situation that already exists.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister consider then putting a chain construction which can be removed at night? Something so that people at Varyl Begg who are worried and are concerned at mums having to walk along a road with a pram, children having to walk in the middle of the road. It is dangerous. I am aware that it is inconvenient for cars but I am also aware that it is far more important to save lives.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am quite willing to discuss the matter with the Varyl Begg Estate Committee who I think have the overriding interest in that area.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government give details of the proposed dredging of the commercial Port Berths?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The commercial Port was last dredged in March, 1971. Although the anchorage in the Bay is suitable for the largest vessels, the alongside berths have a draft restriction.

The deepest draft vessel permitted on the Western side of the Western Arm is 31' 6", and on the inside berths, it is 30 feet, with drafts of 30' on No 1 Jetty and 28' on No 2 Jetty.

Due to these limitations, it is essential to ensure that further restrictions are not imposed due to siltation.

The Berths to be dredged are as follows:

Western Arm	East and West side
No 1 Jetty	Berths 4 and 5
No 2 Jetty	Berths 6 and 7
No 4 Jetty	Berths 10 and 11
Detached Mole	Berths 53 and 54

On the outside of the Western Arm dredging will take place up to 120' from Quay and on the inside up to a distance of 80' from Quay.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 181 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

I am sure we all welcome an improvement to the Port facilities. Can we know the estimated cost of this operation?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think there is provision for it in the Estimates. It is of the order of £20,000.

HON G T RESTANO:

Just one further question, Mr Speaker. On the question of dredging, I think the Minister said that the last dredging was done in 1971. Was not dredging also done in 1974 in the commercial harbour?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not think so, Mr Speaker. I must naturally go on the information that is provided for me by the Captain of the Port but I do not think that there was any dredging undertaken in the commercial harbour, certainly not at the instance of the Captain of the Port.

HON G T RESTANO:

I believe that in fact it was carried out by a ship called the Fograut, in 1974. I think Gibraltar heard dredging during part of the night.

HON A J CANEPA:

I remember hearing dredging but I do not think the Port Department was responsible for that but I can check to see whether my information is wrong.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Just a clarification point. Did I understand the Minister to say that the intention of this dredging was just to remove any sediment that may have accumulated or is it the idea to go any deeper?

HON A J CANEPA:

No. To prevent siltation within the sediment that does accumulate over a period of time. To remove it.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the material removed then usable for part of the Government's reclamation or not?

HON A J CANEPA:

I would require notice of that, Mr Speaker, I really do not know.

HON G T RESTANO:

I know that the operation has been put out to tender. Has any decision been taken as to who is going to carry out the operation?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am not aware that a decision has yet been taken.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the tenders were invited with a closing date of 17th June.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, one is asked the question of details of the proposed dredging and one imagines that we are talking about the technical aspects of dredging and one therefore brings an answer accordingly and cannot possibly and physically answer every possible supplementary. If Hon Members genuinely want information, information can be provided. If they want to score debating points in the House by bringing matters up that the Minister cannot answer that is their privilege but they will not get the information.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I must answer that because that is the most unrealistic type of answer. It is clear, I asked 'would the Government give details of the proposed dredging' and I would have thought it would have been a logical supplementary question to ask. After all the information which was obtained from the tender notice which appeared in the Gazette on the 21st May was that the closing date for the tender was half way through June and I am asking, has the tender been awarded? Surely, we should know if it has been awarded.

HON A J CANEPA:

You should have asked whether the tender had been awarded and whether the Minister would give details of what is proposed. I realise that the Hon Member opposite has a fetish about tenders but I do not.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does the Minister then have no idea when the proposed dredging will commence?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is certainly proposed to commence within this financial year otherwise we would not have voted at the last budget the sum of £20,000 for that purpose.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 182 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Why has legislation to prevent young children from handling speedboats unless they are accompanied by adults still not been brought before this House?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The Seaside Pleasure Boats Rules 1981 were enacted on the 25th June, 1981, and published on the same day in the Gazette. They will become effective on the 15th July, 1981. They provide, inter alia, for the testing of persons under the age of 18 before being allowed to handle speedboats and the opportunity has also been taken to review the previous rules generally.

The Hon. Member will also be aware that a Bill to amend the Public Health Ordinance is set down for consideration of all its stages during this meeting. This Bill is intended to make better provision in the principal Ordinance for the control of pleasure boats. It expressly defines certain terms and also expressly confers power to require testing of persons handling speedboats.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 182 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

I do not want to ask any further supplementary but I think I should say that when this question was drafted I was not aware that Rules had come into force on 25th June and in fact there was a weekend in between and we had to present our questions on Monday the 31st. That was the reason I asked this question.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government confirm whether MOD is asking £200,000 for the re-provisioning of the shed at No 4 jetty but it is willing to transfer the jetty without cost if the shed is demolished?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Jetty No 4 was released to the Gibraltar Government on 1 April, 1981, on an extension to the existing Commercial Port Agreement. The transfer excluded temporarily the shed on the Jetty pending future discussions on land matters which will determine whether the shed will have to be paid for. The value of the shed had been assessed by the MOD at £200,000.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 183 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Is it a fact, the second part of the question, that the MOD have indicated that if the shed were demolished they would not require £200,000 for it?

HON A J CANEPA:

It cannot be. In April I wrote to the Deputy Governor asking him to formally approach the Ministry of Defence with a proposal either that they should demolish these sheds or they should allow the Government to demolish the sheds and moreso as the firm, that are using No 4 jetty for their aggregate and sand operation, are quite willing to demolish it themselves at no cost to the Government. This point was made by me in April and there has been no response.

HON J BOSSANO:

Let me try and get a clear picture, Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member will bear with me. Is it true then that the MOD are saying that they want £200,000 for the shed, and the shed is worth that much, and they will not let it go at all? Is it a fact that if the Government does not buy the shed from them for £200,000, in fact, they have no choice but to demolishing it because they have already agreed to release the land on which the shed exists? The land has already been released. Presumably the Government is not willing to buy and the MOD has got no choice but to demolish it and get nothing for it.

HON A J CANEPA:

The Government is not willing to buy the shed because it does not consider that it has any continuing use value. The position is that when we take over MOD land, if the buildings on it have a continuing value to the Gibraltar Government, then we must pay for that. The shed, as far as we are concerned, has no continuing value to us because we want to demolish it. Therefore, we are not going to pay for something that they want to see demolished.

HON J BOSSANO:

I am not suggesting that the Hon Member should pay for it, quite the opposite. What I am trying to establish is, in fact, whether the position of the MOD is that if the shed is demolished then that is fine, you have not got to pay for it but if you were to have some use for it then we want £200,000 for it. It seems to me that whether the Government decides to demolish the shed or not to demolish the shed, it is a matter for Government's decision looking at what is the best use that can be made of the site that has been made available and it is irrelevant to the MOD whether the Government uses it or demolishes it and therefore it should not be a consideration in the Government being charged. I would like to get a clear picture of what the MOD is saying.

HON A J CANEPA:

Let me say, and I will give way to the Attorney-General in a moment because he is more closely involved with the negotiations than I am, I wish that that were their position. Logically it ought to be but I will not say anything more and I will allow the Attorney-General to intervene at this point.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, there is a distinction in the arrangements between the Government and the Ministry of Defence. There is a distinction between natural land and reclaimed land. In the case of the reclaimed land there is no arrangement or understanding that if the building does not have continuing use it may be transferred free of charge and that is a matter on which the Ministry of Defence and the Government are negotiating at the moment. The correct position is that the matter is unresolved. My understanding is, and I feel sure I am right, and I can check and confirm privately that I am right, that at the moment the position of the Ministry of Defence is that if the building is to be handed over it must be paid for.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 184 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government confirm that it has been told by MOD that William's Way Tunnel is required for defence purposes and cannot be used in connection with land reclamation on the East side of the Rock?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

I can confirm that the possibility of excavating rock from William's Way Tunnel was discussed by the Development and Planning Commission early in the year and after enquiry by Ministry of Defence representatives the Commission was informed that such operations could not be permitted having regard to the use made of the tunnel by the Services.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 184 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Can I ask the Government, once they had been informed of this what further they did to investigate on what grounds the Ministry of Defence was stating this and to persuade the Ministry of Defence that, if it was more important to Gibraltar's economic future that William's Way Tunnel should be made available than it was to MOD's future, which is so uncertain anyway, it should be taken into consideration.

HON A J CANEPA:

The situation has changed of late but at the time we were informed, and I think this is the position at William's Way Tunnel at the moment, that it contained storage tanks of highly inflammable liquid and sensitive signals equipment. Whereas I say as a result of the Defence Review and having regard to the economic benefit that there could be for Gibraltar of reclamation on the eastern side of the Rock that the matter should not be looked at again particularly if MOD space were to become available elsewhere for these materials to be stored there then I think that there is certainly some logic in pressing for this again if that is the only way that the reclamation proposed on the east side of the Rock can take place.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Government not agree then that it is desirable that when a private firm expresses an interest in this they should be given an indication of encouragement from the Government in pursuing such a possibility which goes beyond simply being sent a short letter telling them William's Way Tunnel is not available because the MOD do not like it, fullstop? Would the Minister not agree that if there are objections, then one could see whether it is possible to overcome those objections and preferably to be able to produce the result we want for Gibraltar without disturbing the MOD too much and make an attempt to overcome the obstacle rather than simply accept defeat, as it were?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, I would agree, Mr Speaker. What happens sometimes is that if the application of the enquiry has been made through an official channel, the reply goes through an official channel and is couched in more civil service jargon. Where an enquiry is made to me either in my capacity as Minister for Economic Development or as Chairman of the Development and Planning Commission and people come along to see me to discuss any development proposals that they have, then I think that approach is somewhat different and I have had experience of that. I know the case that the Hon Member has in mind but another interest has been expressed and I think the House will recall that I have stated here in the not very distant past that there had been a number of enquiries and interest was being shown in reclamation on the east side of the Rock. Where an approach is made at ministerial level one is rather in a better position, I think, to show an encouraging approach than what has happened in this case where an enquiry went through official channels to the Development and Planning Commission; through the MOD representative on the Commission we got the answer and the answer was communicated back through the same channel. I think that this is a matter that we want to pursue further, the whole question of economic development on the east side of the Rock and it will be tackled at my level rather than at official level. I do not mind putting myself at the disposal of any people wishing to make an approach to me on the matter.

HON P J ISOLA:

Should a private firm apply to excavate from William's Way for reclamation on the east side, am I not right in thinking that any reclamation or any work on the eastern side of the Rock would be subject, surely, to Government policy, tendering procedures and so forth? Am I right?

HON A J CANEPA:

Let me choose my words carefully. I think an enquiry was made, I would not call it a building application. Enquiries were made and the matter was brought to the Development and Planning Commission. Not everything that comes to the Development and Planning Commission is a building application. Enquiries are made and they are considered on planning grounds and on broad development grounds and it was indicated in this enquiry that they were looking to the fill coming from William's Way and naturally enquiries had to be made from the MOD but there was no question of a building application. If the Government is going to consider a development programme, the Government, I think the Hon Member is aware, does not always go out to tender. Sometimes there are direct negotiations with the developer like, for instance, Bayside Marina. That did not go out to tender. The proposed hotel at Parson's Lodge is also in that category because many years ago when the Government went out to tender there were no takers. If a developer comes along at a given point in time and is the only developer showing an interest in a particular development project, the Government may well enter into negotiations for a direct allocation to be made in the public interest. Where there is more than one interested as is becoming apparent with the east side of the Rock where we have got more than one enquiry then, obviously, the Government will have to seriously consider whether any project should not be put out to tender.

HON P J ISOLA:

Would not the Government agree that in terms of alternative economic strategy for Gibraltar in certain circumstances, a big project on the east side of the Rock might help in providing the answers for alternative economic strategy and, therefore, one must go very carefully before dishing out any concessions on any part of the eastern side because it would seem to me, would the Minister not agree, that if we are talking of alternative economic strategy we would be talking of a very major reclamation scheme on the east side of the Rock?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, I concur with the Hon Member.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 185 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether it proposes to make compulsory purchase of the privately owned site at Town Range adjacent to the St Jago's housing project now under construction?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The Government is not in a position at this stage to consider whether to exercise its powers of compulsory acquisition (in the absence of an agreement with the freeholders) in respect of the privately owned site at Town Range. Such a decision cannot be taken in isolation but must be related to the Government's Development objectives for housing.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 185 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

The Hon Member, I imagine, sees the logic of carrying out its development for housing when it is already working on a site which is adjacent to an under-used site that has been a scandalous situation in Gibraltar for 20 or 30 years. Do they see the logic of that?

HON A J CANEPA:

A scandalous situation which was not of Government's making. Let it be said. It is a question of expense really. What are the freeholders looking for? What sort of money do they want for that site? I think where the Government is in a position that it has sufficient sites to build on, this site does not become that important. I agree with him that it would be desirable to consider building on it as an extension of the development going on there at the moment. But we do have, as I say, other sites available between 1981 and 1986. We could well reach a stage where sites that become available in the future might be very costly to develop and then the cost of acquiring this site, when set off against the additional cost of building elsewhere, might well make it an economically viable proposition. I do not think we are at that stage at the moment. The matter has been discussed from time to time and other than a compulsory acquisition we do not seem to be able to come to terms with the owners of the site.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 186 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government consider carrying out demolition of the Engineer House site so as to make it available as a temporary parking area pending development of the site?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Government has already considered carrying out demolition of the Engineer House site for use as a temporary car park. However, the cost of this exercise would be very substantial, and bearing in mind that a housing scheme for the Engineer House site forms part of the aid submission, there is little point in reconsidering this proposal until such time as the outcome of the aid submission is known.

It is intended meanwhile that work should proceed shortly on trial holes related to the proposed housing scheme.

NO. 187 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state when work is due to start on the project on the site of the Old Slaughter House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The site of the Old Slaughter House is now being considered for another purpose. This decision followed the failure of the successful tenderer to meet the conditions of the acceptance of tender within the stipulated period.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 187 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister saying that it is being considered for another purpose within the people who answered the original tender or is he saying that it is going out to tender again?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, it is not going out to tender at present. The Government itself has a use that it would like to see that site being put to. In one case for the Government's own benefit in the sense that there is a motor vehicle testing shed that we would like to see built there and there is another matter which is also the subject of negotiations at the moment.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 188 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state when work is due to start on the Buena Vista Cottage site?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The tender for the development of the Buena Vista Cottage site was awarded to a Company on the basis of the most meritorious scheme. Acceptance was, however, conditional on the production of evidence of the tenderer's availability of resources to execute the proposed development. This it has failed to do within the time limits that were extended to permit it to allow negotiations with a financial institution and the award of tender has consequently had to be withdrawn.

A fresh tender notice has already been published and steps will be taken to enforce stricter adherences to those safeguards in the tender conditions which are intended to ensure the economic viability of the scheme and the tenderer's financial standing before a selection is made by the Tender Board.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 188 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

It is welcome that the Government should do something to take this up because at least in two questions the Hon Member has mentioned that the successful tenderer has subsequently been unable to complete. Would not the Minister agree that in circumstances as these other tenderers must feel aggrieved if somebody else perhaps dresses up a scheme to make it seem more attractive to the Government where-as a competitor who puts in a more realistic proposal and then finds that it goes to the person that has produced something that looked on paper sufficiently nice to have the edge and win the tender then the unsuccessful tenderer find himself defeated, as it were, the first time? Then possibly having to go through everything again with the expense of re-submitting tenders and so on, would not the Member agree that the original tenderers must feel that, if the successful tenderer was unsuccessful because he was unable to complete, they should have the choice of being considered first?

HON A J CANEPA:

The Government has to be careful that it does not waste its own time because we have lost over six months with respect to the development of this site and because of that from now on, before we seriously consider any tenders, we shall be requiring evidence of the financial standing of the tenderer. We felt on balance that six or seven months was rather too long to have approached the previous tenderers. Another consideration that we had in

mind was the motion that was passed here in the House in December which would mean a higher density development and because of that we are going out to tender again. Let me tell the Hon Member that we are looking at the minimum of 12 units for that site which is rather more than was the case before December. For all those reasons we thought, on balance, to go for fresh tenders.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 189 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state when work is due to start on the Woodford Cottage scheme?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

May I first of all dispel any misunderstanding of the nature of a Housing Association Scheme. In essence, this is a common form of self financed, collective tenant participation which lays on the members responsibility for designing, building and subsequently maintaining the homes which they wish to build. This is necessarily an involved process. Several meetings have already been held at which initial issues have been discussed by the members. These discussions will lead to the selection and appointment by the Association of an architect and other professional advisers who will undertake the preparation of the necessary drawings (on the basis of the sketches prepared by the Public Works Department) and of the accompanying tender documents. Tenders will then be invited by the Association. Within broad limits, therefore, the tempo of events will be dictated by the Association and its advisers but it will, of course, be in the Association's own interest that work should be started as soon as humanly possible, a fact that the members fully appreciate for financial if for no other reason.

The answer to this question, therefore, is that work will commence as soon as the various preliminaries described above have been completed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 189 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

The situation then is that the Association has now been formed and is functioning and is dealing with the Government collectively and will be dealing with contractors collectively. Is that the situation, Mr Speaker?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That is right, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

So the Government, I assume, accepts quite apart from the interests that the Association itself is bound to have to get the project going, that it has also got to look at two other aspects which are very important. One is the fact that the use of the land is important and secondly, the flow of work in the construction industry is important. We cannot afford, the Government I assume accepts, to have land lying idle while there are people willing to develop it and construction workers out of work looking for projects to be working on.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

From what I know of the Association I think they are well advanced and I think they will soon be looking for an architect to get the actual thing well under way.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 190 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government now given consideration to the proposal that all private sector landlords should be required to register with Government their property and the rent charged to tenants?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Government's proposals in this respect are set out in the Bill which has been published for an Ordinance to amend the Landlord and Tenant (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance. These provide for the registration, within a period of three months, of business premises subject to Part III of the Ordinance in a register to be kept by the Surveyor and Planning Secretary. It is also intended that this register shall be open to inspection by the public during normal working hours on payment of a prescribed fee.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 190 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

That is in fact in respect of business premises, Mr Speaker. That is what the Hon Member said or did I misunderstand him?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

It is correct. The provisions for a register is in respect of business premises.

HON J BOSSANO:

I am, in fact, asking the Government and I asked the Government at an earlier meeting of the House to consider in terms of responding to the public discontent that has been expressed about the lack of control of rents in the private sector, I would submit to the Government and I would ask the Government to confirm whether they agree that the first step to establish the level of rents that are being charged and the proportion of private sector tenants who are in this situation, is to require people to register that information with the Government in order that when the Government has to come in and legislate they can legislate, not based on emotional reactions or on rumours, but on facts which have been presented to them and where people can challenge those facts. I propose this as a positive and practical step in that direction and I would ask the Government whether they will consider doing it before they actually go into any in-depth change in legislation? Let us at least have the facts in this House.

HON A J CANEPA:

The position is that, as the Hon Member knows, the Bill is just being given first reading at this meeting of the House. I would suggest that the Hon Member should examine it very carefully. It is a complex piece of legislation and obviously over the summer recess before the next meeting there will be plenty of opportunity for all parties concerned to examine these proposals and to make representations on the matter. In fact, depending, I would imagine, on the nature of the representations received, the Government may not even proceed to take the Bill through all stages at the next meeting. It could be open to us just to give it Second Reading and to debate the general principles of the Bill and leave Committee Stage and Third Reading, where specific amendments can be looked at, for an even later meeting before the end of the year. That is the strategy I think that I would suggest should be adopted on the point made by the Hon Member.

HON J BOSSANO:

If the Hon Member will bear with me. In suggesting what the Government was being asked to do was not really to change the law. I do not know myself but I think Members of the House are in a position to hear quite horrific stories about what is happening in the private sector and on the other hand one gets, for example, the family expenditure survey that shows a five per cent of household income is spent on rent. There seems to be a discrepancy and, therefore, what I am putting to the Government and I would ask the Government whether they will consider this, is that quite apart from the policy decision that they may take on what needs to be done on housing, would they not agree that an initial and desirable step, if it is possible within existing legislation, perhaps by regulation, is to require that everybody should have a rent book. That the rents should be registered with the Government and that, therefore, the Government should have the statistical information based on facts of knowing, within the total of the seven households that there are in Gibraltar, what precisely the breakdown in terms of rent people are paying in pre-war, post-war, rent controlled, non-rent controlled, so we have got facts. That is what I am suggesting and I would ask the Government for an indication of their views.

MR SPEAKER:

I think what the Government has replied is that to be able to do what you have asked they need legislation and the legislation is coming before the House as a Bill. Perhaps I am speaking out of terms.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, that is so. The Bill itself is a complicated piece of legislation on which we would want public reaction on many aspects of the matter. It does intend to change the law and this could be one of the matters that could be taken into account. To look at it in isolation now of the Bill, which has taken a long time to

be produced, would be anticipating the matter. We are open to any suggestion when the time comes. That is why it is only going to be read a first time, it affects properties, it affects tenants and we have got to make sure that everybody will have a say and then the Government will exercise its own responsibilities in reacting to those matters.

HON J BOSSANO:

With due respect to the Hon and Learned Chief Minister, I think he is missing the point because in fact I am not asking the Government to commit itself to any specific policy for or against liberalising or controlling rents. All I am asking it to do is to introduce machines so that we have got facts instead of having to base ourselves in hearsay and therefore I would say to the Government that it is a more sensible and prudent line to follow to have possession of the facts before they legislate rather than to legislate and get the facts afterwards.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

We do not propose to legislate until we have had reactions which could include the ones that the Hon Member is raising because it goes to the root of the whole question of private property too.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 191 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

In view of recent developments will Government make urgent representations to the Ministry of Defence for the release of the premises at United Services Officers Club to the Gibraltar Government for public use and enjoyment?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

I do not know to what recent developments the question refers. I can, however, confirm that no request has yet been made for the release of the Queensway premises. There has to be a clear appreciation of the financial and other factors involved.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 191 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does not the Government consider it clearly desirable that that complex which is a sport complex should be retained for the use of the public and that the premises that are there should, obviously, also be retained because it seems to me that there is clearly no Ministry of Defence use for that area now? When I said recent developments I was referring, obviously to recent defence cuts that have been announced. Does not the Minister agree that the process of getting clearance of any matter relating to lands with the Ministry of Defence is always a lengthy one and in these circumstances would it not be advisable to put in a claim and at least find out what are the conditions for transfer that are being asked for?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, of course it is desirable to retain that complex for the use it has been traditionally made of it or perhaps for even better use. Under the existing arrangements governing the transfer of land, surplus to defence requirements, the Government would be required to pay for the value of the building on the site. That is the existing position. Now whether a new situation is going to emerge or whether the desire which the Government has to see certain unsatisfactory aspects of the Lands Memorandum negotiated might now be given a fresh impetus, I think, is something that we shall see very shortly because we have been talking about it. There is no point in going along at the moment to the MOD and asking them to hand over those buildings because they are going to ask us to pay a colossal sum of money and that may not arise in future.

HON P J ISOLA:

But that question cannot be answered until the application has been made.

HON A J CANEPA:

No, because there is an obligation on the MOD to come along to the Gibraltar Government and say this piece of land is surplus to defence requirements, here you are.

HON P J ISOLA:

Has the Ministry of Defence not come with that proposition?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, they have not.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Government then ask the Ministry of Defence what are their plans for this site because we cannot have in Gibraltar quite a large area of land and buildings vacant?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think at the juncture at which we are now, not just having regard to the question of the defence review, which I think the Hon Member has in mind, but in respect of the negotiations of the Lands Memorandum which we have been asking for and on which there have been negotiations at the highest level, this is not the time to ask for this specific piece of land. It can be settled in a different way and we may not have to pay a penny for it.

HON P J ISOLA:

I appreciate that but is it not wise for the Government to put in a request in respect of all empty MOD sites and await developments, the fact that the MOD may ask for £1m does not mean that they are going to get it? Therefore, the Government would then be knowing the position of the different MOD sites, would it not?

HON A J CANEPA:

The question of all empty buildings is another matter. Yes, that stems directly from the approach to the Ministry of Defence that all land and all buildings which they do not require should be handed over to us without paying a penny. Even if it is not reclaimed land.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 192 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government now inform the House of the results of the tenders received for a multi-storey car park, the applicant to whom the tender has been awarded, if any, and generally inform the House as to the earliest possible date for such a car park to be in operation?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Seven firms responded to Government's invitation to submit proposal for the development of the site in question. This was the first step in the selection of a suitable developer. These proposals were duly considered by the Government and the applicants were subsequently informed of Government's intention to invite them to submit tenders if they were prepared to amend their proposals to conform to certain stipulated minimum requirements and to the prior production of satisfactory evidence of their financial standing and availability of the necessary resources.

Government's basic requirement is that the building to be erected should be a multi-storey car park for at least 400 cars and that any additional conforming development should be subsidiary to the main purpose and be within the maximum plot ratio of 5:1.

All the parties except one have indicated their continued interest in the project.

The completion date for the project will depend firstly on how soon the existing seven married quarters can be reprovided and, secondly, on how long it will take the successful tenderer to carry out the work. These are unknown factors at this stage but the period will be appreciably shortened if the reprovizioning of the married quarters can be undertaken by the developer himself on MOD's behalf. A decision on this proposal is awaited from the MOD.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 192 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister whether the Ministry of Defence have now indicated to the Government the site where these seven married quarters are to be built?

HON A J CANEPA:

This was being considered as part of the feasibility study which the Ministry of Defence was carrying out to build over 70 married quarters. What the end result would be for that feasibility study, I think, may well be in the melting pot now.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could the Government possibly ask the MOD again, in view of the statements that have been made publicly now on the whole question of the defence review, whether MOD accommodation that becomes free as a result of any cuts and so forth should not be used to accommodate these seven married quarters with an undertaking that the quarters would be built at some future date in order that the building can be cleared for development?

HON A J CANEPA:

There is no indication naturally at the moment that there are going to be MOD quarters that will become available. If they did become available, I think, having regard to the importance in economic terms of this project, that it is a point that is naturally worth making and I will do so at the earliest opportunity at local level. I should stress it is a matter which can then be taken up at a higher level as developments unfold.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say what the position regarding Parson's Lodge is as of this point in time?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The position is that the Company interested in the development of Parson's Lodge met its obligation to submit a feasibility study of the project in time but was at that stage of its negotiations unable to produce the required guarantee or divulge information regarding its sources of finance.

It is understood that contacts have been maintained with the Financing Bank and the Company is confident that it will be in a position to supply the required details shortly. The position will be reviewed by the Government in the light of the Company's response or if it is not forthcoming within a reasonable period.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 193 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister what he terms as a reasonable period?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is very difficult, Mr Speaker, in a changing situation to say that. I would have said before the statement of the Secretary of State for Defence that a reasonable period might have been September or October but having regard to that statement my own view is that I am prepared to wait longer if there is a very real chance of having an hotel built on that site. I think Gibraltar needs that.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 194 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say whether to their knowledge there are any plans for the development of the old Theatre Royal?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Government has no knowledge of any plans for the development of the old Theatre Royal.

NO. 195 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say what the position regarding the development of Maida Vale is as of this point in time?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The physical development of the Maida Vale site has made no progress in view of the unfavourable economic climate which continues to depress the tourist industry generally. The developer's efforts to obtain the necessary financial backing have in the circumstances been unsuccessful so far and alternative forms of development have been considered by them. These proposals have been put to the Government very recently and will be considered in the light of all relevant factors.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 195 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can I ask what these alternative proposals are?

HON A J CANEPA:

They entail, Mr Speaker, the building of housing for re-sale.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is this to be another Gardiner's Road type of project?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I do not see why the Hon Member should ask that question. This is what the Company has proposed to the Government. I have not indicated in any way what the Government's reaction is at this stage.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 196 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government inform this House if the re-advertising for further applicants to the Woodford Cottage Scheme has resulted in an increase in the number of people interested and will Government state if it is still their intention to proceed with this development in the manner originally envisaged?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

A further six applications were received in response to the renewed invitation for participation in the Woodford Cottage Scheme. One of the applicants did not however qualify within the terms of the notice. I can confirm that it is Government's intention that the scheme will proceed as originally envisaged.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 196 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

So I can take it, therefore, that other than the last six applications, there are now 12 applications all told?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir. After the second advertisement it became twelve but there have now been another five people interested.

HON W T SCOTT:

So we now have seventeen.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is fluctuating between fifteen and seventeen at the moment. I am not quite sure of the number.

HON W T SCOTT:

For the fourteen or seventeen units?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Seventeen units, yes.

HON W T SCOTT:

So Government, therefore, if they proceed with this scheme would have no intention of building the two or three quarters that they informed this House that they might be building in March of this year?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The participation of Government is dependent on how many we actually get. If we only get fifteen then Government may consider taking the other two. If we get sixteen, Government may take the other one. If we get seventeen there will be no need for Government to participate.

HON W T SCOTT:

But it is still not the intention of Government, obviously, to increase the number of units within the same land area.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir. The maximum number of units is seventeen, that is all that can be built according to the designs.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 197 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has Government made any progress in acquiring the freehold property in Town Range opposite the Transport and General Workers Union building?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The position is as stated in my reply to Question No 185. Since a substantial amount of money would be involved it will no doubt be appreciated that the acquisition of this freehold property (whether by agreement or compulsorily) can only be considered in the context of the Government's Development Programme objectives in housing having regard to the substantial amount that would be involved in its acquisition.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 197 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

I believe that there have been negotiations over the years. May I ask what is the asking price of the owners of this property at the moment?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think that the asking price has changed over the years and I would not know what is the last figure that was talked about because there have never been real negotiations. There have just been tentative enquiries, that is my understanding. From time to time when proposals have been submitted to develop that site or when a request has been made on a related matter, it has given Government officials an opportunity to enquire. I would not really know what the figure is. I would imagine that it is very substantial having regard to market values of land. I would hazard a guess that it would certainly be well in excess of £100,000.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am surprised that the Minister should say, that to his knowledge, there has not been very much negotiations. I would refer him to a question by the Hon and Gallant Major Peliza, going back nearly three years ago, and the Minister's predecessor on this subject . . .

HON A J CANEPA:

Not the Minister's previous answer, surely, three years ago?

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister's predecessor.

HON G T RESTANO:

The Minister's predecessor said: "the Surveyor and Planning Secretary is negotiating". I do not think, in fairness, that he has made much headway because the price asked is out of the question. So there seem to have been negotiations in 1978.

HON A J CANEPA:

Was that, Mr Speaker, in the course of supplementaries or was it part of the main answer because we are always very careful about the words that we use in the main answer whilst in supplementaries one can use the word "negotiations" when one means discussing or talking without prejudice, without any commitment.

HON G T RESTANO:

In fact, it was in a supplementary but in the actual answer the then Minister said that the freeholder of the site had been approached as to the possibility of Government acquiring this site.

HON A J CANEPA:

That is not negotiations, Mr Speaker.

HON G T RESTANO:

The negotiations came up in a supplementary. I do not know whether the Minister is saying that his predecessor did not say it or that if he did say it

MR SPEAKER:

No, he is not saying that. He said that the use of the word "negotiations" in the main answer can be taken as a definite indication as to what Government is doing. The "negotiations" used in supplementaries may have been used more loosely. That is all he is saying. I am not saying whether that is the case I am saying that that is what the Minister was saying.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I would like to know what, in fact, the sort of asking price is? Surely, that should be known.

HON A J CANEPA:

The asking price was in the region of £54,000 in 1973 or 1974.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The point is and I think it should be stated quite clearly, that our powers of acquisition are very old and in fact we have to pay the market value and that is why one shirks until we have a better legislation of acquiring something compulsorily.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is the Government considering bringing forward new legislation?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, we are and do not ask me when because I will tell you that I do not know.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can Government state how many firms in Gibraltar have their businesses registered in Government owned accommodation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The information required is not readily available and would take a considerable time to extract. I regret therefore that it has not been possible to undertake the required research and analysis.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 198 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Will that search be made at all?

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, having regard to the fact that there are over 5,500 limited companies registered under the Companies Ordinance and over 3,000 business names are registered under the Business Names Registration Ordinance, it will certainly not be undertaken unless the Hon Member can adduce a very good reason as to why it should be done.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is the Government in agreement in principle on its accommodation being used for this purpose?

HON A J CANEPA:

I require separate notice of that question, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 199 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Does Government now know when talks will start with the British Government on the new development programme?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, with your permission I propose to answer this question together with Question No. 200 of 1981.

The Gibraltar Government is awaiting a reply from Her Majesty's Government regarding the timing of discussions on the 1981/86 Development Programme Aid Submission submitted on the 9th February 1981. I would add that the Gibraltar Government continues to be concerned about the delay and has made representations to this effect through the appropriate channels. I am hopeful that these representations will result in an early and positive reaction in line with Her Majesty's Government recently reaffirmed policy to 'support and sustain' Gibraltar.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 199 AND 200 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister state the effects on projects planned if these talks are delayed beyond the end of, say, September of this year? Would that not bring a big gap and make the programme 1981/86 impossible to achieve ab initio?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is the position, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 200 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Has Government now arranged a date for the opening of talks with the British Government in respect of the Gibraltar Government Development Programme for 1981/86?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Answered together with Question No. 199 of 1981.

7.7.81

NO. 201 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

In view of recent developments, can Government state whether it is now in a position to make the Port Feasibility Study available to Members of the Opposition?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Mr Speaker, I gave you notice on the 23rd June, 1981, that I proposed to make a statement on the Port Feasibility Study during this meeting of the House. The subject matter of the question is covered in the statement.

NO. 202 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Having regard to the assurances given by the Chief Minister that the report on the Public Works Department would be made available to the Opposition, can Government now state when this report will be made available to Members of the Opposition?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, the report was made available to the Hon Member on 29 June and I can assure him that it was sent before Government had any knowledge of the Hon Member's question. Earlier this year I informed the Hon Member that the report would be made available to him once I had received comments by those directly concerned. In fact all the comments required have not yet been received. It is a very complex report but I did not wish any longer to delay making the report available. It is for this reason that in making it available to him and in publishing it we have made it clear that the Government has not so far taken decisions on the recommendations.

7.7.81

NO. 203 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government state whether there is a properly constituted Board of the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation and if not will Government take immediate steps to constitute such a Board?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Yes, Sir. There is a properly constituted Board.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 203 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Is this the same Board that was in existence last year?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes. Letters appointing the Chairman and members of the Board were issued on the 20th of June. The appointments are due to appear in the Gazette this week. There was some delay in making the form of reappointment and discussions have taken place with the Chairman and the result of these discussions had to be considered in Gibraltar Council before a decision was taken. In the end all concerned agreed that the Board should be reappointed for another year in the normal way, that is, on the 1st of January for one whole year. The Gazette will be appearing, I think, today or tomorrow.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 204 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can the Chief Minister inform the House whether the Government is no longer pursuing its policy to appoint a Committee of Inquiry into the Electricity Department and if so why not?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

As has already been announced, the Government does intend to appoint a Committee of Inquiry into the Electricity Department.

As I informed the Hon Member in my letter of 29 June, the Committee will be chaired by Sir Howard Davis. The Committee has not been appointed earlier because offers of the chairmanship made to four other persons were declined.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, who had been put on notice about this in January, have now been asked to assist us in obtaining the services of two specialist advisers - a Trade Unionist and a technically qualified person - to serve as members of the Committee. It is hoped that the Committee will start its investigations in September, after the peak leave period and the end of the hot weather.

As has already been announced, the Telephone Department will be the next subject of a Committee of Inquiry. Mr Charles Piccone has agreed to be the Chairman in this case.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 204 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Chief Minister say whether the terms of reference for the inquiry into the Electricity Department are the same as he announced in the House or have there been any changes, or has anything been settled yet?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Subject to any remark that may be made by those taking part in the inquiry.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 205 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government reconsider having more counters opened at the Central Post Office in view of the general public dissatisfaction with the existing facilities?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

No, Sir. The Government is not aware that there is general public dissatisfaction at the number of counters in the General Post Office and the facilities being provided, although it is accepted that there have been isolated complaints.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 205 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister realise that even I, in the United Kingdom am getting used to these complaints and that, in fact, if I remember rightly, at least there has been one letter in the Gibraltar Chronicle on it?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

If the Hon Member is as reliant on his United Kingdom information regarding the Post Office as he is about the vending machines outside the Post Office then, of course, I would accept that he is. It is absolutely true that there is a peak period when the counters hold up queues but after that things go reasonably well.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Cannot arrangements be made at least in those peak periods when we do have big long queues which are perhaps the most important ones because that may well affect even our commercial side of Gibraltar? Can we not do something to improve the situation?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

This is a matter which has been brought up in this House on a number of occasions. I remember my colleague, Mr Abecasis, going through this. Staff inspection thought that that was the number the Post Office required. It is impossible to have a person employed there just for the peak period and then what else do you do with them during the day? It is a question of finance.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Could perhaps the Minister think of this question of vending machines? Perhaps he could have a few vending machines inside the Post Office, a few more to overcome the problem.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I wonder whether the Member knows how many we have at the Post Office.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I do not know how many we have. All I am saying to the Minister is that perhaps he could increase the number because obviously what is available does not cope.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I do not agree that it does not cope. What the Post Office may not be able to cope with is the arrival of a passenger liner on that particular day. I would grant him the fact that if he happens to be in Gibraltar at 10 am on any particular morning, that there are occasions during the particular 9am to 10 am, that there is a rush but again that happens in every shopping area. There is a peak period and there is a slack period. Government does not consider that the peak hour justified a further employment of counter clerks.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Since the Minister has drawn attention to cruise liners and I think we want to attract as many as possible of them, people who come for very short stays in Gibraltar want to make the best of it, see the sights and so on. Particularly on those days is it possible to arrange for, perhaps, individuals from another department to come to the counter even if they get an extra allowance for doing so?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

It surprises me from a man who has been the Chief Minister of Gibraltar. One cannot just send people from one department to another for stamp selling because a cruise liner comes in, it is not on. There are knowledge requirements for stamp vending and there is cash to be handled. It is not as simple as that.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Of course I am aware of the difficulties but, surely, all this can be arranged, as I said, by paying them an allowance. Whatever extra cost might be, the facilities that are going to be given to the Gibraltar public, who obviously are complaining, whatever the Minister may say - there are times when there is congestion in that place - will be more than justified because of the depressing dissatisfaction with the service.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I refute that there is a certain dissatisfaction. I strongly refute that.

HON P J ISOLA:

In view of the fact that the Minister has admitted that there are peak periods, can the Minister arrange that during peak periods all available staff is at the windows and nobody takes any tea breaks, after appropriate discussions with the Union and anybody else the Government discusses with? Can he ensure that at least that occurs?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That is certainly so. That is a good logic and it has been done, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 206 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what is being done to promote tourism for the coming winter season?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and
Postal Services)

An outline strategy for Advertising and Promotion in 1981/82 has been discussed with the Advertising Agency in Gibraltar and London and a presentation of the campaign is to be made to me in Gibraltar on the 13 July. We shall also make this presentation to the Travel Industry at an all-day meeting I propose to hold with them on 14 July.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what is the present hotel room occupancy and the latest forecast for this summer?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

The bed occupancy of all hotels in Gibraltar up to May 1981 compared to January/May 1980 was 31.7%. Room occupancy would be around 46%. Regrettably these figures exclude one hotel yet to submit their May figures.

We calculate that Summer 1981 will be down by about 35% to 40% compared to 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 207 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Would the Minister agree that 1980 was down on 1979 and by how much?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I cannot remember by how much it was down in 1979 but 1979 was the boom year of tourism.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does not the Minister consider that this is a very serious situation indeed for Gibraltar's tourism?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I totally concur with the Hon Member. It is a very serious situation for Gibraltar as it is for other tourist resorts.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is he happy, in trying to promote tourism for the coming winter season that all he has been able to tell us today is that he is having a team coming out to show what sort of films (Presentation) we are going to have?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

It is a little bit more elaborate than what sort of films we are going to have. It is an advertising campaign conducted by professional people to try and catch the market. The Hon Member is no doubt aware that we are up against very strong competitive

opposition and, if you may allow me, may I just quote, for instance, that Laker is offering a three day all-inclusive holiday in Spain for £50 and a full week for £59, air passage and full board. There is another firm called Global with a minimum of seven-night prices of £73 in Benidorm and £79 in Majorca. If we subsidise our hotels totally, if we pay their wages totally, we can not compete. I regret to say this and I certainly do not enjoy saying it, we just cannot compete.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

7.7.81

NO. 208 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state how much is being done to encourage Cruise Liners to call at Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

The normal day-to-day contact is maintained with operators and obviously any advertising for Gibraltar stimulates all modes of traffic including cruising which is a static business in Gibraltar.

We recently up-dated and distributed a Port Manual to all shipping companies and operators in the UK.

We have also given hospitality service to selected journalists who have visited Gibraltar on cruise liners. This type of specialised editorial is in our view the most cost effective.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

MEETING OF 26 OCTOBER 1981

QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

209 to 285

26.10.81

NO. 209 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, will Government now publish the Alexander Howden Report and the proposals made by Ernest A Notcutt (Overseas) Limited?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

No, Sir. The reports contain confidential information relating to commercial activities and are not suitable for publication. The Government will consider releasing such information in the reports as may be of public interest as soon as a decision has been taken on the insurance of its properties.

NO. 210 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government make arrangements so that Ad Valorem duty is not levied immediately on entry to Gibraltar in the case of motor cars that arrive in Gibraltar with passengers on board but that a reasonable time is given for the payment of same?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, duty on motor cars is payable immediately before the Customs Officer permits its removal from the place of landing. However, it is proposed to authorise the Collector of Customs to defer payment if he is satisfied that immediate payment of duty would result in hardship to the person concerned.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 210 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, will the Government deal with this rather more sympathetically than appears to be the case from the answer of the Financial and Development Secretary? Does the Hon the Financial and Development Secretary really believe that people arrive in Gibraltar with £1,000 or £800 in cash to pay the Ad Valorem duty and does Government consider there is any danger at all that the duty will be lost if people who arrive tired from a journey across the Straits of Gibraltar and are met by Revenue Inspectors who refuse to allow entry to the passengers and their baggage until they pay Ad Valorem duty? Is it not really absurd, Mr Speaker, that people should be delayed, after a journey, entry in Gibraltar especially with the frontier closed, they cannot get away, can they?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the Hon the Leader of the Opposition is pressing on an open door. I thought I had made it quite clear that we would authorise the Collector of Customs to defer payment if he is satisfied that there would be hardship. The present arrangement is that if a vehicle arrives with a family and luggage, they are allowed to proceed to wherever they are going to stay and then the car is brought back and duty is payable. However, I have authorised the Collector of Customs, to defer payment for up to seven days in cases where he thinks this is necessary or desirable and this reflects an arrangement which has recently been introduced in the United Kingdom and we shall require persons who receive this treatment to sign a declaration that they will pay the duty within seven days. This will require an amendment to the Ordinance but I am advised by the Hon and Learned Attorney-General that pending the amendment to the Ordinance, there is no legal objection to this procedure being carried out.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I am glad that the law is to be amended, I did suspect that that was what was required having regard to the clear terms of the Import and Export Ordinance provisions on this but will the Financial and Development Secretary consider not leaving this matter to the discretion of individual Customs Officers and making it a rule of general application because does he not agree that the effect on persons arriving in Gibraltar from overseas to take up post in Gibraltar or Gibraltarians who have bought a car and coming back to Gibraltar, back to their home, the effect of being stopped and held up at the Customs at nine o'clock at night with young children is very traumatic and would he not agree, in view of the fact that motor cars have a habit of not being able to hide themselves in our streets for long, that the directive should be one of general application and not be left to the discretion of individual Customs Officers who may have different views on different kinds of people who arrive at Gibraltar?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the instructions that will be given to Customs Officers will be clear cut and will lay down adequate guidance for them. I really feel that this is being pushed a little far. In all territories this has been the practice, including the United Kingdom. If you are going into a territory, you have a car, you know that you have got to pay Customs duty on it, you find out what the Customs amount is and you have a cheque with you to pay it, this is the usual arrangement which one makes when taking the car into a country. However, the Government accepts that some change is desirable and are ready to make it.

NO. 211 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state the position as regards the revision and printing of the Laws of Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, Sir John Spry has been appointed Commissioner to undertake the revision. A Bill containing the necessary enabling powers will be introduced at this meeting of the House. The Commissioner has already begun work on the revision and tenders are about to be called for printing and publication.

The Hon and Learned Member may recall that in answer to an earlier question on the reprinting of statutes, I said that it was proposed during the course of this present year to reprint up to twelve individual statutes. In point of fact, four such statutes will be reprinted this year but after discussion with the Commissioner, we have agreed that as the comprehensive revision will speak from 31 December, 1982, it would be unnecessarily expensive to reprint the remaining eight ahead of that date.

I shall be making a more discursive statement on the general revision of the laws on the second reading of the Bill that is to be introduced.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 211 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am not quite sure I understand. The present eight or nine volumes that there are of the Laws of Gibraltar, will they remain rather a coveted piece and not available to practitioners or others who may wish to buy one? Will there be no reprinting of the statutes already in existence?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The reprints that the Commissioner is undertaking will replace the present sets of laws, the present general statement of the statute law of Gibraltar, it will completely replace it, and in calling for tenders, we will estimate to the best of our ability the market demand for the new statutes. They will be presented in place of the existing statutes as a new set of statutes.

MR SPEAKER:

I think what you are being asked is in the interim period will we have reprints of the existing laws which are not available?

HON A J HAYNES:

That is correct.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, I misunderstood. The short answer, I am afraid, is no except for the four I have mentioned because this is going to be a fairly costly exercise and with the reprint due to come out as at the 31st December, 1982 and probably I would think being available a month or two months thereafter, it would, in my view, be unnecessarily expensive to reprint laws in the meantime. If there were special cases of hardship perhaps it could be looked at but in the meantime there is no general plan to do so.

HON A J HAYNES:

This revision of the laws which will be completed by December, 1982, is this just bringing up-to-date the present statutes or will there be Bills before this House, ie, will the revised laws to be produced in December, 1982, incorporate our present statute law and the eight or nine individual volumes or will it mean a detailed study of the various aspects of the law and changes therein?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The reprint will state the law as at 31st December, 1982. It will be available, we anticipate, perhaps two or three months after that. It will be a complete statement of the statute law of Gibraltar including everything that is printed in the past up until that date.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, there is not great work involved in this in the sense that the law has been

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

£250,000 worth.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, am I right in assuming that what we are talking about is our present eight volumes or nine volumes of statute laws and thereafter the individual volumes that are published every year?

MR SPEAKER:

I think you have been given your answer otherwise we will be going round in circles. You have been told that the revised Laws of Gibraltar will be as at the 31st December, 1982, so anything on the statute book at that date will appear three months after in a combined set of volumes. I think that is the answer, is that right?

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the printing of these volumes going to be different in style and structure to the present ones, ie, is it going to be easier to insert additions and changes in the law or is it going to be the same system?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I would like if I may just refer back to the previous supplementary put by the Member. It is not a small task, it is a very major task and if I may say so from my own experience, the time-table which the Commissioner has set is a record time-table for this sort of work. As to whether or not the style will be the same as the present style, as I said, I would like to speak at more length on this when the Bill is given a second reading but it will, in fact, be an entirely loose leaf system and the printing style will be looked at with a view to following what are accepted as contemporary printing styles through I think the present Laws of Gibraltar are in perfectly contemporary printing style.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the index for 1981 going to be ready?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, yes, I hope so.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is it the Government's intention to have the printing done in Gibraltar?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The Government will invite tenders in Gibraltar and in the United Kingdom, I cannot comment further than that at this stage.

HON J BOSSANO:

Does the Government recognise in looking at the tenders the desirability of providing work in Gibraltar?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes.

26.10.81

NO. 212 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can Government say how many stray cats and dogs have been humanely destroyed in the first nine months of this year, and how many were similarly dealt with during the corresponding period last year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, seven hundred and forty-four cats and one hundred and sixty-four dogs were humanely destroyed from the 1st January to the 30th September, 1981. Eight hundred and fifty cats and two hundred and fifteen dogs were similarly disposed of during the corresponding period last year.

NO. 213 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, is Government satisfied with the system in use for house calls in the Group Practice Medical Scheme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Yes, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 213 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Is Government aware of the delays that seem to occur in relation to persons who call for a doctor from the Group Practice Scheme?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government does not accept that there are any substantial delays involved on the question of house calls.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is it the position of Government then that house calls are dealt with expeditiously and without any delay in every case?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the procedure of house calls is as follows. Calls received during clinic hours are transferred to the duty doctor who sees the patient and may either take the house call and visit the patient or request the latter to call at the Health Centre where he will be seen immediately. Calls received during the day but outside clinic hours, that is, during the lunch period, patients are requested to ring back during the clinic hours. In case of an emergency, the call is transferred to the nursing Sister who speaks to the patient and gives the patient the duty doctor's home telephone number. Between 5 pm to 8 am the Records Office telephone number, 2003, is transferred to St Bernard's Hospital, in fact, at precisely 5 pm when the Porter is advised of the duty doctor's name and telephone number. This information is passed on by the Porter to patients when calls are received, that is after 5 pm. Callers are then channelled onto the GPMS medical officer on duty and I will repeat my answer to the questions that yes, Government is in fact satisfied with this system.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 214 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government look into the possibility of having a doctor on duty at nights to deal specifically with casualties at the St Bernard's Hospital?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, there is always a resident doctor on duty covering St Bernard's Hospital.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 214 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Yes but in fact, Mr Speaker, is it not the case that the doctor in question quite often is working during the day, is on duty during the night and is expected to work the next day?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, that is in fact not the case. The position is that the first line of defence in the Casualty Department, and we must remember the question refers to night time, there is always a house officer on duty. We, in fact, have three in our establishment and they do not carry on for 24 hours a day. Apart from that, there are three consultants who take it in turn on a rota system and they are always on call for any casualty which may require their attention during the night time.

HON J BOSSANO:

The Minister is not aware then of difficulties in doctors who have been working all day not being able to get any sleep at all during the night because they are called out on a number of occasions during the night and the fact that this system puts strain on the patients, on the nursing staff and on the doctors themselves, he is not aware that that happens?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, I think the Hon Member is confusing the house officers with the doctors at the GPMS. The doctors under the Group Practice Medical Scheme are not involved in work at the Casualty Department at night time at St Bernard's Hospital, that is done by the three resident house officers. I take the point that the Hon Member makes about the GPMS doctors but they are not involved with casualties.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I am afraid the Hon Member is wrong in thinking I am confused. I am talking precisely of the doctors employed in St Bernard's Hospital and is he not aware that the confusion that he thinks exists in my question exists sometimes in the minds of the doctors themselves in that patients are sometimes told in the department that they should be calling on the services at night of somebody from the GPMS and the doctor from the GPMS tells them that they should be calling on the doctor that is on duty at the Hospital and the duty doctor in the Hospital tells them that he has been working all day, is he not aware that this situation happens quite frequently?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, I am not aware of that situation except to maybe add that we are talking here about the Casualty Department which, for example, would probably deal with traffic accidents at mid-night or at one in the morning, that is what I think the whole question is based on, on night work at the Casualty Department.

HON J BOSSANO:

If somebody is taken suddenly ill at night is he not, in fact, expected to go to the Casualty Department or where is he expected to go? If he calls an ambulance because he is ill where is he taken, to the Health Centre in the middle of the night?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, a case in that situation would be that there would be a house call and the GPMS doctor would be involved. As soon as that patient is taken to St Bernard's Hospital he comes under the umbrella of the three house officers plus the three consultants that are always on call. We have two consultants who deal with the surgical side and another consultant who deals with the medical side but let me add that I am not aware of any complaints from the doctors or from the nursing staff in this regard but if the Hon Member wishes I will look into it.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member then look into it and if in fact he finds that the system is not working as smoothly as he thinks it is, will he consider methods of improving it?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I will look again into the matter and I will report back to the Hon Member.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 215 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government now state what it proposes to do about the replacement of the Director of Medical and Health Services on his retirement and does Government propose to advertise the post and if so when and where?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government has decided that when the Director of Medical and Health Services retires in June 1982, he will be replaced by a full-time Orthopaedic Surgeon with experience of general surgery and by a Director who should be a medical officer of Consultant status with administration experience in order that he should devote most of his time to the administration of the Medical Department.

The vacancy for the Orthopaedic Surgeon, who it is planned to have in post by March 1982, has already been advertised in the local and UK press.

The post of Director will be similarly advertised in late December or early January.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 215 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, I do not quite follow the Minister. Does it mean that if somebody is selected as Orthopaedic Surgeon he will then become the Director of Medical and Health Services or is it possible that there will be two posts?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I thought it was quite clear in the answer to the question. The Government has decided to replace the present post of DMHS, the Director, by two persons. One an Orthopaedic man with general surgery experience and a Director of Medical and Health Services who must be of a Consultant status.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 216 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government outline the circumstances that made the importation of additional generating plant necessary having regard to the statements that were made by the Minister at the time the existing skid generators were imported?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, the decision to hire a trailer-mounted generator for this coming winter has arisen following investigations of a fault sustained by Engine No 8 last winter. The fault occurred following the importation of the skid generators and obviously any statements made at the time that these were imported could not possibly have taken subsequent events into account.

Engine No 8 suffered propagation of an existing crack in the column. This crack had been previously metal-stitched and expert advice was sought on the feasibility of repairs by the same process. No guarantee was forthcoming on the effectiveness of these repairs and two courses of action were open. Firstly, to obtain a replacement column and rebuild the engine or secondly, to hire a generating set. The second alternative was preferred on grounds of cost and minimal increase in workload. It was estimated that the cost of rebuilding No 8 engine would have been of the order of £200,000.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 216 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister state what was the generating capacity of No 8 engine, working normally, and what is the generating capacity of the new generating plant that is being imported?

HON DR R G VALIARINO:

Mr Speaker, the average generating capacity of No 8 engine was just over 1 megawatt. The generating capacity of the new engine is rated continuously at approximately 1.7 megawatts.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean, Mr Speaker, that if any other generating plant of the ancient generating plant that is being used in Gibraltar due to bad planning, of course, in the past, if any many more plant expires we will have another skid generator brought to Gibraltar, where the Government will place it we do not know, but we will have some more, will we? Is there any chance of that between now and the new power station?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, there are two things on this I would like to answer. First of all, there was no bad planning and, secondly, there will be no further importation of skid-mounted generators.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Minister telling the House now, categorically, that there will be no need for any new skid-mounted generators? Is he giving us that assurance categorically or is that subject to unforeseen possibilities in the future?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, certainly it is not envisaged to get any further generating sets and as the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition well knows the new power station is going ahead full steam and we should have two major engines ready for the summer of 1982.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the Minister will recall that when he announced the last skid generators that were imported he was confident that they would supply or they would boost the existing supply sufficiently not to make necessary any further generating equipment before the new power station was built and now we have the same situation arising less than a year later. Can the Minister say at what cost to the tax payer the new additional generating plant will occur, at what cost?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

First of all, let me answer the first question. There were two reasons for this, one was the breakdown on No 8 engine and secondly it was this coming winter this is why we felt that we needed additional generating capacity and the cost of the importation of the trailer-mounted generator would be in the region of about £120,000, everything considered, compared to well over the £200,000 that it would have cost us to rebuild No 8 engine.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, on the question of adequate generating power, does not the answer of the Minister now illustrate the point that I made earlier that Gibraltar will continue not to have sufficient power supply principally because the situations that could arise in the future had never been foreseen or not properly foreseen during the last four years?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I cannot accept that statement on the part of the Hon and Learned Member.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister tell us whether the breakdown of engine No 8 came as a complete surprise?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, as the Hon Member well knows, engines do break down and certainly the fact that No 8 engine, that this particular column broke down, was a surprise.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, was this engine in the bloom of health or in the prime of youth, was it otherwise a perfectly sound engine or isn't it true, Mr Speaker, that in fact this engine had been written off some time ago or should have been written off some time ago?

MR SPEAKER:

I think the answer has been given in the original answer.

HON A J HAYNES:

No, Mr Speaker, what I am trying to make is that these engines do have a statutory period of life or whatever you call it, and this one had expired some time ago, I think it was 1974 or 1975 or maybe earlier, can the Minister make any comment on that?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, let me say to clear the air and reassure Mr Haynes that No 8 engine was the most reliable engine in King's Bastion South.

HON A J HAYNES:

That does not answer the question. Had it outlived its statutory period of life? Don't these engines have a time-span?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Mr Speaker, as I said, if it is the most reliable engine in King's Bastion South, No 8 engine, then obviously it was the latest engine to be put in King's Bastion South and in fact it was the most reliable and gave the highest kilowattage.

MR SPEAKER:

There is another question which I think will give the Opposition opportunity to speak on this.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I have got supplementaries on this one as well.

MR SPEAKER:

But then you must be careful on your supplementaries on the next one, I think, because they duplicate. I do not mind but you are not going to have two bites at the cherry.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, we would like to find out information as regards the planning capacity and capability of No 8 engine.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, ask your question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, our question is quite simple. What is or what was the manufacturers' recommended lifetime for engine No 8, was it sixteen years, twelve years?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the answer to that is obviously no. The manufacturers certainly do not give us any information as to the life of the engines because everything has got to be taken into account considering running hours and all these sort of things. I am afraid the answer to the Hon Mr Haynes' question is no.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, doesn't Preece, Cardew and Rider have anything to say about this?

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to discuss the Preece, Cardew and Rider Report.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the information that I have is that engine No 8 has been living on borrowed time for about six or seven years.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, ask that question.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I object to that because engine No 8 has not been living on borrowed time, I think Mr Haynes has been living on borrowed time.

HON A J HAYNES:

As far as I am informed engine No 8 has been living on borrowed time and therefore I ask the Minister

MR SPEAKER:

The answer has been no.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister tell me whether the plant that we have got here to replace it has been bought, leased or hired?

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked how you are acquiring the new skid generator, is it on a hire agreement or is it on a straight out purchase?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, there are certain aspects of what Mr Haynes is asking which is not in the question at all and in fact I would be most grateful if he could put a question relevant to the questions he is asking at the moment. I shall answer that one, the new generator will be hired.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister give us the comparative figures for leasing and buying?

MR SPEAKER:

We are ^{not} going to quiz the Government on the pretext of one particular question, on any matter related to the skid generators, that is unfair and requires notice.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, might I therefore ask the Hon Minister what is the cost of hire?

MR SPEAKER:

£120,000 was the full cost of the operation.

HON W T SCOTT:

And for how long?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the full cost is £120,000 of which hire charges are £60,000, transport £15,000, ancillary equipment which means transformer and fuel tank £15,000, civil works £10,000, installation and commissioning £20,000, bringing the total to £120,000 and the contract is for a six month period.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister not agree that it is a cause for some public concern that the loss of one megawatt generating capacity should require immediate importation and is that not an indictment on Government power supply policy that has not allowed for any spare capacity to deal with emergency situations in Gibraltar?

MR SPEAKER:

I will allow an answer yes or no and no more because that is a matter of opinion.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the answer is obviously, no.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 217 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government inform the House on the maintenance programme carried out at the Generating Station since last Spring?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, the mechanical maintenance work carried out in the Generating Station since last Spring can briefly be summarised as consisting of:

- (a) the completion of the rebuilding and commissioning of Engine No 11
- (b) a top overhaul of Engine No 9
- (c) a general overhaul and fitting of new turbo-chargers to Engine No 12
- (d) a top overhaul of Engine No 13, currently in progress
- (e) exhaust valve and fuel injector changes generally, at prescribed intervals.

It is also intended that a further overhaul on Engine No 10 will be completed before the end of December.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 217 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, can we therefore ask the Minister what capacity would be available to consumers this coming winter from those five engines that he has mentioned?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it is simple. From those five engines he has only got to add 2.2, 2.2, 2.2, 4.6 and 2.2.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, is the Government satisfied that with 21.4 kilowatts which is what

MR SPEAKER:

No, I am not going to allow that question. The question asks can Government inform the House on the maintenance programme carried out at the Generating Station since last Spring. We are talking about maintenance, we are not talking about the supply of electricity, generally, otherwise we will never finish.

HON P J ISOLA:

Has the maintenance programme been carried out since last Spring exactly according to plan or has there been any drawbacks of any kind?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the maintenance programme has gone according to plan except as the Hon Member well knows and I answered in my last question, the fact that we had the industrial action of the IPCS which meant we could not work overtime for a certain period but apart from that the programme of maintenance has been carried out as expected.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean that the overtime was never necessary then? If it has been carried out according to plan despite the IPCS industrial action, is it correct to assume from that that the industrial action has not affected the maintenance programme?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It has.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well then how could it have been done according to plan?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

It is easy, Mr Speaker, for two reasons. First of all, we could not do overtime at the time but we certainly have been able to, after the IPCS strike action, we have been able to do more work on the engines especially by working nights where needed and therefore by catching up on the maintenance programme.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I then ask, Mr Speaker, has this involved additional cost as far as the maintenance programme is concerned to that that was estimated and if so how much?

DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I would require notice of that question from the Hon Member.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister give us the state of health of the engines which were part of that maintenance programme?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Minister is not here in his medical capacity.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can he tell us the prognosis for these engines?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No 5 engine has lumbago

HON A J HAYNES:

Are any of these living on borrowed time? Is the failure of any of these engines going to come as a complete surprise to the House in about a month's time?

MR SPEAKER:

Order. Ask a question seeking information.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, from the maintenance programme has the Minister been informed as to the likely lifespan for any of the particular engines that were maintained?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

You have not been informed or you did not ask? No, Sir, what?

MR SPEAKER:

You have asked whether he has been informed and he said no.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does the Minister know what the expected lifespan of these engines that were maintained is?

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether you know now, after the maintenance of these engines whether you know what the lifespan of each engine is or whether you have been informed.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Of course not, Sir, it depends on a variety of factors.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer is he does not know.

HON A J HAYNES:

If the Minister does not know how can he come and say it was a complete surprise that No 8 broke down?

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Government if it is satisfied and therefore can it assure this House that since we have heard just a few minutes ago that all these five sets have been substantially overhauled or at least have had their planned maintenance since last Spring, that we can look forward to a power cut free winter unless there are major problems outside of normal maintenance?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us whether the Preece, Cardew and Rider Report makes any reference to the lifespan of any of the engines in King's Bastion South or North?

MR SPEAKER:

Can you answer that question?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Sir, and neither does it arise out of this question.

HON A J HAYNES:

The answer is no?

MR SPEAKER:

The answer is that the Preece, Cardew and Rider Report does not refer to the lifespan of the engines.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can we just put it this way. Can the Minister assure the House that engines 9 to 13 have, as he has said, successfully gone through their maintenance programme and is the Minister satisfied that these engines will give service throughout the winter notwithstanding any other remarks that might have been made about them in the Preece, Cardew and Rider Report?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, yes, Sir. As I have said before the engines have been maintained, in fact, we have had No 13 engine out for almost two weeks now because it is undergoing overhaul and without any help we have had enough power on the grid to be able to do this, in fact, I remember that this used to be thrown at me that whenever No 13 engine was out we had power cuts but what the Hon Member asked is whether I was satisfied that with these engines we would avert the need for cuts, and apart from any major, as the Hon Mr Scott says because he is an Electrical Engineer and knows, apart from any major disaster the answer to that question is yes, we can look forward to a winter free of power cuts.

HON P J ISOLA:

And, Mr Speaker, can we look forward to this power cut free winter whether or not there is a heavy strain on the Dockyard power station?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, no, we are now expanding.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has volunteered the statement that we will be power cut free.

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister has said that saving any major breakdown there should be no power cuts this winter.

HON P J ISOLA:

We won't mention the Dockyard power supply, we will keep quiet.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 218 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state their proposals for averting any risk of aural pollution at the new Generating Station?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, to avert any risk of aural pollution as stated in the question is a technical and physical impossibility but the Hon Member may be assured that the matter has received very serious attention from all parties concerned and will be strictly monitored as works progress on site.

The tender document drew particular attention to this aspect of performance and effectively specified that at worst the noise level at the west side of Varyl Begg Estate should with one engine fully loaded be no higher than that of an average conversation. There is every indication that practical noise levels will be substantially below this, particularly at night.

The proposals for minimising aural pollution include:

- (a) composite fibreglass and plasterboard sound insulating lining in the Engine Hall
- (b) air intake silencing
- (c) exhaust silencing
- (d) two-speed and silenced radiator fans
- (e) engine foundations decoupled from the main engine hall structure
- (f) decoupling of potentially noise-carrying ductwork.

The contractors have engaged the services of consultant acoustical engineers to advise on the various design problems that will be encountered and a strict series of works tests on particular items is being carried out prior to these being accepted for shipment to Gibraltar.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 218 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will any of these apparently far reaching proposals be applicable or be able to be converted to the use of the present King's Bastion Generating Station?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, first of all, with all due regard to Mr Haynes, it does not arise out of the question.

NO. 219 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will the Government give the figures it has available for the following categories:

- (a) the number of Apprenticeships finally offered by each of the Official Employers and the number taken up
- (b) the number of school-leavers who passed the Apprenticeship Training Examination but were not offered an Apprenticeship
- (c) the number of school-leavers under (b) above who were offered Training facilities at the Construction Industry Training Centre at Landport for one year, and
- (d) the number of school-leavers under (c) above who have taken up the offer?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

- (a) Sir, a total of 25 apprenticeships were offered this year by the Official Employers, as follows:-

Public Works Department	-	12
City Electrical Engineer	-	4
Telephone Department	-	3
PSA/DOE	-	6

All have been taken up. MOD have not yet decided how many they will be able to offer.

- (b) The number of young persons who passed either or both the Engineering and Construction Entrance Examinations was 113. In theory, therefore, there are 88 who could not be offered an apprenticeship, but it is relevant to observe that of those asked to attend for trade selection, 47 either failed to do so or declined an offer when their turn came, because they were not interested in the trades remaining.
- (c) and (d) Whilst it is the intention to offer training facilities at the Construction Industry Training Centre to those successful candidates who are not offered an apprenticeship with the Official Employers - the scheme has not yet been started as the MOD's decision on their intake of apprenticeships is still awaited. It is intended to introduce the scheme in January, 1982 or even before, if there is an earlier decision by MOD on the question of their apprenticeships.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 219 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I remember very distinctly in this House that the target date that was set by the Minister, in fact, was September of this year for this new course to start in the Construction Industry Training Centre. Can I ask the Minister one question, the MOD still not having decided on how many apprenticeships are to be offered, can I take it that the balance of 25 apprentices still have not initiated their course?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, I did indicate that we hoped to start in September but the problem arises because of the MOD, in a sense, Sir, that if we had started the scheme in September or this month, October, we would have found out later that the Dockyard could have offered 20 apprenticeships and the chaps already started in our own training course would have left us and we would have had to have brought in different people who would have had a different starting time for the course that we are running. We want to make sure that the people we bring into the course are going to stay with us during the whole of the year.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is the Minister therefore saying, Mr Speaker, that until such time as the MOD offer apprenticeships the course will not start?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir. I have said it quite clearly that it is intended to introduce the scheme in January 1982 or even before if there is an earlier decision by the MOD on the question of their apprenticeships.

HON W T SCOTT:

Yes, it is conditional on the MOD making the decision, that is what I am asking.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I will read it again, Sir. It is intended to introduce the scheme in January 1982 or even before, if there is an earlier decision by MOD on the question of their apprenticeships.

HON W T SCOTT:

Will the Government therefore be approaching not only the 41 that are left out of the possible 88 that might have had this one year industrial training scheme offered to them but will they approach the 88 again because circumstances to these 88 individuals might well have changed?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Strictly speaking, Sir, when we discussed the motion at the last House of Assembly I did emphasise the fact that I did not have very much sympathy with people who refused apprenticeships and then want to take our own construction industry training but I am quite prepared that if we have the 88 we will consider taking all of them but we have limitations of space, of course, though I do not envisage that they are

HON W T SCOTT:

Will the Minister give way?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I have not finished my answer, when I finish my answer I will give way. We do not envisage that there are still 88 apprentices waiting to come into our course.

HON W T SCOTT:

I think the Minister mistook my question. He did say of the 88 who had refused apprenticeships but in fact we are talking about two different things, are we not? We are talking about a young man who is offered an apprenticeship, the 25 that were available, out of a total of 113 leaving a balance of 88 who are not offered an apprenticeship but they are offered industrial training which is a totally different thing.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir, I will emphasise that 47 out of the 88 refused to accept any kind of apprenticeship.

HON W T SCOTT:

But it is not an apprenticeship, Mr Speaker, I think it was clear cut in the debate that the Minister was referring to in subsequent questions, it is industrial training for one year, not a four year apprenticeship course. I want the Minister to be absolutely sure of the distinction between the one and the other.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, the spirit of the motion was that those who could not be offered an apprenticeship would go to industrial training. These 47 were offered.

MR SPEAKER:

We have a question on industrial training coming now.

HON J BOSSANO:

The Minister said, as I understand it, that the 47 people concerned were not interested in any of the 25 apprenticeships available, that is the distinction he is making, is it not?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

That is right.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is there any indication yet as to when the Ministry of Defence will make up its mind on this point? What is holding them up making up their minds?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

As a matter of fact I asked the General Manager of the Dockyard, I think last Monday, and he did not have a reply. Government has already made up its mind to what date we are prepared to wait. Quite frankly I do not want to make things easy for the Dockyard. I do not want them to say no. The more pressure we put on them the better it is, if we make life easy for them and we start putting up courses and creating our own things it is very easy for them to say: "Alright, no more apprentices". That is the attitude I have been adopting all the time. I do not want to make things easy for the MOD.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 220 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, is Government satisfied that the facilities offered by the Construction Industry Training Centre are being fully exploited?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the Construction Industry Training Centre provides practical and craft training for construction trade apprentices throughout the first year of their apprenticeships and also for periodical training during their second, third and fourth years. The Centre is also employed on the trade testing of craftsmen as well as running supervisory courses on subjects such as scaffolding, safety and first aid.

However, the drop in the number of construction trade apprentices taken on during the last two years, has resulted in some under-utilisation of the Centre. Because of this it is possible to offer basic training facilities for those who were successful in the apprentice entry exams, but were unable to obtain an apprenticeship without the need to either employ more instructors or provide additional facilities. Also, space is being made available at the Centre for the training of trainee technicians and craft apprentices of the Telephone Department, who will be providing their own line supervisors as instructors.

26.10.81

NO. 221 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government state what figures it has available for job vacancies as at 30th September, 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the number of vacancies available on 30th September, 1981 was fifty-four, covering thirty-five different occupations. Twenty-five of the vacancies were for skilled workers in the construction industry.

NO. 222 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, can Government confirm that the first twenty applicants in the Family Care Unit awaiting a report for Housing as at 1st August, 1981, had been waiting for more than twelve months for their reports, and will Government state the present waiting time to be expected in respect of a report requested as at today's date ie how long will the last person listed for a report be likely to wait?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, on the 1st August, 1981, the Department of Labour and Social Security had a list of eighty-seven requests from the Housing Department for social reports on applicants for accommodation. The first twenty on the list had been received between 18 September, 1980, and 17 December, 1980 - ie less than twelve months previously.

As a result of the recruitment of two Trainee Social Workers in July of this year it has been possible to step up the rate at which these requests could be investigated and reported upon, with the result that, although since 1 August, 1981, a further twenty requests have been received, the number now on the list waiting to be dealt with is sixty-four.

On the assumption that the workload of the Family Care Unit will enable this improvement to continue, it is expected that the present backlog will be cleared by about the end of 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 222 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

And will the staffing at the Family Care Unit remain consistent and will the priority given to housing remain high or not? Can the Minister tell us whether after the backlog is cleared up whether another backlog will emerge or not?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, if I could predict the future I would not be here. I do not know what the next lot will be. I can tell you that what we have, if the present workload continues, we shall be able to deal with them by the end of 1981 which is only about two or three months away. Whether more backlog is coming, we will give the priority that is always given to this.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the priority is not always given. We have cases here which have been waiting for eleven months, maybe not twelve but certainly very closely, from September to August. Mr Speaker, can the Minister confirm to this House his worry and apprehension at

the thought of social cases being left for eleven months and if that is the case will he then undertake to keep the staffing or manning level of the Family Care Unit high enough to cope with the housing reports that come to him? That is what I want to find out.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I think from my answer it is obvious.

MR SPEAKER:

Precisely and the answer is yes. Next question.

NO. 223 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state whether it has a set system, employed at regular intervals, for the inspection of school buildings especially during the long summer holidays?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, even before the recent difficulties concerning maintenance and cleaning were highlighted at Bayside School a system for regular annual inspections of school buildings had been agreed with the Public Works Department which involves visits to all schools during the Autumn Term in connection with the preparation of Estimates for the forthcoming financial year. Representatives of the Department of Education and Public Works Department are in the process of visiting all schools to assess the need and extent to which maintenance and minor works are required to enable sufficient financial resources to be included in the Estimates.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 223 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, the Minister said distinctly minor works but if it is included in one estimate in the Autumn term it will take a substantial amount of months before those minor works can be carried out. Surely there must be some provision for minor works to be carried out at regular intervals.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, requisitions come in regularly from the Headmasters of all the Schools.

HON W T SCOTT:

So other than that in fact there is no inspection of school buildings other than once a year, it depends entirely on the staff of the school on minor works at least to inform the Education Department of any problems that might arise. What is the speed at which these requisitions that are made by the staff of the school seen to?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

That, I am afraid, I do not control, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

As all Government schools are in fact public buildings, is there no system at all under which the Public Works Department of its own initiative inspects school buildings as opposed to inspecting them at the request of the Education Department?

MR SPEAKER:

He has just said that they have instituted a system whereby schools are inspected regularly.

HON P J ISOLA:

As I understood the answer, in the Autumn the Department of Education together with the Public Works Department look at the thing and then there are requisitions. My question is if there is any system at all under which the Public Works Department independently of any requirements of the Education Department, regularly inspects the public buildings, ie the schools, in the same way as presumably it does its other public buildings, that is my question.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, previous to this system which we have introduced there was no system, we would probably have had to employ more people.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean that previous to the present problems at the Bayside Boys' Comprehensive School there was no system in existence under which the Public Works Department visited public buildings that were schools?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, I will make two points. Before the difficulties were highlighted, the Department of Education with the Public Works Department had already instituted a system of annual inspection for all school buildings. The idea of the Department of Education and of the Public Works Department working together is in order that we can get our priorities right, the Headmasters will be able to say: "This is what I consider the first priority, the second priority etc", because the Public Works Department are dealing with all Government buildings and obviously there are limitations within the structure of the Public Works Department as to how much work they can do in one year and the money the Government can afford to spend during that year in maintenance so the idea of the Public Works Department and the Education Department working closely together is to get an order of priority. But there has always existed an element of inspection by the Headmasters themselves because the Headmaster when he comes to us to ask for money for the school he puts to us his request which we then in turn pass on to the Public Works Department and they have to consider the financial implications, labour manpower etc, etc. Before we did not have a regular inspection by the Public Works Department, by experts, now we have it. Before the thing was highlighted at my instigation I had meetings with the Minister for Public Works but there has always existed a system because when we are talking of estimates we have to have some knowledge of what the buildings are like but it was not done in a professional basis it was done more or less on what the Headmasters thought was required. I hope that will answer the Hon Member's question.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am glad, Mr Speaker, that the recent problems in the school have brought up obviously more efficient procedures and I am glad there was some sort of inspection before but if that was the case and it was done properly can the Minister explain how the Boys' Comprehensive School got into the state it did without any remedying during the summer vacations?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, that is a separate question.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Minister not agree that that is a natural question to ask from what he has said and the message of reassurance he has given to the House about procedures? It seems to me odd that the school after a long summer vacation should have to close down to have repairs done to it if these procedures were being properly carried out by the Department for which the Minister is responsible and by the Department for which his colleague the Minister for Public Works is responsible.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, there are specific questions which are related to repairs and minor works and maybe we could answer as part of those questions.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

One question, Mr Speaker. The Minister says that he has no control over the time it takes to have the requisitions for minor repairs carried out in schools. Is he satisfied with the time it takes to carry out those repairs?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, there is a question later on, I think it is No 227.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 224 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many students was the Bayside Comprehensive School meant to cater for, and how many students does it house at present?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, the total school complex at Bayside was originally planned for 850 boys and the current roll is 878. However, the maximum capacity was made on what later proved to be an incorrect assumption that specialist accommodation in the building could also be used throughout the day as a class base. This incorrect assumption was highlighted at the time of re-organisation in 1974. It led to the acquisition of the temporary void accommodation in order to provide the necessary basic teaching spaces which would otherwise have been in specialist accommodation in the school in keeping with the original plans. A permanent extension of basic classrooms is now planned at Bayside School in order to replace the void accommodation. This project has been included in the development aid submission for 1981/86.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 224 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Is the Minister satisfied that these extensions, when and if they come about, will not only be able to cater for the excess number of students that we have at present but for the excess number of students which undoubtedly we will have over and above those by 1986?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 225 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, has Government made adequate provision for heating at Bayside Comprehensive for the coming winter?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, I think the Hon Member is of the opinion that we only have one school, Bayside, everything I get is from Bayside.

At the beginning of each Autumn Term a circular is sent to all schools requesting information as to what work may be necessary to ensure comfortable working conditions during the winter. This exercise covers both maintenance work to doors and windows as well as the provision of and repairs to heaters. This information is then passed to the Public Works Department for any necessary action to be taken during the latter part of the Autumn Term so that all necessary work is completed before the cold winter period. This procedure has been followed for the coming winter.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 225 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I can assure the Hon Minister that I do know that there are more schools than Bayside but apparently he seems to get all the trouble from Bayside that is why I am harping on it.

HON A J CANEPA:

You get all the information from Bayside.

HON A T LODDO:

Flippant even. Mr Speaker, then I can take it categorically that this winter we will not have another blankets protest by students because the school will be too cold for students and teachers alike to work in. Can I take that as categorical, that it won't be?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I never give any categorical replies. I think it depends on the thermal conditions prevailing at the time, Sir, we might get arctic conditions and Gibraltar is not equipped for arctic conditions. I think, Sir, that what I have said is something that I introduced myself, I introduced it last year in that the schools suddenly realised that it was cold and started switching heaters on when it became cold and they did not have the necessary sense I think to make sure that they were working before the winter came along and this is why we send a circular reminding them to check the heaters before the winter comes along and this is what happened last year, they did not check them.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, has the Minister consulted his colleague as to whether the Generating Station has the capacity for the heaters?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The heaters, Sir, last year fell into disrepair many times because they had been abused by the people themselves in putting books and things on the heaters with the result that they overheated and the thermostats fused. If the staff and pupils of the school look after their heaters then we do not envisage much trouble with them.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 226 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government ensure that there are sufficient chairs in the Common Room at Bayside Comprehensive?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Bayside again, Mr Speaker. It is a pity that the Hon Member has not got smaller children in other schools.

Mr Speaker, there are sufficient chairs at Bayside School for all boys entitled to use the 6th Form Common Room to have a seat. However, there would be insufficient room in the 6th Form Common Room for all boys to sit comfortably if this room were used by all the boys at the same time and consequently fewer chairs have been made available than the number of boys actually entitled to use the room. Not all boys wish to use the 6th Form Common Room and certainly all 6th formers do not use it at the same time. In addition the management of the school encourages the boys to use seating accommodation in study areas, like the Library, elsewhere in the school for much of the time.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 226 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I would like to assure the Hon Minister that there are definitely insufficient chairs particularly since this year more students have decided to stay on and I would ask him to ensure that there are sufficient chairs in the Common Room for the boys' use. The fact that they are supposedly entitled to use the Library is a myth because the boys in the 6th form are asked to leave the Library because that is also being used. The fact is that the school is overcrowded. Will he please ensure that there are sufficient chairs, Mr Speaker?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Let me assure the Hon Mr Loddo that this answer was prepared with the full cooperation of the Headmaster of the Bayside School and I have been assured that we do not require any more chairs, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 227 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many requisitions for works were put into Government by the Administration at Bayside Comprehensive in the last five years, and how many were complied with before the autumn term 1981 commenced?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, copies of requisitions have been kept and logged by the management at Bayside School since July, 1977, only, a period of four years instead of the five that you are asking. During the period July, 1977, up to the commencement of the autumn term 1981 there were 275 requisitions submitted by the school through the Department of Education to the Public Works Department and at the time that the recent difficulties concerning maintenance at the school were highlighted at the beginning of the autumn term only five requisitions were outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 227 OF 1981

HON A J CANEPA:

You do not like the answer do you?

HON A T LODDO:

The answer is astonishing, five requisitions.

MR SPEAKER:

Order.

HON A T LODDO:

I hope the Minister is not answering tongue in cheek because it seems to me, Mr Speaker, and I hope I can clear this up, it seems to me that to have had the action that we did have at the Bayside Comprehensive

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to go into that. You have asked how many requisitions were made by the Department of Education to the Public Works Department and how many have been complied with. You have been given the answer. It may be surprising but that is the position.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Minister then what where the five requisitions that were left outstanding because they could be a list as long as my arm for all we know?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes. The five requisitions outstanding were (1) construction of a litter room, (2) repairs to eleven toilets systems, (3) replacement of broken glass by plywood, (4) repair of window, (5) repair gate.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, did I hear repair of window? One window?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

One window.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, if all these requisitions were carried out except five and apparently they were not of all that significance, how can he explain, Mr Speaker, the fact that the school had to close and work had to be carried out at overtime? Was it perhaps that the jobs that were supposed to be done were done wrongly or indifferently and therefore they had to be done all over again, can the Minister explain?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, the procedure is that when there is a requisition for work and the Public Works Department go there, it is not considered as finished until the Headmaster or his representative countersigns that requisition saying that the work has been completed.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So the Minister is saying therefore that all this business of the school being closed and all this business of people working overtime was due to the fault of the Headmaster not putting in the requisition?

HON A J CANEPA:

Has he said that?

MR SPEAKER:

He has not said that. That is a matter of implication and we must not ask that under this particular question.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I beg your pardon, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

We must not ask that under this particular question. What we are trying to find out is how many requisitions for works were put to Government by the Administration at Bayside Comprehensive in the last five years, and how many were commenced before the autumn term 1981 commenced. You have had the answer on that and we must not go beyond that.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I think there is a great relevance between the requisitions being carried in the school and the school not being able to open because apparently it was in a very unsatisfactory state.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. If the Opposition wanted to know the reasons why the school was not opened they should have asked a question.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Perhaps we can follow that up another time, Mr Speaker. Coming back to the previous questions that I put to the Minister with regard to whether he was satisfied with the time it takes for the requisitions to be carried out. Apparently, he has no control, that is what he said. Is he satisfied with the time it takes for requisitions to be carried out?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, I am satisfied that when the Public Works Department realise that there is a requisition of great urgency the Public Works Department cooperates fully and do it as quickly as possible. On other things which they might not consider quite so urgent, probably we would like it to be done quicker, but I am fully aware that the Public Works Department have other commitments to other departments, to other Ministries, in fact, to housing, and I have to accept this. Of course, if the Government start employing more people and spending more money etc, etc but apart from Bayside there are other schools too.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I think we are talking very much on maintenance really unless we want to really narrow and bring it to the point in question but surely, Mr Speaker, if there is obvious dissatisfaction with the people who use the school, the Minister cannot say: "I can understand that there are other problems and therefore I am going to allow this to carry on".

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not go round in circles. The Minister has said that within the context of the requirements of the Public Works Department he is satisfied that they give reasonable attention to the requisitions.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

To the urgent ones, Mr Speaker, but with the others he was not all that satisfied but he understood, of course, that the Public Works Department have other things to do and what I am saying, Mr Speaker, isn't it time therefore bearing in mind what happened earlier this year when in fact the school did not open for quite a long time, that the system should be looked into and perhaps they could have their own maintenance team to carry out the whole maintenance? Isn't it time that an answer was found to the state of the schools? Could the Minister give an answer, Mr Speaker?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Minister, Mr Speaker, in view of the answer that he has given which obviously must raise a lot of doubts in Members' minds in this House as to the circumstances of the closure of the Bayside Comprehensive School at the beginning of this term, could I ask the Minister rather than go on debating the matter here, whether he will give us an assurance that the Report of the Committee that he set up to inquire into the Bayside Comprehensive School problems will be made public so that the public may know, Is there a question on this, I had not seen it, I beg your pardon.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There is a question by the Hon Member which is down for answer by me.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is there really, Mr Speaker, I beg your pardon. Mr Speaker, you will be aware that I left Gibraltar before the questions and I have certainly been looking for it, it is there, is it? In that case, Mr Speaker, I will defer comment until then. I apologise for taking the House's time.

NO. 228 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, why were 5th year Spanish students at the Bayside Comprehensive forced to go without a Spanish Teacher during the latter part of the Summer Term of 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, I would like to make it clear that the Government does not employ any Spanish Teachers at present. Following interviews in April, 1981, a member of the Modern Languages Department at Bayside School was appointed as an Executive Officer under the Government's graduate entry scheme. Arrangements were made by the Establishment Division for this teacher to take up his appointment at the end of May. This meant that the first year 6th form did not have the services of this particular teacher for the remainder of the term (ie two weeks of full-time and three weeks of part-time school). The Department of Education accepted this arrangement because the teacher concerned had by then completed his examination teaching with the 4th and Upper 6th pupils at the school and other teachers were available to cover for other parts of his time-table as all examination classes were then taking GCE 'O' and 'A' level Examinations.

NO. 229 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government still requiring students who obtain grants to undertake further education in UK to return to Gibraltar to take up employment with Government?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, Government still requires all students taking courses of further and higher education in the UK to sign an agreement that if offered suitable employment in Gibraltar on the successful completion of their courses they will return to work for Government. Steps are taken in the majority of cases to ascertain the extent to which suitable employment is available in Government Departments before students are due to return so that a clear indication can be given to them before the end of their courses whether there is likely to be suitable employment available to them. If suitable employment cannot be offered to students they are released from the terms of their agreement and the intention in future, is to give them advanced notice during the autumn term prior to completing their initial course.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 229 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, welcome as that improvement is, would the Member not agree that it is still a one-sided situation where a student is required to come back if the Government wants him to but is not guaranteed employment if the Government does not want him to?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I agree it is a one-sided situation.

HON J BOSSANO:

Will the Government not agree that in the light, in fact, that there has recently been a move towards recruiting people in order to undertake University courses as Government employees and be guaranteed employment at the end, that that situation creates a two-tier system where some people are sent to University on the Government payroll, guaranteed a job at the end of it if they are successful and required to work for the Government, on the other hand other people are given smaller incomes, treated as students, have no guarantee of work and they have the same responsibility towards the Government as the Government's own employees. Does he not think that in the light of this recent innovation the situation becomes even less defensible?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, smaller incomes in that the trainees are required to work during all their school holidays. Yes, I agree with you, it is a one-sided thing.

HON J BOSSANO:

Will he then consider reviewing Government policy on this matter in order to see the possibility of changing it for next year, Mr Speaker?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Certainly, Mr Speaker.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister look into this matter and if at one stage along the course of the student it is obvious that that student is not going to find employment in Gibraltar, advise him that the requirement will not be forced upon him in order that he may be able to look for employment in the United Kingdom, Mr Speaker, where the situation is not as easy as it used to be before?

MR SPEAKER:

They have said in the answer that they are doing that now. They are specifically doing that and they are informing students.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I did not hear that, Mr Speaker. I cannot hear the Minister and perhaps he could speak a bit louder.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Shall I repeat the answer in a loud Sergeant-Major's voice?

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

No, Mr Speaker, but I would not like him to be silent when there is an important question like the one I asked before.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Just give him a hearing aid, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I add one further suggestion in the form of a question. Would the Minister also consider in terms of planning for next year's educational opportunities in the United Kingdom, that people should be told when they are trying to make up their mind in Gibraltar what they are going to do in further education, what are the employment prospects? Will he consider ensuring that in future, I do not know whether it is happening already or not, but certainly my information is that a number of people have gone to the United Kingdom in the mistaken idea that choosing one particular course of education as opposed to another improved their possibility of employment on their return to Gibraltar and then have had the disappointment of finding that this is not the case, so will he consider introducing a system where people are told quite clearly on the basis of suggestions perhaps from the Labour Department of job opportunities in the future, which are the courses that enhance the chances in Gibraltar in finding employment so that people know before they study whether they are choosing something that appeals to them but they are unlikely to find work in Gibraltar, or otherwise?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes, Mr Speaker, that is in fact my way of thinking since I came to the department in 1978. I think that that is up to counselling in school by Career Counsellors and the Youth and Careers Office. I myself, in fact, have tried this with different students. I have looked at certain posts and the age of certain people and have said to them: "Look, if you want to come back to Gibraltar make sure you go for this kind of post because that chap will be dead in five years' time or he has got to retire" but unfortunately students have still the right to choose whatever they want. If we were an autocratic system of Government like Singapore, Singapore at one time said: "We do not want any more history, philosophy, geography, we are going to have technicians because we are going to do this", and no one was given any more scholarships for anything except for technical courses. We do not want this situation to happen in Gibraltar but certainly I shall investigate that further counselling is given to those students who want to return to Gibraltar.

HON J BOSSANO:

In fact, Mr Speaker, what I am suggesting and what I would ask the Minister to consider, is something more technical, more sophisticated if you like, a projection by the Department of Labour for which he is also responsible of what is likely to be the demand in different fields at graduate level and then that those projections should be made available to people at a very early stage when they are deciding what further education they are going to go into.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 230 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government state what led to its change of policy in relation to traffic lights considering the answers given to Question 153 of 1981 and the subsequent assurances given by the Chief Minister to the tenants of Laguna and Glacis Estates as reported in the Gibraltar Chronicle of the 15th instant?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, there has been no change in Government policy in this matter. As part of the original plans to deal with traffic in an open frontier situation it was agreed to install traffic lights at Winston Churchill Avenue - Glacis Road. These plans subsequently went into abeyance and this accounted for the wording of answer 153. Now that certain parts of the traffic plans have been re-activated for possible frontier re-opening the question of installing the traffic lights is again being pursued.

NO. 231 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, is Government taking any steps to prevent the road leading to the 'New Marina' from becoming

- a) a dumping ground for derelict cars, and
- b) an unofficial trailer park?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the Police are as anxious to keep this road as clear of derelict cars and parked trailers as they are of all other public roads. Steps are in hand to remove certain derelict vehicles from the area of the new Marina but because of the need in certain cases to Gazette the vehicles, removal takes some time. Steps are also in hand to legally designate the existing lay-byes as official car parks within the Traffic Ordinance and when this has been approved the parking of trailers in these lay-byes will be an offence. At present it is not.

NO. 232 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many derelict vehicles have been disposed of month by month during the first nine months of 1981, and how many during the corresponding time last year?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
January	32	113
February	-	85
March	49	56
April	35	42
May	3	34
June	58	74
July	81	39
August	70	135
September	38	96
Totals	<u>366</u>	<u>674</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 232 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Police on a very worthwhile exercise. It is a shame that cats and dogs have not followed the same pattern.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 233 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government make a statement on the use of Rosia Parade parking site by containers?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, at present no offence is committed by trailers or containers parked in this location. Steps are in hand to legally designate the parking site as an official car park within the Traffic Ordinance and when this has been approved the parking of a trailer or a container in the car park will be an offence.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 233 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister whether he has any idea when this will be because at the moment there are a lot of containers parked there and the weight is damaging the newly laid asphalt?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, perhaps I might answer that question. The matter is with me, there are a number of parking matters which need attention. All I can say is we will expedite them to the best of our ability.

HON W T SCOTT:

Might I ask the Government, Mr Speaker, also to look at other areas which have been traditionally used exclusively for parking which have been made use of over a number of years for the parking of containers as well and not to restrict oneself to Rosia Parade?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

As I say, Mr Speaker, there are several parking matters which need looking at and they are with us for action.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if you will allow my going at a slight tangent to the question, but in fact wasn't the creation of a container berth supposed to improve the situation? There seems to be as many containers littered all over the place as there was before we spent £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m in building that place for people to handle containers. I know it is at a slight tangent as a supplementary. Has it made any difference or do we have the same problem we used to have before with containers all over town?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the container berth, Sir, should tend to improve it but possibly it will be further improved when the unstuffing shed is there and then there will not be any real excuse to bring a container into town, they should be able to unstuff there.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask, Sir, on the question of the official car parks and designating Rosia Parade as an official car park, could thought be given to making certain official car parks illegal for parking not just for containers and lorries but also for commercial vans? It is not unusual to insist that a car park is for motor cars and not for motor vans and buses and so forth. One accepts that you have to make certain allowances in Gibraltar but there are surely certain areas where it should purely be motor cars, could consideration be given to that?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Most people use their vans for private purposes.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 234 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many unlicensed vehicles are there on the public highway at the present time?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, without visiting every part of the public highway at the same time on a particular day it would not be possible to answer the question accurately. The Police have been giving increased attention to the matter in recent months and since 1 July they have reported 176 cases involving vehicle licensing offences.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, may I preface the question by asking as to the health and/or whereabouts of the substantive office holder of Housing?

MR SPEAKER:

I beg your pardon?

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, this is a question directed to the Minister for Housing and I would like to ask after the Minister for Housing.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

A Minister will be answering the question. The fact that they answer questions to their department is of course much more practical. The Government collectively is responsible and everybody knows that the absence of the Minister for Housing is due to health reasons.

MR SPEAKER:

Will you ask the question then?

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, there has been no statement to that effect.

MR SPEAKER:

May I say that under our practice there is no reason why any explanation should be given for the absence of any Member either from the Government or the Opposition from the House, that is the prerogative of the particular Member unless, of course, absences are for six consecutive meetings and then a decision would have to be taken by the Speaker but otherwise there is no requirement.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I think my Hon and Learned Colleague's question was meant to be solicitous, enquiring after the health of the Minister. No public statement has been made as to the health of the Minister, it is rumoured that he is sick and he was really asking about his health. I do not see why the Government should be so sensitive about it.

MR SPEAKER:

Anyway, let us go on to the question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government consider substantially increasing the number of housing applicants now appearing in monthly lists?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for
Housing and Sport)

Sir, as was last explained in reply to Question No 63 of 1981 it would not be practical to require members of the staff of what is already a hard pressed Department to produce long waiting lists containing information which is subject to daily fluctuation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 235 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, we have had various assorted types of answers to this effect to the questions we have asked periodically and generally the impression has been that it is impossible to give any list and yet since, I think it is August, we have had monthly lists which according to previous answers would have been impossible. It is also palpably obvious from the various lists that have been produced that the work cannot be so great since it is a matter to spot the difference between one month's list and the next. There are hardly any fluctuations in the names appearing, primarily the fluctuations are as regards the order in which they appear, it does not appear to me therefore to be an overburdened task to the department and I was asking whether or not it would be possible to increase those numbers.

MR SPEAKER:

Mr Haynes, with due respect, you are making a statement.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the answer we have had from the Minister

MR SPEAKER:

But what are you asking?

HON A J HAYNES:

I am asking whether, given certain facts, they cannot increase the number.

MR SPEAKER:

That is the original question and you have been given an answer.

HON A J HAYNES:

But given the facts, Mr Speaker. The answer we have had is to the effect that the work is too great yet we also know that despite these protestations a list was produced and is now being produced on a monthly basis. We also know from these lists which have been made public that the

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect, you are making a statement, I am asking for the question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, but the point I am trying to make to save time in effect, if I could narrow the premise on which I am basing my question. We have heard before, repeatedly, that the workload is too great, now I challenge that statement and I would like to know when will the workload be

MR SPEAKER:

Mr Haynes, you have been up on your feet now for at least four minutes and you have not asked a question. We must not do that at question time, you have got to ask a question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister give more specific reasons for not increasing the list? We have had the workload business before and that obviously is not valid.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, we are very grateful for the Hon Member's devious way in asking the state of health of the substantive Minister for Housing. I can only reiterate what he has said several times before, that the amount of work involved would be beyond the capacity of his department with its present staff. Is the Hon Member suggesting that the staff should be increased at considerable extra public cost to provide something which, possibly, will not be of all that great assistance?

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, may I start by asking the Minister to withdraw the statement that I was devious in my asking for the Minister for Housing, there was nothing devious in my statement and I would ask him to withdraw.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I see no reason to withdraw it.

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister meant not devious, I am sure, but not direct.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would withdraw the word devious if you so wish, Sir, but I would comment that the way that I would, had I been a Member of the Opposition, wished to know about the health of the Hon Mr Zammitt, I would have said: "We notice Mr Zammitt is not here, we understand he has been ill, what is the state of his health?"

HON A J HAYNES:

There seems to be very little difference between that and what I asked, Mr Speaker, nothing in fact. I would like to know quite sincerely the position as regards Mr Zammit that is why I prefaced it. I was also prepared to withdraw these questions to a later date as we did in the case of Mr Abecasis when he was ill with flu as you remember in February or March of 1980, and yet the Ministers have reacted in this way without any indication that there was malice on my part. I was most aggrieved by this attitude, like the Chief Minister walking out.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, I happened to walk out because I was called from the Secretariat on an urgent matter concerning the House and therefore I thought I ought to tell the House that the responsibility for answering questions was here just the same. I was not going out deliberately, if I were I would not have to apologise, I would do so. I happened to be called on the telephone, I did not go earlier because I wanted to hear the outcome and that is why I did so on the way out. But I would have thought that in a place of our size and in the circumstances of Gibraltar it would have come to the notice of the Hon Member that Mr Zammitt was taken ill very seriously about three weeks ago and had to go into Hospital and has gone away to convalesce for a few days in a very bad state of health. I would have thought that just one Member of the Opposition, Mr Bossano, went to visit him, not that other Members were expected, in fact, people were not encouraged to see him but I think it was generally known. If it has not been known to the Hon Member I am sorry that these questions have been put down, in fact, I was surprised, I will say that clearly now, I thought that the motion on housing, the substantive motion on housing for which we are prepared to deal with if necessary would be eminently suitable to be left for another meeting because of the absence of the Minister but I thought that the question, perhaps I have done the Hon Member an injustice, I thought that the questions were put in spite the fact that he knew that Mr Zammitt was ill or rather he knew that he would be away. I am sorry, if I have done him an injustice, I apologise.

HON A J HAYNES:

I have spoken personally, in fact, with the Minister for Public Works as regards the Hon Member and at the last meeting, as the Minister will confirm, he informed me that he expected Mr Zammitt to be here at the House.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The other thing I would like to say why the Hon Member should have known, perhaps, that the Minister was not fit to be here is that I understand that he used to see him regularly every Tuesday on housing matters and that he has not been available for that.

HON A J HAYNES:

I have known that, that is one of the reasons why I spoke to the Hon Minister.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, I am saying about the knowledge of the state of health of the Minister.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, to clear this matter

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not go beyond this now.

HON P J ISOLA:

The only comment I would like to make on that, Mr Speaker, is that one would have expected some sort of official statement or something. The Chief Minister says it is known, it is not known let me tell him. I heard nothing about this in fact, I did not know the Minister was in England until my Hon and Gallant Friend told me in the airport that he was actually in England. There has been nothing in the press, nothing on the radio, nothing on television about this so all we can rely on, certainly as far as I am concerned, has been rumours that have reached my ears and I assure the Chief Minister there have been rumours, varying in degree of seriousness from almost off his head to he is having a rest. I think we ought to make that point clear.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect, we must not personalise the issue.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

May I just add one thing and that is that we were advised, for his own sake, not to make any statement about the state of his health.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, may I just then say now, on behalf of the Opposition, that we wish the Minister a speedy recovery and back to health and we look forward to seeing him in the House. Mr Speaker, I have just one short supplementary to ask the Minister on this question. In view of the fact that the main argument has been the daily fluctuation of names on the top priority list, can the Minister reconsider his answer in view of the fact that, as I understand the position, or is it not a fact that with these five names on each category that have gone up the fluctuation has been minimal over the last three months?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The fact that the fluctuation may be minimal does not mean that a considerable amount of work does not need to be done with the variation in pointages. I am willing, however, to request the department to look into the matter to see if they could make the list a little longer but I do not promise that it can be made substantially of the length that the Hon Mr Haynes, I think, would require. Perhaps, we can make it twenty-five or thirty.

NO. 236 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government circulate the lists of the areas and location of the units that were declared in Question No 65 of 1981 and which in accordance to the answer given to Question No 147 of 1981 were to be circulated?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for
Housing and Sport)

Yes, Sir. Arrangements have been made with the Clerk of the House to circulate these lists.

MR SPEAKER:

Perhaps I should ask a question. Does it mean that the lists are already in the possession of the House because we do not want any misunderstanding as to why they have not been circulated at a later stage.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, the lists will be supplied fairly shortly and then the Clerk of the House would circulate them in the normal way that he circulates other papers.

MR. SPEAKER:

Most certainly.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 236 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I understand it then that these lists were not ready at the time when the question was asked. The statement came about in answer to the question and the answer was: "I won't give you all the details, I will circulate the answer".

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The lists are ready, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Are they up-to-date as at present or are they as before the question then?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am afraid I do not know the answer to that question.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I wonder if before I ask the question you will allow me to say precisely because of the matter that has been raised by the Chief Minister himself on the question of the acting Minister for Tourism, that it is my intention to raise the question of the Survey Report on Tourism, generally, on the adjournment and that although I understand that the Minister will not be here I think it is perhaps in the interest of everybody since obviously no vote will be taken on this for whatever points that I intend making to be taken note of and perhaps the whole issue at least will gain time as it will be sometime before the next meeting takes place and this being a question which I think of great urgency it should perhaps be taken up. I hope that the Chief Minister particularly will take it in the spirit that I am speaking at present and of course I wish the Minister a very speedy recovery.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is exactly the spirit in which we came to the House, that if questions were there we had to deal with them, if a problem is there it may not be dealt with as completely as if the Minister himself were here. My view about this matter is that you cannot say "we are not going to ask questions because there is nobody", somebody must be made responsible. I am sure the only thing that perhaps the Hon Questioner may have a little more leniency in supplementaries to the persons who are going to answer the questions than would otherwise be the case. But anyhow the answers are mostly of statistics and so on and they are all available.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I hope so, Mr Speaker. Of course if there is any point which I think is of substance that should be pursued I will, I think the Chief Minister will realise that that is necessary, too.

CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, of course.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Going back to the question, Mr Speaker. Can Government state what the hotel occupancy was for the months of July, August and September this year, and how does it compare with the same period in 1979/80?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, Sir, I regret I am unable to furnish hotel occupancy statistics for September 1981 as some hotels have not yet submitted their returns to the Government Statistician. Once these are available I shall send the questioner the details for September.

However, the comparative occupancies for July and August 1979, 1980 and 1981 are as follows:-

	<u>JULY</u>			<u>AUGUST</u>		
	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Sleeper occupancy	71.8%	53.1%	40.2%	76.9%	64.9%	43.5%

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 237 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I suppose the Minister realises the importance of this and I have no doubt that perhaps we might have, if the Minister agrees, a chat with the Director later on this question since I do not want to press the issue any more here.

HON J B PEREZ:

I am prepared to answer any supplementaries that he would like to ask.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

To what extent is the Minister concerned about the very serious drop in the hotel occupancy this year?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the Government is obviously very concerned but I think the Hon Member must bear one or two things in mind which is what Government is doing and that is, first of all, the question of the recession that all other main European tourist resorts have in fact been experiencing throughout the last two years and, of course, we are not completely out of this, we are part and parcel and we are affected as other tourist resorts are, that is the first point. The second point that I must mention is of course that the number of seats available to Gibraltar have been reduced and I think there is another question on that but I think the Hon Member must bear these two points in mind and, of course, the Government is concerned.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But purely on the question of the recession and the effect on Gibraltar. Wasn't the trend very clear the year before where we had a drop of 12% already there in August, ie the previous year from 76.9% to 64.9%, 71.8% the previous month in July to 53.1%? Isn't that indicative that the situation was becoming serious and also isn't it a fact too that in 1980 if people leaving the United Kingdom for overseas have gone up by 16% and since obviously we get most of the tourists coming to Gibraltar from the United Kingdom, isn't that an indication that something must be radically wrong with our resort, the publicity we are making, whatever it is, our marketing strategy, since the drop has been so serious?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the first point is that Government cannot accept that there is something substantially wrong with our marketing. I think there is another question which the Hon Major Peliza will be asking as to what the Government is doing to make things better as far as tourism in Gibraltar is concerned and I will answer that at that stage but, of course, one must also bear in mind, Mr Speaker, that 1979 was in fact a very, very good year for Gibraltar and I think this must be borne in mind when we look at the figures but as I have already said, of course, the Government is concerned.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I won't pursue this because obviously there is another question.

MR SPEAKER:

We must be careful because there is another question.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

That is why I will not pursue it.

MR SPEAKER:

Precisely.

NO. 238 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state the number of visitors who have come from Morocco in July, August and September this year and how does it compare with the same period in 1979/80?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, Sir, the overall number of visitors from Morocco increased in 1980 by 6% and dropped in 1981 by 22%. However, the number of excursion visitors from Morocco (Tangier) by air dropped by 16% in 1980 but increased by 32% in 1981 compared to 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 238 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But totally as far as visitors are concerned, I know we have had the percentage but percentages can be very misleading in that 31% of 1 is very little whilst the percentage of 5 on 100 is obviously much more. Could the Minister state, without quoting percentages, visitors as such?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Mr Speaker. The actual number of visitors in 1979 was 19,262, in 1980 there were 20,454 and in 1981 we have had 15,895.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So again on this question we see a very serious drop of 5,000 visitors. Can the Minister say what has been done because obviously I would imagine that in connection with Morocco something can be done fairly quickly to ameliorate the situation. Can the Minister say what action, if anything, what sort of first aid was taken to make sure that this did not carry on?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, this is one of the matters which I know the Tourist Department is in fact pursuing at the moment. The only reason that I can give at this particular moment in time is that I think the strength of the pound, the strength of sterling, does have something to do with this in the number of people that come over from Morocco because I think this particular catchment area is one which is very important for our economy and they come over in

fact to purchase from our shops but I would reiterate what I have already said and that is that the Tourist Department is looking at this in conjunction with the Financial and Development Secretary and the matter is being, I would not say kept under consideration, it is being vigorously looked into.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, again I won't pursue this because I think I can combine that with the previous one in the questions that follow.

NO. 239 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if UK/Gibraltar flights availability is sufficient and is it a fact that insufficiency of seats is depriving more tourists from coming to Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Sir, the number of seats being offered on the route for winter 1981/82 is definitely insufficient to fill hotel beds. The indications are that potential visitors from whatever source are having difficulty in obtaining a seat of their choice to Gibraltar. The Government is gravely concerned and the whole question of the balance between schedule and charter services is being examined by the Gibraltar Air Transport Advisory Board.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 239 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is it perhaps, Mr Speaker, that this has something to do with the question of the reduction in tourists that we have had and not so much perhaps the depression in the United Kingdom, that perhaps travel agents cannot find seats in the plane or say that there are no seats in the plane?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I would agree that this has been a substantial contributing factor.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Also, Mr Speaker, when examining this matter will the Minister bear in mind the question of the family travellers between here and the United Kingdom who should not in any way be sacrificed for the sake of just bringing tourism, that that matter should also be taken into account not just the tourists when examining the whole question of seat availability but also the number of Gibraltarians and others who have connections in Gibraltar from the United Kingdom, that they also find seats on the plane?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Mr Speaker, this will be borne in mind.

NO. 240 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state who is responsible for cleaning the cafeteria area at the Air Terminal, and why are the floors and windows allowed to be in such a filthy state?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, responsibility for cleaning the cafeteria area at the Air Terminal rests with the concessionaires except for the glass frontage which is Government's responsibility.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 240 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister saying that because the concessionaires are responsible for the cleanliness, they are completely indifferent as to the state in which the cafeteria is and what have they done to put it right?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, what I attempted to do was to give the Hon Member an honest answer to his question. Now he has asked whether we are not concerned. Of course, the Government is concerned but the Hon Member must realise that primarily the concessionaires would clean before the people start rushing to the Airport and as the Hon Member himself should well know since he uses the facilities on very frequent occasions, that here in Gibraltar there is a tendency when a particular individual or a family is leaving for the United Kingdom that whole families, in fact, sometimes ten, twelve and up to twenty people go to see them off. Of course, if the cafeteria area is completely packed with people then if you go at that particular moment in time it will be in a dirty state but if he were to go before the rush starts or after it has finished he will probably find that it is not, and I say it is not as dirty as he thinks it is.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I do not think I was really referring to glasses and perhaps odds and ends lying on the floor after use, I was referring to the amount of chewing gum stuck to the floor which has been there for quite a while and also to the state of the windows because I have made marks there before and have not been cleaned to my knowledge for two or three months. Doesn't the Minister have someone inspecting the area to see that things like that are put right?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the first point I must make is that the windows which are Government's responsibility are cleaned once a week. As far as Government's responsibility is concerned, on the Monday all the windows and all glass surfaces of the arrival hall are cleaned. On Tuesday the departure hall and display recesses are cleaned. On Wednesday the main concourse and toilets are cleaned and on Thursday the cafeteria area is cleaned, that is done weekly by Government.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Well, Mr Speaker, maybe it is done but it is not properly done because I can see, and I am not talking about the exterior, I do not know whether the Minister is referring to the exterior or the interior, I understand that the exterior gets dirty very quickly and that I fully understand, you may get a strong levanter and the fumes of the cars and the engines of the aircraft may dirty them very quickly. I am referring to the interior where it is obvious that the place has not been cleaned for months and I would suggest to the Minister, unless it has been done since I put the question, that he should go and verify himself and find out if he has been given a proper answer to that question and obviously also the chewing gum on the floor I do not believe that that has been cleaned for some time either, not by the amount of chewing gum still there.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Minister on this point, I think it is a point of general application. Presumably the concessionaire has a contract with the Government at the Air Terminal and presumably under that contract he has got obligations and when the Minister talks of cleaning again it is under obligations whether it is the Government or anybody else. Is there anybody at all (a) who supervises the cleaning because it may be cleaned but if it is not done properly, what is done about it, and (b) as far as the concessionaires are concerned is there anybody who looks and sees whether he is carrying out the terms of his contract because it seems to me that in this case, as indeed in a lot of other cases, it is the lack of supervision, there seems to be no supervision at all in any of these areas, is that a fact?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, that is not a fact. The person responsible for supervising, who has overall responsibility, is the Airport Manager who is the Director of Tourism.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Minister to tell the Airport Manager of the great concern there is at the fact that the Airport Terminal building is in a filthy state and if he is responsible he should make sure it does not occur, surely?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I can assure the Hon Member there is no need for the Minister to tell the Airport Manager because the Airport Manager is listening to the comments that have been made.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 241 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what steps have been taken to review the price and competitiveness of Gibraltar, as a tourist resort, having regard to the statement made by the acting Minister for Tourism in the House of Assembly and in public?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, Government is at present considering this matter as far as its own responsibility is concerned. The pricing of a holiday, however, ultimately depends on tour operators, hoteliers and air carriers.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 241 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Yes, but it is obvious from the statement made by the Minister, the situation in Gibraltar with regards to wages and all the rest of it, that it appears from what I have heard from the Minister and others that it is just not possible to compete pricewise with other holiday resorts. Are we leaving the matter in the air or are we doing something to be able to attract tourists perhaps even at a higher price and if so what are we doing about it?

HON J B PEREZ:

First of all, Mr Speaker, on the question of what the Government is doing there is another question following this one and I will answer the Hon Member at that stage. As far as the second point on the question of competitiveness, the House will be pleased to know and I am sure the Hon Member also, that the latest summer brochure in our possession indicates that Gibraltar compares reasonably favourably with other competitive Mediterranean resorts. These are the brochures in our possession for this coming year but I think I must add one thing, Mr Speaker, and that is that the tour operators must use their commercial judgement and of course market forces must dictate the cost of holidays, this is unavoidable.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So in fact we cannot go by what the Minister said here before that the place is uncompetitive pricewise, that has been changed now.

HON J B PEREZ:

I think, Mr Speaker, the Minister said that in a particular context.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

The acting Minister said it here very much in a debate when he stood very firm on that question and subsequently in an article in the Gibraltar Chronicle where he was questioned there and which I think I replied to the letter subsequently. I think there is no doubt at all about the statement of the Minister. What now is in doubt is whether he was correct when he made the statement or whether the situation has changed subsequently because other people have put up their prices.

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I do not think it is correct to say that the Minister was wrong in saying that at the time. The Minister was referring to special package offers which were being made in places like Bahamas and places like Spain. That is what I think the Minister was referring to but as I say the answer to the question is that the latest brochures in our possession show that we compare favourably and this is what we all want, surely.

NO. 242 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what progress has been made to the formation of the Tourist Advisory Board, to which the Government is committed to in the House of Assembly?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, there has been disagreement regarding one clause of the terms of reference of the Advisory Board. Informal discussions with the Hotel Association are at present in progress in an attempt to resolve the matter.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 242 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't it a fact that this clause which may be one clause is very significant in that what the tourist trade is asking for is to be able to have a say and be listened to and that in fact one reason why they are demanding that the situation should remain that way is because the previous Travel Association would have had more responsible commitments to tourism under its constitutional arrangement with the Government than in fact the Minister is prepared to accept in the case of the Advisory Board?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I hope the Hon Member does not misinterpret what I am going to say now but this is a matter which I will be looking into as soon as this House is over and I would not like at this stage to say what the hotels are saying, what the Government is saying because I think it would be untimely. All I can say to the Hon Member is that I will try and resolve this particular disagreement which exists and I hope that the Hon Major Peliza will leave it at that.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am very pleased to hear that, Mr Speaker, from the acting Minister and I do wish him every success in doing that because I understand from the Hotel Association that they have already made three changes to their proposal and nothing has been forthcoming from the Government to meet their request.

NO. 243 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what the prospects are for the tourist trade this winter?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, initial reaction to our advertising response has been encouraging, an increase of 96% over a similar period last year. Indications from Tour Operators Bookings for the coming winter are higher than last year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 243 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am very glad to hear that, Mr Speaker. I hope next time I ask the question, which I probably will at the next meeting, it can be confirmed.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 244 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what measures, if any, it is taking to improve the prospects for the tourist trade in 1982?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, in the first instance we have increased our total advertising and field sales budget by 33% from £150,000 to £200,000, the bulk of the increase having been devoted to direct advertising in the UK national press. Secondly, we have scheduled advertising in the Autumn (September to November) to promote winter 1981 holidays, in late December and January to promote summer 1982 holidays, and between February and April to attract late bookers and consolidate summer and possibly autumn holidays. We are also producing advertisements of sufficient size to achieve greater awareness and which include a coupon to ensure that the response pack reaches as many prospective customers as possible. Thirdly, we have just carried out a large scale trade promotion to include advertising in the local influential press in the Guildford area, which is a potentially lucrative catchment travel area. The promotion includes incentives from Travel Agents' window displays featuring Gibraltar promotional material. We shall continue with a series of trade promotions in the UK and after monitoring the Guildford exercise we intend to organise a further similar promotion on the Manchester areas.

Additional fees will be payable to our Public Relations Consultants to enable them to increase these activities.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 244 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Well, Mr Speaker, I see that the Government is beginning to wake up on this question. Has it done all this with the cooperation and blessing of the tourist trade organisations in Gibraltar, generally?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, since I was not the person who actually formulates this and carries it out I really cannot answer that particular question.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

With respect to Morocco, I do not think he mentioned Morocco, I think possibly what he was referring mostly was the United Kingdom.

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, that is correct but I already informed the Hon Major Peliza, Mr Speaker, that the question of Morocco was being vigorously pursued because we were concerned.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

In concrete terms there is nothing that you can specify what the plans are?

HON J B PEREZ:

I cannot do that, I am afraid.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what is the situation with regard to flights from Gibraltar/Madrid/Gibraltar and Gibraltar/Faro/Gibraltar and is it a fact that a Gibraltar Airline has applied for the licence already in existence to become operative and what is the delay in consent being granted by the authority concerned?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

It is understood that an application has been made by GB Airways to the Spanish Aviation Authorities for a licence to operate Gibraltar/Madrid/Gibraltar and to the Portuguese Authorities for a licence to operate Gibraltar/Lisbon/Gibraltar. No reply has yet been received.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 245 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister aware that apparently these requests have been going on for quite a while, perhaps over a year, certainly months?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, again I hope the Hon Member takes this in the right spirit, I feel that the question is an untimely one and I would ask him not to press the issue at this particular stage.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

All I am saying is, is the Minister aware that this application has been standing for a long time, which I suppose he must, and what has the Government done to try and get him to get it?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, there is very little that Government can do to help a private operator to obtain a licence in a foreign country.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But if this is the licence that Gibraltar has already, surely it is the concern of the Government to make sure that an operator from Gibraltar gets the hearing that he deserves from the Foreign Office if necessary?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Can I give the Hon Member an assurance that everything that is possible is being done in this matter, not only now but for some time and particularly now.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Could the Chief Minister write to me as to what has been done, what have been the replies given? Could the Minister write to me telling me exactly what the position has been in the past, what the Government has done and what reply he has had, if any?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am afraid I am not in a position to promise that because that is not directly my area but I will see that the Hon Member gets as much information on the matter as possible.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, it might not be directly in his area in that he is not obviously responsible for foreign affairs but, surely, Mr Speaker, he has every right to speak for Gibraltar in that respect and, hopefully, he must be in the position to get a reply from the Governor, if anything, as to what the state of play is and I would expect the Chief Minister in giving me the information to give me as much details as possible of what has happened.

NO. 246 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how long have the Gents toilets at the Air Terminal been out of order and when is it proposed to have them in working order?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, it is only the urinals of one of the toilets at the Air Terminal that have been out of order since the end of last month. New outlet plumbing has been installed and this entailed major repairs. The floor of the toilets and the outer pavements had to be dug up to the sewer mains. The repairs were completed on 22 October, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 246 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I can assure the Hon Minister that although I am not a frequent user of the Air Terminal, I can assure him that these urinals have been out of order at the very least since the beginning of September. The reason I know this is because at that time I went to collect my son so at least they have been out of order for the whole of September and three quarters of the month of October. However, I am glad to hear that the matter is now in hand.

NO. 247 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state what is the present position as regards improving the facilities at the North Mole for receiving Cruise Liners and at Waterport for the ferry services?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

(In the absence of the Hon the Acting Minister for
Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, as stated in the reply to question No 170 on 17 July, 1980, the Government has no immediate plans for improving facilities at the North Mole.

As was pointed out by the Financial and Development Secretary in answer to question No 334 of the 17 December, 1980, passenger flows have been improved at Waterport Wharf and the system is working reasonably well.

Arising from the recommendations contained in the Port Study Report the Government has agreed that a modest cruise passenger terminal should be provided as an extension to the new Port Office to be sited at the north west corner of the North Mole. Progress on this project may however be dependent on the resiting of facilities in this area, which are presently occupied by:

- (a) MOD Degaussing Station;
- (b) Mobil Oil;
- (c) PWD Water Checker's Office and others.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 247 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

What does he mean, is there going to be any improvement or not?

HON J B PEREZ:

The answer, Mr Speaker, was that Government has no immediate plans for improving facilities at the North Mole.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, then why commission a Port Development Study if we are not going to implement their recommendations? Mr Speaker, on the ferry services. Do I understand that the Government is not going to do anything further than is already in existence there or is there also a plan for doing something with the ferry services which has not yet been implemented?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, perhaps I could answer that one. There is a plan in the Port Study for improving facilities for the ferry services as part of a complete renovation of the whole area.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there any idea as to when this might come about? Is there any indication as to whether any of it may be anticipated and commenced earlier than the total redevelopment?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir. As soon as we can get some money.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 248 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state the position with regard to the Buena Vista Cottage proposed development and the Woodford Cottage Scheme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the position as regards Buena Vista Cottage is that fresh tenders were invited on 12 October, 1981, for the development of the site. This followed the lack of response to the previous invitation. Government has now relaxed the previous constraints on residential development to the extent that proposals will be considered if these are based on the optimum capacity of the plot subject to the provision of parking facilities within the site on a one-to-one ratio.

With regard to Woodford Cottage the stage has been reached, following a series of meetings held by the applicants to clarify certain aspects of the scheme, where the appointment of an architect has been pursued and an initial contribution has been made to cover preliminary expenses in connection with the pre-planning stages of the scheme. Steps have also been taken to incorporate the Association under the Companies Ordinance.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 248 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, with regard to the Buena Vista Cottage, were there in fact no tenderers in the original tender?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The first offer for the Buena Vista Scheme, there were a number of tenderers and the winning tenderer unfortunately fell through because apparently he did not have the finances to carry out the scheme. The second offer for tender was not applied for by anybody.

HON P J ISOLA:

As far as the retendering of this scheme is concerned, am I right in interpreting the answer that the Government has allowed greater density in that area than originally envisaged and, if so, why, having regard to previous Government statements on density in that area?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the previous tenders specified a minimum of twelve dwelling houses. Under the new tender no minimum is specified, the maximum number of dwellings which can now take the form of houses or flats will be dictated by the number of parking spaces which can be provided within the property. This may mean that the density may be increased, as long as the parking needs can be fulfilled.

HON P J ISOLA:

I appreciate that, Mr Speaker. I had understood and perhaps I am wrong, am I right in having understood previously that Government was determined to control density in that part of Gibraltar and if it is relaxing the rules as far as density is concerned as regards the Buena Vista Cottage Scheme, can it not do the same with regard to the Woodford Cottage Scheme and have a much bigger scheme that would alleviate the housing needs of the population of Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the position is not exactly the same insofar as the Woodford Cottage Scheme has progressed to a stage that it is already getting into full swing whereas the Buena Vista Scheme has not even got off the ground. The actual density may have been allowed to be increased slightly in the Buena Vista Scheme but of course subject to the parking. I think, if one looks into it very carefully, one will find that to be able to give the parking on a one-to-one basis will not increase the density very much over the normal density that had been stated for that type of area.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I have got another question in fact which is closely related but if I could just on the Buena Vista Cottage Scheme. The situation is that when the land was put out to tender for a second time there were no tenderers, that is, none of the people who tendered and were unsuccessful the first time tendered the second time, is that the situation?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That is correct, Sir, yes.

HON J BOSSANO:

And in fact is it that the conditions on which the land was put to tender the second time precluded people resubmitting the original scheme or not?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, they could have submitted the original schemes just as they had done before. Simply it was that apparently for some reason or other they just did not have the interest.

MR SPEAKER: /

Next question.

NO. 249 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether the total number of participants in the Woodford Cottage Scheme is now known and when work will be starting?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Fourteen persons have definitely committed themselves to the Woodford Cottage Scheme with three others still to decide whether to do so or not.

Work will commence when working drawings and designs have been submitted to and approved by the Development and Planning Commission. The Association are for this purpose pursuing the appointment of an architect and other professional advisers who will be responsible for preparing tender documents to go out to contract and for subsequent supervision.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 249 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Government dealing collectively with the participants in terms of dealing with the Association or individually?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Collectively, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

And seeing that the development actually progresses once work is started will the Association be held collectively responsible for it or could one have a situation where somebody starts off with his own particular plot of land and then he does not have enough money to put on a second floor and that sort of thing?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, it will be collectively all the way through.

HON W T SCOTT:

Has Government therefore given up the idea of developing one, two or perhaps more of these plots themselves contained within the phase 1 and phase 2?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, Government has not given up the idea but if the total number who do decide to take part in the scheme is seventeen then Government will not need to take anything at all. If only sixteen or fifteen come forward then Government will most likely take up the other one or two.

26.10.81

NO. 250 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Is Government satisfied with the staffing situation at the Cemetery?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The staff of the Cemetery has been under strength for some time following the resignation of one of the grave diggers and subsequently the dismissal of the two labourers who were exclusively engaged on weeding and cleaning. To that extent the position has not been satisfactory.

One labourer has already been engaged and a suitable candidate for the second vacancy is being sought. The replacement of the seventh grave digger is also being arranged following the resolution of the grave diggers terms of employment and consequent up-banding.

In addition I will be seeking financial approval next year to cover the cost of engaging two additional labourers to strengthen the labour force at the Cemetery and to cover the upkeep of other Cemeteries such as Witham's and Trafalgar.

NO. 251 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

When did the Cemetery Committee last meet?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

I assume that the question is in fact intended to refer to the Board of Visitors to the Cemetery, there is no such body as the Cemetery Committee.

The Board last met on 23 July, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 251 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, could I ask the Minister what were its latest recommendations to Government?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am afraid, Sir, I would need notice of that but I am willing to send a letter to the Hon Member and let him know. I cannot remember them all off hand. One of them was, of course, that we should try and improve the cleaning of the Cemetery including, in particular, Witham's Cemetery.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, could I ask a supplementary on that. Does Government intend implementing that particular recommendation and any other recommendation that the Minister might not remember?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the previous question which I answered said that I would be seeking financial approval next year for two extra men. This will, of course, put into effect the need that that recommendation brings up.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I also understand that the Board of the Cemetery recommended, and perhaps the Minister could confirm this, that a temple, an all-denominational temple be built at the Cemetery?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, I cannot recollect that that has been put up to me by the Board of Visitors to the Cemetery.

NO. 252 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government explain the reason for demolishing two of the properties on or near Arengo's Palace site?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, if the Hon Member is referring to Nos 3 and 4 Arengo's Palace Lane, these two properties were demolished in December 1980 having been reported to be in a dangerous condition due to serious cracks which had developed in the retaining wall at Castle Road.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 252 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, could I ask the Minister, are the other four or six properties in the same area, are they in a safe and sound condition?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, the dangerous part of the retaining wall which was at the south end was also demolished at the same time, the rest is in satisfactory condition.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, the way I understand it is that some of the floors in these other properties are in a dangerous condition. Would the Minister confirm that, in fact, they are not in a dangerous condition?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The reason that the two properties were demolished was due to outside reasons, not to the actual condition of the buildings themselves. If the floors in the remaining buildings are not in a good condition then that, of course, is another matter and I will look into it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 253 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state why the children's paddling pool at Little Bay could not be used for long periods this summer?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, whenever there is a breakdown of the pump servicing the children's paddling pool at Little Bay, the pool is filled by using the PSA/DOE brackish water service system which supplies this area.

PSA/DOE have been undertaking extensive works to their supplies to the South area this summer and the water has been cut off on a number of occasions.

Unfortunately, some of the breakdowns of our pump this year have coincided with these cuts, and it has therefore not been possible to fill the pool.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 253 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say why it takes so long to have the pumps repaired, I would have thought that would have been a simple operation?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the pump is getting old and we are going to put in for a replacement next year.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Can we expect, therefore, to have a replacement before summer and for this paddling pool not to suffer the same fate as it did last time otherwise I suggest that the pool is scrapped?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

A replacement will be here before summer, Sir.

NO. 254 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what is the position with regard to the embellishment of certain areas of Gibraltar for which Government engaged consultants from the UK?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, Government engaged consultants last April for an urban design pilot scheme centred around the Old Command Education Centre.

The brief called for proposals in respect of the building site in question in the context of recommendations for the general environmental and visual improvement of the street scenes in the immediate and surrounding areas of the site details of which have been published by Government.

The consultants have visited Gibraltar on three occasions and during one of these visits a household survey as well as a shop owners' survey were carried out in order to identify the problems of the area and to encourage residents of the area to put forward their ideas for improvements. During their last visit in September the consultants presented reports to the Development and Planning Commission on their findings as well as outline alternative proposals in respect of the future of the Old Command Education site.

The next stage, envisaged for November, will be the presentation by the consultants to the Commission of a more detailed scheme with alternative variations to the scheme.

This will be the subject of a public participation exercise early in the new year.

Following this it is intended to invite tenders for the development on the strict guidelines set by the Development and Planning Commission after consultation with the consultants and utilising the feedback obtained from the public participation exercise. The exercise will include proposals for the improvement of the street scenes in the surrounding areas as well as possible suggestions for further pedestrianisation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 254 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, firstly, can the Minister possibly let me have a copy of that report to start with and, secondly, is the Minister looking into other areas besides the Cornwall's Parade area bearing in mind that the product from the point of tourism is absolutely essential?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If the Hon Member is in Gibraltar after the meeting of the House and he cares to come and visit me I can show him a copy but I am afraid he cannot take it away with him as it is the only copy I have got. Other areas have been looked at, in fact, he will see when he does visit me that they have looked at the whole area, I should say, from Castle Street up to Library Ramp.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

By when does the Minister expect to show some results for all these consultations and all this planning that is going on?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, as I have said we hope to have the public participation exercise in the early part of the new year which will be an exhibition probably at John Mackintosh Hall so the public can see what is proposed, make their comments and I would hope that some results will come following tender applications very shortly after that.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Cannot the Minister accelerate the situation so that at least by next summer Gibraltar has something attractive to show since it is obvious from the report that quite a number of people come to Gibraltar on recommendation of previous visitors and therefore it is absolutely essential for the tourist trade that our product should be improved and improved with a sense of urgency?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think Government is treating it with a sense of urgency, Sir, but it is very essential that with the Old Command Education Centre which is a vital area in Gibraltar we must get the thing right. Any haste or any hasty decision which afterwards would be regretted is something we would not like to see and though I agree with the Hon Member that one would like to have something ready by this summer I do not think with such a comprehensive scheme as is envisaged, it will be available by the coming summer. I should imagine that the whole scheme would take some eighteen months to develop.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But whilst that obviously is a major scheme as I can see, I am sure that the Minister if he put his mind to it, there must be quite a number of small things that can be done that does not require all that time in other areas of Gibraltar which would do a lot to improve the product of Gibraltar. Can he apply his attention to those small schemes which I think would do a lot to embellish Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If the Hon Member suggests to me some ideas of the small schemes that he has got in mind, well, we will look at them.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I will and perhaps at the adjournment I might be able to produce them.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 255 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state who is responsible for the up-keep and cleanliness of the Piazza at the centre of our city?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the Public Works Department is responsible for the up-keep and cleanliness of the Piazza, except for the cleaning of the section used by the cafeteria for which the lessees are responsible.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 255 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Bearing in mind that the Public Works office is almost overlooking the Piazza, what excuse can the Minister have for allowing the Piazza to be in the state it is particularly when most tourists congregate in this area? What explanation can the Minister give me?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the Piazza is, as far as the side that the Public Works looks after, is swept daily and it is flushed at least once a week, during the summer it has been flushed twice a week and scrubbed down with some detergent. I am afraid the side used by the lessees has not been as well kept as we would like to see and we are chasing them up about it.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister really saying that he is personally satisfied with the state of the Piazza simply because it is washed once a week and it is swept perhaps once a day or whatever it is? Isn't he really upset by the neglect that is shown all round the Piazza, it is not just in the cleanliness but the upkeep of the place, where are the flowers, where are the shrubs? What is the state of the toilets? Can the Minister say if he is personally satisfied with all this?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the plants and shrubs are quite well looked after, Sir. I would invite the Hon Member to have a look at the Piazza at 9.30 in the morning just after it has been swept, washed and flushed and I think he will find it is in a very good condition. The thing is it is so heavily used that it gets dirty very quickly again.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

If the Minister looks on the other side of the Piazza which I think is all part of the same thing he will see two litter bins which have been left there apparently by the department who was supposed to take them away and I understand they have been lying there for seven days, could the Minister look at that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir.

NO. 256 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state the latest figures it has available for the cost per housing unit, in the different categories, in a) the Modernisation Scheme, and b) new Housing Projects?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, of course, this is not part of the answer but I would mention they do vary to some extent between one site and another. However, I would state, Sir, that:

St Joseph's	£42,000 per unit (New)	£700 per square metre
Castle Ramp	£26,000 per unit (Modernised)	£580 per square metre

The above figures will, of course, vary depending upon location of site and site conditions.

The costs per square metre are projected to the completion date and settlement of final accounts on present ongoing projects.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 256 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

I think it was last year, Mr Speaker, that we were told that a new house might cost something of the region between £35,000 and £40,000 and a modernised one, the figure we were given then was £15,000. We find now there is no relation in the proportionate percentage rise between the one and the other and in fact the cost of a modernised unit is now approaching the cost of a new one.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I do not fully understand what the question is from the Hon Member but I would comment that the Castle Ramp modernisation is a rather difficult site, it is an area in which the contractor cannot get his materials and vehicles to very easily and this is one of the reasons why the cost has gone up. It will, of course, vary very tremendously between one area and another if you are doing modernisation on the site conditions and also on the conditions of the buildings being modernised.

HON W T SCOTT:

Yes, but I would have thought, Mr Speaker, for example, if one is going to talk about a virtually inaccessible area like Castle Ramp, there was another one in fact where perhaps figures have been available to the Minister and that is Lime Kiln Steps. Do we have any figures for that project?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I cannot remember the figures for Lime Kiln Steps offhand but I think if anything, they will be found to be as high or even higher than Castle Ramp because the conditions there are even worse, if anything, than Castle Ramp. I think in Tank Ramp the modernisation has cost somewhere between the £15,000 and £20,000 per unit.

HON W T SCOTT:

What I am really leading to, Mr Speaker, is a situation where a lot of money is being expended in the modernisation programme and it is virtually creating no new homes, it is just refurbishing old ones.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The situation, of course, is if one does not modernise these houses they would just collapse and fall into absolute dereliction, then Government must either demolish them and build new housing or perhaps put them out to the private sector for development.

HON W T SCOTT:

Which is exactly our point from the beginning, Mr Speaker, in demolishing old properties and within the area encompassed by those old properties building higher buildings with more flats available.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 257 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government give the figures and costs for water production from available sources for the months of June, July, August and September, 1981, and state what the stocks were at 30th September, 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the figures and cost for water production from available sources for the months of June, July, August and September, 1981, are as follows:-

<u>Source</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>
	Amount m ³ (mg)	Amount m ³ (mg)	Amount m ³ (mg)	Amount m ³ (mg)
Rainfall	-	136 (0.03)	-	174 (0.04)
Wells	9238 (2.03)	9500 (2.09)	9221 (2.03)	8586 (1.89)
N F Distiller	3990 (0.88)	15486 (3.41)	14396 (3.17)	17501 (3.85)
V T E Distiller	-	22313 (4.90)	18111 (3.98)	10197 (2.24)
Importa- tion	28288 (6.22)	23314 (5.10)	14564 (3.20)	20540 (4.52)

Costs are as given in answer to question 176 of 1981.

Stocks on 30 September 1981 were 42667m³ (9.39mg). This included 5926m³ (1.30mg) owed to DOE.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 257 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, the production costs in each of the different categories seem to have gone up quite substantially, in fact, can we have an explanation for this?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

May I ask, gone up from when, Sir?

HON W T SCOTT:

From March 1981 which was the last time I asked the question prior to July of this year. In March 1981, for example, we were given the cost of rainfall at 0.37, the wells 0.51, NF Distiller 2.53, VTE Distiller 2.29 and imported 2.16 whilst in July of this year they have gone up, for example, rainfall from 0.37 to 1.12 and so on and so forth.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, I think there is a difference between the two figures basically because the figures given in answer to question No 176 of 1981 are the absolute costs which take in all considerations including the capital outlay, interest outlay on the different methods of production and also all the what might be called hidden charges which must really be put against the absolute cost of the production. At the same time, of course, there has been an increase in wages and to some extent oil fuel fairly considerably. I think the answer given on question 176 of 1981 are the most realistic figures we can produce.

26.10.81

NO. 258 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government give the costs to date of the repairs to the Tower Blocks?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, if the Hon Member is referring to the external repair works being carried out on part of the three upper storeys of Constitution House, the contractor has not as yet presented the first bill for payment. However, the total cost of this first phase of work is estimated at £45,000.

NO. 259 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government inform this House as to the latest situation on the Sand Project on the East side?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the consultants to the scheme have stated that they have concluded that a full length conveyor system is the most satisfactory means of obtaining consistent sand production from the top of the catchment. It would seem therefore that the consultants have now discarded the concept of a gravity chute which was an integral part of their scheme. The matter has been referred to the Attorney-General. It is Government's contention that all expenses incurred in attempts to make the sand winning project a viable scheme as well as losses and indirect extra expenditure resulting from the problems presented by the chute must be the responsibility of the consultants.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 259 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

I am grateful to the Hon Member for that answer, Mr Speaker, but can the Government assure this House that Government will not come to this House for any further sums of money to help with that project until such time as that project starts recouping sand in the proportion and the amounts originally envisaged and advised by the consultants?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

No, it won't come or no what?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

You said can Government give the assurance and the answer is no, Sir, it will not give that assurance.

HON W T SCOTT:

Does that mean that we can expect Government to come to this House for more money?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That is within the bounds of possibility.

HON W T SCOTT:

Taking into consideration that it was only a few short months ago, in fact, that this House was asked to vote in an extra, I think it was £70,000 odd, raising the value of the project I think to just over £½m?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are making no guarantees, Sir, what we are going to do in the future, the whole situation has been carefully looked at, if it can be made viable by a conveyor built system then, of course, that must be looked at very carefully.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can we have an assurance from the Minister we will not get into the catastrophic position we got into with the Varyl Begg settlement when we were informed by the Minister that the Government did not intend to pay for the roofs and it was a question for the architects, the consultants or the builders and eventually we ended up with a bill of over £1m? Can Government give us an assurance that this will not be repeated with regard to the sand scheme and that liability will go squarely upon those whose responsibility it was to advise the Government properly?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The terms under which the Attorney-General has been asked to consider making a legal action against the consultants are very wide indeed and brings in every possibility that we can think of for recouping all losses.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister state if the consultants in question were insured against such losses, will they have the means to pay?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I understand the consultants are a very big firm, I should hope that they have covered themselves for insurance, I do not know whether they have or not.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But that was not a condition of the contract?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not that I know of.

HON P J ISOLA:

Are the consultants Robertson Research (1975) Limited which I notice is a Gibraltar Company, or are we in fact dealing with the English Company which presumably is the Company with the resources and the funds?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are dealing with the UK Company.

NO. 260 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government give details of the time spent and the costs incurred from 1st July, 1981, to 30th September, 1981, in building the pavement along Rosia Road?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the works on this section of Rosia Road, which includes parking bays in addition to the paved area, were started on 1st July, 1981.

The recorded expenditure on this project between 1st July and 30th September, 1981, was £8,163 and the breakdown is as follows:

(a) LABOUR - £5,751.11

Week ending	3.7.81	- 5 men
	10.7.81	- 5 men
	17.7.81	- 4 men
	24.7.81	- 6 men
	31.7.81	- 9 men
	7.8.81	- NIL (Ramadan)
	14.8.81	- 5 men
	21.8.81	- 9 men
	28.8.81	- 8 men
	4.9.81	- 5 men
	11.9.81	- 6 men
	18.9.81	9 men
	25.9.81	7 men
	30.9.81	7 men

(b) MATERIALS - £2,382.70

Sand	£508.50
Aggregate	£630.00
Cement	£ 88.00
Bitumen	£ 42.00
Kerbs	£220.00
Channels	£ 50.00
Paving Slabs	£840.00
Bricks	£ 4.20
	<u>£2,382.70</u>

It should be noted that the works were interrupted by Ramadan and the Royal Visit when labour was not available.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 260 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

I am glad to see in fact that since more money has been expended there that there has been noticeable improvement in the progress of the laying of that pavement. Might I ask Government, if it has not already done so, to consider putting some access from the lower level of Rosia Road for the residents of Humphreys, some steps, so that those parking areas can be better utilised?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We have not considered it but I am willing to do so, Sir.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is this a project that could be suitable for piece-work and is it being done that way or which way is it being done?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is not very suitable, Sir, because we allocate labour as and when we are able to do so with other jobs that we are doing, that is why you have noticed sometimes they have had 4 men, sometimes they have had 9 men. I think to put it on piece-work would only work to the detriment of other jobs which may have higher priorities.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But bearing in mind that this is taking ages to be completed, I usually go round that place and I see this has been going on for months and months. Would it not have been, I think, a much more effective way of completing the task, perhaps at a much lower figure, to have done it piece-work once and for all?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, if we had done it by piece-work it would not have been a lower figure it would have been a higher figure.

HON A J HAYNES:

What was the estimated price for the work?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I do not think there was any specific estimate, I think it was one of the jobs that we said we would do as and when we can and its costing will be as it works out.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Then how can the Minister say that piece-work would have been more costly?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Because we have found whenever we do piece-work it is more costly.

NO. 261 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, further to Question 130 of 1981 can Government say whether it has now located the fault giving rise to the oil leakage from King's Bastion to the Harbour and can Government confirm that they have taken corrective measures to ensure that it does not happen again?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, a claim has been made against the Government by a Solicitor instructed by the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club and the members thereof in respect of loss and damage alleged to have been sustained by the Club and the members by reason of an alleged leakage of oil from a pipe owned and maintained by the Government.

As the Government has denied all liability in respect of the alleged loss and damage, it would be inappropriate for me at this point in time to go further than the answer provided by my Honourable Friend the Minister for Municipal Services on the 7th July, 1981, in answering Question No 130 of 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 261 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the answer to question 130 seems to admit liability.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, with great respect to my Hon and Learned Friend I would dispute that.

HON P J ISOLA:

Where does the oil come from, does the Government know?

MR SPEAKER:

The matter is sub judice.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there nothing they can tell us about the matter? Will it not happen again?

MR SPEAKER:

Order. Next question.

NO. 262 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many prosecutions for offences concerning the depositing of litter have there been since the last industrial action involving the collection of refuse?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, there have been no prosecutions for offences concerning the depositing of litter since the Refuse Collectors industrial action was terminated last May.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 262 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can one take it therefore that there has been no depositing of litter or that there have been no persons found depositing litter?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the Environmental Health Department reported eleven cases but these were vetted by the Legal Department who advised against prosecution because of the recent appeal case on this issue. The Police have had a similar experience.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does that mean then that the depositing of litter can continue in Gibraltar with impunity?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think if the Hon Member has read his Order Paper he will see that there is legislation coming up in the course of this meeting.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, may I assist by clarifying a point. The decisions which have been taken on the eleven cases mentioned were taken in consideration of the facts prevailing at the present time but, as my Hon Friend has said, there are measures being brought forward to ensure that future prosecutions may be brought.

NO. 263 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government give the number of housing units due for completion within the next twelve months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

		<u>Completion Date</u>
St Joseph's	50 units	September 1982
St Jago's	26 units	March 1982
Flat Bastion Road	15 units	January 1982
Lime Kiln Steps Phase 1	7 units)	February 1982
Lime Kiln Steps Phase 1A	13 units)	
<u>Just over the twelve months</u>		
Castle Ramp/Road to the Lines	26 units	November/December 1982

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 263 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Are there any projects due for completion shortly after that date or is there going to be a gap?

HON M. K FEATHERSTONE:

The Catalan Bay scheme which has just been out to tender I should imagine will take about fifteen to eighteen months so that will come hard after that.

HON P J ISOLA:

But that is not for general allocation is it, that is for Catalan Bay? Isn't there a statute of independence there?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

They are people on the housing list.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is there anything after Catalan Bay? The names that have been cited are quite familiar, we have not heard reference to any others in the past, is that the extent of the Government's housing project?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That is the extent at the moment, we are currently hoping that the next development programme will be started fairly soon.

HON A J HAYNES:

We live from day to day, Mr Speaker.

NO. 264 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government make a statement with regard to its proposals for the canteen and other facilities for stevedores in the Port?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Mr Speaker, I would refer the Hon Member to Government's press release of the 8th October in which it was stated that three alternative proposals had been put to the employers, namely:

- (i) The incorporation of offices and welfare facilities within the unstuffing shed which is to be built at the new container area;
- (ii) The construction of a building at the cross-berth between nos 4 and 5 jetties to provide for the required facilities;
- (iii) The provision by the employers of suitable portakabins at sites to be provided.

The Port employers have opted for the second alternative and they will be submitting details of the proposed building for planning and other approval in order to ensure that the building complies with the building rules and other statutory requirements.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 264 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there any date fixed for the completion or the commencement of these works?

HON A J CANEPA:

There is no date, Mr Speaker.

HON W T SCOTT:

Have the recent developments within the Port area over the last few days involving stevedoring and cargo handling company and another company changed these proposals in any way?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, because the Stevedoring Company were not one of the three employers involved in these discussions, they already had separate welfare and canteen facilities of their own.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if they have welfare facilities of their own in the area and they are not going to continue in operation, isn't that something that needs to be looked at?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think the whole position is somewhat fluid at the moment, Mr Speaker, we will have to wait and see how events develop.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 265 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether the Transit Shed in the Port poses any health hazard?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, no, there is no health hazard in the Transit Shed in the Port.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 265 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Is Government aware that the fumes from the various machines in the Transit Shed have no escape other than the main entrance and do cause some discomfort to the people working there?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am advised, Mr Speaker, that provided the doors at either end of the Transit Shed are open the ventilation is adequate but in order to cover the situation where it might be necessary to close one of the doors at the end, work is in hand in connection with the work which is currently being done in the Transit Shed, repairs in the Transit Shed, work is in hand to make improvements in the ventilation.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the Minister saying the present position is that it is satisfactory or is it that he expects that it will not be a health hazard once the works have been completed?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, it is not a health hazard at present, it does not constitute a health hazard but since repair work has to be done to the Transit Shed the opportunity is being taken to provide ventilation other than by means of the doors at either end. The other point that I could add, which I think is useful, is that the Chief Environmental Health Officer has advised the Stevedoring Companies that progressively, as the forklift trucks which emit these fumes have to be replaced, they might consider replacing them by electrically operated ones.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, with respect to the Hon Minister, it is not only the forklift trucks that have access to the Shed, it is in fact the lorries both from the Transport Contractors and private businesses that go into this unstuffing shed and as like as not in fact most

of the engines remain on throughout the course of the time that they are in the Transit Shed if only because perhaps they cannot be restarted again so all those fumes are contained within that Shed.

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to debate now whether in the opinion of the House it creates a health hazard. It has been asked and the Government has said no it does not create a health hazard.

HON W T SCOTT:

I am voicing, Mr Speaker, the opinion of a considerable number of people that work within that Shed, that was the object of our question.

MR SPEAKER:

Fair enough, I accept the reason but it is question time and perhaps it might be discussed at another time but I do not think we can go any further now.

NO. 266 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government explain why, knowing the delays that always accompany the submission of a development programme, it did not submit its five year development programme from April, 1981 to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office before February of this year?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the question seems to imply that there was delay on the part of the Gibraltar Government in submitting its proposals on the 1981/86 Development Programme to Her Majesty's Government. I would like to refer the Hon Member to the statement which I made to this House during the course of this year's Budget debate regarding the detailed, lengthy pre-planning of the programme when I stated, inter alia, "although we have been very closely concerned with progress on the current programme, the Government has been making early preparations for the next Development Programme. With this aim in mind, a Forward Planning Committee was set up towards the end of 1979. This Committee was charged with the responsibility of ensuring that all potential projects had been worked out in detail and costed. By November 1980, the Government had already completed its plans for the next programme..." The Aid Submission and the Development Programme were subsequently cleared in Council of Ministers and Gibraltar Council by mid-December 1980. The despatch to the Secretary of State, was drafted, discussed and finalised during January 1981. The submission was formally forwarded on the 9th February 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 266 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Was the reason for the late submission then, Mr Speaker, the fact that the current Development Programme was behind and could not possibly be completed before 31st March, 1981, as had been envisaged by the Government?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, there has been no late submission. If the British Government had been minded to do so, having had our submission by mid-February, we could easily have held talks a month or six weeks later. The British Government does not appear, the Ministry of Overseas Development, even now they are not being categorical about when they will discuss the next Development Programme so whether we had submitted the thing in February, in January or December would have made no difference whatsoever and there is no connection between the date of submission and the 1978/81 programme.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister not agree that the earlier it had been submitted the sooner could the Government begin to put pressure for aid discussions? Is it not a fact that aid submissions do not follow within a month of the submission of a programme, inevitably every time there is a delay and leaving it to February, approximately a month before the current programme was meant to terminate, was surely leaving it too late?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker. In 1978 talks were held on the 1978/81 Development Programme in May, 1978, that was when Miss Judith Hart came out to Gibraltar. What would have happened, Mr Speaker, if we had sent in the submission earlier is that we would be even more frustrated than what we are now. Representations have been made by myself and by the Chief Minister in Gibraltar Council and they have been made to ODA/FCO officials throughout the year, to Mr Culver of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, to Mr Peskett of the ODA who was here in December 1980 and then in July this year, to Mr Riley, Building Adviser of the ODA, and more recently to Mr Cox of the ODA and the Chief Minister sent a very strongly worded despatch in August this year following all that up at the time of the Defence Review in order to draw attention of the need of the British Government to divorce the two and not allow one matter to be overtaken by the other. The Gibraltar Government, Mr Speaker, has done its work, we are well ahead on our preparation work even now to go out to tender with a number of housing projects and I have no doubt that it is not the failure of the Gibraltar Government at all, it is not the fact that we submitted the aid submission in February that has got anything to do with it, if it were, why are we now in October and we still do not know when talks are going to be held?

HON P J ISOLA:

Could the reason for the British Government dragging its feet a bit on the matter, could one of the reasons be the fact that the 1978/81 programme has not yet been completed?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, when Mr Peskett was here in December 1980 he was speaking in terms of a moratorium of one year and I remember asking him whether the British Government was waiting for the frontier to open in order that they could then wriggle out of the commitment to give us aid.

HON P J ISOLA:

But is it not a fact, however, that at the moment we have not finished the 1978/81 programme?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think it has got nothing to do with it, Mr Speaker. Programmes dovetail one into the other, the Hon Member knows that perfectly well. I know he is just playing at politics, Mr Speaker, we must not blame the British Government we must blame the Gibraltar Government. Well, he is mistaken. The Gibraltar Government is not to blame and the British Government is to blame and he would be doing something good for the benefit of Gibraltar if he were to add his voice to ours.

HON P J ISOLA:

I do wish the Minister would not get upset.

HON A J CANEPA:

I do get upset because it is shameful to play at politics in this manner.

HON P J ISOLA:

I do wish the Minister would think that there are other people in this House who think of Gibraltar, it is not an exclusive province of the Government or of the Minister for Economic Development and if he cannot hold himself back when answering questions, Mr Speaker, I suggest he takes a bit of a hold of himself.

HON A J CANEPA:

What I suggest to the Hon Member is that he apportions blame where the blame lies.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. Next question.

NO. 267 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government make a statement, and I tremble to ask this, as to the results of its most recent discussions with representatives of the Overseas Development Aid with regard to the 1981/86 Development Programme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, no formal discussions have been held between the Gibraltar Government and the Overseas Development Administration with regard to the 1981/86 Development Programme. Apart from other representations, the Gibraltar Government took the opportunity of the recent familiarisation visit of Mr W T Cox, whose department at the ODA has direct responsibility for Gibraltar, to reiterate the concern at the delay in holding talks on aid for the next Development Programme.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 267 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

I think I saw in the press recently that there was to be a forthcoming visit to London to discuss the question of Development Aid, was that not a result of the visit of Mr Cox? Are there any fixed plans for a November visit, I got the impression that it had all been fixed up for November from a recent newspaper report in Gibraltar?

HON A J CANEPA:

We do not have any firm date, Mr Speaker, I think it is well-known that the British Government committed itself at the time of the Defence White Paper to discuss the implications of that with the Gibraltar Government and that on present form it is hoped that a delegation from the Gibraltar Government will be going to the United Kingdom perhaps at the end of next month for this purpose and also we are pressing to discuss quite independently of any financial aid which Gibraltar may get arising from the Defence Review, we are pressing for talks on the Development Aid Programme at the same time and also discussions on the Lands Memoranda.

HON P J ISOLA:

So is the position, Sir, that no date has been fixed for talks on the Development Programme 1981/86 but it is hoped to have a talk with regard to the United Kingdom Defence White Paper at the end of November, is that the factual position?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is hoped, Mr Speaker, to have talks on three matters, on the Defence Review, on Development Aid and on the Lands Memoranda.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister tell us what he has got lined up for housing in these talks?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, that would be the subject of a separate question and I have already given information in this House precisely on that matter. If he will look back over either previous questions or during the Budget debate, I have given considerable information on that matter.

26.10.81

NO. 268 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state when it expects to complete the development programme 1st April 1978 to 31st March 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, in terms of the projects planned for the 1978/81 Development Programme, physical completion of the five remaining projects under the programme will be achieved by the summer of 1982, although some projects are of an 'on-going' nature (eg deep drilling, mains renewals, etc).

NO. 269 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether it has now had a reply to the 1981/86 Development Programme aid submissions first submitted in February this year?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the Gibraltar Government is still awaiting a reply from Her Majesty's Government regarding the timing of discussions on the 1981/86 Development Programme. It is expected, however, that these discussions will take place before the end of the year, possibly next month. As I pointed out in answer to questions 199 and 200 of 1981, the Gibraltar Government is concerned about the continuing delay and has made further representations to this effect through the appropriate channels.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 269 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member, in making the representations to Her Majesty's Government, point out that they are systematically helping to destroy the economy of Gibraltar by their delaying tactics in a way that they are supposed to be working contrary to in sustaining the economy of Gibraltar against the effect of the Spanish campaign?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, the representations which the Hon the Chief Minister made in August this year I think went even beyond that.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 270 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, what specific plans does Government have on Development after March 1982 with regard to the construction industry bearing in mind the grave consequences for Gibraltar in general and the construction industry in particular?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the Government's Development Aid submission for 1981/86 is designed to inject capital expenditure into the building industry of at least equal magnitude to previous building and civil engineering works programme. No details can, however, be given at this stage of the composition of the Programme.

I will also be giving particulars of the Government's proposals to encourage private sector participation in the development of residential accommodation by the provision of a number of derelict Government properties suitable for modernisation or redevelopment. This initial programme is intended to be followed by other projects which will provide phased opportunities to strengthen the economy and use the resources of the building industry in the process.

I should also remind the House that a number of major schemes, notably Buena Vista and Woodford Cottage, and the Casemates multi-storey car park, are already in the pipeline. I should also inform the House that it is proposed to invite applications for a major reclamation and development scheme on the East Coast.

26.10.81

NO. 271 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government state if there is any element of Modernisation in the proposed Development Programme 1981/86?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Yes, Sir. A substantial element of modernisation has been included in the draft Development Programme 1981/86. These proposals would result in at least 80 modernised units and complement the planned programme of new construction.

NO. 272 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government state what the position is with regard to the proposed multi-storey car park at Casemates and does Government have anything further to report on the statement made on 7th July, 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Tender documents are now being prepared and will be sent to the seven firms whose outline proposals were found acceptable, if suitably amended to meet the basic requirements that the car park should provide accommodation for not less than 400 cars. I have no other information to give at this stage other than what I shall give in my reply to Question No 276.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 272 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, what will be the closing date for the tenders, does one know yet?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, I have not got that information at hand. I think considerable time must be given for a major project of this nature, I do not imagine that it will be less than about three months.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 273 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state how long the PSA stores depot at the entrance of Rosia Road have been unoccupied and what payment has Government made for the reallocation costs of this depot to the MOD?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

The land and stores on the south side of Ragged Staff were taken over by the Government on 26 May, 1981.

Government paid the Minister of Defence the sum of £73,581.25 for the buildings made up as follows:-

(i)	Continuing use value of buildings on site	£80,000.00
(ii)	less PSA/DOE relocation costs	£ 6,418.75
	Net cost	<u>£73,581.25</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 273 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, as regards the time that the place has been unoccupied, does Government know how long it was unoccupied before May, 1981?

HON A J CANEPA:

Four or five months.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, when is Government thinking **that** it will be in use by the Gibraltar Government, I believe they are going to move the Stores there?

HON A J CANEPA:

There is some allocation of funds to be made in order to carry out the physical moving from one Stores into the PSA Stores and as soon as that allocation of funds is made the PWD will get cracking.

26.10.81

NO. 274 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether payment has had to be made to MOD for the shed at No 4 jetty and if so how much?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, no payment has had to be made consequent on the transfer of the Shed on No 4 jetty to the Government.

NO. 275 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government now made any decision regarding the latest proposals for the development of Maida Vale?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Government has made its attitude known to the potential developers as to the nature of the development that would be permitted on the Maida Vale site. This is, that the site can only be used for touristic development.

An early reply is now awaited from the developers following the general restatement of Government's policy with regard to this site before a general re-appraisal is undertaken of the position.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 275 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, didn't the Minister say the last time this matter was raised in the House that they were considering proposals for residential development?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, we had received proposals which entailed building of houses for resale, I think I said.

HON J BOSSANO:

And in fact when the Hon Member is talking about touristic development is he saying that it has to be used for the construction of hotels?

HON A J CANEPA:

Hotels or hotels cum holiday apartments but tourist orientated given the importance of the tourist sector as in the Input/Output Study and also the Port Development Study. I think it is generally accepted that it is tourism which offers the best alternatives for diversification of our economy certainly in an open frontier situation.

HON J BOSSANO:

But the Minister, I take it, agrees that in fact there is a tendency nowadays in the tourist industry to move away from hotels to self-catering apartments and that in fact residential blocks of flats have the advantage that they become available for either tourist use or non-tourist use depending on whether there is a demand for one or the other, would he not agree with that?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, there is this tendency and in fact a tendency which started some years ago and I seem to recall that there was a proposal from the potential developer at the time that they should be permitted to sell, I think it was two floors, two out of four or five floors and the rest would be holiday apartments, that was the proposal which at the time, I think I am speaking of 1977 or 1978, found favour with the Government but the latest proposals would amount purely to residential development for sale and that would not inject any input into the tourist industry and I think if we have waited all these years to try and get a hotel or holiday apartments built on that site I think it would be inopportune at this stage to do a U-turn.

NO. 276 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has a decision now been taken by MOD regarding the reprovisioning of the seven married quarters at Casemates?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the position as stated by MOD's representative at the beginning of September 1981 is that the married quarters will only be transferred upon reprovision as previously understood, as MOD's long term requirements for these quarters are unknown at this stage. There has been no change since then.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 276 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, did the Minister not say the last time that if the MOD would agree to the developer doing the reprovisioning this would accelerate the possibility of getting the development under way?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, I think I said that arising from the question from the Hon Mr Isola, No 192. I think I did state that.

HON J BOSSANO:

My original question is aimed at finding out whether this has been put to the MOD and the MOD have either agreed to this or refused to agree to it.

HON A J CANEPA:

It has been put, Mr Speaker, and the other point that has been put was arising from the question of the Defence Review whether perhaps it was any longer needed and helpful noises were made at one stage but then the answer that came back was no, we still stick to our original condition at this stage. Whether that will change or not may emerge over the next few weeks, something may develop in that connection. On the one hand one hopes that it will because it will allow this project to get under way but if it does it is because something else is happening which one would not like to see happening so it is very difficult. I think arising from the talks that we shall have on the Defence Review we have to come back to the charge immediately after with regard to this project and get the position abundantly clear regarding these seven quarters.

HON J BOSSANO:

But it seems to me there are two different lines of attack, Mr Speaker, and perhaps the Hon Member would confirm that I am correct in my understanding of the situation. One is that in the light of a reduced MOD presence in Gibraltar there may be other property occupied, say, by UK based into which the people residing in Casemates could be moved in which case the need for reprovisioning would not arise. That is not known until we know to what extent there is going to be any movement. The other thing as I understood it was that if the developer was keen to get on with it and keen to take on the reprovisioning himself, then one would expect the MOD to be cooperative in this and I think that surely can be pursued irrespective of what is happening on the Defence.

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, I think that can be but since we have not yet sent tender documents to the seven selected applicants and since when they are sent these documents, as I mentioned, they must be given a reasonable period of time, it may be even more than three months because it is a very complex and a very substantial development, the position by then may be rather more evident and if the position improves with regard to the requirement for reprovisioning then it will just be a welcome bonus as far as they are concerned.

26.10.81

NO. 277 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what further progress has been made in the development of the Buena Vista Cottage site?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, I would refer the Hon Questioner to the answer I gave to Question No 248 where the information has already been given.

NO. 278 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government now state to what use it proposes to put the site of the Old Slaughter House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, it is Government's intention to use the Old Slaughter House site partly as a public car park and also for the building of a new motor vehicle testing centre.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 278 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, has Government now looked at the fact that if they are putting out the East side to a possible large reclamation project, there might be a conflict between any of those uses and that?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, the East side reclamation project would extend from, roughly, where the Caleta Palace is or to be absolutely accurate, a line drawn in an easterly direction at the most easterly promontory below the Caleta Palace to the end of the Sandy Bay to where the lessees have the delineation, that is, the point of demarkation there.

HON J BOSSANO:

The Government in fact is not expecting reclamation in the area where the old refuse destructor and the Slaughter House are?

HON A J CANEPA:

Reclamation which the Public Works Department is carrying on on a piecemeal basis, yes, that will continue.

NO. 279 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what importance is attached to the Foreign Affairs Committee Report, and what action has been taken to overcome the conclusions and proposals that are contrary to the views of all the parties represented in the House of Assembly, and therefore of the overwhelming majority of the people of Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the Foreign Affairs Committee's Report on Gibraltar was published on 28 August. On that same day the Leader of the Opposition and I issued a statement expressing our preliminary reactions to the conclusions and recommendations in the Report which were all that were available to us at that time. Copies of the Report were available in Gibraltar on 30 August and on 9 September, the Leader of the Opposition and I sent a 38-page assessment of the Report to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with the request that the views expressed by us be taken into account in the preparation of the British Government's response to the Report.

It had become apparent, even before the publication of the Foreign Affairs Committee's Report, that there was a need for a clear and simple re-statement of the views and position of the people of Gibraltar. This need had been met, to some extent, in the submissions made by the Leader of the Opposition and myself to the Foreign Affairs Committee itself. Copies of my submission were distributed at the time to some of the leading newspapers in Britain as well as to other appropriate quarters. The Leader of the Opposition and I have recently issued a joint statement of our views. This is not designed as a reply to the Report of the Foreign Affairs Committee as such but it naturally covers the main issues dealt with in that Report.

On the same day, 9 September, the Leader of the Opposition and I wrote a personal letter to the Secretary of State on the question of the Committee's Report. We also wrote on the subject to a number of Members of Parliament who have shown an interest in Gibraltar's affairs over the years.

We cannot say whether or not the Committee's Report will be debated in the House of Commons or when such a debate might take place. Steps are however being taken to prepare a very detailed commentary on the Report which will be sent to Gibraltar's friends in Parliament, as a supplement to the material prepared in anticipation of such a debate taking place.

NO. 280 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government make a comprehensive statement with regard to the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Public Works Department with particular emphasis on the proposals and recommendations contained therein?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the recommendations and proposals contained in the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Public Works Department are being studied. The Government is not yet in a position to make a statement.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 280 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Does the Government have any idea as to when its deliberations will be concluded?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It seems to me that we may well be in a position to make a statement at the next meeting of the House. It was necessary to obtain the detailed views of a number of Government Departments concerned with recommendations. Two of the main recommendations in regard to the Lands and Surveys Office and whether the Public Works Department should be a self-accounting department have been discussed by Council of Ministers who decided to refer them for further detailed investigation and discussion by a small mixed Committee of Ministers and officials and we shall be having a very early meeting on that.

NO. 281 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, has Government now formulated its ideas on the broadcasting of the proceedings of the House of Assembly and can Government state whether the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation is now in a position to broadcast proceedings of the House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, as the Hon the Leader of the Opposition is aware, the question of broadcasting the proceedings of the House of Assembly has been discussed between us on various occasions. It is, of course, a matter for the House.

Mr Speaker, you recently passed on to me a copy of a letter from Mr Isola to you setting out the views of the Opposition on this matter. As I said in my reply to your letter, I intend to discuss the Opposition's proposals with the Hon the Leader of the Opposition at a meeting to be held as soon as this can be arranged.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 281 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, could I have an answer to the second part of the question, that is whether the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation is now in a position to broadcast proceedings of the House?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I beg your pardon, yes. GBC have stated that they are in a position to consider broadcasting the proceedings of the House. GBC now operate on frequency modulation, a second channel is available and the cost will depend on the extent of the broadcast.

NO. 282 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government make public the findings of the Committee of Inquiry into the disruption of the normal teaching programme at Bayside Comprehensive?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, this morning I would have said that the question had been put by the Leader of the Opposition, I thought he had but, anyhow, it was Mr Loddó.

The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the causes which led to the disruption of normal activities at the Bayside Comprehensive School in September, 1981, was submitted to His Excellency the Governor on the 16 October, 1981. The Government will consider the question of publication in due course.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 282 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, will the Government bear in mind the fact that work was disrupted at the school, a number of school days were lost involving expense, that the public in this particular case were very concerned about what occurred and that the public outcry only subsided when a Committee of Inquiry was appointed. Now that this has occurred, does he not agree that the public are entitled to have an explanation and certainly this House that is constantly voting funds for education and for the Public Works Department, is entitled to know the reasons why it became necessary to close the school for the number of days that they were closed and why it became necessary plus all this emergency work done at the school in question?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Sir, I think that though, of course, the Committee of Inquiry may have reassured people about the events, the main thing that really dealt with the situation was the emergency works that were carried out and the cleaning but, as I say, despite the fact that it is of a small item it is a rather voluminous report which Ministers have not yet read fully, I have not read it at all, I have just looked quickly at the last recommendation when I had time and until the Ministers consider it I cannot give an undertaking. It will be looked at with the intention of giving as much information as possible for the public good as consideration of it will allow.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is there any State secret in this report, Mr Speaker, that the Chief Minister cannot give an undertaking to this House that he will show the report to the Members of the House?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I cannot give an undertaking to disclose a report that I have not read myself yet.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is a report/only submitted to this House when it suits the Government, Mr Speaker?

MR SPEAKER:

The Chief Minister has said that the report had been submitted to His Excellency the Governor, that he himself has not read the report so far and therefore until such time as they consider the contents of the report they cannot say whether it will be published or not.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So it is not known, Mr Speaker, whether the Members of this House will be able to see the report or not.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Of course, it is a Government's Inquiry, it is not a House Inquiry. Despite the fact that it is now nine years that he left the short time he was in office he does not seem to realise or remember anything about the facts of Government and the fact that the Government has got the responsibility to take decisions in these matters.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, does the Chief Minister accept and agree that however much the Government has a responsibility to decide whether or not a report should be made public, in most cases unless there is a very, very good reason why they should not be made public particularly concerning

MR SPEAKER:

Order. It has not been said the report is not going to be made public. There have been reservations as to whether it is once they have been able to consider the contents. Let us leave it at that.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, realising the number of reports that are submitted which are never made public one can suspect that this one is not going to be made public.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 283 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government report any progress in relation to the Committee of Inquiry into the Electricity Department?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Yes, Sir. As the House is aware, there was some initial difficulty in finding a suitable Chairman for this Committee. Furthermore, though enquiries were instituted in London as long as January this year about the availability of two other persons to serve as members of the Committee, it has only recently been possible to identify one other suitable person who could devote the time to come out to Gibraltar and engage in this task. Efforts continue to be made to find a third such person. As soon as this has been achieved - and I hope it will take no more than three or four weeks - the necessary appointments will be made.

NO. 284 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, has Government now decided who the new Chairman of the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation shall be?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Yes, Sir. Sir Howard Davis has agreed to accept the Chairmanship.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 284 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, could I ask, is the appointment of Chairman of the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation a matter for the Governor or is this a matter on which the Gibraltar Government gives advice?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

First of all, it is a matter for the Governor who takes advice and in fact, if I may say so, in every appointment that is made by the Governor in my experience, certainly by this Governor, he takes advice or he receives advice, it would be pre-empting to say that he takes advice, he seeks advice. Certainly, the appointment of a Chairman of the GBC has always been a matter of consultation between the Governor and the Chief Minister.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Chief Minister not agree that it might be better to start some new procedure where this is concerned in view of the fact that the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation is meant to be an independent Corporation rather than a Government controlled Corporation? Would it not be advisable that all sides of the political spectrum should be consulted before a Chairman of such an important Corporation is appointed and meanwhile, Sir, as far as the Opposition is concerned, we must certainly reserve our views on the matter?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Reserve their views on the first remarks or on the appointment?

HON P J ISOLA:

On the whole lot.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

On the whole lot, well, I reserve mine on the whole lot.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does that mean that the Chief Minister might change his mind about the appointment if he is reserving his mind about the whole lot which includes the appointment?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

On the whole lot of the second part of the question.

HON P J ISOLA:

But does the Chief Minister not agree that it would be preferable, if the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation is to have an image of being an independent Corporation, that an appointment which is not really a political appointment, if it is going to have consultations with the Government it should also have consultations with other political parties in Gibraltar to try and maintain the independence of the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation, certainly consultation with the parties in the House?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is a thought and no doubt by the time the present appointment expires a procedure may have been devised to do that. For one thing it is hoped that in the not too distant future the Corporation will be self sufficient, so we are told, and that will make it even much more interesting on the part of everybody but I would like to say that appointments which have been made either in my time, I do not know whether any fell to be given the advice of the Hon Major Peliza, that we have been fortunate in having persons of very independent views and we have always sought to look for persons of independent mind to govern the Corporation as the list of past Chairmen can well prove.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, there are a number of other vacancies in the Corporation, are these to be filled up by the same procedure and if they are could I ask that the Opposition be consulted on the filling in of the other vacancies in the Corporation?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I would like to have notice of that, I cannot give an undertaking of that nature at this stage. There are already two or three names which have been submitted to the Governor for appointment.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Chief Minister to represent to His Excellency the Governor our views on this matter, I shall certainly have to do so myself?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes.

NO. 285 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government give serious consideration to implementing 'Summer Time' next year, bearing in mind that 1982 is World Cup Year?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, as the Hon Member is aware, the desirability or otherwise, of introducing any daylight saving scheme or 'Summer Time', is kept under annual review. The decision to do so, at any time in the future, will be taken if and when, in the opinion of the Government, the circumstances generally warrant it. The fact that 1982 is World Cup Year should not, and will not, influence the Government in reaching a decision as to whether the scheme is introduced in 1982.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 285 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, in view of the fact that this question is being put this year well in advance to enable the Government to seek out views of people well in advance, will Government in particular seek out views and see whether the people who were affected last year would seem to us on this side of the House to be a very small section of the community can so alter their arrangements and I am speaking mainly of flight schedules and Mons Calpe sailings and Hydrofoil sailings, could make arrangements to have the new times provided they got plenty of notice and could make arrangements and we do not have the excuse next year when we ask the question that all the schedules have already gone out and it is not possible to do anything. I would have thought, Mr Speaker, that generally speaking it was unquestionably in the interests of the social amenities of Gibraltar, of the comfort of its citizens, of the ability of people who do not have Government hours for working in the summer but have to work till 5 o'clock or 6 o'clock in the evening every day to have that extra hour of sunshine that will enable them to enjoy the pleasures that their more fortunate brethren in the public service enjoy. I ask the Government to try and get people involved in this matter, changing their schedules and so forth, so that everybody in Gibraltar can enjoy summer hours next year?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is a very short supplementary, isn't it, to answer yes or no. I think it is a very unfair supplementary, Mr Speaker, because it has tended to indicate that Government makes up its mind only because the employees of the Government do not need summer time, I think that is very unfair. It is not a question of schedules, the matter comes up every year in September and why I said that is that in fairness to the questioner the question of the 1982 World Cup was not taken into account. Other factors

may compel us to do it without having to think more about it but on the advice that we received last year we had very strong representations if I remember rightly from the trade that it would prejudice trade considerably in the shopping hours of excursionists about which there were so many questions earlier on in the proceedings.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, but the questions of the trade, the reasons for it were mainly because, as I remember it quite clearly, the sailings of the Mons Calpe, the British Airways schedules, the Gibraltar Airways schedules to Tangier and the Hydrofoil all of which, of course, were fixed in advance but if the Government gives notice now, surely, that it intends implementing summer hours next year and I would ask the Chief Minister to consider seriously the suggestion of my Hon Friend Mr Loddó because if Gibraltar does not change its hours the World Cup Football match times will appear in Gibraltar an hour earlier and therefore people will not be working at four and five o'clock but will be watching the football instead because of the difference in hours and does not the Government agree that that is a very important consideration to take in mind especially as thankfully now, England appears to have a good chance of qualifying in the World Cup Finals?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not get carried away. Next question.

GIBRALTAR

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

17 December 1981
286 to 362

NO. 286 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government consider granting subsidies or extra tax relief in respect of privately installed solar heating or other such non fossil fuel consuming devices?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, any expenditure incurred by a commercial institution in installing this type of equipment would attract full tax relief under the existing provisions of the Income Tax Ordinance. A private individual who borrowed to purchase such equipment would be able to set off the interest charges against his taxable income.

If there were firm evidence that private dwellings were installing this equipment on a large scale the Government would be prepared to consider what additional relief might be given. Any such concession would have to be looked at in the light of the Government's financial position and the cost/benefit to the economy as a whole.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 286 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

An optimistic note, I think, Mr Speaker. Can the Hon Member explain more fully what kind of proposals Government would undertake if there were a stronger demand and will the Government also consider the age old adage of which came first, the chicken or the egg, if the Government offer an attractive subsidy or whatever that they might have a greater demand rather than wait until the demand before implementing the subsidy?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I must disabuse the Hon Member immediately. There is no question of a subsidy, of the Government paying people to put these things in, any assistance would be in the form of tax relief.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, but will Government if they consider the matter is something which they should encourage, perhaps they should introduce the extra tax relief which is what I am asking for now, so as to encourage those who would like to instal solar heating to do so.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I feel that unless we have some indication of the number of houses in Gibraltar that would be able to use this it would be unfair on the generality of tax payers that a few people should get a tax relief for a facility that the generality of people cannot get and one has got to be very careful how we give away relief on taxation. If, however, it is clear that a large

number of these solar heaters, for example, could be installed which would have an impact on the amount of electricity we had to generate and we could look at the cost and the benefit carefully, then I think the Government would move but it would not be right to move until we had some indication of the size of the movement.

HON A J HAYNES:

How does Government propose to decide on whether it is going to be of general application or not?

MR SPEAKER:

No, order, next question.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, would the Government at least consider making goods of this nature, in fact, solar heating panels or whatever, not being subject to import duty?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government will consider that.

NO. 287 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, why is duty paid on goods introduced into Gibraltar on an approval basis through Mail Order Catalogues not refunded, when these same goods are returned within the prescribed time?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, the Imports and Exports Ordinance does not provide for the importation of goods on approval. However, an importer may examine goods before tendering payment of duty and is at liberty to return such goods should he wish to do so. This is the only way to avoid payment of duty where the goods received are unacceptable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 287 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, would not the Hon Member agree that in the case of articles of clothing it would be very awkward to try them out at the Revenue Station before returning them?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, it depends on the article of clothing. I personally would not like to change my trousers in the hall but I would not mind changing my shirt. I think that the nub of this matter is that there is no provision in the Import and Export Ordinance for the repayment of duty once paid and this is deliberate because if you had a provision of such kind in Import and Export Ordinances there would be a tremendous amount of administrative work involved in repaying when people wanted to re-export goods that they did not like. What we can do is look rather more carefully at the arrangements at the Waterport where articles are received to see whether we can improve the facilities there.

NO. 288 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government consider allocating funds to provide further Building Society services to the community?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is the Government's policy to create the right climate for home ownership by providing incentives to potential purchasers, for example, through taxation relief. Additionally, the Government is trying to help attract capital from abroad as such capital would, inter alia, increase the scope for mortgage facilities. However, if the Hon Member is asking whether the Government is prepared to allocate funds in the form of mortgages to prospective home buyers, the answer is no. Funds are just not available. Should the Hon Member care to suggest specific measures to improve building society facilities I would be happy to consider and comment on them.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 288 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, offhand if they are not prepared to solve their own building society, if they were to inject funds into existing building societies or ones into which they could legally do so, then

MR SPEAKER:

What is the question?

HON A J HAYNES:

This is a suggestion he is asking for.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, on a point of clarification. The intention behind the last statement in the answer was that if the Hon Member would care to write or come and see me and to discuss this I would be happy but I do not think that they are suggestions which we could debate across the floor of the House at question time.

NO. 289 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, in view of the requirements in Standing Orders that Bills should be published at least seven days before the meeting of the House, will Government take steps to ensure that this practice is adhered to and in particular will Government ensure that the Bills are in fact circulated to Members with the Agenda for the meeting of the House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the majority of Bills are being printed and published in accordance with Standing Orders. Moreover, where leave is sought to suspend Standing Orders, there is nearly always a substantive reason for that course of action. In fact, of the twenty-three Bills introduced in 1980 and the twenty-seven Bills to be introduced this year, only three Bills do not fall within this category.

During the period, leave to suspend Standing Orders has been sought four times for the annual Appropriation and Finance Bills. By their nature, these Bills are not published in advance of introduction. Although the Development Aid Bill, 1981, was not strictly a budget measure, it was prepared at the same time as the Appropriation and Finance Bills and introduced on a suspension of Standing Orders at this year's budget meeting. It was not taken beyond its second reading at that meeting. No objection was taken in the House to this course. Standing Orders were also suspended in respect of the Landlord and Tenant (Temporary Requirements as to Notice) Bill, 1981, because it was not appropriate to disclose the proposal before publication. In the case of the Public Health (Amendment) (No 4) Bill, 1981, which dealt with a matter of urgency, it will be necessary to seek the suspension of Standing Orders. That Bill was however printed and distributed to Members as soon as was possible after Government decided to promote the measure.

As I have indicated, in three cases in the last two years, it has been necessary to seek the suspension of Standing Orders simply because of pressure of work. In one case, the Bill was read a first time only. The second Bill was not taken beyond second reading at the meeting in which it was introduced. The third case involved a Bill of a very minor nature. Mr Speaker, every effort is made to avoid this situation.

The Government will in future wherever possible, publish Bills so as to be available for distribution to Hon Members with the Agenda or ahead of the Agenda where possible.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 289 OF 1981

MR SPEAKER:

I would like to make a comment on this. I have felt slightly concerned because whilst it is accepted that Bills have been circulated with the Agenda, I think it has always been the practice to publish Bills long before the meeting to enable Members to have greater time to study the implications and thus be in a position to discuss the general principles and I think that is what my Learned Friend is referring to. Whilst I entirely agree with the Attorney-General that Bills have been published and circulated with the Agenda, I think we have kept to the minimum requirement.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, may I add a word of explanation. It was not until very recently, in fact, that I became aware that it had been the practice, certainly of my predecessor who was here for some years, to do this and I think the last sentence of my answer is intended to be an indication that in the future I will endeavour to follow this practice.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 290 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government state what qualifications are required for the posts of Chief and Deputy Chief Fire Officer?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the Chief Fire Officer is required to hold the Diploma of the Institute of Fire Engineers and to have attended approved Command, Staff and Fire Prevention Courses in the United Kingdom.

The qualifications required for Deputy Chief Fire Officer depend on the grading of the post which is currently under review.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 290 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, what degree of Diploma is required for the Chief Fire Officer?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I am sorry I cannot answer that. My information is that it is simply a Diploma of the Institute of Fire Engineers.

HON G T RESTANO:

There are three types of gradings and I wondered whether there was any one particular grading that was required.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I will undertake, if I may, to ascertain that and inform the Hon Member. I do not know the answer.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, may I have the leave of the House to provide some further information on Question 290 relating to the Chief Fire Officer?

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, most certainly.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I was not able at the time to answer the question put as to the different types of diploma. There are, in fact, three: a certificate which is not strictly a diploma, a graduate diploma which stresses the technical qualifications involved for a Chief Fire Officer and the membership diploma which stresses the managerial skills involved and either of the second or third is a qualification for the post.

HON G T RESTANO:

And as far as the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, which of these diplomas are required?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, at the moment the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer is under review and no prescribed qualifications have been settled.

HON G T RESTANO:

But would qualifications have been required up to now in the past? Is it the intention, Sir, if I can put it this way, either to downgrade the post or to upgrade the post?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I do not think I can comment on that at this stage, Mr Speaker.

HON G T RESTANO:

In other words, can I know what were the qualifications in the past?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

My information, Mr Speaker, is that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer was a designation, not a post as such, in the same way as the Deputy Commissioner of Police.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would not the Government agree that it is a post which carries quite a lot of responsibility particularly when the Deputy has to take over when the Chief Fire Officer is not here and that it would be preferable, in fact, it should be a requirement that he should have a certain diploma under the Institute of Fire Engineers?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, I think while the matter is under review I cannot comment.

HON G T RESTANO:

Who is reviewing the matter, Mr Speaker?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

It is with a public service inspector..

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Public Service Commission.

HON G T RESTANO:

The Public Service Commission? In what way, if I may ask and it may be a silly question, but in what way is the Public Service Commission qualified to look into the requirements of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

It is being carried out in the same way as any other review of a post by Staff Inspectors.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask, was there not a report once on the Fire Service, generally, and what the requirements were and was it not laid down there what sort of requirements were required for both posts?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, I am not able to answer that. I do not know.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Hon Member find out and please let me know about this?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Yes, of course.

NO. 291 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many prosecutions for offences concerning the depositing of litter have there been since the new legislation was brought in, in October, 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, four litter prosecutions have been instituted since the passing of the Public Health (Amendment) (No 3) Ordinance, 1981. One person has been convicted and fined £25. The other three cases are pending. These prosecutions have in fact been brought under provisions of the Ordinance that were already in existence.

Two notices have been served under the new section 68B of the principal Ordinance.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 291 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, did I hear rightly, these four prosecutions have been under the previous law?

MR SPEAKER:

That is correct, yes.

HON A T LODDO:

Then, Mr Speaker, if I may recall, at the last meeting of the House I asked how many prosecutions on a similar question to this and the answer was that there had not been any because they had all been

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I understood this question to be how prosecutions have been brought since the new legislation came into force. Well, of course, since that has happened there have been four prosecutions. I think I did say at the last meeting of the House that the prosecutions which had not been proceeded with were prosecutions which came up a month ago. I do not think I said anything to the effect that there was an absolute bar on proceeding with prosecutions under the existing provisions of the Ordinance.

NO. 292 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government consider forming a small voluntary and independent committee to enquire into complaints directed against the Civil Service?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 292 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I think that was a bit blunt. In answer to Question 117 of 1981 which was a question asking: "Will Government undertake to start a complaints department at the Secretariat to deal with all and any complaints directed against the Civil Service?" Again I was told, Mr Speaker, that the answer was no, that there already was machinery and when this was investigated I was informed that the machinery was by way of "you could complain to the Governor". That is not really what I had in mind and this other option of going to the Head of Department was not what I had in mind. I understood then that the Government had not understood my question as to the motive and when I ask it again in a different form of asking a more specific request I would hope to receive more explanations to go along with it. Is it Government policy to protect the Civil Service from any form of complaint at all?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I am happy to give the Government's reasoning at greater length. I am aware that at the last time this matter was raised, the Hon Member did refer to the possibility of a small advisory bureau and this question is obviously more specific. The Government feels that the existing machinery is adequate, that you can complain to the Head of Department, you can complain to the Establishment Officer, you can complain up the line in effect, and it feels that there is no real reason why any machinery other than that should be necessary because most people know perfectly well where to go and complain and I think most complaints are dealt with.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I also understood that the Government found themselves in the happy position and no one does complain.

MR SPEAKER:

We are debating, with due respect to the Hon and Learned Member. You must ask a question.

HON A J HAYNES:

There is a question coming at the end.

MR SPEAKER:

No, with due respect to you, the question should come at the beginning. Next question.

NO. 293 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government make a statement on the progress of the Government Committee on drugs?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, I am most grateful to the Hon Member for giving me the opportunity to make a statement on the progress of the work of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, which I presume is the subject matter of the question.

As the Hon Member may be aware the Council was re-constituted very recently and I was appointed Chairman. The other members of the Council are:

The Commissioner of Police
 The Collector of Revenue
 The Principal Youth and Careers Officer
 The Director of Medical and Health Services
 Flight Lieutenant C Morgan RAF
 Mr C Clinton BDS, and
 Mr W Guillem MPS

The Council first met on the 25 September, 1981, and four further meetings have since been held.

At the moment the Council is engaged in examining certain recommendations made by a Working Party of the British Medical Association (Gibraltar Branch) on steps that in their view need to be taken to deal with drug abuse generally, including abuse of intoxicating liquors and other allied matters. The work of the Council is well advanced, meetings being held generally on a fortnightly basis, and a number of recommendations have already been submitted for consideration.

As the Hon Member will have noted the membership of the Council is intentionally a high-powered one, representative of all the agencies and professions which have an interest and can assist in this matter. I am very pleased with the progress being made and am very grateful to the members of the Council for making their very valuable time available to me so readily in dealing with this highly important matter for the welfare of our community.

I am very hopeful, and I am sure I have the support of my colleagues in this respect, that the recommendations which have been made and those which will be made in the future will be implemented and will go a long way to combatting the scourge of drug addiction which is such a great problem throughout the world today.

I would be less than responsible if I were not to take advantage of this opportunity of once again bringing to the attention of all persons in Gibraltar the grave dangers that drug addiction can present particularly to the youth of Gibraltar and would ask of those concerned with youth activities as well as parents and older members of our families to exercise great vigilance and pay great

attention to any possible signs there may be of this danger within their family circles. I ask Hon Members and the public in general, not to fall into the trap of complacency and think that this cannot happen here when dealing with the drug problem. I would urge that no effort be spared on our part to ensure that this evil influence does not spread in our community.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 293 OF 1981

MR SPEAKER:

Before you make any supplementaries may I comment on this particular reply. I am very specific and strict on the Members of the Opposition when they ask supplementaries and I must, I think, make a comment that an answer should not be taken as an excuse to make a statement. I am saying this because perhaps it has been done in ignorance but I feel that an answer should contain the reply to the information required and nothing else.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I should add that this is exactly what I wanted to hear, in fact.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but I am concerned exclusively with procedure.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does the Minister feel there would have been any difference in adopting the Opposition's request for a Select Committee to investigate this?

HON J B PEREZ:

I think, Mr Speaker, that the position taken by the Government was, in fact, the correct one. I personally feel, in my own judgement, that a Select Committee on this would have been a waste of time.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Would Government consider administering with more flexibility the Imported Food Regulations, 1981, laid on the table at the last meeting of this House?

If I may, Mr Speaker, I think I would like to declare an interest. I have a small involvement in a Company which is involved in the importation of food although, of course, the question does certainly not arise out of that involvement and I am assured that the problems that face some of the importers which is the cause for this question, does not apply to that particular Company.

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, may I take this opportunity of apologising for the length of this answer.

I am not quite certain what is meant by 'more flexibility' and if the Hon Member would be more specific or point out any definite area to which he is referring, I would do my utmost to help him.

However, I must point out that the main objective of these Regulations is the protection of the community's health by ensuring that food imported into Gibraltar is fit; complies with local legislation and, in the case of meat and meat products, emanates from approved sources. I am sure the Hon Member will agree there can be no deviation in pursuing this objective.

Having said this, I must point out that since the passing of the Regulations, my Department has done its utmost to ensure that they are smoothly implemented and to help the trade adapt to the new requirements.

Specifically, the Department organised a meeting, which was very well supported by the Trade, to explain the Regulations prior to their implementation. Leaflets, detailing the main requirements of the Regulations, were also prepared by the Department and distributed to the Trade.

It was also agreed that the Department would allow the importation of all food which could be proved as having been ordered prior to the passing of the Regulations, irrespective of its complying or not, provided of course it was not considered harmful to health.

It was also decided that up to the end of the year and in order to give the Trade more time to adapt to the Regulations, there would be no strict enforcement of the documentation requirements for certain products, even though it was expected that the Trade would play its part and comply as best and as soon as possible.

Finally, I think it only fair to thank the Trade for their co-operation in adapting to the requirements of the new Regulations, which I am glad to say are working most satisfactorily.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 294 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member asked for more specifications from me because he was not quite clear on the question. May I then specify and say exactly what is intended by the question? There are certain items imported in Gibraltar or which used to be imported in Gibraltar from countries like, for example, the United States and they have been imported into Gibraltar for many years. Under the new Regulations those United States companies which, clearly, they have Regulations there on food hygiene, those products will no longer be able to be imported under those Regulations and would the Minister therefore ensure that where products have been imported in the past for a long period of time and it has been provided that the hygiene Regulations have been applied and adhered to, that they are given flexibility of importation?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, within the context of the main objective which is in fact the health of the community in Gibraltar, I will do my utmost to help any particular trader who has problems. May I take the opportunity of informing the House that as yet there has only been one trader who has made representations and that is a matter which the Department is looking into but we must not lose track of our objective which is the health of the community.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is it not a fact that if the United Kingdom accepts the importer in question that is automatically accepted in Gibraltar and would the Government not consider that it would be equally appropriate to accept in the case, for example, of the United States Government, where we do know that the hygiene Regulations are as strict if not stricter than in the United Kingdom, would it not be worth considering applying it in the case of the United States?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, that is precisely the representation that I have received from one particular trader and I am having a meeting with him and the Government is considering how we can help.

NO. 295 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, is Government satisfied that there are sufficient available telephone lines to cater for:

1. the normal rate of applications
2. the hopeful increase in applications as a result of the next development programme
3. the further increase in demand following its projected development on the East side of the Rock?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Yes, Sir. The answer given to Question 251 of 1980 of 4.11.80 still applies.

There are over 1,000 spare lines available at present.

It is expected that these will be taken up by 1983, when, on the completion of the new extension, 2,000 more lines will become available.

Government is confident that it will be in a position to satisfy demand arising from the next development programme and any development on the East side of the Rock.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 295 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, does the Government have the forecast of the number of lines that they might require for the development on the East side of the Rock?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, no, Sir. Government has so far not had any detailed proposals at all on requirements on the East side of the Rock and in fact the scheme on the East side of the Rock, as I think the Hon Minister for Trade and Economic Development will expand on this further, is at the moment being studied and there are no definite proposals as yet.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how can the Minister say that there are going to be sufficient lines when he does not know how many lines are going to be required?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it must be obvious to the Hon Member that with regard to the size of Gibraltar and the number of lines that we have available we shall be able to cater easily for the increased number of applications that will result if a development takes place on the East side of the Rock.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 296 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what reasons led it to decide to locate the most recent skid mounted generator in its present site and what other sites were considered?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, the length, weight and height impeded its entry into the town area, and by nature of its being a trailer mounted unit, it was more convenient to park it at a site which of necessity had to be near the power station.

An alternative and perhaps more convenient site might have been the USOC hockey pitch but access to this site was also a problem. An additional consideration was the loss of playing area which would have resulted.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 296 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, in November of last year, a year ago, when the original four skid-mounted generators were installed in their present location, the Minister was asked why they were not installed where this last one has been placed and he said that the installation was just not on. Can he tell us now, Mr Speaker, why it is that then it was not on and now it is on?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the answer is fairly simple. The four skid generators took far more available space at the USOC than the present trailer mounted generator which has really only involved the temporary loss of about twelve car parking spaces.

NO. 297 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether any of the proposals for minimising aural pollution as stated in answer to question 218 of 1981 will be adopted or applied to the King's Bastion Generating Station?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

No, Sir. It is not intended to introduce at King's Bastion any of the proposals stated in answer to the earlier question on the new Power Station, which was put by Mr Haynes, because such features are best incorporated within an overall design approach. Whilst this has been possible at the new Station, it would present serious difficulties in an existing installation, and in certain cases would be physically impossible.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 297 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I accept that, for instance, the engine foundations to be coupled from the main engine wall structure would not be feasible in the King's Bastion Generating Station but the other listed improvements, namely, composite fibreglass and plaster-boards sound insulating lining in the engine hall, can that not be introduced?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, not really. To be able to produce less aural pollution on the old Station, first of all we would have to change the building drastically.

MR SPEAKER:

But we are not going to go into detail, the answer is that it cannot be done. We are not going to debate the possibility of doing it or not.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am labouring under the difficulty that as I understand from the Minister's answer, the position is that these minimising aural pollution measures should be introduced when you build your power station and that in the case of King's Bastion we already have a power station. Obviously, the point of my question was how can we improve the position at King's Bastion and my question was asking whether any of these measures could be introduced.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect to the questioner, we must ask questions which are short and to the point and seeking information. We must not debate at question time.

HON A J HAYNES:

I am not trying to debate.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect, I will not have you answer back, that is my ruling. You can ask supplementaries to seek clarification and information but you must not make statements.

HON A J HAYNES:

For what reason cannot exhaust silencing be installed at King's Bastion?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Exhaust silencing, Sir, would mean further silencers in the air intake. This would only be a very small portion, a very small amount of the total requirements necessary to reduce aural pollution and if we did want to reduce aural pollution it would be an extremely costly exercise. Not only that, we have to remember that when the new plant is installed at No 5 jetty, the actual operating hours of engines in KB North station will be reduced substantially with a consequent reduction in the overall aural pollution and the engines in KB South will be done away with and also the four skid and the one trailer mounted generators.

HON A J HAYNES:

And in the interim nothing will happen I take it?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

How long is this going to last for? How long are we likely to have the four skid-mounted generators, one extra generator and a whole load of noisy engines at King's Bastion Generating Station

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, until the two new engines come on stream and this will be in May/June 1982.

NO. 298 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Does Government consider that, following the installation of the two 5 megawatt engines, there will be sufficient generating capacity to cope with requirements after completion of the land reclamation projects to the East of Gibraltar and would Government further state what extra generating capacity it expects will be required?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, at this very early stage it is not possible to say what extra generating capacity future installations on the land to be reclaimed to the East of Gibraltar will require for the simple reason that no detailed proposals have yet been received, to enable the possible loads to be estimated.

For this reason, it is impractical to expect Government to say whether or not the additional two 5 megawatt engines will be sufficient to cope. What can be said is that the new station, as now being built, can take an additional 7 megawatt engine, and, should the need arise, the extra capacity can be installed within a short time and certainly before any additional demand arises from developments at the East side of the Rock.

NO. 299 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state the position as regards the proposed new Prison to be constructed on the East side of the Rock?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, a feasibility study for the construction of a new prison was completed earlier this year and the Government has accepted the report. The project, estimated to cost over £5m has been included in the aid submission being considered by the ODA. I think I would be dishonest if I did not add that I think that it would have a very low priority.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 299 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, does it have a low priority because of the large sum involved or for any other reason?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I cannot think of a better reason than £5m.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, how much money would Government be prepared to channel towards a new prison and at the same time give it priority?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I do not know, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there any point in Government trying to bring the price down of the new prison from £5m to £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Did Government give any consideration to the potential cost of a new prison before commissioning the report?

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, when the team of consultants came here, I impressed upon them that if they came up with a very costly prison, even in a situation where we got substantial aid from the United Kingdom, it could well put it beyond the range of our possibilities but I am afraid that when you are dealing with professionals of that nature they always seem to go for the ideal.

HON A J HAYNES:

Did Government consider what kind of money they were prepared to channel into the new prison before commissioning the report?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, in a development aid programme of £40m, during the third year of that programme we would be prepared to put substantial funds into the construction of the prison if we got the £40m, then yes.

HON A J HAYNES:

If they do not get the £40m, what are they prepared to give to the prison?

HON A J CANEPA:

If we have got £40m, Mr Speaker, over the required period we would build the prison.

HON A J HAYNES:

What percentage of ODA will they expect will go towards the prison presuming they do not get the £40m?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, we have a development programme over a period of time of a certain capital sum partly to be financed by aid from the United Kingdom and partly to be financed by our own efforts. If the aid from the United Kingdom had come up to scratch and if the economic situation of Gibraltar enabled us to put as much into that development programme as what we thought we could last February, then arrangements would have been made to start the construction of the new prison in the third year of the programme, spreading the construction over a two-year period and we would have built it but I cannot tell what proportion one thing was of the United Kingdom aid, you look at the programme as a whole.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 300 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, is Government satisfied with the conditions prevailing at the prison and especially as regards remand prisoners?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the Government is not satisfied with the conditions at the prison. If the aid submission fails, consideration will be given to the implementation of alternative plans for rehabilitation of the existing facility. The regulations make no distinction between the standard of accommodation to be provided for convicted and remand prisoners.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 300 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Is Government aware that a remand prisoner, someone whose innocence, according to the law, is to be presumed until such time as proven otherwise, is entitled to a maximum of two hours liberty ie by liberty I mean outside your cell in twenty-four, and cannot they at least do something to improve the privileges for remand prisoners?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, first of all, I should say that remand prisoners in the United Kingdom are kept in remand centres. I think it would be invidious in a situation where it is a small prison and everyone is together, to make privileges.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, we are talking about convicted criminals and people whose innocence is primary, it has got to be established that they are guilty, it is a different presumption, and they are being treated like convicted criminals and their liberty is severely handicapped by being in prison and furthermore the conditions whereby they have two hours outside their cell in twenty-four is extremely harsh.

MR SPEAKER:

Let us give an answer to that.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, may I just assist in this matter to some extent. I think the rules governing prisoners do make some distinction between remand prisoners and convicted prisoners.

HON A J HAYNES:

They are harsher for remand prisoners.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I do not think that is really correct, Mr Speaker. They make some distinction within the overall limitations of the facilities available at the prison, I think that is really the position.

HON A J HAYNES:

If I can help the Attorney-General, Sir, they are harder for remand prisoners. Convicted prisoners have more privileges since they are there for a long time, a remand prisoner, for instance, can opt for these

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to discuss the regulations.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am not sure that the Government realise what the position is as regards remand prisoners.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. Perhaps you should bring a motion about this, that is another matter, but not at question time.

HON A J HAYNES:

What are the alternative plans for rehabilitation that the Minister referred to in his answer as a proviso if and when the ODA is not granted?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, I am not prepared to disclose them at this stage of the proceedings.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can he give us any idea what they entail?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I have said no, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 301 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, when did Government take delivery of the prison van at present under repair and what are the costs of the repairs?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the question is inconclusive as the Hon Member has not stated to which prison van he is referring. The prison has, in fact, two vans. The first was acquired in July 1977 and the second in September 1981. The first van has had to be put in for repairs on a number of occasions since 1977, the costs of these repairs amounting to approximately £300 during the past four years. No repairs have been made to the second van but some minor mechanical adjustments have been made by the dealers under the guarantee, at no public expense.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 301 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I did ask this question because it appears in the Statement of Re-allocations No 3 and in fact I am precluded, because it is a re-allocation, to ask the question at the time because it never appears but can I therefore ask the Government that if when I ask questions of this nature they tell me there are two vans, I can ask them also in the remarks column and the reasoning for the allocation, precisely to state which van it is or give some further details so that I won't have to ask this question?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17.12.81

NO. 302 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, is Government satisfied with the safety of the playground, formerly the tennis court, at St Mary's Middle School?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the Government is already aware of the need for greater safety in the playground at St Mary's Middle School and the renewal of the surrounding fence at the old tennis court has already been the subject of requisition to Public Works Department. This work will be carried out as soon as the PWD Blacksmith can be released from more urgent security work elsewhere. As the Hon Member will recall there are other playgrounds at Sacred Heart Terrace, and these are in use.

17.12.81

NO. 303 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, when will phase two of St Mary's Middle School begin?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, phase two of the building work required at Sacred Heart Terrace to bring into use the whole of the former Grammar School building has been included in the aid submission for the 1981/86 Development Programme.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 303 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister, will this have precedence over the prison?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Certainly, Sir.

NO. 304 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government install safety bars in the windows of classrooms at St Mary's Middle School?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, this work is due to be carried out by the PWD Blacksmith at the same time as the renewal of the fence at the tennis courts.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 304 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, would not the Government agree that where the lives of young children in school is concerned, this should take priority over any other work the Blacksmith might be doing at the moment?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Sir, Government is as concerned as the Opposition. All it requires at the moment is a bit more supervision and because of the inclement weather the windows will generally be closed. The urgent work being done by Government is on the question of security and I am not in a position to state publicly why we are doing this but if the Hon Member will meet me outside I will tell him exactly what is happening.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 305 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state their policy as regards the introduction of a comprehensive rehabilitation scheme and/or Attendance Centre for both juvenile and adult offenders?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, insofar as young persons between the ages of 12 and 21 are concerned, the reply which my predecessor gave to the Hon and Learned Mr Haynes's question No 94/80 of the 25 March, 1980, explained the existing provisions in the law which enables the Court to order attendance at an Attendance Centre in lieu of imposing a sentence of imprisonment, or for failure to comply with a probation order.

During the past year there have been seven cases in which the Courts have made an Attendance Centre order, and the present arrangements whereby the young offenders are required to attend under supervision at the Youth and Careers Office seem to have worked well.

The present question by the Hon Member opposite goes further than his previous ones on this subject, as he has also brought adult offenders into the picture. I am not aware that there is a need to consider introducing new measures for dealing with offenders.

In the absence of evidence to the effect that new measures are necessary, Government does not intend to pursue the matter.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 305 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker; will the Government reconsider their policy on this if the ODA talks are not fruitful and as such no new prison is built?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, this has nothing to do with the ODA. I have just said that I am not aware that there is a need to introduce new measures.

HON A J HAYNES:

As I understand it, Mr Speaker, the new prison will, inter alia, provide you with some Attendance Centre or other type of thing, will it not?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Then I will ask the question which is, if the new prison is not to be built

MR SPEAKER:

That is hypothetical.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, but what will their policy be then?

MR SPEAKER:

When that happens then you are entitled to ask the question.

NO. 306 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government state what figures it has available for job vacancies as at 30th November, 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the number of vacancies notified to the Department of Labour and Social Security and which remained open at the end of November 1981 was 55, covering 36 different occupations.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 306 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Sir, can I ask the Government, if indeed they themselves have to arrive at these figures at the end of each month, to let me have them in the same manner that they do with the unemployment figures?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member repeat that question please?

HON W T SCOTT:

In the same manner as the Members on this side of the House are circulated with the unemployment figures by the Department, could I ask the Minister if he will likewise do the same for job vacancies?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Certainly, Sir.

NO: 307 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government confirm that the Apprentice Courses in the Engineering and Construction Trades will commence in January, 1982?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the twenty-five engineering and construction apprentices commenced their training on 5 October, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 307 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Sir, I asked this question precisely because in a previous question at the last meeting of the House, Question No. 219, I went to great trouble to solicit this kind of information from the Minister and in fact I think on one occasion I asked him to give way so that I could illustrate to him the difference between the Apprentices Course and the Industrial Training Course. I make no apologies for having asked the question.

NO. 308 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government inform this House if and to what extent a further approach has been made to those young men who have passed the Engineering and Construction Entrance Examination but were not offered an Apprenticeship and will Government also inform this House if the Industrial Training Scheme will commence in January, 1982?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, on the 9 December, 1981, Government decided to proceed with the training scheme in question, and as the Hon Member is now aware, a notice was published in the press on 11 December offering training facilities at the Construction Industry Training Centre to youngsters who were successful in this year's apprentice entry examinations but to whom it was not possible to offer an apprenticeship because of the few vacancies.

Applications will be received until 31 December and arrangements are well in hand to start the training in January, 1982.

As stated in the press notice, depending on the number of applications received, a selection may have to be made to reduce the number taken on to that for which the facilities at the Training Centre can cater.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 308 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, we are very glad to have heard that at least finally this scheme has got off the ground in practical terms although I have one remark to make and that is that it is rather funny that it was only two days after I posed the question that the public notice appeared.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I would like to reply to that, with your permission, of course. Mr Speaker, it is unfortunate that the Hon Member has never been in Government but he has two Members beside him who have and he must know that it takes some time before papers can go to Council of Ministers so if I had the scheme ready on the 9th December it means that it went to Council of Ministers well before that.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, what precisely will this course qualify people to do at the end of it?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I do not think that comes under this question. It does not follow from Mr Scott's question.

MR SPEAKER:

It certainly applies to the general matter dealt by the question but, of course, if you require notice you can give the information to the Member later.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir, I do not require notice. The intention is to encourage youngsters into trades which normally they would not have gone into and the idea is to give them a clear picture of what the construction trade means and at the end of the academic year if other employers come in with apprenticeships for these skills, that year will count towards their apprenticeship, so instead of doing four years they would only do three years.

HON J BOSSANO:

So, in fact, the only advantage is that they could shorten their apprenticeship by a year by virtue of the training they will receive but at the end of that year they would be like any other first year apprentice which effectively means that they would not be able to take on a job in any given trade.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, it is hoped that certainly the private construction industry will take a far greater interest in employing young apprentices and training them and making more use of our Construction Training Centre. I must state quite frankly that the Construction companies have found it always too easy to search in other markets and have never made any attempt to train youngsters.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is there anything, Mr Speaker, in the scheme that is likely to encourage construction companies to do anything different from what they have done in the past? Are they being penalised by a levy or rewarded by a subsidy if they take on apprentices?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I think that a youngster who has received a years training in our Construction Training Centre would certainly stand a better chance of being employed in the construction business than somebody who has never been trained before.

NO. 309 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, would Government consider ensuring a regular bus service from the town area to Mount Alvernia?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a matter for the Transport Commission, who consider that the area in question is adequately catered for by the present bus service.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 309 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Will Government make a recommendation to the Transport Commission along these lines?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The area in question is served by three different bus routes and there has been no demand from the inmates of Mount Alvernia, or from anybody attending Mount Alvernia, requiring a special bus service running up St Bernard's Road.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, that is not my understanding. Would the Hon Member not recognise that the friends of those who are staying in Mount Alvernia are naturally of an advanced age, some would like to visit and cannot because they do not have transport of their own and they would like to have transport to Mount Alvernia. It is a long way for them to go walking and it is also very steep so I think it would be in the interest of the people in Mount Alvernia, too, they would have more frequent visits. Would he consider making a suggestion to the Transport Commission?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Sir, according to the Transport Commission they have had no demand at all from the inmates or visitors to Mount Alvernia. It is a difficult situation because even if we were to suggest to the Transport Commission that a bus service should go up St Bernard's Road, it is not the most ideal of places to have a turnabout place for public service vehicles to go up and turn around and come back again and although I agree it is steep but I think we are talking of something like 200 or 300 yards walk. If one takes the bus routes that stop at the bottom of Shorthorn Estate or outside the Loreto Convent it is merely a few steps to climb up and down. I am equally informed that elderly people who visit their friends frequently, that Mount Alvernia has on many occasions provided their own mini bus service to cater for that. As I say there is no demand, if there was a demand then the Government would consider it, Sir.

17.12.81

NO. 310 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state how many applicants have been housed during the last twelve months following recommendations from the Housing Advisory Committee on social grounds?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, during the past twelve months twelve applicants have been accommodated as a result of recommendations made by the Housing Advisory Committee.

NO. 311 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, how many persons are to Government's knowledge, presently squatting in Government housing stock and how many persons to the knowledge of the Government are presently living in cars, in tents on the beach, in lean-to sheds or sub standard accommodation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, there are at present thirteen families squatting in Government owned accommodation.

As far as the Housing Department is aware, there are two applicants who have alleged to be sleeping in cars and one reported case of a family living in a garage.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 311 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

What does Government propose to do about those squatting in Government housing stock?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Sir, of the thirteen families squatting in Government owned accommodation, there are nine where an order of possession has been obtained for them by the Court. The Government tries to be as lenient as possible and particularly over the festive season we would certainly not like to implement their eviction but if the house that they occupy is required for accommodating some other person on the list or for modernisation, then I am afraid that person will have to find his own accommodation and come out.

HON A J HAYNES:

When the Minister says modernisation what does he mean, any time in the future in the modernisation project or now?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

In connection with the modernisation programme or rehabilitation programme which could be immediate.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does the Minister therefore say that in those cases where people have squatted in buildings which are not immediately required by Government, they will be allowed to stay there?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

They will not be allowed to stay, Mr Speaker, we would obtain a Court order for possession but we may not implement it as quickly as we would in other cases whereby we would require the house for immediate use.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister say exactly what the Government policy is because it seems now that today we have been given an indication that there is a change in this policy and that the idea is to have an eviction order?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

There is no change in Government policy, Sir.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is a matter of exercising discretion.

HON A J HAYNES:

It is a matter of exercising discretion but with what criteria?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Human criteria.

HON A J HAYNES:

The Government seems to lack a lot of that, I am afraid.

MR SPEAKER:

Order.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the Government going to act on these possession orders or not?

MR SPEAKER:

I think you have been given a straight answer to that one. Please sit down when I am speaking. You have been told specifically that if the land is needed immediately, the possession orders are executed. If not, they are lenient until such time as it becomes necessary for the person to be evicted.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am concerned with the answer given in respect of those who are presently squatting in accommodation which is not required immediately and for which Government have already obtained a possession order. What exactly is going to happen?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am not prepared to go beyond what I have said for the simple reason that I am not prepared to encourage unfortunate people to squat in places that they may find themselves out in the street should Government decide to do so.

HON A J HAYNES:

But he is encouraging them.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, the Hon Member is encouraging people to squat.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. We are now arguing and I will not allow that. Next question.

NO. 312 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government disclose the number of applicants who have been recommended for housing on social grounds by the Housing Advisory Committee in the last twelve months and will Government state how many applicants are still awaiting either for the Family Care Unit to make a report or for the Housing Advisory Committee to make a report?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, in the past twelve months the Housing Advisory Committee has made pre-war recommendations in thirteen cases.

It is understood that the Family Care Unit have now investigated all cases awaiting an investigation report. However, there are fifty-nine cases which have been investigated, and for which the reports have not yet been received. There are a further seven cases for which a report has already been submitted by the Family Care Unit but have not yet been considered by the Housing Advisory Committee.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 312 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, we had in answer to Question 310 the answer that twelve of those recommended by the Advisory Committee were housed. Over that same period of time they made thirteen recommendations so only one has been left out. Can the Minister tell me how many applicants were actually heard, how many were rejected?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am sorry, I do not understand the question, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

We have heard that when the Housing Advisory Committee have made a recommendation, in this case they made thirteen, the Housing Allocation Committee have acted on nearly all of them ie, twelve out of the thirteen. I would like to know how many the Housing Advisory Committee rejected ie, thirteen out of how many?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am afraid I do not know. I would require specific notice of how many they rejected. I have been asked to give how many there have been accommodated or recommended by the Housing Advisory Committee. I do not know, quite honestly, if any have been rejected. I do not think they have been rejected as such and if the Family Care Unit consider that a case is not a social problem then, of course, it does not get to the Advisory Committee.

HON A J HAYNES:

I know offhand of one which has gone straight there and has not been accepted by the Housing Advisory Committee. What I wish to know is the percentage of success for social cases?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am afraid I do not know, Sir, I require specific notice.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how long does the Minister think that it will take for the fifty-nine reports which remain outstanding, how long will it take for those reports to be completed and the whole process of going through the Advisory Committee?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Again, Mr Speaker, I would not like to speculate on how long it will take for the outstanding cases on social grounds to be housed as opposed to recommended. What I can say is that within the next couple of weeks we hope to be able to allocate the Red Ensign Club in Engineer Lane which will accommodate seventeen families, social cases of course.

HON G T RESTANO:

That was not my question, Mr Speaker. The fifty-nine reports which remain outstanding, what I would like to know is not when they are going to be housed, I know the Minister probably cannot answer that question, but what he could answer perhaps is, how long the whole process will take for those fifty-nine to have their reports made out and submitted to the Advisory Committee?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, that depends again on two issues. It depends on the availability of staff within the Family Care Unit to keep up with the impetus of submitting reports to the Housing Advisory Committee and subsequently, of course, the Housing Advisory Committee being able to meet and consider the various applications. If the reports are through then one could say it could take a month or six weeks but I cannot go beyond that because there are occasions when the people in the Advisory Committee are unable to meet because of the exigencies of other duties.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 313 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state how many applicants in the waiting list have been housed during the last 12 months giving the numbers in respect of the various categories ie 4 rooms, kitchen/bathroom, 3 rooms, kitchen/bathroom, etc?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, a total of 33 applicants in the Housing Waiting List have been housed during the last 12 months as follows:-

Bedsitter	-	16
2 RKB	-	2
3 RKB	-	6
4 RKB	-	7
5 RKB	-	1
6 RKB	-	1

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 313 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Is this the kind of average amount you get in a year or not?

HON H. J. ZAMMITT:

It is slightly lower on average, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 314 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Goyernment state how many persons have been rehoused as a result of the modernisation programme during the last 12 months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, twenty-one families have been rehoused in connection with the modernisation programme during the last 12 months.

NO. 315 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government disclose the number of applicants at present on the waiting list giving the number in respect of the various categories ie 4 rooms, 3 rooms?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

There are 1,816 applicants, at present, on the Housing waiting list as follows:-

Bedsitter	-	155
2 RKB	-	432
3 RKB	-	657
4 RKB	-	502
5 RKB	-	62
6 RKB	-	8

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 315 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Given the average of 33 per annum, it looks like it is going to be the year 2010 before these are accommodated.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect, that is a supposition.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is that a fair assessment?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That is a most incorrect and unfair assessment, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, every time I ask how many people there are on the waiting list I am always given the same number.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think, Mr Speaker, the Hon Member fails to understand, and there is no milder way I can put it, fails to understand the housing problem and therefore I am not prepared to talk to him on this issue any longer in the House, certainly, Mr Speaker. He fails to understand it and I am wasting my time and his.

NO. 316 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Sir, will Government consider changing the method for carrying out tourist surveys by providing tourists generally with a questionnaire form to be filled anonymously and privately, in which the reasons for liking or disliking Gibraltar can be expressed and thus obtain less inhibited answers and more genuinely useful results?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government will consider any proposals for changes in the Tourist Survey which will improve coverage, methodology, response and final use of the results. It is however, likely that the change suggested by the Hon Member will reduce overall response to the survey and, in addition, will invariably increase the administrative burden and cost of the exercise. In practical terms, the Hon Member's suggestion could only realistically be applied to staying visitors in hotels. It would be a totally impracticable arrangement for other tourists, ie day excursionists from Morocco, cruise-ship excursionists and visitors staying with family and friends. I should point out that there are a range of questions in the tourist survey questionnaire, many of which can on present questionnaire design, only be correctly answered by interview. I must add that the questionnaires currently used do not ask or make reference to the name or address of the tourist being interviewed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 316 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But doesn't the Minister agree with me that a tourist who is in Gibraltar will try and be polite and always, if necessary, make an understatement about how he feels if the feelings are against his visit particularly if he is faced with a pretty Gibraltarian girl?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the questionnaire which I think the Hon and Gallant Member must have a copy of, has been slightly amended over the years. In fact, if I may give him credit, it was a questionnaire which the Hon Member himself gave publicity to way back in 1969 when he obtained consultants to look into the situation. We have found that people have no inhibitions at all, Mr Speaker, in answering the questions but if there is something that we feel would be of benefit we would certainly consider it.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Doesn't the Minister think it would be a good idea to put this other suggestion that I have made of asking the tourist why he likes it or why he dislikes it?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think the questionnaire does ask why he likes it or certainly why he has come to Gibraltar, Mr Speaker, and that is where we get our information that there may be repeat tourists. To ask a person point blank why you like it or why you do not like it maybe is to a degree inhibiting but the questionnaire has to be by way of interview otherwise if we gave these cards out to people who came on a cruise liner then, of course, we would have to tell them to go to the Post Office or Tourist Office or wherever, post it, send it on or collect it and therefore people would not do it. We carry out a survey of people throughout the month and we obtain our information. We are quite satisfied with it at present but if there is something that is felt that would be advantageous we certainly would not put blinkers on, Mr Speaker.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I hope he gives more attention to that because I think it is very important. On the second point that I made, doesn't the Minister think it is vital to know why they like it or why they didn't so that they can put that matter either right or reinforce where there is success?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 317 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government explain if when preparing the Gibraltar Tourist Office Brochure the hoteliers and other interested parties whose business premises appear in it are consulted?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 317 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't it a fact that it can be very prejudicial to the business concerned if the place or the way in which that premises is displayed in that leaflet can cause loss of trade to that particular hotelier and doesn't he think it is right and proper that if something is going to be printed such as the name of a particular firm in Gibraltar, that consultations should be carried out with them as to whether they agree or disagree since that can easily affect the business very considerably?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Sir, the brochure happens to be a Gibraltar Tourist Office brochure which is paid for by the Gibraltar Tourist Office and I have, Mr Speaker, both the 1980/81 and the 1981/82 brochures. The only complaint we have had is from one particular hotel who is complaining of the photograph being a centimetre smaller of what it was last year. There is very little that we could do here because of space and of course this is done by experts who consider that the particular hotel in question had to suffer in size. Sometimes, Mr Speaker, and I do not want to start a storm in a teacup, sometimes of course it is the hotel's fault for not having up-to-date transparencies and when we ask them for it they cannot make it available and therefore we have to depend on our own public relations people to do it.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But isn't it a fact that this particular hotel is probably even considering claiming from the Government for loss of trade?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Sorry?

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is it true that this particular hotel is going to claim from the Government by having put that particular photograph, for what they consider to have been loss of trade?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I have not heard of that, Mr Speaker, but if it is so it is absolute rubbish, absolute nonsense that they should do that after we have been advertising their hotel. Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member would like I can tell him privately something else he might like to know.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't it possible, Mr Speaker, that by the way a particular photograph is displayed that instead of aiding that particular business it can do the very opposite and therefore all I am going to say is will the Minister

MR SPEAKER:

No. Order.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am sorry, Mr Speaker. Could I just add a final question?

MR SPEAKER:

No, you cannot because we are now going into matters of detail. Next question.

NO. 318 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if the difficulties preventing the formation of the Advisory Tourist Board have been totally overcome and if not what are the causes obstructing final agreement?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, the terms of reference of the Gibraltar Tourist Advisory Board have been agreed by all the constituent members except for the Gibraltar Trades Council whose views are awaited.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 318 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't there some disagreement on the question of representation on the part of the hoteliers who feel that they should have more representation in the Advisory Board?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That has been agreed to, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state on how many occasions and where has the Acting Minister for Tourism and Postal Services since so appointed, travelled abroad officially, and for what purpose, by whom accompanied, for how long and at what cost to the Government, on each trip?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, since my appointment as Acting Minister for Tourism and Postal Services, I have travelled abroad on official business on eight occasions, equally divided between the two Departments concerned.

Details of these visits are as follows:-

PERIOD	PURPOSE	BY WHOM ACCOMPANIED	COST £
21/25 Sept 80	Trade promotions in Portsmouth and Brighton	London Office Manager and Team	384.50
30 Sept/6 Oct 80	Attendance at British International Philatelic Exhibition 1980 in London	Director of Postal Services, EO, Philatelic Bureau and two other officers	245.00
12/22 Nov 80	Attendance at Essen International Philatelic Exhibition and to hold discussions with British Post Office	Director of Postal Services, Controller of Philately and one other officer	565.00
(15/20 Feb 81	Trade promotions in Maidstone, Brentwood and Cambridge	London Office Manager and Team	389.50
(22 Feb/1 Mar 81	Attendance at Stampex International Philatelic Exhibition in London and to hold discussions with National Girobank	Director of Postal Services, Accountant, EO, Philatelic Bureau and two other officers	289.00
(12/18 May 81	Trade promotions in Sheffield, Hull and Leeds	London Office Manager and Team	267.75
(19 May/3 Jun 81	Attendance at Vienna International Philatelic Exhibition	Controller of Philately and two other officers	1,045.00

PERIOD	PURPOSE	BY WHOM ACCOMPANIED	COST £
21/26 Sept 81	Trade promotions in Ipswich, Luton and Oxford	London Office Manager and Team	438.00
20/25 Oct 81	Area sales drive Guildford	London Office Manager and Team	370.05
16/26 Nov 81	Attendance at American Stamp Dealer's Association International Exhibition in New York and to hold discussions with the Govt's Philatelic Agents in America	Director of Postal Services, Controller of Philately and one other Officer	901.00

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 319 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does the Minister feel that this expense is justified and also does he think that it is important that the Minister should be there on these occasions?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Could the Hon Member say, do I consider it important in which particular department or to which particular visit?

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

In either department.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, let me commence by saying on the stamp situation, on the philatelic situation, yes, I think it is very important for a number of reasons. Although I cannot recall exactly what I have done on every single occasion, I can say that every time that I have attended a stamp exhibition prominence is given to Gibraltar because there may be five, six or seven or ten Ministers from various countries attending and therefore the Post Office, the administration as such is given priority within the whole exhibition. Secondly, it gives one a tremendous opportunity to be able to discuss and obtain what obviously we are after and that is the sale of stamps. If I can start from the tail end and work my way back, Mr Speaker. In the case of New York I think the House will be pleased to hear that I was able to secure Readers Digest, which has eleven million circulation in sixteen various languages, to publish for the first time ever and print our Christmas 1980 issue which I think will bring in tremendous results. While I was there I was able to persuade Readers Digest that they would take on our

Europe First Day Covers and when I was there I was able to sell 30,000 First Day Covers of the Royal Wedding to Readers Digest. That in itself was £30,000 but I do not think that one can look at it just purely from that sense, there is an awful amount of goodwill to be obtained in the particular sphere. Also, Mr Speaker, I think there have been questions in the House in the past as to the difference in commissions between our various agents. I can now report to the House that all our agents are now on 20%. We have reduced the two outstanding ones from 25% to 20%. Again the 5% although it may appear to be minute could well mean £20,000 or £30,000 dependent, of course, on our sales. That is something else which one can achieve whilst one is there. On Post Offices too, there have been discussions with Girobank, I suppose Members know that Gibraltar is now able to cash giro cheques which is a service we give not only to pensioners in the United Kingdom but tourists also are very pleased to be able to come to Gibraltar and obtain a service which they can get in the United Kingdom. Mr Speaker, one cannot evaluate in real terms what

MR SPEAKER:

We must not try and do so now.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

It is a very wide question, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

You have been asked whether you can justify the visits and you have said yes. You can give some examples but you must not go into great detail.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, on tourism I think the Hon Member knows that when a Minister attends one gets television and radio coverage much more, with great respect, than if the Director or anybody else goes. In fact, I am encouraged by the Hon Member's question because reading through Hansard last year I see that he thinks we should go more often. I have tried to be as realistic as possible in this answer, Mr Speaker.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am glad to see, Mr Speaker, that he sees the importance of the Minister taking part.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if there have been serious delays in the air mail service from the United Kingdom causing disruption to trading concerns and if so can it give the reasons for these delays?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Delays in the receipt of airmail from the United Kingdom occurred during the period 24 November to 4 December, 1981. These delays did not at any time consist of more than four days. The reasons for these delays were that no mail was received on 24 November and on 27 November, 1981. This had a snowballing effect and created a backlog. The backlog had been cleared by 4 December, 1981, when the situation reverted to normal.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 320 OF 1981

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is it true, Mr Speaker, that the situation today is not all that good and even today they are experiencing long delays?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, there has been a further delay since the question was submitted for answer and that is because of the weather conditions prevailing in the United Kingdom. We have today, Mr Speaker, received all the mail bags consisting of sixty-two letter bags and thirty-six bags of parcel post which date back to the 10 December, so we are back to normal, Mr Speaker.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So the Minister is quite happy that except for something like the weather or some unexpected occurrence like the one he explained, we are likely to have regular mail again in Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, yes. We obviously do our utmost to try and ensure that there is a regular service of air mail in the aircraft but it depends entirely on the load factor of the plane. In the event, for example, of certain essential spare parts having to be brought out, mail could well be left back for the following day. We try, of course, to avoid this as much as possible but there are circumstances which we really have no control over.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 321 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government investigate the feasibility of converting all or part of the water catchment area on the East side for the dual purpose of harnessing solar energy and collecting rain water?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Mr Speaker, I should point out that the science of harnessing solar energy is still very much in its infancy and requires considerable developments before becoming viable on a large scale.

Also, the water catchment area faces East while the optimum direction for collection of solar energy is South.

The catchment area is subject to frequent rockfalls and landslides which would easily damage the delicate and expensive equipment involved.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 321 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Will Government investigate the feasibility?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Mr Speaker, it all depends what you are trying to do. If you want to obtain electrical energy from the area, it costs at the moment something like £500 per square metre for the silicon cells, therefore, I think, the capital expense would be impossible. If you want to distil salt water into fresh water on the area you have got to put up a whole plastic frame system which again is very expensive and as I have said the fact that it does not face South does not help to a very great extent and if you get a rockfall even at the present day it can cost damage of £4,000 or £5,000, if you had a whole plastic system of distilling it would cost £50,000 or £60,000. I think the risks are too great to investigate really seriously.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 322 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, why has it been necessary to carry out further road works at British Lines, and at what cost?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, in order to utilise the land at British Lines Road recently released by MOD it has been necessary to carry out certain works. These include:-

- a. demolition of obsolete buildings;
- b. provision of toilet and services;
- c. levelling, kerbing and paving;
- d. laying of asphalt surfacing;
- e. container area.

In the event of the frontier opening, part of the released land will be used as a car holding area for traffic waiting to enter Spain, part as a coach parking area and part for container traffic.

The cost is approximately £80,000..

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 322 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can I take it then that the works that were completed by the 1st June last year are still intact and this is sort of an additional thing?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, the works that were completed by June last year mainly applied to the Revenue Offices etc, it did not envisage the large car holding area which may be necessary, we really do not know until the frontier has opened, this could not be done last year as we had not had the land handed over by MOD.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 323 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government give the figures and costs for water production from available sources for the months of October and November, 1981, and state what the stocks were at 30 November, 1981, and will Government make a statement regarding the existing water situation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, figures for potable water production and cost for October and November, 1981, are as follows:-

	<u>October</u>		<u>November</u>	
	M ³	(Mg)	M ³	(Mg)
Rainfall	485	(0.12)	-	
Wells	7,439	(1.63)	8,980	(1.98)
North Front Distiller	16,216	(3.57)	9,347	(2.06)
VTE Distiller	17,077	(3.75)	8,509	(1.87)
Imported	25,739	(5.66)	17,377	(3.82)
Total	66,956	(14.73)	17,377	(3.82)

Costs are as answered in Question 176 of 1981.

Stocks on 11 December, 1981, were 25,000 M³, 5.5 Mg below the projected figure for this time of the year.

The lack of rainfall has meant a shortfall in production. Difficulties in importation have aggravated the situation.

The distillers have had to put back their maintenance periods to meet the shortfall in production.

The uncertain meteorological conditions do not allow us to predict whether we are to have average rainfall in the New Year.

In order to build up stocks to cover the period when the distillers go into maintenance, extra importation by tanker from the UK of 20,400 M³, 4.5 Mg is being arranged.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 323 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I notice that on both the distillers the production figure for November is substantially down, can we have some explanation?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes. The main reason, Sir, is that these two distillers have been working for a long time, they are getting near to their scheduled maintenance periods and therefore they are giving us more trouble and are breaking down more frequently than they would under normal circumstances.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, in the case of the VTE Distiller, for example, it is only the fifth month that it has had a continuous production since a break of four months from March to June of this year, whereas before last year that distiller worked for a continuous period of ten months.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, but these distillers are normally reasonably temperamental after a six month period and they should be stopped for a minor overhaul after some five or six months. This has got to the stage that the actual faults that are occurring are of minor consequence but unfortunately a small fault means shutting down for at least one day. The fault may be repaired in one hour but it takes sixteen hours before it comes back into production.

HON W T SCOTT:

What I am really leading to, Mr Speaker, is that if we had had even substantial rainfall as last year in October, November and December, it perhaps would not have made the significant difference in the total water production and water would still have had to be imported outside of the normal traditional way of importing it from Tangier.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, if we had had reasonable rainfall last year we would have had heavier stocks all the way through and therefore the distillers would have worked less and if we had had as we would have hoped, some 2 million gallons of rain in October and the same or even more in November then we would be in, I think, a much happier situation than we actually found ourselves in.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I am thankful to the Minister for that reply but, quite frankly, of the figures that I have seen here over the last two years, one thing seems to come out quite clearly and that is that there is a pressing need for another supply of water whether it is through another distiller or whatever. Is there a project in the next development programme for another distiller?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, there is and actually later on in the House I shall be asking for some money towards the provision of that new distiller.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, what is the average consumption of water on a daily basis in Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The daily average consumption, Sir, in summer is around 450,000 gallons. The consumption in winter is between 1,800 to 2,000 tons. If you multiply it by 220 you will get it in gallons but since we did make an appeal for people to go carefully with water, I am happy to say that the consumption has dropped to approximately between 1,600 and 1,700 tons per day, that is about 350,000 gallons.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 324 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government give the reasons why the tenants on the upper floors of Constitution House still do not have a continuous supply of brackish water?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the salt water distribution system serving the area which includes the Tower Blocks, both Constitution and Referendum House are affected, is unable, at peak hours, to meet the demand from that area. During periods of high demand the mains pressure cannot be sustained and as a result is insufficient to enable the water supply to reach the service tanks on the top of the Tower Blocks. The installation of booster pumps, already ordered, at the base of the Tower Blocks will enable the supply of water to be maintained during the periods of low mains pressure.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 324 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Sir, I think, if I remember correctly, this is not something new, in fact, it has been going on for quite a while and I remember distinctly, I think it was the Hon Minister for Public Works, in fact saying virtually exactly the same that he has said today quite a few months ago on the pumps. Can we have some further information as to why the pumps are not here and why they have not been connected and in operation?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir. The money for the pumps was asked for actually during the estimates last year, the money was approved and four booster pumps were ordered on the 12 May, 1981. Delivery is expected at the end of January, 1982. It will take approximately two to three weeks to instal them so I should hope by March next year the situation will be, for all intents and purposes, solved.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, does the Government not agree that it is perhaps a little bit unfair to ask the tenants of Constitution and Referendum House who having no brackish water on certain occasions, have to resort for toilet facilities to use fresh water thus increasing their water bills?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I would agree with you there, Sir, it is a lamentable situation.

HON W T SCOTT:

What is the Government doing about this?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are waiting for the pumps to arrive, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

Yes, but they have waited for so long and the tenants are having to pay more for their water than they normally would have done.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would it not be fair for those tenants who live on the top floor who are having to pay hefty water bills because the Government is not producing a service, should their water bills not be subsidised to a certain extent?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I think that in various areas of Gibraltar at certain times there is no salt water and one has to use potable water down the toilets. I think it would be an almost impossible task to find out how much water a person had used in flushing the toilet and I think the difficulties would be impossible. I do appreciate the difficulties these people are suffering under and as I have said by March next year they should be completely cured.

HON G T RESTANO:

How long, Mr Speaker, has this situation been going on for?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It has not been so bad until the last two years. Part of the difficulty has been that the Solway valves in the flushing units in the houses are giving trouble and are tending not to shut off properly and to leak salt water away all the time. This means that the tank has emptied quicker than it used to when the valves were new. When a valve becomes so bad that it is impossible to use at all, we replace it with the old fashioned type of flushing system rather than a Solway valve.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does that mean that these tenants, Mr Speaker, have been for two years having to use fresh water for those facilities?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir. This only happens at certain times during the day when there is peak demand on the whole of the salt water system. For example, during the night the tanks all fill up completely so I should say for the first five or six hours in daylight use there

is ample salt water. It can occur perhaps at two or three o'clock in the afternoon that the water does get a little short on certain days, not every day, only when there is a peak demand in the area.

HON G T RESTANO:

Presumably then also, Mr Speaker, during the evening and at night time.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, the peak demand falls off by about five o'clock and then the tanks fill themselves up again.

HON G T RESTANO:

But this situation has been occurring for the last two years at least.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Off and on.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is it not unfair that these tenants have for the last two years been having to pay more for their fresh water and would Government consider subsidising to a certain extent their water bills?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would not say it is unfair, Sir, on the other hand I would not say it is fully fair.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Government consider and look into it? He said he does not know whether it is unfair or whether it is fair.

MR SPEAKER:

He does not think it is unfair for tenants to use fresh water and he does not think it is fair for the Government to subsidise. Is that the answer?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 325 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state what it considers to be the fresh and brackish water requirements for the development on the East side and how does it propose to effect this, should the project be realised?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, it is yet too early to visualise the kind of development that will be carried out on the East side of the Rock. However, based on an assumed population of 2,500/3,000, the estimated water requirements of the East side development are:-

Potable water - 270 m³/day (0.06 Mg/day)

Salt water - 540 m³/day (0.12 Mg/day)

Present potable and salt water distribution networks will not be able to cope with the added demands that the scheme would impose on them.

Existing pipe work conveying potable water from the waterworks to the development site would have to be renewed by the laying of larger mains.

A new salt water reservoir sited possibly on the East side would have to be built, plus mains to convey salt water to the reservoir and from the reservoir to the development.

The estimated extra potable water requirement means an increase of 14% of our total average daily demand. The present production available from existing sources cannot cope with this added demand, so extra means of production would have to be considered.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 325 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Would Government look for a source of some capital outlay for this extra source of production from the intending developer?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I cannot see that it is easy to expect the developer to buy a new distiller for his own demands. If, as we would hope over a period of time, the Water Account becomes a viable account then, of course, the capital outlay would be recouped in due time by the actual amounts of water supplied.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 326 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government explain why invoices to the Public Works Department from the Gibraltar Quarry Company totalling £32,970.35 remained outstanding on the 30th November, 1980, and what periods do these invoices cover?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the invoices covered the period from May, 1980, to November, 1980. A payment of £20,000 on account of the sum due was made on 30 September, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 326 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Why did it take, Mr Speaker, so very many months for this account to be paid?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think, basically, the invoices had not been put in as early as they might have been put in. Also there was a certain reluctance on the part of Government to pay to the Quarry Company this amount of money while they were still hoping to get active payment by the consultants.

HON W T SCOTT:

But, surely, isn't the situation, Mr Speaker, by having a look at one of the documents that was laid on the table, that the Quarry Company has paid a substantial amount of money through bank interest which could well have been substantially reduced had these invoices been paid when presented?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, Government is considering taking legal action against the consultants covering a number of different elements. One of them will be the actual cost of certain expenses that have been made and another one will be a consequential expense for interest which has been paid by the Quarry Company which would not have been paid had the consultants done their job properly.

HON W T SCOTT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, but with respect, if the money which is outstanding to the Gibraltar Quarry Company by the Public Works Department had been paid, the consultants are not accountable for that element of interest, it is the PWD that is accountable for that and not the consultants.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I think it has been the feeling of this House that no more money should be poured into the Quarry Company at the moment until we have cleared the whole situation with the consultants who ultimately may be responsible for a considerable amount. If, of course, the House is willing to give me the odd £12,970.35 I shall be happy to accept it on behalf of the Quarry Company.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I think the Hon Minister is consciously twisting the words here. What is the intention of Government and when does it intend to pay the balance of not only the £12,970 outstanding but also any purchases that might have been made post to the 30th November, 1980?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There are two possibilities, Sir. Either I could come to the House for a very large supplementary to pay all these amounts and then if the Government and the Quarry Company reclaim the money from the consultants it will all square up, or there is the second alternative of trying to get the money from the consultants first and squaring up then. Speaking on behalf of the Quarry Company I would say that I would prefer the former course but I have understood that there is a Government reluctance and a reluctance I think on the part of the Opposition, to pour more money into the Quarry Company and that is the reason it has been left in abeyance until we can try and clear the matter with the consultants.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, one further thing. We are very glad in fact that finally the Minister has been able to speak on behalf of the Gibraltar Quarry Company. I think it is the first time ever he has been able to do this.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I do not accept that, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

But, Mr Speaker, surely, we are talking about not pouring money into the Quarry Company, what we are saying here, are we not, is paying them for goods produced, that is all.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, it is not exactly paying for goods produced, it is paying for work that they have done which has been considered necessary by the consultants to try and get the project working. Whether

Government should have footed that bill or whether the consultants should have footed the bill will obviously be one of the things in the Court action, if we have one.

HON W T SCOTT:

I am glad for the Hon Member but it does not appear in that way in the balance sheet.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The way the whole thing was arranged from the beginning is that the consultants said: "Do this amount of work", and a contractor who had been employed by the Government to do the work got on with the work and did it and submitted his bills. When the Quarry Company took over the consultants then shifted some of their instructions from the contractor to the Quarry Company and said: "You are not quite getting this right, do so and so". That, theoretically, was something that was being done on Government's behalf by the Quarry Company under the instructions of the consultant but whether the consultant was fully justified in saying that all these things should have been done since they did not produce a viable scheme in the first place, is the point at issue and may be the central theme in any possible Court case.

HON W T SCOTT:

May I ask just one last question, Mr Speaker, of a general nature. May I ask the Government for the latest news from the consultants in making this project viable?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, we have now asked ODA to provide us with an independent consultant to inform us whether the latest news as proposed by the original consultant is a viable scheme.

HON W T SCOTT:

So, in fact, the Government now do not feel as assured as they did in October of this year, at the last meeting of the House.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think I said at that time that we had had a proposition put to us by the consultants. We are now asking an independent consultant whether he considers that this is a viable scheme or not.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, who is paying for the independent consultant?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Hopefully, the ODA.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, as the profit and loss account of this Company to the 30th November, 1980, showed a loss of £20,000 and as the net current liabilities at that date of the Company was £36,000 and as the Government has a guarantee of £40,000 to the bank, has it been necessary to increase that guarantee to the bank?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think so, yes, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister tell us to what amount?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

£60,000, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister confirm whether one of the objects of the sand quarry was to cut a wedge at the top of the sand mound at the top of the Rock to ensure that falling rocks fall into a wedge and do not roll down the hill, is that a correct summary of one of the objectives?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That would have been one of the benefits of the quarry in operation, yes.

HON A J HAYNES:

Has any of that, in fact, happened?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, because the amount of sand produced from the top of the Rock is absolutely negligible.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, may I clarify a point on this matter. Obviously, the independent consultant's report is of some consequence and when that report is received it may have a bearing on the heads of damage which Government might be able to pursue by legal action.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is it not a fact that any litigation is bound to involve in lengthy periods of time and what is going to happen in between, is the Government going to go on increasing its overdraft or is it going to dispose of its interest in the Gibraltar Quarry Company and cut their losses?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, I think the Quarry Company at the moment is running without any increased expenses, it is running on a viable basis at the moment.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 327 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, what is the extent of Government's involvement in the new litter bins being installed throughout Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the provision of advertising litter bins resulted from an offer made to the Government by a private firm.

The Government considered the offer attractive, as apart from being a source of revenue, the acquisition, fixing and maintenance was at no cost to Government.

After negotiations with the firm in question, an agreement was entered into for the provision of up to 300 litter bins for a period of five years commencing on the 1st October, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 327 OF 1981

HON W T SCOTT:

Does Government derive any financial benefit from the advertising on these litter bins?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would not say we derive anything from the cost of advertising, what we do derive is an amount of £5 per bin per annum for the first 150 bins and £2.50 per bin per annum for the next 150 bins and of course it also saves us having to provide litter bins ourselves.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is Government therefore consulted when the rates of advertising on these litter bins is offered to prospective clients?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

In other words, the client himself can mention whatever figure he thinks correct?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If people are willing to accept his figure I presume there is nothing that can be done about it.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, who is responsible for emptying the bins, there are a lot of them very full?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The emptying is normally done by Government, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 328 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state which of the proposals and recommendations made in the Port Study Report have been accepted by Government and will Government make a statement as to their programme for implementation of these proposals?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Mr Speaker, in reply to the first part of the question, I would refer the Hon Member to the detailed statement I made to the House in July outlining the Government's position regarding the recommendations of the report.

With regard to the second part of the question, insofar as major development projects are concerned, provision has been made in the 1981/86 Development Programme.

Apart from major development projects, the other matters recommended and phased within the ten years of the programme suggested by the Port Study Consultants which are receiving attention are:-

No 4 Jetty and Shed: This has been handed over to Government and is being used for the discharge of building materials in bulk, sand and gravel. The shed is being demolished.

Clean Up Operation: Working areas have been considerably improved and a large amount of dunnage, pallets and other materials has been removed from the Port area, by using the Port Department's pick-up van specially purchased for this purpose.

The Attorney-General is also looking into the necessary amendments to the Port Rules in order to give greater powers of enforcement to the Captain of the Port. This will make the clean up campaign more effective.

Staff: The appointment of a Dock Controller and two assistants is in hand. Their primary task will be that of coordinating all cargo operations and ensuring clear and safe working practices. Interviews for these posts have already been held and their appointment by the Public Service Commission is awaited shortly.

Yacht Reporting Centre: This was recommended for the latter part of the second year or later. Work has in fact commenced and a site office (Portakabin) has already been positioned on Waterport Wharf to the West of Shell's Bunkering Station. It is envisaged that this office will be operational early in the new year.

New Port Offices: Work is at present under way converting the old workers' hostel at the North Mole into the new Port Offices. The necessary works and refurbishing will be completed by June, 1982. This was actually programmed for the third year but Government has brought it forward.

Transit Shed: The refurbishing of the present Transit Shed was programmed for the fourth year, this, however, has already been tackled and is nearing completion, without any interference to cargo operations.

Unstuffing Shed No 2 Jetty: Detailed plans are now being drawn up for the unstuffing shed after consultation with the Port operators. A further meeting will be held once the plans are ready to ensure that all necessary facilities have been catered for, prior to construction.

Ice Box: As the Hon Member is aware, negotiations have been held to transfer the Ice Box to the old refuse destructor site. Although programmed for the fourth year, this is already reaching its final negotiating stage.

Sheppards Marina Extension: This was scheduled for the ninth or tenth year of the Programme. Government has, however, already approved limited reclamation in the Marina to improve the facilities. The first phase which provides for the reclamation of land for shore facilities, a slipway and an alongside berth, is already under way.

These, Mr Speaker, are the works at present being implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the Port Study Report although not necessarily as strictly programmed by the consultants.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 328 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, though, as the Hon Member has stated, a statement was made, there seems to have been one departure, the question of the use of the Ice Box and the Customs Shed. This we were told by the Financial Secretary was an idea. Has this now been incorporated as Government policy for the Port or is it still an idea?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is Government policy, yes.

HON A J HAYNES:

Has the feasibility of that idea been investigated?

HON A J CANEPA:

Not as yet, it is something that is at the policy stage and I think we will have to await developments in respect of the consultancies which are going to be put in hand in respect of supplementary economic activities. This is something which could form part of that.

HON A J HAYNES:

The other thing, Mr Speaker, what is the programme as regards the facilities for the North Mole and the Liners and so forth. As the Minister will remember, in Question 247 I asked and I was told in the answer eventually from the Financial and Development Secretary: "We will do it as soon as we get some money".

HON A J CANEPA:

I did not cover that part, Mr Speaker, precisely because I was aware of the fact that information had been given arising from Question 247. In fact, other matters that have already been approved but which are going to have to await development are the question of the provision of a modest passenger terminal, the question of converting the Ice Box into a transit shed, the provision of a security fence in the Port area and the reallocation of the transport companies facilities. These will have to await, as I said, developments.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister agree that these are in fact the most important aspects of the Port recommendations? I think they are. Is there a programme for these? Is there a set of priorities as to which will come first and as to which year they will be undertaken?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, really the Government must now in connection with next year's budget, in connection with the new situation that we are faced with in the economy of Gibraltar, I think we have got to take a very close look at matters. It could well be that the Port Study in the wake of the Defence Review may be the subject of further assessment, or re-assessment I should say. I mentioned the question of major development projects, one project to which we are giving priority naturally will be the Viaduct bridge and the new causeway to the North of Viaduct bridge. I am sure that that would have immediate priority.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will that in fact enable the Government to do something at least for the Mons Calpe ferry?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, it is a limited matter. The causeway went hand in hand with reclamation of Waterport Basin. Until the situation is clearer with respect to development aid, I do not think that we can commit ourselves to reclaiming Waterport Basin but it is a logical next step. The causeway has got to be provided because the Viaduct bridge is in danger of collapse but that has got nothing to do at this stage with the Mons Calpe.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, one final question. I understand from the Minister's answer that there is some uncertainty for fairly understandable reasons as to the future but these I believe, Mr Speaker, would the Minister agree, do amount to some delay or potential delay in tackling the problems and fulfilling these recommendations and as such will the Minister consider introducing some interim measures for, say, the liners calling at North Mole, perhaps lavatories, a small cafe, something to beautify the spot and similarly will the Minister consider doing something to further remedy or improve the situation for the ferry passengers?

HON A J CANEPA:

I realise that the Hon Member has a particular interest in these two matters because he keeps on constantly bringing them up. My priorities are different, I will be absolutely frank with him. I do not consider these matters either to be directly my responsibility as Minister for the Port and that is why the Minister for Tourism earlier on answered the question on the Cruise Passenger Terminal and that is why the Financial and Development Secretary deals with the question of the arrival hall at Waterport, they are not my Ministerial responsibilities. I personally as Minister for the Port do not attach the same importance therefore. As Minister for Economic Development I am interested in other matters which I consider to be of greater urgency but really, as I say, we have to re-assess what is the situation that faces us in April or May, there might be further development talks in March, until that stage is reached the Government cannot do more than what it is doing and I think the Hon Member will see that we have tackled many matters that were in the Port Study Report. All the matters that should have been covered in the first year, I think, are pretty well covered or are in the process of being put in hand and we have gone well beyond. I think that that is an indication of the priority that we give to the whole Port Study and the urgency with which I am trying to tackle matters wherever possible but, really, I cannot commit myself beyond that, Mr Speaker, at this stage.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 329 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, by how many units does the Government expect its housing stock to increase as a result of the proposed East side development?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, it is impossible to say at this early stage how many housing units will be built on the area to be reclaimed. This information will only be available when proposals have been submitted. It cannot be expected, however, that Government's own housing stock will increase directly as a result of the scheme since this will be a private sector venture. There may well be, however, some gain to Government housing in the event of new houses being taken up by persons who now occupy Government-owned dwellings.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 329 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

I think, Mr Speaker, that we will come to blows with the Government on this one. The question, Mr Speaker, perhaps the Minister will agree, is aimed at a Government which has a definite policy and does the Minister

MR SPEAKER:

We are not debating, if you want to seek information you are free to do so.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does the Minister agree as to the advisability of having clearcut plans on the question of the East side development?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member had asked that question I would have answered it. I think there are a number of questions on the East side reclamation. As I answer them I think it will become clearer as to what it is that we are trying to do and what is the stage that we are at in respect of this project.

HON A J HAYNES:

What is the stage that you are at at this project?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think it will become clearer as other questions are asked but it does not arise on a question which is purely about the housing stock. If the Hon Member wants to deal with the wider implications of the East side development he can ask a question on that.

NO. 330 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, following the statement of the 26th October, 1981, on the development of Government properties by the private sector, will Government now state whether any satisfactory proposals as referred to in paragraph 3 of the statement have been made and will Government explain the details of such proposals?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the scheme as outlined in my statement has not yet been advertised but a tender notice is about to be issued which will invite participation in the redevelopment or rehabilitation and modernisation of four pre-war properties for residential purposes. I can now, therefore, give the essence of Government's proposals in greater detail. Preference will be given to applications from persons who are eligible to apply for a house under the Government Housing Allocation Scheme, who wish to take up residence in these properties and who are prepared to solve their housing problem or improve their living conditions on a 'self-help' basis without any assistance from public funds.

In return the successful tenderers would be granted leases of either 99 or 70 years depending on whether redevelopment or modernisation was carried out.

Participants in such a scheme would be required to form themselves into a housing association which would take on responsibility for looking after the common parts of the building on behalf of its members.

The four properties in question are:-

- 4 Lower Castle Road
- 6 Lower Castle Road
- 8/14 Devil's Gap Steps
- 8 Willis's Road

and now consist of a total of thirteen flats.

As I also said in October there will be a fifth property as well, namely, 46 City Mill Lane. The conditions of tender will be the same as for the other four properties except that Government will also consider proposals for redevelopment for residential or commercial or a combination of both purposes. Developers on this basis would be required to provide at their own expense a public pedestrian link between Cannon Lane and City Mill Lane.

Tenderers in the case of a personal occupation scheme will furthermore be given an opportunity to offer a lump sum premium or a rent with an option to commute thereafter the rent obligation within the period of 25 years in accordance with a given formula.

I may also add that when considering schemes of rehabilitation and modernisation Government will insist on a great deal more than just a cosmetic facelift. Standards of accommodation expected will be those normally used by Government in its modernisation programme and guidance will be available from Public Works Department if anyone wishes to consult them.

I would in fact commend tenderers to do so in their own interest having regard to the long period of the lease and to the need to avoid short-term expedients which will have serious financial repercussions in the longer term.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 330 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, if there is a general interest in this project, will more houses be put on the market?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Sir, I can confirm that that is Government's intention.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is this therefore a new line in Government policy?

HON A J CANEPA:

This is breaking new ground engineered and initiated by the Minister for Economic Development.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 331 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, what new trading activities does Government expect will result from the East of Gibraltar Reclamation Project?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, it is too early to visualise what new trading activities will result from the development scheme in question apart from the initial construction stages.

A better appreciation of the trading potentials will, however, be possible once outline proposals have been submitted and analysed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 331 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, surely the Government must have some idea of what it would like to see in this new reclamation project. Surely, before asking for proposals they must have something in their minds as to what they would like to see there. Can the Minister not confirm this?

HON A J CANEPA:

We have given those details, Mr Speaker, they have been provided as an Annexe to the application form that has been provided to applicants but I have said in the answer, I have made reference to outline proposals, we are not at the tender stage, we are only inviting outline proposals from applicants and then there will be a process of selective tendering. In other words, the procedure is going to be very much the same as that which has been followed in the case of the multi-storey car park where we invited proposals from potential developers and then from those applicants we selected and, in fact, the seven of them were invited then to tender formally. We are very much on the lookout to see what it is that people, having regard to the parameters which the Government is laying down, we want to give flexibility so that we do not stifle the development. The whole thing, of course, arose from a number of enquiries that the Government received from within and from outside Gibraltar and therefore because we were receiving enquiries in respect of a reclamation scheme in respect of the provision of yacht repair facilities on the East side of the Rock, the Government considered that it was therefore timely, if nothing else, to test the market in this respect.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, this is precisely what the question is leading to. The Minister has just said that one of the areas might be a yacht repair yard. That is the sort of general ideas which I would have thought the Government would have had already at this stage and in the comparison that has been made by the Minister with the multi-storey car park, does he not remember that when we first started talking

about the feasibility of a multi-storey car park, in fact, it was envisaged at the time that beneath the multi-storey car park there would be shopping arcades and so on and therefore what I would like to know is what the Government has in mind, of course, in broad parameters, but what sort of trading activities.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer has been that they have not got an idea as yet until such time as outline proposals have been submitted and analysed.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am sure, Mr Speaker, that no responsible Government, and perhaps the Minister will confirm that this is not so, I am sure that no responsible Government would go into a project without at least having some idea of what it wants to see there, particularly on such a large project for Gibraltar which covers 33 acres.

HON A J CANEPA:

But the information has been provided for potential developers, it is available. Of course the Government has ideas of the nature of development that it wants to see there. The Government, in inviting applications, have said that we want to see tourist orientated development, that we do not rule out commercial development, hotels, recreational amenities, yacht marinas and yacht repair facilities, that is the nature of the development that we would like to see. Having laid down the parameters, we are then inviting proposals in more detail to be submitted to the Government together with feasibility studies and so on. That information, in much more detail than what I have given, has been made available to potential developers. Anybody who makes enquiries, and many enquiries have been received particularly from outside Gibraltar, that information is sent to the potential developers.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I am grateful for that last reply, that is precisely why I asked the question. I do not think we have any potential developers on this side of the House and therefore we wanted to know precisely what we have been given now and that is what the question seeks in the first place.

HON A J CANEPA:

I did not take the question to be that, Mr Speaker. He referred to trading activities and if any Hon Member had asked for more details to be provided about the nature of the scheme, these would have been provided but the impression

that I got having regard to the nature of the question, was that the Hon Member had some idea of what the development project was about because this has been made public and it was picked up both by GBC and by local newspapers, it was given some publicity. I think, at the time, the Hon Member himself was away, I do not know whether he has managed to read up since he returned through all those newspapers whilst he was not here but, as I say, the information is available, the only thing is that we interpreted this particular question precisely as trade and not more in the nature of wider economic activities in the reclaimed area.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 332 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

In view of the extent of the proposed development of the East side, would Government expect the prospective developer to make provision for schooling facilities up to and including middle school level?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, Government does not expect provision to be made in the scheme for schooling facilities if the question refers to Government-financed schools but there would be nothing to stop a developer doing so if he so wished whether on a private or public basis. At this stage all that can be said is that the provision of schooling facilities is not a requirement.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 332 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, but would not the Government agree that in view of the size of the development, a 33-acre site, and in view of the fact that great emphasis is being laid on the commercial side, yacht berths, shops, restaurants, recreational activities, would not the Government consider insisting that part of the development should include a school for the area?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Sir. I do not think the burden can be put on a developer. If as a result of large scale development of the area concerned we get a population there which might be a sizeable population which has more of a resident character about it than that of a transient one, then schooling facilities might have to be provided for the children living in that area. I would consider that to be a Government responsibility, to provide such schooling facilities, I do not think that the burden need necessarily be put on the developer.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, do I take it then that in that case Government would build more schools in that area?

HON A J CANEPA:

In that case the Government would have to give serious consideration to the provision of schooling facilities in that area or in one close to that area.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 333 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, considering the magnitude of the proposed development of the East side of the Rock, would Government extend the time limit for submitting proposals?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the period of over four months allowed for the submission of proposals is considered reasonable given that such proposals will only be in outline form at this stage. The period can, however, be extended if it proves to be too short.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 333 OF 1981

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, do I take it then that even after the period for submitting proposals expires, anybody at a subsequent time wishing to tender would be allowed to do so?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, what I am saying is, Mr Speaker, if before the period expires and it expires on the 31st March, 1982, there are applicants who point out to the Government that they have in fact found the period of, it is $4\frac{1}{2}$ months actually, Mr Speaker, because the date of publication was the 13th November, if they point out that they have found the period to be short, I think the Government would consider extending it after they have indicated that it is short but once the 31st March closes I do not think it would be fair to allow late applications.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, and would the Government in the case of there being only one interested party be prepared to hand over a multi-million pound project to that one party?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is a hypothetical question, Mr Speaker.

NO. 334 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, does Government consider that enough information has been given in the Government's offer to prospective developers of the East Coast to enable developers who do not have an intimate knowledge of Gibraltar to put forward feasible proposals and does Government not agree that much more detailed information is necessary if prospective tenderers of standing are to be attracted?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, a scheme of the size and nature envisaged necessarily requires a thorough and expert study of all the factors involved. This must include investigations into hydraulics and geophysical conditions and take into account data on waves, tides and currents, sea bed conditions, soil and beach erosion and possible effects on the coastline and ecology of this part of the Rock. These investigations must be carried out by those persons interested in submitting proposals themselves since the results of their findings will determine the cost, extent and nature of the development and the assessment of the viability of the very substantial amounts that have to be invested in realising a project of this magnitude. This is normal procedure and the invitation to submit proposals is on the basis that Government will not supply any technical details other than the guidelines given in the brief available to potential developers.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 334 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, does the Minister not agree that the 2½ pages of information that has been given out by the Department of the Surveyor and Planning Secretary together with part of a plan, really, of the area, does he consider that this sort of very, very sketchy information either about the area, about the Government thinking on it and what the Government would like to see there, is not likely to attract developers of international standing and is it reasonable to expect developers to go into the tremendous expense of having a feasibility study with such poor guidelines?

HON A J CANEPA:

It does, Mr Speaker, seem to be attracting certainly many enquiries from developers of international standing. I can assure the Hon Member that probably as a result of the half page insert in the Estate Gazette, up until yesterday's post, at a time when the mail is notoriously bad, we have received eight enquiries and some of those from people of very high repute. Whether the information will be enough, what we are providing, remains to be seen but the burden is on the potential developer. They do have to submit feasibility studies in the same way as a feasibility study has to be provided if a new hotel is to be built, say, at Parson's Lodge or at Engineer Battery, in the same way as a feasibility study has to be submitted for the multi-storey car park at Casemates.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister not agree that this is a much bigger thing than Parson's Lodge or anything else? We are talking about a big sizeable chunk of Gibraltar being leased out to a developer. We are talking of 40 acres or whatever it is. Does not the Minister agree that if we are going to invite or attract developers of international standing, that there should almost be a brochure prepared about Gibraltar, its people, the population, all these things?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, we have got such a brochure. We have a development brochure which is also being sent to all the enquiries. I do not know whether the Hon Member has seen it or not but the Government does have a development brochure which is kept up-to-date and this is also being sent to the potential developers.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is it being given to everybody who applies for the forms because I can assure the Minister that is not the case?

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, perhaps, in respect of enquiries from within Gibraltar it has not been made available but certainly in respect of enquiries from outside Gibraltar the development brochure has been sent. However, I will ensure that any enquiries that we have received from within Gibraltar also get the development brochure.

HON P J ISOLA:

In view of the fact that one advert in the Estate Gazette has brought on eight enquiries, does that not support the question of my Hon Friend on the right of the really short time that is being given? If Government want to end up with the right development, is it not in the interest of Government to advertise as widely as possible and to give plenty of time for people to make their own enquiries? For example, Mr Speaker, would the Minister not agree that in the brochure that is given out or the form that is given out, would he not agree that a statement merely saying that the project is subject to the Development Aid Ordinance would mean nothing to any developer without an intimate knowledge of Gibraltar?

HON A J CANEPA:

I have already given an undertaking, Mr Speaker, that there is no difficulty about extending the period in respect of those who communicate to us before the 31st March, no difficulty at all. What we are after is to ensure as far as possible that the scheme does get off the ground and if extending the period is the way that it can and should be done then, of course, we are perfectly happy to do so.

HON A J HAYNES:

Why the hurry, Mr Speaker, when up till now every time we have asked something about the East side they have said "Nothing doing"?

HON A J CANEPA:

I disagree with the Hon Member. I have been asked about the East side and now I am going to give him chapter and verse because he has given me the opportunity. On the 11th March the Hon Mr Bossano asked: "Can Government state whether it has received any proposals for a land reclamation project on the East side of the Rock?" and I said: "No proposals have been received for such a project. Enquiries have, however, been received indicating interest in the 1968 reclamation proposals made then to the City Council which were related to the protection and development of the East Coast of Gibraltar for tourism". Again from the Hon Mr Bossano in July this year: "Can Government confirm that it has been told by MOD that William's Way Tunnel is required for defence purposes and cannot be used in connection with land reclamation on the East side of the Rock?" That led to a number of supplementaries including some from the Hon Mr Isola who asked: "Should a private firm apply to excavate from William's Way for reclamation on the East side, am I not right in thinking that any reclamation or any work on the Eastern side of the Rock would be subject, surely, to Government policy, tendering procedures and so forth? Am I right?" and I said, yes, he was. I said that I had a number of enquiries and I said: "I think that this is a matter that we want to pursue further, the whole question of economic development on the East side of the Rock and it will be tackled at my level rather than at an official level. I do not mind putting myself at the disposal of any people wishing to make an approach to me on the matter". This was in July. There had been previous questions so it has not come out of the blue, I should inform the Hon Mr Haynes, Mr Speaker, he can see that it has been very much in the pipeline and here it is.

HON A J HAYNES:

It has not come out of the blue, Mr Speaker, I mentioned it in my electoral broadcast. It has been a project which has been in the air since 1968 or 1969 so why, suddenly, the hurry for this deadline?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, the project came up in 1968 at the time that the border closed and that put an end to it. Naturally, interest has awakened because there are indications that the border may open and there have been indications since the signing of the Lisbon Agreement so, naturally, potential developers are now interested once again.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 335 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

In fact, Mr Speaker, this question has been partly answered already. Will Government inform this House as to the manner and extent in which the development on the East side has been advertised?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the invitation to submit proposals for development on the East coast has been advertised through the usual local news media and, in the United Kingdom, in the "Estates Gazette", which is one of the leading journals in the United Kingdom property world. The scheme was picked up by Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation and local newspapers and was given wide publicity. The local notice will be repeated at monthly intervals.

A press release giving details of the scheme was also issued on 2 December to 63 specialised newspapers in the United Kingdom by Eric Williams and Partners (Public Relations Consultants) Ltd on behalf of the Gibraltar Government Tourist Office. I can add, Mr Speaker, that I already have cuttings of it being given publicity in the Travel News of the 10 December and in the Travel Trade Gazette of the 11 December.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 335 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Would the Minister not agree that because the project is of this size it would be worth, having regard to the result there has been from the Estates Gazette, it would be worth having paid adverts in a whole range of papers?

HON A J CANEPA:

I will consult with my official advisers, Mr Speaker, as to whether we should put advertisements in journals other than the Estates Gazette.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will Government give greater consideration to those employing or likely to employ the largest possible reclamation and if so, will they then make that clear in their advertising?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, that will be a matter to be gone into when we consider the proposals which are received.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 336 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government make a statement on the 1978/81 Development Programme and outline the position with regard to the completion of this programme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, I would refer the Hon Member to the detailed statement which I made to the House on economic development during the course of this year's Budget session, where I gave a comprehensive account of progress on the 1978/81 Development Programme. In particular, Mr Speaker, the pages in question begins at the bottom of page 94 of the Hansard (Volume II) of the 11th March. I will, however, update the salient aspects. Total expenditure on the 1978/81 Programme will exceed £30m of which ODA grants will have accounted for £13m. The Gibraltar Government's contribution towards ODA funded projects has risen sharply from an estimated £0.9m to £4.6m. Financial slippage on ODA disbursements are estimated at £3.6m (mainly on one project - the Girls' Comprehensive School), the lowest ever percentage figure compared to previous programmes. In terms of physical progress, I would refer the Hon Member to my answer to Question 268 of 1981 at the last meeting, when I mentioned that completion of five remaining projects (ie St Jago's, St Joseph's, Flat Bastion and Lime Kiln 1A housing projects and the Girls' School) will be achieved by the summer of 1982.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 336 OF 1981

HON. P J ISOLA:

And these will be paid for in accordance with the Development Aid Programme of 1978/81?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 337 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Has Government any plans for further development to be put in motion now that this programme is nearing completion?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Yes, Sir. The 1981/86 Development Programme. As I have informed the House repeatedly, this programme involved lengthy and detailed pre-planning of a series of projects related to infrastructural development, housing and other areas of social and economic need. I would add that the Government has already committed local funds for a number of planned projects, eg the Power Station (£7m), the telephone (IDD) system (£1m), the Catalan Bay housing project (£0.35m), and a series of port projects. I would also refer to the statement I made at the last meeting regarding private sector redevelopment of selective properties and the advertised notice inviting proposals for the East side reclamation.

NO. 338 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state whether their application for funds to the EEC for investment in a Hydroponic Farm Project for Gibraltar has been considered and will Government ensure that an area is earmarked for such a project?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the Gibraltar Government has not made an application to the EEC for investment in a Hydroponic Farm Project for Gibraltar. After many meetings and lengthy correspondence with the person interested in the proposed scheme, the Gibraltar Government agreed to make an approach in the form of an enquiry, enclosing details of the project, on behalf of the person concerned. A reply has only recently been received, from Brussels which states that, irrespective of Gibraltar's status regarding the Common Agricultural Policy, there is no legal basis for aid for the project. A copy of the reply has been sent to the person concerned.

A number of large areas in the Upper Rock have been proposed for the project. The Development and Planning Commission has not accepted that the areas in question can be earmarked for hydroponic cultivation. The Government is in no position to ensure that an area will be earmarked for a project which imposes large demands on land and which seeks financial assistance in the order of £7 million, particularly since future requirements on land generally have not yet been finally determined.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 338 OF 1981

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister aware that one of our MEP's, namely, Mr Alf Lomas, has taken an interest in the matter and this interest has been communicated to the other MEP's responsible for Gibraltar and that Mr Alf Lomas outlined a method whereby EEC funds could or may be made available for such a project?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am aware, Mr Speaker, that Mr Lomas and, indeed, Lord Bethell, I think, himself, has taken an interest in this project and one would be grateful for any concrete assistance that they might be able to give which might make the EEC more amenable to granting assistance to the Gibraltar Government in respect of this and many other projects in respect of which we have already approached the EEC for financial assistance and I would be grateful to know, myself, how Mr Alf Lomas proposes to pursue the matter.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister, to put himself out of this difficulty, write to Mr Alf Lomas and find out from Mr Alf Lomas himself and if so will the Minister then undertake to write on behalf of the Gibraltar Government to solicit the help of the MEP's for such a project?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, if I may answer this part of the question. We are fully aware of how we can pursue the funding by the EEC of projects in Gibraltar, it is known as the Ortoli facility. What we have been doing is delaying going forward on any such proposals until we knew the answer to this from HMG to the development aid application, because one thing that we would have to make clear was how much aid we are receiving from HMG when we went forward with an Ortoli proposal.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I never understood that the Government was proposing to finance this project itself. How can the ODA therefore have any bearing on the EEC funds?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, I am speaking about the way in which the EIB would fund any project in Gibraltar. It is most unlikely that it would go to a specific person and give them funds, any funding would be done through the Government.

HON A J HAYNES:

How would that be affected by the ODA?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Because, Mr Speaker, the EIB would want to know what our development plans were over a period, where the money was coming from, to that extent they would require to know what funds we were getting from HMG.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does the Government not agree it is a desirable objective to make Gibraltar self-sufficient in vegetables and fruit and can Government explain why Government cannot earmark an area on the Rock face up above about which there has been no development for any time, for any year, and areas especially that I would have thought do not give themselves easily to any other sort of development than some sort of hydroponic farm?

HON A J CANEPA:

I would say that to be self-sufficient, generally, is a good thing and to be self-sufficient in respect of food and vegetables may very well be a good thing. One has got to weigh up that objective, however, with the fact that it is £7m that we are talking about and note that we have only been able to get £4m from the United Kingdom on the question of development, that the project is not labour intensive, it would only employ twenty or thirty people. As regards the land on the Upper Rock, I think I should inform the Hon Member that the Upper Rock is in fact designated in the City Plan as a nature conservation area, it is a recreational conservation area. So under the present City Plan to earmark an area for development there would be contrary to the statutory policy in respect of town planning. These are the considerations which have until present guided the Development and Planning Commission in its deliberations.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I can understand the question of money, this is understandable but I cannot understand why the Development and Planning Commission would not agree as a very desirable objective, a hydroponic farm in Gibraltar, finance to be found from somewhere by somebody, and would not be prepared to recommend a change in the City Plan because is it not a fact that probably when the City Plan was drawn up there was probably no such project, hydroponic farms, I believe, are things that have come up in recent years?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, that is not quite so. We in fact had a feasibility study on hydroponics conducted here in Gibraltar in 1975 by an Arizona University team and it was not very conclusive.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, coming back to an earlier point. Did the Financial and Development Secretary mean that when the ODA monies have been cleared up he would then be applying for funds or not?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

When we know the results of the application or submissions to HMG as to the 1981/86 development programme, we shall be in a position to go forward to the EIB on the Ortolí facility to see whether they will provide funds for any of the projects in the development plan.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister for Economic Development undertake to write to Mr Alf Lomas?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, Mr Alf Lomas is one of the Members of the European Parliament who form the Gibraltar Group and it is not for me to write to Mr Lomas.

HON A J HAYNES:

Why does the Minister show an interest in Mr Lomas' possible suggestion, does he want someone else to write for him?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think Mr Lomas is aware of the fact that I have had correspondence and meetings with the person concerned because invariably they are copied to Mr Lomas. In fact, the latest letter which I have received from the person concerned dated yesterday has been copied to the Hon the Leader of the Opposition and to Mr Alf Lomas and if Mr Alf Lomas has greater interest in pursuing the project, I think he himself would get in touch with me.

HON P J ISOLA:

What would be the point of anybody pursuing the project if the Government is not prepared to earmark an area for a hydroponic farm?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is a chick and egg situation, Mr Speaker. We are reviewing the City Plan next year and perhaps the Development and Planning Commission might be prepared to reconsider its policy in that respect if it were to be convinced that the project is viable and is feasible, if it were convinced that the funds are available and that that is the best way of utilising such considerable funds. Then I think it would be the responsible thing to reconsider the whole thing either by moving the Scouts to Princess Caroline's or making Princess Caroline's Battery available. I myself do not favour that, I can tell the Hon Member, any development in Princess Caroline's Battery. I would like to see some areas of the Upper Rock available to the whole of the public and I do not think we have got to develop the whole of Gibraltar but perhaps the more conservationist line that I adopt is not shared by everybody.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I then ask, if the Development and Planning Commission will have a look at this again next year on all the conditions that the Minister has said, will the Minister agree that it is desirable not to do anything with any particular land that could be used for a hydroponic farm until final conclusions have been reached, otherwise there is no point in pursuing the idea?

HON A J CANEPA:

Nothing is going to be done at Princess Caroline's, that is certain. As far as the Scouts are concerned I am not so sure but what I do ask the Hon Members to understand is this, that the Economic Adviser and myself have been giving this matter a great deal of attention. The Chief Minister is also the subject of a lot of correspondence but on these matters usually the buck stops here. I do not know what it is that people in Gibraltar would like me to concentrate my energy on, whether it is the definite problems that we know are coming up, this could fit in, I am not saying that it cannot, but my time is limited, my energy is limited and this is a matter that I have been giving a great deal of time to perhaps at the expense of other matters and we now have a number of consultancies coming up on supplementary economic activity and we are all going to have to be working very, very hard over the next year. Unless the funds are available, quite honestly, I am loath to give more of my time to a project which might be abortive in any case. I must be frank and sincere so that Hon Members know exactly how I stand on that matter.

HON A J HAYNES:

Has there been a change in Government policy as regards the hydroponic farm because as I understand it, on the 2nd October, 1980, the Chief Minister undertook to write a letter stating that the Government of Gibraltar fully supported the hydroponic farm scheme and what they awaited was funds from the EEC?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, that is not correct, Mr Speaker. What was being sought was a declaration from the Gibraltar Government that it was prepared to earmark land for that purpose and the Government has never been prepared to earmark land for that purpose and I am telling you today, now, what the position is. That the Government was being pressed to do that, that is another matter.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 339 OF 1981

17.12.81

THE HON P J ISOLA

ORAL

Will Government make a statement on the Development Aid talks held in Gibraltar recently and have any assurances been given in relation to Development Aid in the foreseeable future?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

I think, Mr Speaker, I dealt at length with this matter in the statement I made earlier today.

THE HON G T RESTANO

ORAL

Has Government issued an invitation to Mr Neil Marten, Minister for Overseas Development, to visit Gibraltar in connection with the next Development Plan?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

The answer must be the same. I wanted to say a little more this morning but I was adhering to my statement and that is that as I had the opportunity of seeing Mr Marten as it was expected he would have been at the meeting with the Lord Privy Seal and the Minister for Defence, I would have referred had he been reluctant to accept the invitation, to the message I got from the Hon Member that he had said at the CPA Plenary Conference that he was willing to be invited and I would also have reminded him that at the previous CPA Conference he gave a similar reply to Mr Featherstone which was followed by an invitation which was later side tracked but in fact he was not able to be at this meeting because of the bad weather conditions in England that made it impossible for people to get to London. The message was conveyed at the meeting and also, on my behalf, to the Permanent Under Secretary by the Financial and Development Secretary when he visited him so the invitation is there and I shall now follow it by a formal letter inviting him to come.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.340 OF 1981

HON G T RESTANO:

I am grateful for that reply, Mr Speaker. If I may just take up the Chief Minister on one point where he said that the previous year there had been a similar conversation with Mr Featherstone and that an invitation had been sent to Mr Marten, was this invitation not accepted?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, it was linked up with something else, it was not accepted and we were side-tracked on that one, I do not say by Mr Marten himself but I think he was advised that it would not have been prudent for him to come at that time, that is my understanding of the situation.

HON G T RESTANO:

Was it followed up in any way?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, it was followed up but the answer was always the same and it came to a point when things were complicated and it was obvious that he had fore-knowledge of things to come and he was not prepared to come out.

THE HON J BOSSANO

ORAL

Is it Government's intention to continue to apply parity of wages and salaries and civil service conditions of employment irrespective of what happens to the Dockyard?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the application of the principle of parity of wages and salaries and conditions is subject to annual review by the Official Employers. In so far as the Gibraltar Government is concerned, the matter is looked at on the basis of the financial position and the overall state of the economy.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 341 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

So is the Chief Minister then saying, Mr Speaker, that the Government can give no commitment that it wishes to continue with parity of wages in the event of the composition of the public sector being reduced as a result of the Dockyard being run down?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not want to speculate, Mr Speaker, what the situation will be when the matter is considered in the normal way prior to the 1982 review.

HON J BOSSANO

Would the Chief Minister not agree that it is only correct that people who are outside the Dockyard should be made aware of whether their wages and salaries and their conditions of employment are likely to be put at risk or not by what happens to the Dockyard?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I would like to say that I hope it is possible to carry on with the wages policy. I do not know what the economic position will be, what the alternative would be and I think I have gone far enough to say that it would be our hope, not only in respect of the people that we employ but an indication of what remains of what may have gone away by the closure of the Dockyard if it is closed, that we will be able to maintain that.

HON J BOSSANO:

Have the UK Departments given any indication to the Gibraltar Government as to what their attitude would be in the event of the Dockyard not continuing in MOD hands?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

None whatever.

THE HON J BOSSANO

ORAL

Can Government state whether the motion passed in the July meeting of this House with reference to the Dockyard's future was brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Government and if so what their reaction to it was?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

The text of the resolution passed on 14 July was formally transmitted to the Governor on 20 July. The matters dealt with in that resolution have been discussed in detail with British Government officials and with UK Ministers and I explained the present position on these matters in the statement I made earlier today.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 342 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Chief Minister agree that in fact the decision of the British Government on the announcement of closing the Dockyard in 1983 and, indeed, the way it was handled, runs contrary entirely to the feelings of this House as expressed in that motion and in the contributions made?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I think that is obvious, I do not have to agree with it, it is obvious and I have brought it to the notice of the Secretary of State not, if I may say so, directly resulting but it was very much in the papers that were before the officials here and that, I think, was reflected I hope clearly in my statement this morning.

HON J BOSSANO:

And the Chief Minister would also agree then that in fact the British Government decided to proceed with this in the full knowledge of the fact that it was contrary to the wishes of the House of Assembly because they were fully informed before they took the decision?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am sure that it must have been as much with the knowledge of the feelings of the House of Assembly as of the 7,000 workers of Chatham and those at Portsmouth when the decision was taken that it would affect them. Whether they had passed a resolution or not they would certainly have passed it before and in fact I think the hard answer to that is that the Government have taken very hard decisions well knowing that it was going to upset a lot of people and some of the people who have been upset and particularly affected are the people of Gibraltar and we are trying to do our best out of that situation.

NO. 343 OF 1981

17.12.81

THE HON J BOSSANO

ORAL

When was the Gibraltar Government informed that Her Majesty's Government had taken the decision to close the Naval Dockyard in 1983?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

I was informed, in the strictest confidence, on Friday 20 November that is, less than 48 hours before the Unions were informed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 343 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, did in fact the Chief Minister make any attempt in that 48 hours either to communicate with anybody else on the issue or to go back to the British Government and try and get the matter handled in a different way?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I could not communicate to anybody because it had been given to me in strict confidence but I made my feelings pretty well clear and I am sure that they were transmitted to London as is normally done when one takes matters up of this importance and this nature and, in fact, the reactions are in my experience always reported back.

Was the consultancy on a Commercial Dockyard suggested by the UK Government to the Gibraltar Government?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

The ODA suggested a consultancy to study the effects of possible changes arising from the Defence Review, not for a commercial Dockyard as such.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 344 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Was the possibility of a commercial Dockyard then entirely the idea of the consultants themselves and not part of their brief?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Their brief was a consultancy to assess the effects of the Defence Review which no doubt also indicated the closing of the Dockyard so it seems to me pretty obvious that they had to look at the whole picture. Certainly, nobody to my knowledge mentioned the question of the commercialisation, this must have been a natural result of the study of the proposed closing of the Naval Dockyard.

HON J BOSSANO:

And it was not suggested at an earlier stage either by the British Government to the Gibraltar Government?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, not at all.

Has the Gibraltar Government been consulted on the proposed closure of the Chart Depot?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, the Gibraltar Government has not been consulted on the question of the future of the Chart Depot.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.345 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Gibraltar Government aware that the Unions were informed in June of the proposed closure of the Chart Depot?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, we were not aware and we have had to make extensive enquiries in order to be able to provide the answer to the Hon Member of which he knew better before he asked than I do now.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, with all due respect to the Hon Member, I did not know he did not know given all this highly confidential consultations to which he is privy and I am not but would the Hon Member not agree that it seems very peculiar that the consultants who carry out a study of the commercialisation of the Dockyard should include the Chart Depot as part of the area that is not going to be closed down a couple of months after there has been an official decision to do away with it? Does he not agree it is very strange?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Very peculiar.

NO. 346 OF 1981

17.12.81

THE HON J BOSSANO

ORAL

Has the Gibraltar Government been told the total number of jobs that would be lost in the UK Departments if the Naval Dockyard were to close, including those, if any, in DOE/PSA?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker with your permission I propose to answer this Question together with No.347.

NO. 347 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

How many service and UK based civilian jobs would be lost in Gibraltar if the Naval Dockyard were to close?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

As the Hon Member knows, the only figures that the Gibraltar Government have are those contained in the Dockyard Study Report. These figures were disputed by the MOD(N) in London and discussions were subsequently held between the Dockyard Study consultants and the MOD(N) to resolve the differences. The latest assessment shows that the likely direct effect of Dockyard closure would be in the order of 1,300 employees. This figure includes UK-based civilians, the Refit Group and the PSA/DOE.

Figures should be treated as orders of magnitude and do not in any way refer to the precise impact.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 347 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is it not the case that the Refit Group, for example, is already in the process of being returned to UK, the individuals involved in the Refit Group that are Service people who are based in Gibraltar for the purpose of carrying out frigate refits?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

All that we know is that the Refit Group will go back when the refit that is at present going on with the frigate is completed.

HON J BOSSANO:

Which is in fact next month, is it not, Mr Speaker?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

So it is said to be, yes.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member not agree that in fact given, for example, that in the Dockyard Study the economic implications of the loss of UK-based jobs and service jobs are worked out as a result of the relationships established in the Input/Output Study, would he not agree that already in January we are going to start seeing the beginning of the policy of running down the Dockyard taking place and the economic effect even if this is not at first glance noticeable to everybody? Would he not agree in fact that we are not talking about a hypothetical situation in the future, we are talking about something that is already beginning to happen?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Will the Hon Member simplify the two questions?

HON J BOSSANO:

What I am saying is in fact, Mr Speaker, if within this number of 1,300 we have the Refit Group and UK-based civilians who are in Gibraltar because of the frigate refits and these people will be going back to UK in a month's time and that has an economic impact which is reflected in the Input/Output Study, would he not agree that in fact we are not talking about a hypothetical order of effect in the future but that the beginning of the run-down is starting in January and the effects of that run-down are starting in January?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, of course it has, it had when 224 Squadron was closed suddenly and we lost a considerable amount of money in defence spending, I entirely agree, of course. One person that goes away has an effect but let me say that according to the figures I have, in both areas of the numbers given as the grand total of direct effect and I have given the most favourable one, it excludes the Refit Group.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17.12.81

NO. 348 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government give an undertaking that it will not seek to reduce its services or the number of employees in the event of a closure of the Dockyard?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I am sure the Hon Member must appreciate that it is too early for me to be able to answer this question with any degree of certainty. I very much hope that the need for either of the two measures referred to in the question will not arise.

17.12.81

NO. 349 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has the Gibraltar Government been given specific proposals by the British Government as to how the latter intends to offset the effects of the proposed Dockyard closure?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I would like to answer this question jointly with Question No. 352.

NO. 350 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government confirm that it was the intention of the British Government to close the Naval Dockyard in 1977 and that this was prevented because Government would not participate in the "Strasbourg Talks" unless the proposed Dockyard closure was not proceeded with?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir. The sequence of events was as follows:

1. I was first informed of the proposed closure of the Dockyard, in strict confidence, on 8 July, 1977, by a Labour Government, by the way. It shows that it comes from all sides when the time comes, this was purely on an economy basis. I strongly resisted this in correspondence with the British Government through His Excellency the Governor.
2. At a meeting on 19 September, 1977, the Foreign Secretary informed me that he would do his best to persuade his colleagues and the Prime Minister to hold action on the Dockyard in abeyance while wider issues were being considered.
3. At a meeting with Dr Owen on 4 November, 1977, I myself suggested that talks might be held between the British Foreign Secretary and the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs with Gibraltarian leaders forming part of the British delegation.
4. By that time the British Government had already agreed to hold action on the Dockyard in abeyance.
5. The first talks, as people know, were held in Strasbourg on 24 November, 1977.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 350 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the matter of the Dockyard was not revived then by the British Government either during the course of the so-called Strasbourg process or once it met its timely death?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Never, the thing fell into oblivion.

NO. 351 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government make available to Members the plans that were prepared in 1976 to deal with a possible closure of the Dockyard?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir. These plans are not available in Gibraltar.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 351 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, didn't the Hon Member say in a television interview that they were going to be brought out of their pigeon hole once the White Paper was announced, is it that he cannot find it in the pigeon hole?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, I said that they should be brought out from the pigeon hole because we had been through this trauma before, that is what I said. I was shown the brief at the time in the strictest confidence, it is really not relevant today but as far as we are concerned we have to deal with the present day situation but the plans, I can assure Members and in fact I started to make enquiries after this in order to prepare myself for it when the first announcements were made not for this question but when the announcement was made and they were not in Gibraltar. In fact, to some extent I was originally told that because they were the plans of the previous Government they were not available to the present Government.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I am talking about the plans the Gibraltar Government had then to deal with the situation not the plans the British Government had then to close the Dockyard.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

We had no plans to deal with the situation, I am very sorry but it must be a misunderstanding.

HON J BOSSANO:

I think the Hon Member gave the impression in a television interview after the White Paper, perhaps he will go back and check, that in fact there were plans then which would not have to be looked at again if the possibility of the closure reared its ugly head again, I think were his words.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, I was discussing this precisely with the then Minister on Tuesday night, Dame Judith Hart, because she was responsible for commissioning the plans and I was referring to those plans. I said there was the threatened Dockyard closure in 1977, I knew that on that occasion and I think I should stress this because it is important in relation to our participation in this, that those plans were being made entirely by the British Government in anticipation of the closure of the Dockyard, entirely by the British Government, and as I say, I was shown it in the strictest confidence later on and whilst the problem was on the mat but it did not ever reach a stage in which we had to make any contingency plan. Perhaps the Hon Member misunderstood me, perhaps I was not articulate enough but I could not refer to any other plans because no other plans could have been in my mind.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government aware what are the measures Her Majesty's Government proposes to carry out to maintain the economic and financial stability of Gibraltar in the event of:

- a) the opening of the frontier with Spain having an adverse effect on the economy
- b) a reduction in the level of MOD expenditure in Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I have dealt with these matters, as far as I am able to at present, in the statement I made earlier today.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 349 AND 352 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I am sure the Hon Member knows that I do not agree otherwise I would not have asked the questions. Will the Hon Member say whether, in fact, the British Government accepts even that it has an obligation to make specific proposals about off-setting the Dockyard closure?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, I think that that is clear from the statement that I made this morning. If it is not clear it must be my fault but I thought everybody had understood that as being what all the fuss and all the talks and all the business and all the protests were about, about which I informed the House at large.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Chief Minister then saying that the position now is that the British Government accepts that it is their responsibility to suggest to the Gibraltar Government precise measures intended to maintain Gibraltar's economic equilibrium and that the process of consultation is that the Gibraltar Government will then tell the British Government whether such measures are acceptable to the Government of Gibraltar or considered sufficient or suitable?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I really do not know whether I remember all the little speech that my Hon Friend makes to put a question. I think, speaking generally, of course the British Government appreciates that the action that they have taken has an effect on Gibraltar, that they have a duty under the White Paper especially as stated in the White Paper and that they have the duty under the policy of support and sustain both of which have been reiterated. I think that it would not be

in keeping with the responsibility of the Government of Gibraltar if the Government of Gibraltar did not cooperate with the efforts that the British Government propose to make to try and see how that can be alleviated and in that respect, of course, the consultancies that are going to be done in addition to the already existing ones and the enquiries about the commercialisation of the Dockyard are spheres in which we must cooperate. We cannot really live in a cocoon and expect the British Government to do everything for us, we must make them responsible for the ultimate result but we must make it clear that we want to cooperate in saving our standards of living and in maintaining life in Gibraltar as we know it.

HON J BOSSANO:

Does that apply equally, Mr Speaker, to the subject matter of Question 352 which is different from 349 in that it is not limited to a closure of the Dockyard but is concerned with the level of expenditure in Gibraltar, that is, the level of MOD expenditure as it has been up to now?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am sorry, I cannot read anything more into this question than what I have read in it before and I have answered and that is that it is all part and parcel of the same problem and let me say that an adverse effect on the economy on the opening of the frontier has been emphasised in order to disillusion anybody who may think, and there are people who do think that the opening of the frontier is going to be the end of all our problems. In fact, I made the particular point to the Secretary of State that with an open frontier the closing of the Dockyard would have been equally disastrous in order to emphasise the point.

HON J BOSSANO:

May I ask the Chief Minister, has in fact the British Government given the Gibraltar Government an indication of the savings it is expecting or hoping to achieve in MOD expenditure in Gibraltar as the result of the review?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, not at all, that figure has not been given at all.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Chief Minister not agree that that is a very relevant figure when we are talking about either maintaining the level of expenditure or substituting for it?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Perhaps I should preface this by saying that I am only answering the question to the extent that this is information to the House which I may have and which is not in the possession of Hon Members and if I have it I think it should be in the possession of every Member. I would like to stress once again that I am not answerable for the British Government in this House or anywhere else, I am only answerable for the people of Gibraltar but I appreciate that I am the political link or rather we all are but I have perhaps the highest responsibility, obviously, of the elected political link and therefore I must put whatever information I have at the disposal of Members in this respect. It has been emphasised to me that it is the change of Defence policy that has brought about this and not a question of Defence cuts. The Defence policy has affected Gibraltar considerably because there is very little money to go around for other things if you are going to spend the sort of money that is being spent to be a junior member of the nuclear club and therefore less money is available for more conventional methods of defence and, indeed, this is a matter which I discussed with Mr John Silkin, the Shadow Minister, because as I think I said before and if I did not I am sorry and I ought to say it now, that it is of course the view not only of Mr Silkin but of the Labour Party that the accent on defence is wrong and that it should go on the conventional side as the Americans are bringing out a lot of their warships which are in mothballs and that it is not the way for the British Government to reverse the procedure but there it is. This is the decision that was taken by the Defence Secretary which was sprung on everybody at the same time and what is likely to affect us seriously and we have to try and ameliorate that extent and certainly we must not be failing in our efforts so that nobody can ever point a finger at us that we did not save the situation by refusing to collaborate in an attempt to remedy whatever damage will be done.

HON J. BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if I can get back to the subject of the question that I was actually asking the Chief Minister. Would he not agree, if he has not been given the information as to the savings that the British Government hopes to achieve and since fundamentally it is a political decision related to economic factors of funding a nuclear programme out of a £20,000m budget, would he not agree that it is pertinent to ask the British Government just how much do they expect to save in Gibraltar towards their financing of nuclear weapons?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

In that respect I think we have done a little homework and that is that without in any way attempting to question that, representations have been made regarding what it really means, what in that kind of budget that the Hon Member has mentioned Gibraltar really means, but at the time when as the Hon Member sitting next to the Questioner knows, things are running so very tight in the United Kingdom and local authorities are fighting over a post of caretaker and as to whether there will be a grant from the central Government and so on, these arguments looked at logically do not appear to carry much weight when every penny appears to be required to build up nuclear weapons.

NO. 353 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government been told by the British Government that the policy of "sustain and support" and Development Aid as such will not be continued once the Spanish restrictions against Gibraltar are removed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir. We have made it very clear that, in our view, aid will be required for some time after the frontier opens, that is, irrespective of the Dockyard closure.

We shall be pressing this view when we come to discuss the aid submission

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 353 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

I accept, Mr Speaker, that that is the view of the Gibraltar Government but in fact has that view been accepted by the British Government?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It has not been denied when we have maintained it.

HON J BOSSANO:

So the British Government has neither confirmed nor denied whether it intends to terminate development aid and sustain and support with the frontier open?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There has been no specific qualification in discussing the sustain and support policy with regard to the opening of the frontier.

HON J BOSSANO:

So, in fact, Mr Speaker, I take it that I am right in thinking that Mr Fergusson in his visit to Gibraltar did not say to the Chief Minister that the aid programme was linked to the frontier restrictions and that although there would not be an automatic and immediate halt to it we could not expect it to continue, he did not say that?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is true to say and I think we should not miss sight of the fact that the support and sustain policy arose out of the difficulties which started by the frontier restrictions and we have always held that until we have got back to normality after the opening of the frontier that the sustain and support policy should continue. I am grateful to the Hon Financial and Development Secretary who was present at the talks with me the other day, the tenor of the discussion did not indicate anything like any barrier being put on that, in fact, it was accepted implicitly because it is in the report and it was on that assumption that the opening of the frontier would bring strains and stresses more than benefits.

NO. 354 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government been told when the British Government expects the negotiations with Spain under the terms of the Lisbon Agreement to commence?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

It has always been the intention that the negotiations with Spain envisaged under the Lisbon Agreement should begin simultaneously with the removal of the restrictions. I have no information as to when this will take place.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 354 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Does the Chief Minister think that he is likely to get prior information or does he think he is likely to be presented with it? Does he expect or has he got an understanding with the British Government that he will be told beforehand?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I think I can say with some element of confidence though having regard to recent events I might get a knockout, that we are bound to know, at least I am bound to know with a little certainty. Let me also say that even logistically we would want to know because there are many administrative arrangements that have to be made and in any case it is also necessary because if in fact the negotiations are going to start at the same time, to get two Foreign Secretaries together plus, which is a more important thing, the Chief Minister of Gibraltar and the Leader of the Opposition, for the talks, will require a certain amount of previous arrangement.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 355 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government aware what facilities will be enjoyed by the Spanish Armed Forces in Gibraltar once Spain has joined NATO and the frontier restrictions are removed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 335 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, has in fact the Government of Gibraltar made any representations in this respect to the British Government as regards the facilities that the MOD may make available to Spain in the context of NATO?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Civil servants are very clever. The supplementary which has been prepared is very near to what the Hon Member had said and the answer is that the matter has been raised and I understand that it is one to be discussed once Spain is actually in NATO.

HON J BOSSANO:

Will, in fact, the British Government then be consulting the Government of Gibraltar on this issue?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I have no doubt that the British Government through the Governor, who is also Commander-in-Chief, will consult. My experience of recent events regarding the Spanish situation is that I am much better informed on that than on Defence cuts.

NO. 356 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Does the Gibraltar Government continue to have the absolute faith in the British Government the Chief Minister expressed publicly in June this year?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

The word I used was not absolute but near it. While recent events have upset me considerably, I was reassured, as I said in my statement earlier today, by the renewed expressions of support which I received from Lord Carrington on Monday.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 356 OF 1981

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon and Learned Member would allow me to correct him, the transcript of what he said in television does show that he said that he had absolute faith and that he had stuck out his neck and what I am asking him is whether in fact he still feels as confident now as he felt in the aftermath of the White Paper about the way he sticks out his neck in putting his faith in the British Government?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, to some extent I do because if you do not have faith, well, perhaps you cannot understand that, but if you have no faith in your own resolution then you are finished.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17.12.81

NO. 357 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, has Government now considered the question of making public the report of the Committee of Inquiry into the disruption of normal teaching at Bayside Boys' Comprehensive?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Yes, Sir, copies of the report will be distributed to Members of the House and to interested parties. Arrangements are also in hand for a copy to be made available for public scrutiny at the John Mackintosh Hall.

17.12.81

NO. 358 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, is Government now in a position to make a comprehensive statement with regard to the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Public Works Department as stated in answer to Question No. 280 of 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, a statement on this matter will be made at the next meeting of the House.

NO. 359 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, is there any particular reason why the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation is not paying rent in respect of its occupancy of Mercury House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, it is confirmed that the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation will continue to pay a peppercorn rent for Mercury House as it did for its previous premises at Wellington Front. The reason for this is that the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation is not a commercial undertaking but a statutory body heavily dependent on public funds to meet both its current and capital commitments. Any other arrangement would only have added to the amount of Government subvention.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 359 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean, Sir, that the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation will not be granted a lease by the Government of their premises?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

A lease is being prepared at a peppercorn rent.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr. Speaker, is there any reason why the Broadcasting Corporation should be given that asset of a lease at a peppercorn rent?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Because it will be only for as long as it is used for the purpose for which it is meant. I have not seen a copy of the lease but I was going to say, I thought perhaps I might have got another kind of supplementary though I have no brief on it but I would have thought that if in fact the time came when the Corporation was in such good funds provided by their advertising that there was no need for subvention and that in fact they might show a profit, then it might be the time to consider whether they should not pay the rent for the premises.

HON P J ISOLA:

In that case doesn't the Chief Minister agree it would not be wise to give them a lease?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is why I said I have my own ideas about what the terms of the lease will be when the time comes.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17.12.81

NO. 360 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, has the Chairman of the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation in fact signed the Balance Sheet as at 31st March, 1980?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Yes, Sir. The Chairman, Mr J C Cortes, in fact, signed the copies of the Balance Sheet included in the three bound sets of the Financial Statements - 31 March, 1980 - and Auditor's Report of the Corporation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 360 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Chief Minister appreciate that that does not appear in the copies of the accounts that have been circulated to Members?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, I appreciate that. One set is now filed in the Government Central Registry file on this matter, another set is held by the Principal Auditor and the third set was returned to the Corporation's Auditors, Messrs Clinton Chartered Accountants.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 361 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

In view of the need to ensure that the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation should not only be independent but be seen to be independent does Government not agree that both sides of the House should be consulted on appointments to the Board of the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the Government is satisfied that the present procedure for appointing members to the Board of the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation is adequate.

The Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation acts in accordance with the Directions issued by His Excellency the Governor in Council which require the maintenance of strict political impartiality.

The Government does not agree that the independence of the Corporation would be further guaranteed by the other side of the House being involved in the procedure for the appointment of the members of the Board.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 361 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Would the Chief Minister not agree that it would be fairer because that would ensure that persons who either side of the House consider probably have a bias towards the other party would not be appointed to the Board and would not that be a good thing and in the public interest?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

In cases of doubt I am quite prepared to have a word with the Leader of the Opposition but on the advice I have and on my own feeling on this it is a responsibility of the Government. To the extent that it is possible in a place of this size we do try to find people as independent as possible and certainly to exclude anybody who is well known to have any political bias one way or the other.

HON P J ISOLA:

But would the Chief Minister not agree that it is better that these matters should be ironed out before an appointment is made because once an appointment is made and then the appointment is called in question it results in embarrassment for all the parties, those objecting and those against whom objections have been made?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I have no experience of any objections to anyone, indeed, quite a number of the members in the Board today were appointed originally by members of the then IWPB Government and those who have wished to do so have remained but as I indicated when I said that I would be prepared in doubtful cases to have a word with the Leader of the Opposition, I meant before appointment.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17.12.81

NO. 362 OF 1981

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, how many vacancies are there on the Board of the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation and when does Government expect to fill up the vacancies?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, as I stated on 26 October, there were two vacancies on the Board which have now been filled.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 362 OF 1981

HON P J ISOLA:

Have the names been published?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Hon Member will remember in a supplementary I said that people were being approached and that we did take a little time until the new Chairman was consulted on the matter and the appointments have only been made recently. The terms of office of the Board, with the exception of that of the new Chairman who was appointed on the 29th October, 1981, expires on the 31st December, 1981, and the opportunity of the need to appoint new members or re-appoint the current membership has been taken to fill the vacancies. I think I should say two of the vacancies have been filled by Mr J L Tavares, Manager of the Banque de L'Indochine and Major A L Casciaro (retd).