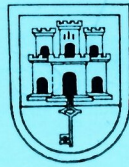


GIBRALTAR

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

23 March 1983
91 to 181

NO. 91 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, why is it (a) that the Report of the Select Committee on the Matrimonial Causes Ordinance has not been circulated with the Agenda for the coming House of Assembly meeting?

(b) that there is no notice of motion on the Order Paper seeking the approval of the House for the Report as is usually the case with Reports of Select Committees?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, the Report could not be completed in time for the Agenda. It is being tabled at this meeting in order to meet a commitment I gave at the last meeting. There is no notice of motion on the Order Paper because it is appreciated that all Hon Members will need a reasonable period of time to study the Report. A notice of motion will be given in due course.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 91 OF 1983

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, would the Hon and Learned Attorney-General not agree that it is thoroughly unsatisfactory that documents that are being considered or are to be laid before the House should not be circulated to Hon Members before the Agenda? It is a very unsatisfactory way of doing business.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Sir, I cannot disagree.

HON P J ISOLA:

On the other point, Mr Speaker, as I understand the position if there is no motion on the Order Paper seeking the approval of the House, the Report of the Select Committee remains confidential until the House has considered it.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

That is my understanding of the situation, yes.

MR SPEAKER:

That is correct, most certainly, it is confidential to the Members of the House.

HON P J ISOLA:

So that, Mr Speaker, will the Hon and Learned Attorney-General not agree that the absence of a motion is unsatisfactory then for two reasons, that the public knows that the Report has been laid on the table of the House and yet the public has not access to it and is this not likely to lead to dissatisfaction at the manner in which we conduct our affairs?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I think I have already said that I agree that it is generally unsatisfactory that this should not be included with the Agenda.

HON P J ISOLA:

And the last supplementary, is it right, Mr Speaker, not right that is probably the wrong word, is it appropriate to draft a Bill to go with the Select Committee Report when the Committee's Report has not been considered by the House and could be rejected?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I think there is nothing wrong whatsoever with attaching a draft of a Bill to the Select Committee Report.

HON P J ISOLA:

The Hon and Learned Attorney-General may say that but is it, especially on a subject on which the House has taken a free vote, haven't we wasted a lot of time at the end of the day if the Report of the Select Committee is rejected by the House and all the work on the legislation has been done for nought?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

If the Report of the Select Committee is rejected by the House then perhaps we have wasted some time but it is common practice, if I may say so, to attach a Bill on whatever subject a Select Committee deliberates on. I think there are two advantages to it, one is that it illustrates to Members exactly what the Report is recommending should be achieved and, secondly, if the Report is adopted the work has already been done on those aspects of it. Of course, it does not preclude amendments to the Bill, it does not preclude additional provisions.

HON P J ISOLA:

But does this not go to the normal practice in this House where a Select Committee Report, the House accepts or does not accept the Report and then the Government considers the legislation that is required in their view to implement the Report? This, to me, seems to be the mistake.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I cannot agree that it is a mistake and I think there is nothing in the Report which pre-empts the prerogatives of Members of the House to vote on such legislation or to introduce such legislation as they wish.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, perhaps the Hon Member could confirm that it is up to the Members of the Select Committee to present their findings in the way they consider most appropriate and in this case that includes the draft of a Bill, perhaps he can confirm that that is the case?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, on two points. On the question of the confidentiality it is regrettable that it is not being discussed at the same time. On the other hand I am sure that people will understand that it will be made public as soon as it is going to be debated and that the Report is not a Government Report but a Report of both sides of the House. With regard to the other matter I do not recall at the moment any other Select Committee that was appointed specially to amend any legislation but I confirm what the Attorney-General has said that certainly it is the practice in the United Kingdom that if the Committee wish to show and makes it easier, perhaps, how the Committee sees the legislation in their recommendations by producing a model draft of what they would like. That does not mean that that is a draft of the Government, it is a draft of those who have subscribed to the Report and I think that should be commended.

HON P J ISOLA:

How is explanation going to be given to the public, Mr Speaker, of a Committee that

MR SPEAKER:

I am afraid that we are beginning to debate.

HON P J ISOLA:

I do not wish to debate but it is a matter of importance as far as the procedures of this House are concerned.

MR SPEAKER:

As far as the procedures of this House are concerned I believe that I am the person to pronounce on that, the procedure which has been carried out is completely and utterly in order. It is up to the House now to decide when the Report is considered whether they accept the Report and the proposed legislation, either one or the other or both or none. The procedure is correct even though it may not have been followed on other occasions.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, my basic complaint is that a Select Committee that was set up in November, 1980, reports to the House at the very last minute thus not allowing for the House to consider and debate the Report and not allowing the public to even see it until possibly now in June after the budget statement or is it proposed to put a motion in the House during the budget session?

MR SPEAKER:

With respect to the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition, that is fair comment on the question of the fact that the Report has been laid and is not going to be discussed. I thought we were discussing the question as to whether it is right and proper for the Committee to include the Bill in the Report.

HON P J ISOLA:

I accept, Mr Speaker, the Committee can put the Report in any shape it likes. What I am worried about and what I am concerned about is that a Report should be laid before the House which cannot be made public and which will not be made public unless, of course, it is leaked, for another two months at least and that a Select Committee Report should come to the House in sufficient time to enable a motion to be put confirming the Report and if that means that the legislation cannot come with it then so be it because what the House is concerned about is the recommendations of the Select Committee.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the matter has been ventilated and we will call the next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many prosecutions have there been during the last twelve months for abandoning derelict cars?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

There have been no prosecutions, Sir. It was found in the past that when enquiries were made with a view to prosecution those who had abandoned vehicles went to ground and much time was wasted while the vehicle remained in the streets. More recent policy has been to seek the cooperation of the owner in order to get agreement to remove and dispose of the vehicle and this has saved time and removed eyesores.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 92 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Hon and Learned Attorney-General when does the Police consider a car to be a derelict because there are a number of cars on the roads in Gibraltar which are slowly being dismantled and this dismantling process takes a matter of weeks? When does the Police consider that the car is derelict before taking any action?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

As I recall, Mr Speaker, the law applies to two matters, derelict cars and abandoned cars, and indeed the Questioner refers to the abandoning of derelict cars. I think it is quite a nice point but if I was asked for an opinion I would say the moment at which it becomes derelict is the moment at which it can be shown that nobody really is concerned to take care of it or do anything with it. If it is something short of derelict, I have to look into this but if it is something short of derelict, if it is merely constituting an eyesore, then I think that we passed some legislation in this House some time ago which would enable us to take action not under the Derelict Vehicles Provisions but under provisions, as I recall it, of the Public Health Ordinance.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, why have no prosecutions been taken under the legislation which we passed in this House?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I did not understand this to be the point of the original question. I can enquire and find out but I would need time to find out that.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can Government explain how two children were able to cross the frontier into Spain undetected by the Police?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, I presume the question relates to the two who entered Spain on 10 March. They did not enter Spain through the frontier, but on their own admission by climbing around the fence at Eastern Beach.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 93 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, would then I be correct in assuming that this part of the frontier with Spain is not under the security that we would wish?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, I do not think that is necessarily a correct assumption. The authorities who do supervise this area have been informed of the incident, obviously.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, would this mean actually that it would be possible for fugitives from justice to cross over into Spain via the same way?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

It has been known in the past, to my knowledge.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, if it has been known in the past why haven't the authorities done anything about it?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The authorities do not encourage the situation at all, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 94 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, in order to release the more able bodied policemen for genuine police duties, would Government consider employing Wardens as they did previously?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 94 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, why not when one considers, am I not right in saying, that to have a Policeman on a pedestrian crossing four times a day must surely be costing the taxpayer a hefty sum of money?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The Government has never employed Traffic Wardens as such. Some years ago a number of elderly men were employed on car parking duties and they also assisted with school crossings and also beach duties but the arrangement was discontinued on the basis that it was inefficient and uneconomical.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon Attorney-General trying to tell us that it is more economical to have a Policeman doing lollipop-man duty than have an actual elderly person seeing children across a pedestrian crossing?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think I also referred, Mr Speaker, to the fact that it was not sufficiently efficient and of course efficiency is a factor on the whole thing.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is there any special qualification needed to see children across a pedestrian crossing?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Yes, care and alertness but, Mr Speaker, may I say by way of information that there are some jurisdictions in which the children themselves, the senior pupils of a school, manage pedestrian crossings as school patrols. That is a matter which is a possibility, it is a possibility I think which will require an element of public acceptance before it can be considered further.

HON A T LODDO:

But, Mr Speaker, if the public accepted all this before, I do not see why the public should be asked to accept it all over again.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am sorry, I think I have not made myself clear, I am talking about school patrols manned by senior pupils in a school and I know that elsewhere that arrangement works very well and in fact it is a far more serious offence in real terms to disobey a school patrol manned by a pupil than it would be, possibly, by a Policeman.

HON J BOSSANO:

This supposed inefficiency, Mr Speaker, that Wardens were apparently guilty of, could it have been due to their age? Is the Hon Member saying that to use Wardens is per se inefficient or that the Wardens that were in post at the time were elderly?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I do not think I could say that these Wardens per se were inefficient, I take the point.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member look into the question of the use that is made of the Police Force before he increases the number of Policemen employed as he has intimated at the last meeting of the House? Will he do it?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think it is not really a matter for myself but it is certainly a matter I will discuss with the appropriate people.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, have there been any prosecutions for illegal importation of meat products since the partial opening of the frontier?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir. The quantities detected have not warranted prosecutions.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 95 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Have any fines been put locally at the frontier?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am sorry, Sir, I do not understand the question.

HON G T RESTANO:

Have any fines been imposed?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

If there is no prosecution there cannot be a fine.

HON G T RESTANO:

What is done with the meat products which are found to be brought in illegally?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

They could I think be seized, I do not know whether they are seized I would have to enquire but they are seized in fact. In fact, since the frontier was partially opened there have been 403 cases of illegal foodstuffs being detected but they have all been of a very small nature in no case did they weigh more than half a pound and it seems that many of the individuals concerned were not aware of the restrictions.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask again, if there have been 403 incidents what is done with the products which are seized?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

They are destroyed.

HON G T RESTANO:

Are certificates made available, destruction certificates?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I have to enquire into the details of the matter but I am sure they are destroyed in accordance with the law.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 96 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state whether the qualifications required to be held by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer have now been decided?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir, they have not. As I stated in answer to Question No. 198 of 1982, the grading of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer post is dependent on the outcome of the review of the Senior Grades which has not yet been finalised. Once it is, the qualification requirements will have to be reconsidered depending on the level of the final grading.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 96 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how long is this going to take, we have been at it for about two years already at least?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I cannot give an estimate of how long it will take.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can the Hon Member say what is causing the delay?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The negotiations that are going between the Government and the union have yet to be concluded.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government disclose its areas of disagreement with the Civil Service Unions which have apparently arisen out of the interpretation of the revised General Orders?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the disagreement arose because the Unions considered that they should be consulted before a final decision was taken in any particular case arising out of the General Orders on trading activity and business interests of Civil Servants. The Government's view was that these were not matters for consultation but for the Government to exercise its discretion and judgement. Talks were held on 9 March, following which the blacking action was suspended. Agreement was reached on 18 March.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 97 OF 1983

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Hon and Learned Attorney-General state whether the result of the agreement is that the Government decides these matters or not?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think that is the essence of the agreement, yes, but there is provision for consideration of representations made by the Unions.

HON P J ISOLA:

Before the Government makes a decision what is the exact procedure if the Government considers that there has been a breach of General Orders what will be the procedure followed in this sort of case, can we have that?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The officer would be informed before a final decision is taken of the action that the Government proposes to take in order that he may make representations if he wishes. He will also be reminded of his right to consult his union who may make representations on his behalf. Once any representations have been considered by the Government they will take a decision and if that decision is adverse the officer affected will be able to appeal.

HON P J ISOLA:

Appeal to the Governor, I presume?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Under General Orders there is provision for appeal.

NO. 98 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether 96 or 84 flats have been made available as quarters under the 1973 Agreement?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, the number of flats made available by the Government under the 1973 Agreement is 96.

However, due to retirements and resignations the number presently occupied by serving officers stands today at 84.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 98 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Does this mean that the difference between 96 and 150 or the difference between 84 and 150 have yet to be delivered to the civil service?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Has yet to be made available under the Agreement, yes.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does this mean that the Government is going to be required to produce an extra twelve quarters or is it sufficient that the 96 stands for the purposes of the Agreement?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

My understanding of the matter is that those twelve houses will be made up.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the information given to us in answer to Question, I cannot remember now, but in October of last year which indicated that 96 had been made available and the ones yet to be made available was the difference between 96 and 150 or whatever.

MR SPEAKER:

Those 96 have come down to 84 now as a result of retirements, that is what the answer says.

HON A J HAYNES:

In other words, they become de-quarterised if the occupant remains in it. Why should the resignation of a civil servant result in Government having to produce another quarter under the 1973 Agreement?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

For the simple reason that if it doesn't we have to give a flat to the civil servant who has resigned which may be much less convenient at the time because there is no accommodation to give them.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is this envisaged under the 1973 Agreement or not?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The position, Sir, is there is a commitment to provide 151 flats and of course if people are retiring that is affecting the situation. I would like to make it clear, Mr Speaker, if I may, that although the answer before this House in 1982 was in fact 96 I think I did provide subsequent information to clarify the position.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, but that subsequent information did not clarify the problem sufficiently for me not to have to ask the question.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, I think I am very clear on the matter. The commitment of Government is 151, they had allocated 96, due to resignations and retirements they have only got 84 and therefore their commitment is the difference between 84 and 151, I think it is very clear.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the position that the Government could provide 151 quarters on the 1973 Agreement, everybody then resigns and they still have

MR SPEAKER:

No, Order. Let us not make an issue of everything. The answer you have been given is very clear. Government's commitment are 151 houses. At one particular time they had allocated 96, due to resignations and retirements there are now 84 committed therefore they have still got the balance between 84 and 151 to allocate if it is needed.

HON A J HAYNES:

If Government reach the figure where they have allocated 150 and suddenly those 150 occupants all retire from the civil service they are back to square one, they need 150. Is the Agreement such, Mr Speaker, and I cannot believe the Agreement is so loosely phrased

MR SPEAKER:

Order, what are you asking now?

HON A J HAYNES:

I am asking whether the Agreement is termed in such a manner that on the allocation of a quarter that allocation is pending whether or not the officer retires? What does the 1973 Agreement establish? Is it a written Agreement?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The 1973 Agreement, Mr Speaker, as I understand it and I will double check this, is a commitment to provide 151 quarters for serving members of the union concerned.

MR SPEAKER:

Is it a written agreement?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am sure it is, Mr Speaker, I cannot say definitively because I haven't looked at it but I am sure it is.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I feel that instead of providing 151 units which was

MR SPEAKER:

No, with due respect, this is question time. You have asked for information and you have been given information.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that the 1973 Agreement is likely to result in far more than 151 quarters

MR SPEAKER:

No, that is hypothetical. Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state the amount of revenue in the form of duty collected at the frontier customs to date, since the partial opening of the frontier?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the total amount collected up to 15 March, 1983, was £13,289.35.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 99 OF 1983

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Could the Financial Secretary say on what particular items, generally, they were collected?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir. I can give the Hon Member a complete breakdown but broadly for the House now I will say much of it was on drink; wine - £2,200; spirits nearly £2,000; liqueurs - £2,700; very little on cigarettes, only about £40; nearly £2,000 on clothing; miscellaneous items £3,500 and then very small amounts on perfume - £215; motor vehicle spares - £241; jewellery - £3.78; records £450 and watches - £9.45. I will send the Hon Member full details and a copy to all Members of the House.

HON G T RESTANO:

What is the duty calculated on? Do invoices have to be produced or is an estimate made at the Customs?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It is calculated on the value in town.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 101 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government confirm that tighter restrictions on the passage of goods across the land frontier have been implemented by Spanish customs officials following the announcement of Señor Moran's visit to UK?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

No, Sir. There is no firm evidence that tighter restrictions have been implemented.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 101 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Has there been any noticeable difference then in the goods brought back by people on which duty has been declared in the last couple of weeks and in the period immediately before, has that been looked at?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I don't think so, Sir. Goods for private consumption are being allowed to be imported into Gibraltar. Some things have not been allowed through, for example, we understand that five kilo drums of detergent were not allowed through, large items like that. In the main I do not think that there has been any great change although individuals have complained that they have had certain things taken off them but there is no real pattern of a strengthening of the control and that is why I used very carefully the words 'no firm evidence'. Isolated instances, yes, but a definite trend, no.

HON J BOSSANO:

What about in the opposite direction, Mr Speaker, people taking things back from Gibraltar into Spain, has there been any trend there?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Well, Sir, as we don't look at whatever they are taking over we have no idea as to what is getting through.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if the arrears on general rates and municipal services charges accumulated in the accounts of traders generally have decreased or increased since the partial opening of the frontier?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the present computerised system for the billing of municipal services does not identify whether a particular account is for trade or not. The identification for telephones is for either business or residential purposes and for electricity and water billing is either for domestic or commercial purposes.

However, in an endeavour to answer the question put by the Hon Member I instructed that a number of accounts known to belong to businesses other than Licensed Victuallers should be taken at random and scrutinised from the computer and these showed that 40% of them, in payment of municipal services were in fact being paid promptly since the partial opening of the frontier.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 102 OF 1983

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Did I hear rightly 40%?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, 40%.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So does that mean that 60% are lagging behind now that they were not before and can the Government state to what they think they can attribute this if this is so?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, they may well have been accounts that were lagging behind before the opening of the frontier.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So, in fact, am I right in saying that from the information the Financial Secretary has got now he just cannot say?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

That is very true, Sir, it would take an enormous exercise on the computer to try and extract full details of this information, an exercise which would delay the preparation of bills to be sent out and the accounting for funds and submission of receipts. Really it would be not worthwhile doing.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I understand the problem, Mr Speaker, but perhaps at estimates time we might be able to get more information on this.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 103 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government confirm whether there is an embargo from the Licensed Victuallers Association in the payment of municipal charges by its members in protest at the inordinately high licence fees that they have to pay as compared with the UK and the unbalanced competitive costs of municipal charges that they have to pay in comparison with the neighbouring area and will Government furthermore state what is the estimated monthly loss in revenue and its own policy on this matter?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, I am not aware that there is an embargo from the Licensed Victuallers Association.

On the question of lower overheads in this sector in Spain, I would refer the Hon Member to Question No. 14 of 1983 asked by the Hon and Gallant Major Peliza in which I stated that apart from the hotel industry the Government has no information on the proportion that the municipal charges and licence fees bear to the total operating costs.

I also undertook to discuss this question with the Licensed Victuallers Association. I set this in train on the same day and the Licensed Victuallers Association have been asked to submit and are preparing details of their overhead charges including municipal charges and licence fees to arrive at the total costs of providing their services and I understand that this information is likely to be with my office towards the end of this week.

On the second part of the question a number of accounts of Licensed Victuallers were taken out at random and scrutinised. 35% of these showed that payment of municipal services had been paid promptly since the partial opening of the frontier.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 103 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

So that means that the 65% will not pay promptly, is that correct?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, but it does not mean to say that 65% were not paid promptly because of the opening of the frontier, it could be because they were not paying up-to-date anyway beforehand.

HON G T RESTANO:

When the Hon Financial and Development Secretary started his reply I think he said that he had no knowledge of an embargo, is that correct?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I have had no intimation from the Licensed Victuallers Association that they have placed an embargo, in fact, a member of my staff has been in discussion with the President of the Association and they have had very useful discussions. We have indicated the sort of information we would like them to provide and they have undertaken to provide it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 104 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government say in terms of income tax how much above UK Gibraltar is taxed at present?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, I assume the Hon Member refers to personal not Corporation Tax. The difference in personal tax payable depends very much on the gross salary and family composition. Taking a married couple with children the difference across a broad spectrum lies between 11.4% and 33%. For an average income of £8,000 pa the difference in the amount payable in taxation is £283 pa or 18% and I can, if the Hon Member wishes, give him and other Members of the House a breakdown for married couples showing gross incomes between £5,000, £8,000, £10,000, £15,000, £22,000, Gibraltar tax, UK tax, the difference in money and percentage terms.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 104 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

That would be quite useful, Mr Speaker. Could I just ask the Hon Member one thing, has he in fact done the comparison on the latest revision of UK allowances by 14% or prior to that?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I did it on the latest figures.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 105 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

When did PEIDA cease to act as consultants for Government?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, PEIDA completed their consultancy work for the Gibraltar Government in September 1982 following the submission of the report on the evaluation of proposals for commercialisation of the Dockyard. This report was prepared in conjunction with Coopers and Lybrand Associates and A R Belch Associates.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 105 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Can the Government explain why they decided to retain the other two firms whom they had not used previously and in fact did not continue to retain PEIDA in the so-called project stage of the commercialisation proposals?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, in the project stage we required a ship-repair adviser to assist us and also accountants, auditors and also some legal advisers. We did not require the economic advice which PEIDA had been providing for the study.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can I take it, Mr Speaker, from that answer that the fact that PEIDA is no longer the Government's consultants does not indicate dissatisfaction with their advice on past consultancies?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, the Hon Member can take it that we were not dissatisfied.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Has Government any policy in mind to reduce Government administrative expenses and municipal services costs to assist Gibraltar becoming more competitive in the circumstances created by the partial opening of the frontier?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is Government policy to contain the level of expenditure to a minimum consistent with an adequate, efficient and cost effective service to the public. A number of areas which have come under close examination and control include staffing levels, reductions in overtime and computerised billing.

The Hon Member should however bear in mind that substantial new capital investment has been incurred or committed in acquiring new plant for the municipal services and loan repayments therefore account for a significant element in the cost of these services.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 106 OF 1983

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Since these bodies are really monopolies and are not really cost effective orientated in the business sense, wouldn't it be a good idea for the Government to engage someone who has some kind of business mind to look at the way the monopolies are run and try and see if there is a more effective way of doing it at a lower cost?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It would be possible, whether it would be worthwhile or not I don't know, Mr Speaker. My only personal experience of a private company running municipal services was in the Pacific where they were rather more expensive than any other Government organisation that I have met.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't it a fact that a similar exercise in England has reduced the cost very considerably in many Departments?

MR SPEAKER:

No, you are not required to answer that question. Next question.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Does Government hold the view that the implementation of the Lisbon Agreement will be of economic benefit to Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is impossible to say until the Agreement is actually implemented and patterns of trade and expenditure are established.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 107 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Would it be true to infer from that, Mr Speaker, that when Mr Pym says in the House of Commons that he is pressing for implementation of the Lisbon Agreement because it will be of economic benefit to Gibraltar he isn't doing so because he has been advised to this effect by the Government of Gibraltar?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I certainly have not given Mr Pym any advice.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member then be kind enough to give him the advice he has just given the House, that it is impossible to say until it is put into effect?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I think, Mr Speaker, that I have made it quite clear and when I say I, my staff or I with the assistance of my staff, have made it quite clear in our projections of revenue over the next five to seven years that if we assume an open frontier that for the first period there would be a drop in Government revenue and we have always made it quite clear in putting forward these figures that it was not necessarily the panacea that some people thought.

HON J BOSSANO:

And this view, I take it, Mr Speaker, has been put to the British Government, the British Government is aware of this?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It has certainly been reflected in figures which we have sent to officials of the British Government, I personally do not correspond with the British Government.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what is the value of imports for 1982 for the category "other commodities" as compared with the value in 1981 of £29,530,000 and can they further state how the figures for January and February compare with the same amounts in 1982 and 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the value of imports for "other commodities" in 1982 stood at £29,557,000 a marginal rise over the 1981 figure. The figures for January and February for the years 1981, 1982 and 1983 are:-

(£000's)	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>
January	£2,098	£1,880	£1,784
February	<u>£1,821</u>	<u>£1,972</u>	<u>£1,097</u>
	<u>£3,919</u>	<u>£3,852</u>	<u>£3,881</u>

Those, of course, are in money terms not in real terms.

23.3.83

NO. 109 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if they have monitored sufficient data on the effects of the partially opened frontier so as to take remedial action if this is necessary, or if not can they say when they expect to be in a position to make an assessment?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the Government continues to monitor the effects of the partially opened frontier in consultation with the Chamber of Commerce and other commercial interests. The trend is clearly a net negative expenditure leakage and the matter is to be discussed shortly with Hon Members opposite, following preliminary talks which have taken place with the Chief Minister, and with the Chamber.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government give the figures for 1980/81 and 1981/82 for the following: GDP (factor cost), GNP (factor cost), National Income and the same figures per capita?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, the figures are estimated as follows:-

	<u>1980/81</u>	<u>1981/82</u>
GDP (factor cost)	£58m (£2,231 per capita)	£63m (£2,423 per capita)
GNP (factor cost)	£72m (£2,769 per capita)	£80m (£3,077 per capita)
National Income	£67m (£2,654 per capita)	£75m (£2,885 per capita)

I would ask the Hon Member to note that the 1981/82 figures are provisional estimates.

NO. 111 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether the discussions presently taking place with A & P Appledore International and officials of Her Majesty's Government on the proposals the company has put forward, have to be completed by a given date?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the discussions are expected to be completed by the middle of May this year. As I have explained in answer to questions on this matter in earlier meetings of this House, the Dockyard project study which commenced in December, 1982, was envisaged to take between four to six months to complete.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 111 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is there a deadline of the 30th April by which a report has got to be submitted?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is it the case then, Mr Speaker, that the Government is not yet in a position to give a date when a final decision is expected to be taken?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

That is so, Mr Speaker.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can the Hon Member say that there will be no redundancy notices issued before a final decision is taken on the proposals being looked at?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, that is a matter for the British Government, I am in no position to make a statement to that effect.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member not agree with me that that view should be put to the British Government?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I can convey that view to the British Government in meetings which I hold.

NO. 112 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Was Government aware in April last year that the potential commercial operator of the Dockyard attached a great deal of importance to as long a programme of Naval work as possible?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, all the potential commercial operators of the Dockyard who intended to undertake ship-repair work indicated in their respective proposals, submitted at the end of May last year, that they required a substantive naval work programme over a period of three to five years. The basis of their proposals in this respect was for a naval work programme which would assist in the transition to a commercial operation and which would taper off in the last two years.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 112 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, in April last year was there an indication of who the potential commercial operator might be?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir, we knew in April last year that there was a list, let me put it another way, Sir, the original intention was that the cut-off date for the submission of proposals was the 31st March, 1982. Because of representations received from certain potential operators we stated that those who gave a firm statement of their intention to submit a proposal by the 31st March would be allowed up to the 30th May in which to put those proposals forward but in April there was no knowledge as to who the operator would be.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 113 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether they have now recruited a legal adviser specialised in the commercial ship repairing field?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, a legal adviser specialised in the maritime field will shortly be appointed. The gentleman concerned visited Gibraltar recently for familiarisation and to hold preliminary discussions on the relevant aspects in the A & P Appledore proposals currently under study.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 113 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Can the Government say whether this adviser was recruited through ODA?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

And is it being financed by ODA, Mr Speaker?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

NO. 114 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government now decided to release the Report of the consultants who selected Appledore to Members of this House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 114 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

They have not yet decided, Mr Speaker, or they have decided no?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The question was: "Has the Government decided to release it?", the answer is no, we have not yet decided to release it.

23.3.83

NO. 115 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state how many patients were seen by the ENT Specialist during his last two visits to Gibraltar broken down into (a) GPMS patients and (b) private patients?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Yes, Sir. The visiting ENT Specialist saw the following number of patients during his two latest visits:

	<u>December 1982</u>	<u>February 1983</u>
GPMS	58	48
Private	10	25

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can the Minister for Health and Housing state whether it is still his policy to allow private medicine to be carried out in Gibraltar at St Bernard's Hospital by consultants during their full-time paid employment time and if so whether any time qualification is imposed and furthermore whether participants in the GPMS scheme are relegated to second class patients thereby?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Sir, consultants employed at St Bernard's Hospital are permitted to see private patients on hospital premises in conformity with the practice in the United Kingdom. The maximum time allowed for private practice is equivalent to one session per week. I do not agree that GPMS patients are relegated to second class patients.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 116 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Are the bookings for these private patients, Mr Speaker, made by the hospital staff?

HON J B PEREZ:

All patients seen by the consultants are seen on a referral basis from local practitioners. Appointments are therefore channelled through the staff of St Bernard's Hospital and in particular with each respective department.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 117 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state when was the feasibility study of the introduction of a hospital laundry carried out?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Yes, Sir. The feasibility study was carried out in May, 1981.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 117 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Can Government say whether in fact as a result of that feasibility study they consider it desirable to introduce a hospital laundry?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, as a result of that feasibility study carried out in May, 1981, the Government thought it was uneconomical to have its own laundry. However, the matter is being looked at afresh.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 118 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what is the total number of places in premises registered as suitable accommodation for workmen under the Labour from Abroad (Accommodation) Ordinance, 1971, and the number of persons licensed to keep premises having such accommodation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Sir, the total number of beds in premises registered as suitable accommodation for workmen under the Labour from Abroad (Accommodation) Ordinance, 1971, is 3,238 but for various reasons such as families wishing to live alone etc, the accommodation available is under occupied and the actual number of beds used is 2,950.

There are currently 293 persons licensed as keepers of this type of accommodation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 118 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I ask does, in fact, the accommodation of labour from abroad apply to all non-Gibraltarian labour or to all non-EEC labour or to all non-British labour, is there a criteria on nationality?

HON J B PEREZ:

I think, Mr Speaker, that it applies to non-EEC.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 119 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what plans it has to expand the facilities for dealing with geriatric patients?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government is at present considering the facilities for dealing with geriatric patients in general. Discussions are being held with interested parties.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 119 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Minister not agree that on the basis of the figures about the population given recently showing a 60% increase in the last 20 years in the over 65 age-group, there is clearly going to be greater demand for these services and that must be reflected in a greater provision of facilities?

HON J B PEREZ:

Absolutely, Sir, that is precisely why I said in the answer to the question that we are in fact considering the whole question of facilities, the whole question of geriatric patients with interested parties, in particular with Mount Alvernia, because at St Bernard's Hospital, we are in fact experiencing problems with the large number of geriatric patients occupying beds there and they are also having second thoughts. I do agree.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 120 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state its policy as regards the granting of a tenancy to a successful housing applicant where the applicant is married?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Sir, it has always been and it continues to be the practice to put tenancies in the name of the head of the family. However, joint tenancies between husbands and wives are created on request.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 120 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, whilst I appreciate that the housing applicants, if married, are entitled to ask for the tenancy to be put jointly in their names, will the Minister confirm that no advice is given to the tenant as to what options are open to him nor to the effect of a joint tenancy or a single tenancy or any other advice of any form?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think that is entirely a matter for the successful applicant but may I add that what happens is that when Mr X or Mrs X goes to the Housing Department and put their respective names on the waiting list as an applicant, when they qualify for a house it is the successful applicant who is offered the house. Whether it is a woman or it is a man it is entirely up to the applicant to say whether he or she would like a joint tenancy. As I say, the Housing Department will grant a joint tenancy on request of the successful applicant.

HON A J HAYNES:

But will the Minister confirm that no advice is given to applicants as to what the importance of a joint tenancy otherwise confers?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, yes, I do confirm that advice is not given but I would add, Sir, that that is not considered to be the function of the Housing Department.

HON A J HAYNES:

I appreciate that the Housing Department does not give legal advice to housing applicants but, Sir, in the circumstances and in order to obviate the need to give advice as to the effect of a joint or single tenancy, will Government consider automatically giving a joint tenancy where the applicants are married and only allowing a single tenancy on election and on election with consent?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether there has been any response to their recent invitation to transfer Government tenants and will Government give an estimate of the amount of transfers it hopes to achieve in the next twelve months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Sir, a survey is being currently undertaken to determine the number of tenants who are actually overhoused, but no invitation has been made to move any such tenants at this stage.

The number of overhoused tenants is still unknown.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 121 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister confirm whether or not the survey which is by way of a letter, Mr Speaker, with a form in it, has been answered to by the majority of those to whom it has been circulated or whether there has been little or no response?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, I think the response has been quite good so far.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister say whether he is aware whether that part of the questionnaire which enquires as to the tenant being prepared or not to move into smaller accommodation, whether that particular part of the questionnaire has been ticked favourably ie, with an idea of moving or not?

HON J B PEREZ:

The truth of the matter is that most people do not in fact volunteer to move but when we have completed the survey we will know exactly how many people are in fact living in overhoused conditions and then we will have to consider taking legal action against some of them or preferably doing it by persuasion.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister answer the second part of the question which is will he give an estimate of the amount of transfers it hopes to achieve in the next twelve months?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I said that the number of overhoused tenants is still unknown which I thought was quite obvious that therefore I could not really give an estimate of the number of transfers it is hoped to achieve in the next twelve months.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister not have some idea?

MR SPEAKER:

No, he has not, he has said so.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, he must have some idea as to the amount of overhoused tenants in Gibraltar otherwise he wouldn't have done the survey.

HON J B PEREZ:

I do not think it is right for me to make a guess, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

No, you have said you haven't got the information. Next question.

NO. 122 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state how many "transfers" of Government tenancies as between Government tenants have been arranged by Government in the last twelve months and how many have been agreed privately and subsequently ratified by Government in the same period?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Sir, no statistics are kept of exchanges between tenants or of requested exchanges which have not been approved. Requests for transfers are submitted to the Department and if approved are recorded in the respective tenancy files.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 122 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

If the Minister were to introduce a system whereby the amount of transfers could be monitored, he may have been in a position to answer my previous question and will the Minister now consider introducing a slightly more efficient system of intelligence into the Housing Department? Mr Speaker, has he answered my question or am I to be given the usual rebuff?

HON J B PEREZ:

I do not think I normally give rebuffs to the Hon Member, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

Well, I do not seem to have got very far this morning, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Does the Minister for Municipal Services still intend to enforce legislation passed by Government majority in March, 1982, to compel householders living in private accommodation to have fire extinguishers in their dwellings at their's or the landlord's cost?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, Government does intend to enforce legislation requiring householders living in private accommodation to have fire extinguishers in their dwellings.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 123 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Can the Minister say how he is going to enforce that legislation?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, in answer to Question No. 123 of 1982 I had said that the amendment to the Ordinance was an enabling amendment which empowered regulations to be made to require fire fighting equipment to be kept in private premises. The regulations were being drafted by the Attorney-General, Sir, and when these regulations are drafted we had, during the discussion on this Bill, the Chief Minister said that before the legislation would be published it would be brought to the House so that we could discuss the legislation involved.

HON G T RESTANO:

I still would like to know, Mr Speaker, because we were told in Question No. 123 of last year that the Attorney-General would report back and give us information. This has not, in fact, been done so I really would like to know, first of all, how that enforcement is going to be carried out and, secondly, the other part of the question was the payment of these fire extinguishers. It would then mean that there are two categories of people in Gibraltar, those who pay for them and those who get them free, in other words, those who are Government tenants. Will the Minister confirm that?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, those two points have obviously not been fully considered and we are awaiting the legislation from the Attorney-General's Chambers as to how we are going to deal with that matter.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can the Hon Attorney-General tell us when he will have the regulations ready?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I would like to report back during the course of the House if I may, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, in answer to a question earlier in the House I undertook to, well not in answer to the question, during the course of the question, I undertook to enquire as to the state of the proposed Fire Equipment Regulations. I have made enquiries and the position is this, that I did say in the House as has been drawn to my attention I think it was in the earlier part of last year, that the matter was ready for drafting. In fact, it was in the sense that I was aware that Regulations had to be drafted and there was a decision on the Regulations but it was rather a loose and slightly premature statement, I think, because in fact what is happening is that the Fire Services Department are considering the implications of introducing regulations and the drafting instructions have not been completed or forwarded and it is a matter which is still under consideration.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, in view of the fact that the Services Telephone Network is not yet equipped to have meters does Government consider that the 15% extra charge on rentals is equitable compared with its income from local metered charges since their inception?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, the 15% extra charge on Forces rentals were introduced in October, 1982.

When the Government reduced its rental by approximately 37% in January, the Forces rentals were maintained at the +15% rate of October and they have not therefore had the benefit of this reduction.

The Government considers this equitable until such time as the metering of Forces local calls is possible.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 124 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Does the Minister have statistics as to what is in fact the average for payment in local meter charges as compared to the 15% extra on the Services charge?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the only information I have is that now the rental to the Services lines of which there are 48 is £33.33, the reduction is £18.27 there is at least £15 difference there but as to accuracy I have not got the actual figures which the Hon Member requires.

HON G T RESTANO:

Could perhaps the Minister try to find out those figures and let me know?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Certainly, Mr Speaker, I shall endeavour to let Mr Restano know.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 125 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether it would be possible to reassess the unit telephone metering so that all units are of one minute duration and would Government give an estimate of the cost of such rearrangement?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

No, Sir, it would not be possible.

The metering system works on units of 4p and uses time as the basis of charge.

It is therefore not possible to time the unit as suggested.

The unit charge is linked to the speed at which meters can work for long distance calls due to electro-mechanical limitations. Since countries vary in distance from the originating point, different metering rates are used to identify charge bands. The rate is also linked to the local call rate since it uses the same meter for both functions.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 125 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am not sure I understand any of that but can the Minister confirm whether or not in other countries, for instance, in England, the system is that every unit is of one minute duration and if you ring at a peak hour then the unit is costing you more and if you ring at a non-peak hour the unit is costing you less? The basis of my question is on that kind of background set-up. Can the Minister confirm whether that is so, have I made my question clear?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, certainly, Mr Speaker. What he was referring to in the United Kingdom this is not so, in fact, local calls have gone up in the UK from 4p to 5p plus VAT which is 15% and the time allowed for peak, standard and cheap have been cut down to 1½ minutes, three minutes and eight minutes. The real answer to this is that the electro-mechanical meters are unable to receive impulses so quickly if they are reduced to one minute.

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not get involved in technicalities. The answer is that it cannot be adjusted.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

It cannot be adjusted. Being a technical answer what I would like to offer the Member opposite is that on a convenient date if we could both go to the Telephone Department we could then go into all these aspects so he would be clear in his own mind because there are technical problems involved, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, if the Minister will bear with me one minute I will outline the kind of problem which I was hoping

MR SPEAKER:

No, under no circumstances.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm or deny the problems suffered by the camera which monitors the meter and will the Minister confirm that this camera is out of order and has been for some time?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, about this camera, which I cannot honestly see how it can arise out of this question, this camera had a malfunction and in fact when I went on official business to the UK with Mr Charles Fortunato we took the camera to Coventry so that it would be repaired but, anyway, we have a stand-by camera which will do the job until we get the other camera back.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm or deny that in the interim when the camera has been malfunctioning that the bills processed have been on an average consumption rather than actual consumption?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON W T SCOTT

How do the costs per kWh generated at King's Bastion compare with that of -

- a) the skid generators, and
- b) the trailer-mounted generator, inclusive of hire charges?

Mr Speaker, if I may, I automatically assumed that the four last words in that question referred to both a) and b) and not just to the b) section.

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, in fact, this was really a reply which I was supposed to give to the Hon Member in the last House which I offered but because this House has come so quickly I had been unable to prepare the due answer.

Mr Speaker, by their very nature and operating regime, high speed diesel engines and for that matter gas turbines, both of which use high grade fuels, are more expensive to operate. They are consequently assigned either a peak lopping or a reserve plant role and rarely a base load duty. Consequently it is totally unrealistic to compare the unit generating costs between plants assigned such different operating regimes. This is true for any utility which operates similar plant and the reasons are obvious. The unit costs will naturally be very different.

In the particular case of this question, the comparison so simply requested is not accurately possible since there is not sufficient information at hand to provide a sound economic base which would enable all relevant costs to be brought into the equation.

Any such comparison naturally requires the plant capital costs or standing charges to be included. In the case of the skid-mounted generators and the trailer-mounted set, which were available under a hire agreement, the plant costs over any given period are easily quantifiable but this is not as simple to do for the fixed base load plant at King's Bastion.

In spite of this, an attempt has been made to arrive at a comparison. To facilitate the work, it has been considered necessary to carry out the comparison over a full financial year. The last audited accounts for the financial year 1981/82 have been used and a table produced, which I am circulating.

From the table, it can be appreciated that a real comparison is not possible in the absence of a standing value for plant at King's Bastion.

Furthermore, the table also brings out the great disparity in the operating hours over the one year period, which evidence that the operating regime of the temporary plant was that of peak lopping and reserve plant exclusively.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 126 OF 1983

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, am I right, generally, in assuming that the cost per kilowatt hour generated by the skid generators and the trailer-mounted generator is substantially greater than that by King's Bastion?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, yes, Sir, on two counts. First of all, that as I said the stand-by generators are only for peak lopping and therefore the units generated and the hours run are much less than the base load plant and, secondly, because there cannot be any value assigned to the present plant that we have got at King's Bastion. Therefore the figures at the end are doubtful to interpretation because there are several factors missing but they are more expensive, yes.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, am I therefore also not right in assuming that there is a certain element of subsidy if the kilowatt hour, the unit charged to the consumer would not reflect the cost of the skid generators and the trailer-mounted generator? In other words, if the skid generators and the trailer-mounted generator, the cost of the production per kilowatt hour of each is commensurably greater, am I not right in assuming therefore that there is a form of subsidy?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister if therefore under those two assumptions, once there is no longer the need for the skid generators and the Waterport Power Station comes on stream, there could perhaps be an indication, there could perhaps be a set of circumstances where there might well be a reduction in charges because the commensurate running costs would be therefore lower?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, yes, I get the Hon Member's point of view that once the whole system has been set, we have engines at Waterport and. . .

MR SPEAKER:

The answer is yes, let us not go into details.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister therefore telling this House that we can look forward to a reduction in electricity charges?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I cannot commit myself to that.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will the Minister for Municipal Services give an account of the maintenance programme that has been carried out during the last twelve months on the engines at the King's Bastion Generating Station, the anticipated programme for the next twelve months and give an appreciation of the state and estimated life-span of these engines?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Part I

Generally all engines are serviced or overhauled as per manufacturers recommendations or as anomalies are observed. During the past twelve months the following engines completed the recommended running periods and maintenance were carried out accordingly.

No. 10 engine - Top overhauled
 No. 11 engine - General overhaul
 No. 12 engine - Presently undergoing general overhaul
 No. 13 engine - Top overhauled.

In addition, No. 10 engine has had all exhaust valves and injectors serviced twice, again as recommended.

No. 11 engine has had all exhaust valves and injectors serviced three times.

No. 12 engine has had all exhaust valves and injectors serviced four times.

No. 13 engine, all valves and injectors serviced once. This is because No. 13 valves are serviced every 3,000 hours as against every 1,000 hours on the other engines.

No. 9 engine is presently completely stripped down for a rebuild.

Part II

It is anticipated that engines 10 and 13 will have run the hours due for overhauls and therefore general overhauls will be carried out on these two engines during the next twelve months.

Part III

It is not possible to give a definite life-span for these engines, other than to say that their life-span will be extended by the operation of plant at Waterport.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 127 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Is there no anticipated programme to overhaul in the coming twelve months, a top overhaul to Nos. 9, 11 or 12?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, all overhauls are based on manufacturers recommendations and basically that is dependent on the number of hours that they are run.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether these particular engines are going to be overhauled during the current year.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

It could well be.

HON G T RESTANO:

Why doesn't the Minister know?

MR SPEAKER:

Because he doesn't know when the particular overhauls as prescribed by the suppliers of the machines come up but they will be done according to the schedule of overhauls required.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, these engines have been here for over twenty years, does the Minister not have a programme?

MR SPEAKER:

In fairness, I must say this. The Minister is not responsible for the supervision of the overhauls of the engines. If general questions are asked the information is given but he cannot have at his fingertips every single aspect of the maintenance of the machines in the Generating Station.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I take your point of course but the question did ask what was the programme for the next twelve months and it struck me as odd that there seems to be nothing which is going to be done, according to the Minister's statement, on engines 9, 11 and 12, perhaps he could say why?

MR SPEAKER:

Without wishing to get involved, the answer is because perhaps during the next twelve months there is no call to overhaul the engines other than the ones that are being done now.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

That is right, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government make a comprehensive statement on all aspects of the Waterport Power Station?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Yes, Sir, I am afraid that the answer is a little bit long, Sir.

The turnkey contract for Waterport Power Station was awarded to Hawker Siddeley Power Engineering on the 26 February, 1981, and involved the installation and setting to work of two 12 cylinder Mirrlees Blackstone Major Mark III engines with a capacity each of 5.24 MW, together with all the necessary ancilliary equipment. In addition it was to include office accommodation and an adequate amount of other facilities such as stores, degreasing room, workshops, laboratories, messing and washing facilities.

The key contract dates for completion referred conclusively to the engines being put to commercial use and these were specifically May and July, 1982.

As is usually the case in projects of this nature, involving in particular heavy civil works, the need for adequate consolidation of reclaimed land and a large amount of pile driving to a depth of over 15 metres, a measure of slippage was inevitable.

It was not until August, 1982, that the first of the two engines started to undergo its pre-commissioning trials, during which control devices are set to their operating parameters and protective mechanisms are tested in service to ensure they operate under the proper circumstances and in the proper manner to safeguard the equipment.

Since the capacity of the engines is large in proportion to the system load, particularly at that time of the year, namely late summer and in the absence of any adequate load banks in the territory, the tests had to be carried out using system load. It was inevitable that brief interruptions in electricity supply occurred whenever the engines tripped out while control and protective systems were being tested to achieve stable operating conditions. The loss of generating capacity was at times more than 50% of the plant supplying the system and given the very high cost of fuels today, it was not economical to carry sufficient spinning reserve to cover the possible loss of the sets under test at all times. This was limited to those occasions when tests required deliberate tripping on load. Furthermore, the present generation of the electrical control equipment such as the automatic voltage regulators, to name but one, are no longer the sluggish and slow acting electro-mechanical devices of the past but use present day solid state micro-electronic technology and are so effective and have such fast acting times that they do not allow the operating personnel sufficient time to take corrective measures on the system by the shedding of load to compensate for the loss of generating plant. This can lead to overloading of other plant and, in a cascade effect, has caused a total blackout on several occasions. This is known to happen in even large national grid systems and is consequently much more

likely to happen in very small systems such as Gibraltar's, when at times there are only two engines running and the loss of one engine immediately can produce up to 100% overload on the remaining set.

The second of the sets at Waterport started its own pre-commissioning tests a few weeks after the first one and both then went on the contractually stipulated reliability runs over a period of thirty days. Both sets had minor problems such as oil and water leaks, but the second set completed its successful reliability run on the 10th November, 1982. However, the other set experienced a number of fuel injection pump seizures which required closer investigation than any of the other causes of interruptions in either of the sets, particularly since none of the pumps on set No. 2 produced this.

As a result of the investigations carried out at both the manufacturers works and their sub-contractors, minor modifications have been introduced, and the modified pumps are already back in service with set No. 1. This particular engine has now run over 3,000 hours and has just recently been serviced and thoroughly inspected. No problem has been identified and all items inspected have been found in excellent condition. The engine has now recommenced its reliability run and over the whole period has produced in excess of 12 million units to the system.

Engine No. 2 has also completed 3,000 operational hours and has generated 10.6 million units to date. It is currently undergoing its first service and is due to come back into service within the next few days.

All the systems currently in operation are working satisfactorily and the contractor's personnel is continuing to operate the plant.

As is normal in such contracts, the entire installation had been split into a number of taking-over certificates. These are signed, usually with listed exceptions which are then progressively cleared on the advice and under the supervision of the Consulting Engineer's site supervisory staff. In the case of Waterport Power Station, the contract involves 21 such certificates and to date 20 have been signed with various operative dates. The lists of exceptions are gradually being reduced and it is hoped that this process will be completed during the course of April.

Mr Speaker, on a number of occasions both during the period when the Station was under construction and now more recently since the engines have been in operation, there have been rumours circulating that there were foundation problems at Waterport Power Station and that either the buildings or the engines or both were experiencing detrimental effects due to this. I would like to take this good opportunity to dispel any doubts which might still exist in some minds and to report that not only has there not been any problem of this nature but putting it more positively there has at no time been any doubt as to the soundness of the foundations for either the buildings or even more important still, the engines themselves.

I would now like to refer to the manning of the Station by the department's own staff. As is generally public knowledge, Mr Speaker, this has been occupying the almost full attention of the Steering Committee for a number of months now. The setting up of this Committee was a recommendation by the Committee of Enquiry into the Electricity Department which carried out its work between March

and June last year. Ideally, the Steering Committee should have been established earlier than September last, but the House is fully aware from the explanation given by the Hon the Chief Minister at an earlier meeting of this House, that it proved very difficult to obtain the services of an independent Chairman as had been recommended by the Committee of Enquiry, who incidentally also estimated that the Steering Committee would require about nine months, with at least a weekly meeting to carry out the work it had to deal with. The work of the Committee continues and as will generally be known from a recent statement which it issued, it is progressing successfully with its negotiations.

I can only hope that progress will be maintained and that in the very near future full agreement on all the aspects associated with the work assigned to the Steering Committee can be achieved. Thank you, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 128 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

I am grateful for that statement, Mr Speaker. May I ask first on the engines themselves. I think the Minister said that No. 2 engine had completed its reliability period. If that is so has Government taken over that engine yet?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No. 2 engine, Sir, as far as I can recollect the outstanding item because I said that there were 31 but I feel that the answer is that it has, yes, contractually.

HON G T RESTANO:

It has been formally and officially handed over to the Government of Gibraltar?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Contractually.

HON G T RESTANO:

Who is manning it? Who is manning the engine which has now been handed over to the Gibraltar Government?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I said this in the answer. In the second page I said: "All the systems currently in operation are working satisfactorily and the contractor's personnel is continuing to operate the plant".

HON G T RESTANO:

Why does the Government not man it itself?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, basically because some of the reliability tests have taken longer than usual and the other reason is that we are awaiting the final recommendations of the Steering Committee so that the Waterport Power Station can start on what we could call a new leaf and certain procedures can be laid down which are not present at King's Bastion.

HON G T RESTANO:

I take the point about the Steering Committee but in fact the reliability period ended I think he said on the 10th November, 1982, that is three months ago, so therefore the answer which he has just given other than on the Steering Committee cannot be so, it is not that the reliability periods have taken so long, it finished on the 10th November, 1982, so there have been three months, according to the reply, where it has been manned by the contractor and not by Government because of the Steering Committee not having come to an agreement, is that the answer?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, one of the major answers is because the procedures for the Steering Committee recommendations have not been concluded.

MR SPEAKER:

Let us be clear because otherwise we are going round in circles. The answer is that it is being manned by the contractor until such time as the Steering Committee has finished its work.

HON G T RESTANO:

I would like to know, Mr Speaker, are any of the staff in the department being trained because after all these are new machines and presumably they would require training before taking the Waterport Station over. Is there any training taking place at the moment or has there been?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No, Sir, when we come to the budget debate we shall see that we have arranged for training to take place.

MR SPEAKER:

So the answer is that no one has been trained as yet.

HON G T RESTANO:

Why not?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Because, Mr Speaker, Sir, it would put everybody in an invidious position because there are certain sections within the Generating Station and if we send certain sections down there we will have a comeback from other sections so therefore until the whole agreement is reached we should not proceed to a final solution.

HON G T RESTANO:

But does that mean, Mr Speaker, that when Government eventually takes over that Station that they will have nobody trained in the running of those engines?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the thing is that the Hon Member makes a slight error on training. Let me assure him that a lot of people at King's Bastion are trained on engines. There are certain differences between these engines and the other engines but the training programme is not as large as envisaged by the Hon Member opposite, it just needs certain areas of training.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, on the Steering Committee itself

HON P J ISOLA:

I don't want to interrupt my Hon Friend but can the Minister state what is the additional cost to the electricity consumer of having the No. 2 engine manned by the contractors instead of by the Government? What is the cost to the Government of the contractors doing them this favour?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am afraid I do not have the necessary information.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, isn't that of great public importance? The Chairman of the Steering Committee is under £4,000 a week, that is one man, running an engine and manning it outside the terms of their contract the Government surely must know, does the Financial and Development Secretary know what is the terms of the agreement with the contractors providing for this extra work to be done by them outside their contract?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us get an answer to that.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, on that point I would like to disagree with the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition.

MR SPEAKER:

You are really being asked a simple question. We must not debate the issue. You have been asked have you got the information related to the cost to Government of the contractors running No. 2 engine. If you haven't got it just say you haven't got it but that is all you are being asked.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

I haven't got it and certainly it is not £4,000, the figure intimated by the Hon Member.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am not worried about that at the moment, Mr Speaker, we can debate that because there is a record on that but we are very worried, we must be worried about the additional public expenditure because the Government is unable to

MR SPEAKER:

You might insist on the information but let us not debate the consequences.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister, Mr Speaker, to get that information and communicate it to the House before we rise today because, surely, that information must be readily available, the cost to the public of this extra manning?

MR SPEAKER:

Can the Minister answer that question? Can he give the required information today to the House?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition asked if the Financial and Development Secretary knows, yes, I do know, I know the gross cost. The gross cost was £13,000 a week and it is now about £16,000 a week but we have got to set off against that the cost of the manning that would be there if it were manned by our own staff. That, I am afraid, I do not know.

HON P J ISOLA:

But in actual fact what is happening is that

MR SPEAKER:

We are debating, with due respect, this is question time. You have been given your information, you can deduce what you like from it.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, but the Hon Financial and Development Secretary has made a statement on it.

MR SPEAKER:

No, he has given an answer to a question.

HON P J ISOLA:

No, he has said that it could be offset, Mr Speaker, with respect, to what it would cost anyway to run it and my question following that would be surely the Government must know the number of people it requires to man a Generating Station?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, that is what the Steering Committee is working on, how many people will man it and what they will be paid and what allowances they will be paid and this is the problem.

HON P J ISOLA:

But in actual fact it is costing the people who pay municipal charges, it is costing them now, we have the cost of the Chairman of the Steering Committee plus we must add to that £16,000 a week extra because the job has not been done.

MR SPEAKER:

No, with due respect to the Hon Leader of the Opposition, we are now really debating.

HON G T RESTANO:

What areas have the Steering Committee agreed upon as far as the manning levels of the Station are concerned?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

It is impossible to say, Mr Speaker, Sir, what areas have been agreed on. The only thing I can say as in the statement put out by the Steering Committee that 'considerable progress has been made in many areas of the enquiry recommendations and that the detailed discussions that have been taking place are confidential as any other similar joint Management union body that exists in any other area of the public sector'.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, when the Committee of Enquiry made its report to His Excellency the Governor they made a number of recommendations some of which bear directly on the Steering Committee and on the manning. Can I ask if, for example, there has been agreement on

MR SPEAKER:

No, most certainly not. You have asked a question: "Will Government make a comprehensive statement on all aspects of the Waterport Power Station?" You have been given an answer, you can ask supplementaries on that answer but let us not go into the Steering Committee now and its progress because you could have asked a simple, clear question on what progress has been made on the Steering Committee. No questions have been asked on that so let us keep to the question.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can we know how long that Committee is going to take to decide on the manning of the Waterport Power Station because it has other work to do as well?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, we do not know until the Committee finishes its work.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, surely, the Government as one side of the Committee, shall we say, the Management side, surely it must know what sort of progress is being made, does it not?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it takes two to tango.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister tango and tell us how much progress has been made?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the progress is good and we hope that in due time all problems will be solved.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does he know how many men are going to be used there, has agreement on that been arrived at?

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to get any further on this one, it is obvious.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister at least state, in general terms, in what areas there has been progress? He is saying there has been progress, presumably he must know, he has got a Head of Department, he has got his own civil servant in that Committee, surely, he can inform the House in what areas there has been progress?

MR SPEAKER:

I think in fairness to the Opposition the only questions that one should be able to ask is, is Government in a position to give an estimate as to when the report is going to come but let us not go into details.

HON G T RESTANO:

Will the Minister answer that?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, this particular answer I feel is encroaching on No. 180 of 1983 by the Hon Mr Restano.

MR SPEAKER:

Which is that question? Will you read the question?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

"Will Government reveal what has been the weekly cost of engaging a Chairman for the Steering Committee"

MR SPEAKER:

No, you may not be in a position to give an answer and you say you don't.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

"And how much longer the services of the Chairman will be required?"

MR SPEAKER:

No, with due respect, you have been asked a simple question. Can you give an indication to the House as to when the report will be ready? If you cannot you cannot, it is as simple as that.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, I will pre-empt Question No. 180 which finalises that these negotiations should be concluded during the course of April.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask, will the public not be able to see the Power Station until we have the official opening of the Power Station to which the Hon and Learned Chief Minister referred to as taking place very shortly when he spoke in the debate of censure on the Government on power last November or somewhere? Can the Minister state is this opening not likely to take place until the Steering Committee has concluded its work and the Government accepted its recommendations?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us get an answer to that one.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have consulted the Chief Minister and both he and I feel that the opening will be before the Steering Committee finishes its recommendations.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister explain why it was said with such confidence in the censure motion, now about five or six months ago, that the official opening would take place very early in the new year? On what was that based, was it based on the confident expectation that the Steering Committee would complete its deliberations by the end of that year or some such thought?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I think, Sir, it is quite fair to say that it was not anticipated that the Steering Committee's progress, though it has been very good, may have taken as long as it has taken.

HON P J ISOLA:

But then can I have an answer, why was it that these statements were made confidently and yet we have no opening, no date for the official opening from the Minister and we are told that even the manning of No. 2 engine at great expense to the public has to await the completion of the deliberations of the Steering Committee?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is very long since the Hon Member has had any part in public office but he should know that things that happen in affairs of this nature sometimes take longer than anticipated at the time when the projections are made inevitably by human errors or by human miscalculations or by difficulties created, all sorts of things take longer in the end, but you must make an honest assessment at the time you are making a statement. That was an honest assessment, it was wrong and it was wrong and that is the end of it.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Chief Minister not agree, Mr Speaker, that when he did announce in this House in October, 1979, that we would have a 5-megawatt engine

MR SPEAKER:

No, no, order. Let us ask questions which seek information and nothing else. Let there be no justification at question time for statements that have been made before.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Hon and Learned Chief Minister if it is true that since we have hardly had any other Government than the present Government in office, it is true that we have learned to live with very, very considerable slippage right through their life?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, with respect, let us call the next question.

NO. 129 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government give a fuller explanation for the need to re-allocate £11,805 in the Electricity Undertaking vote?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, out of the £11,805 mentioned, the Department re-allocation £9,010, the difference of £2,795 being for the Customs Department.

The Department re-allocated £6,950 to Subhead 1, Personal Emoluments in order to meet the cost of one additional post of Clerical Officer for the period of two months and overtime costs connected with the implementation of some of the recommendations of the Committee of Enquiry for King's Bastion Power Station.	£ 720
	<u>£6,230</u>
	<u>£6,950</u>

The cost of £2,060 was re-allocated to Subhead 85, Purchase of Vehicles in order to purchase an additional vehicle in connection with Waterport Power Station.

<u>£2,060</u>
<u>£9,010</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 129 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister say what measures are being taken to improve the safety and working conditions as required by the Factories Ordinance?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I can hardly see how this arises out of this question.

MR SPEAKER:

In fairness, there is no relation to the question.

HON G T RESTANO:

It is quite clear in the statement of reallocation, Mr Speaker, the explanation given there is that the £6,950

MR SPEAKER:

But you are looking at the statement which was given to Question No. 126?

HON G T RESTANO:

It is Statement of Reallocation No. 7 of 1982/83 and it says: "£6,950 to meet the costs of an additional Clerical Officer post, £720 increase in overtime worked to improve safety and working conditions as required by the Factories Ordinance". I am asking what measures have been taken to improve the safety and working conditions?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the money was spent really as a recommendation of the Committee of Enquiry for King's Bastion. The Committee of Enquiry took some of the ideas of what the Hon Member had suggested but the recommendation of the Committee of Enquiry really is that management must provide adequate cleaning methods and material, must remove all rubbish to prevent any possible fires and the repainting of King's Bastion. To some extent it has also helped in providing fire precaution recommendations.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, when I see that the reallocation is being made from training and staff apprentices personal emoluments, does that mean the training and staff apprentices scheme will have £6,900 less, is there a smaller training programme than was at first anticipated?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 130 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, is Government satisfied with the security of the prison and will Government give an explanation as to how a prisoner was able to escape from it last week?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, Government is not satisfied with security at the prison. Its location and the absence of secure perimeters seriously undermines the security of the establishment, in spite of measures put in hand over a number of years.

As regards the second part of the question. The prisoner Aston managed to saw through two bars of the cell window and make his way out of the prison building by climbing over the wall. The matter is now under police investigation and this will be followed by an enquiry to ascertain whether there was negligence on the part of officers on duty.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 130 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, will Government take any further measures to try and improve the security of the prison seeing that the possibility of a new prison just does not exist?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, yes, I think so, this will obviously follow the enquiry from the police to see whether other measures can be implemented but of course there will be financial restraints.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 131 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, why was it found necessary for five teachers to accompany thirteen adult students to La Linea, and was the teaching time-table affected in any way?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, a group of five teachers and thirteen senior students from Bayside School visited a Secondary School in La Linea recently outside normal school hours. The visit was organised through personal contacts and did not affect the teaching time-table at Bayside School in any way.

NO. 132 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, is the Minister for Education satisfied with the standard of teaching, as regards "Spanish", in our schools?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, the standards achieved by local students taking Spanish External Examinations are now extremely high.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 132 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, then I take it that the Minister is satisfied with the standard of teaching?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, of course I am.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister about the statement that he was alleged to have made at a meeting in the John Mackintosh Hall in respect of which he wrote a letter to my Hon Friend but can he tell the House whether he has written to the newspaper concerned asking them to make a correction of what was a rather unfortunate quotation, to put it mildly?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, if it had been any other newspaper I would have written but not to that newspaper.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is it the view of the Hon Member that he only writes to his own party newspapers?

MR SPEAKER:

No, with respect, I have allowed the question which was not relevant to the original question.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I am prepared to answer it.

MR SPEAKER:

No, you cannot answer a question I have ruled out of order. Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 133 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government consider the re-provisioning of the Governor's Meadow First School at some other site, and the demolition of the present buildings, so as to expose the main entrance to the Alameda Gardens?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, Government is unable to give any degree of priority to the possibility of re-provisioning of the Governor's Meadow First School at the present time.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has Government considered amending the Shop Hours Ordinance to allow those trading establishments generally who wish to do so to open on Sundays and has corresponding consideration been given to protect fully the interests of Shop Assistants should such amendment to legislation be effected?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, Government has not given consideration to amending the Shop Hours legislation specifically to allow shops to open on Sundays as a matter of course. However, consultations will very shortly be resumed with the Chamber of Commerce and the TGWU to obtain their considered views on the retention or revocation, in whole or in part of the Shop Hours Ordinance, and this will, of course cover the aspect of Sunday opening.

In view of this, the second part of the question does not arise at this stage, but I would draw attention to paragraph 5 of the Conditions of Employment (Retail Distributive Trade) Order, 1980, which lays down minimum overtime rates for retail distributive trade employees who are required to work on Sundays.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 134 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, when did the Minister say he would be having consultations with the Trade Unions and the Chamber of Commerce?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Very shortly.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what are the limits for the granting of credits for Social Insurance contributions during periods of illness or unemployment?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, credits for contributions, which count equally as paid contributions for certain purposes, are granted during limited periods of sickness, full-time education, maternity, unemployment or incapacity for work due to industrial injury and since 1981 for life if an insured person is totally and permanently incapable of work.

An unemployed person who has satisfied certain contribution conditions shall be entitled to credits for a maximum of 26 weeks in any one period of unemployment. After exhausting the maximum he can only requalify for unemployment credits if he has worked for a period of, or periods totalling 13 weeks.

The same applies to incapacity for work, other than incapacity for work due to industrial injury.

As regards incapacity for work as a result of an industrial accident or a prescribed occupational disease, a person continues to be entitled to such credits for as long as such incapacity for work continues.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 135 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say whether in fact people are made aware of this or is it not the case that in the explanatory leaflet put out by the Department it just says that there is a limited period but unlike other entitlements to Social Insurance Benefits there is no indication of the length of period or of the contribution conditions?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I think there is an element of truth in the question put by the Hon Member. I will try and make this information more comprehensive for the general public.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I also ask him to consider the adequacy of limiting this to 26 weeks in a situation where we are experiencing longer periods of unemployment than in the past and where in fact people, particularly cases where people are retired compulsorily from the public service at the age of 60, may find it very difficult to get another job until 65?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, of course there are always financial implications in what we are discussing. He has mentioned one particular aspect of our system which I am not particularly happy about and that is the compulsory retirement at 60 and sometimes the inability because of a low pension to continue paying the Social Insurance contribution. I am concerned with that, it is something that I have myself highlighted within my Department, we will study it and see what the financial implications are but I am as concerned as the Hon Member opposite, certainly in that aspect.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government say how many of the estimated 4,000 Spanish nationals entitled to Old Age Pension have claimed it?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, out of an estimated figure of about 3,800 Spanish nationals entitled to Old Age or other Social Insurance Pensions and not collecting them, 954 have enquired regarding their entitlement between 15.12.82 and 15.3.83.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 136 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, does in fact the answer that the Hon Member has given me mean that there were people who were claiming it before the 15th December?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I am answering the question, Mr Speaker.

HON J BOSSANO:

Yes, I know that, Mr Speaker, but the Hon Member has said 3,800 and I think in the written answer that was circulated to a previous question there was a figure of 4,000.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

That was an error.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I ask the Minister whether the enquiries that he has mentioned have actually led to the processing of claims or they have simply been enquiries and they have gone no further?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Enquiries noted, no processing so far.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, does Government intend to repair the floodlighting system on the basketball court at Landport?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

No, Sir. The Government has no plans to reinstate the floodlighting system having regard to the existing facilities at the Sports Hall.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 137 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, are the existing facilities at the Sports Hall sufficient to meet the demands on it?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

They are certainly sufficient, Mr Speaker, to deal with competitive games other than training and unless there was a particular case made that the Basketball Association as such was unable to carry out their fixtures, I do not think Government at this stage could consider reinstating the floodlighting system at Landport Ditch. I should also say, Mr Speaker, that we did find when floodlighting was in operation there that it was very costly and there were many instances where the floodlighting was left burning until 3, 4 and 5 in the morning till the police had to switch them off, it was not a very satisfactory state of affairs at all and there was a lot of vandalism.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, have the Government received any representations from the Basketball Association to have that repaired?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Not as far as I am aware, Mr Speaker, I am told that there has been some approach to have it repaired, if by repaired it means because they were bent over in the gale and one thing and the other, of making the playing area less dangerous. Certainly I will look at that very sympathetically but not reinstating floodlighting.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can the Minister for Tourism state if the partially opened frontier has beneficially or adversely affected the tourist trade generally and in either case, is there a plan to foster the advantages or to overcome the adversities?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

Sir, the effect of the partial opening of the frontier is covered in answer to Questions 109 and 178.

I should add, however, that insofar as tourist sites are concerned there has been an appreciable increase in the number of visitors.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 138 OF 1983

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, in the number of visitors but in terms of cash which we are obviously interested in does the Minister believe that this has been beneficial to the tourist trade generally?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the fact that 1,000 or 4,000 people come in and spend a penny, a pound or fifty pence is obviously better than what was happening previously so there must be some benefit but I am not prepared to say what benefits because I do not know, Mr Speaker.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I don't know whether the Minister is in contact with the trade but surely the trade must inform him whether they are doing well or not, for instance, day tours. I don't know whether they have in any way approached the Minister and said: "We are in difficulties".

MR SPEAKER:

If you ask a specific question you can get a specific answer but not a general question. Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 139 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if two of the reasons why few cruise liners call at Gibraltar are because the berthing facilities lack the necessary amenities and the surroundings are touristically offensive?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, there has been a substantial increase in the number of cruise liners calling at Gibraltar. There has also been a general tidying up of the surrounding area which has improved matters.

As I said in my reply to Question No. 170 on 17 July, 1980, the Government has no immediate plans for improving facilities at the North Mole.

NO. 140 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state how many trips, giving dates and destination, have been undertaken by the Minister for Tourism in 1983 and give similar details regarding any further trips scheduled to take place this year and will Government state the costs of the trips to the department to date?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have attended two promotional trips in 1983 to the UK at a cost of £523 each. They are:-

<u>Date</u>	<u>Destination</u>
31 January	Swindon
1 February	Stockport
2 "	Huddersfield
3 "	Wakefield
28 February	Newcastle
1 March	Middlesborough
2 "	York
3 "	Nottingham

As yet no definite decision as to intended Trade Promotions for 1983/84 has been taken.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 140 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister state whether or not the £523 is the total cost to his department or whether we are just talking about the Minister's expenses? I am interested in knowing the cost to the department as a whole.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am afraid the question is very badly asked. The question asked as to how many trips the Minister has taken and the cost of the trips to the department so I cannot presume that he is thinking of whatever. I am answering the question as it is asked. If he wants other information then I am afraid the question is not very explicit. I think I have answered the question. If I had been asked as to the expense of the Trade Promotion or the Trade Promotions that I have attended then of course it would be a very different figure.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister confirm or deny that every time we ask questions on these lines he only gives us his own figures to try and deflate the budget?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, because normally I do not ^{get} questions on tourism from the Hon Mr Andrew Haynes, I get questions on tourism from my Friend the Hon Major Peliza who is the shadow Minister for Tourism.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that his marked reluctance to give the figures in fact indicates that it has been a bit of jolly, Mr Speaker?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I take exception to that and ask for your indulgence because I think that if he was to consult his colleague the Hon and Gallant Major Peliza there would be a very different view coming from Major Peliza where I have been urged to go on more of these so-called jollies. If there is no coordination between the Hon Mr Haynes who really has no direct responsibility as opposed to the Hon and Gallant Major Peliza, then I am afraid I am wasting my time in standing up and answering these questions.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister give an indication of how many tourists he thinks these promotions have resulted in?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I think it is better to give him the rebuff that I think he deserves, I am not going to answer, Mr Speaker.

NO. 141 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, why is it (a) that the Report of the Select Committee on the Landlord and Tenant (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance has not been circulated with the Agenda for the House of Assembly meeting?

(b) that there is no notice of motion seeking the approval of the House for the Report as is usually the case with Reports of Select Committees?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the inclusion of the Report of the Select Committee on the Landlord and Tenant (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance in the Agenda for today's House of Assembly meeting was erroneously effected.

MR SPEAKER:

May I interrupt there, certainly not by the Clerk of the House of Assembly.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, not at all, it was from another source. This Report is not yet ready for submission to the House. When it is so ready, it will be circulated to all Members prior to laying on the table of the House and the requisite motion seeking approval will also be made. Any inconvenience is regretted.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 141 OF 1983

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister state what led whoever did it to request that it be put on the Agenda of the House when apparently it is not even ready at this point of time?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Hopeful expectation, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

May I express the hope that that expectation will be justified in the not too distant future?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are working to that end, Sir.

NO. 142 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, what is the latest position with the Woodford Cottage Development?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the latest position is that the Woodford Cottage Housing Association have now formally decided to put the scheme out to tender, and this is expected to be done shortly.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 142 OF 1983

HON W T SCOTT:

Has the Government had any indication from any of the individual members of the Tenants Association that their support is now less warm than it would have been had the frontier not opened?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is there any time limit as far as the Government is concerned on the development of that scheme for the Tenants Association to act and start physically building?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There is no specific time limit as such, Sir, but Government of course presses them to do it as expeditiously as possible.

HON P J ISOLA:

Has Government anything to do with the putting out to tender of this project? Has Government given any assistance in relation to this at all?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Apart from what I stated a long time ago, Sir, that Government made some very sketchy outline plans, no, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

Government as I understand have envisaged two or more quarters as part of that development. Does Government have a representative in that Tenants Association?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

At the moment, Sir, there is no plans for Government to take up any of the quarters.

HON W T SCOTT:

There has been a change in policy then, presumably, because the last information we had in this House was that Government would be taking up an option.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the last information in the House, if I may interrupt, was the fact that any not taken up by the Housing Association would be taken up by Government, but there were no firm commitments. I am not here to answer questions but I do recall that.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, that is correct, Sir. The whole intention was that the scheme would be entirely for private enterprise but should it fall down because there was one or two not so taken up then Government would step in and take them over but at the moment there are enough to cover the whole scheme.

HON W T SCOTT:

When saying enough, Sir, is the Government saying that all the houses have now been taken up?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, sixteen.

HON W T SCOTT:

I think the original number was seventeen in two phases?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That is correct, there was a slight readjustment to the development of the scheme and I believe I mentioned to the House that it had been reduced to sixteen.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 143 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, when does Government intend to start cleaning up the beaches?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, cleaning of beaches is scheduled to start in mid-April, just before the opening of the official bathing season.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 143 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister not agree it would have been better to have started the cleaning before the Easter break?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, because there is still the risk of an easterly storm destroying all the good work that might be done.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will the changing rooms and the different paddling and swimming pools on our beaches be operational for the Easter Holiday?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

No, Sir, it is not envisaged that the changing rooms and the different paddling and swimming pools on our beaches will be operational for the Easter Holiday.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 144 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is it that the Minister does not expect heavy usage of these facilities as has been the case in previous years?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, it is that there is not the funds to give the overtime that is required for this sort of thing.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does not the Minister agree that in fact over the Easter period if the weather is fine all these areas are full of holidaymakers, local holidaymakers and tourists and does he not consider it in that case a worthwhile expense at least to have the toilets open so that people can use them because my experience last year was that in fact that is what happened? It was a lovely Easter and the beaches were crowded, the areas were crowded and complaints left, right and centre that the toilet facilities were locked up. Cannot the Minister do something about that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, from information we have been receiving so many people have already booked up cars to go to Malaga etc over the Easter holiday and spend their time in Spain, it is somewhat futile to prepare an expensive scheme for Gibraltar as happened on Commonwealth Day when the beaches were empty and everybody was at the Sierra Nevada.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister in fact encouraging people to do precisely that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, we are just being realistic.

HON P J ISOLA:

Shouldn't the Government give consideration to those people who do stay behind? Is the Government not aware that there are still a great number of people in Gibraltar who take their recreation within Gibraltar, at least fifteen, anyway?

MR SPEAKER:

Does the Minister wish to say anything?

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, even if we really ignore the needs of the Gibraltarians, since we want to bring tourists to Gibraltar doesn't the Minister believe that at least in that aspect he should try and see that all these amenities are available to visitors?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am sure the Spanish tourist is not coming over to visit our beaches.

HON P J ISOLA:

What about from the United Kingdom what about the tourist policy of this Government, it is in shambles.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state where the responsibility falls for the upkeep of flags flown on Government buildings and will they ensure that the flags flown are in decent conditions?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, a list is held in all Government Departments having flag-poles in their buildings stating the dates on which flags are to be flown. However, a reminder is given from the office of the Deputy Governor a day or so before the appointed day.

Each Department is responsible for its own flags.

Perhaps the Hon Member would wish to pin point the exact building where the flag was considered not to be in good condition so that if not already done, measures can be taken immediately to replace the flag in question.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 145 OF 1983

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I think the Minister is aware of the building that I refer to and it was not my intention to bring that particular case out because the Minister dealt with it satisfactorily but what I was thinking is to avoid a repetition. Mr Speaker, the building, as he knows, is the City Hall and I was suggesting to him that perhaps if there is no arrangement for someone to look after those flags that someone should be appointed.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

When the flag was flown on the 19th February, 1983, the rope which keeps the flag there actually broke and it took about eight or ten days before we could get somebody to go up and remove the actual flag. A new flag has now been put.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is Government considering passing this problem over to the Steering Committee?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 146 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state why Jumper's Bastion is allowed to continue littered with rubbish and rusting domestic appliances notwithstanding this matter has been called to their attention previously in the House of Assembly?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the rubbish and other domestic appliances at Jumper's Bastion have been deposited by the tenants of the vaults there. This is contrary to the conditions of their leases.

They have therefore been given two weeks notice to remove these accumulations. This notice expired last Friday and the matter has now been referred to the Law Officers for necessary action.

NO. 147 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state for how many days the Refuse Incinerator has been out of action since 1st December, 1982, giving the reasons?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the Incinerator was not operating during the following periods since 1st December, 1982:

January 16th, 17th, 18th - Plant did not operate due to a malfunction of the grates in the furnace. Refuse continued to be accepted and was stored in the hopper.

January 25th to March 1st - Closed for routine annual overhaul.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 147 OF 1983

HON W T SCOTT:

What other arrangements were made between the 25th January/March 1st to dispose of the rubbish?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

As is done normally when the plant is up for an annual overhaul it is tipped from the ash chute.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is this five week period normal? Does it normally take five weeks to undertake the annual maintenance of the Incinerator?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Normally it takes between three and five weeks. It depends once the furnace has cooled down and inspections can be made to ascertain what damage has actually been done and how many fire bricks have to be replaced, etc.

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, for how long has the Public Works Department been in possession of the Street Cleaning Vehicle and how much did it cost?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, PWD took possession of the Street Cleaning Vehicle on the 27th November, 1982. Cost of vehicle was £23,477.88.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 148 OF 1983

HON W T SCOTT:

Is the Government satisfied, Mr Speaker, that the work that was originally undertaken for the Street Cleaning Vehicle is being undertaken by it because as far as I have been made aware there are certain limitations with the sweeping of the road by the vehicle, in other words, it seems to be concentrated basically on the edges and not round the centre?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are satisfied, Sir. There are small limitations, of course, where a lot of cars are parked you can still actually hosepipe between the cars but it does slow down the work considerably, to that extent there is a limitation otherwise we are quite satisfied, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

I presume, Mr Speaker, that this went out to tender as well?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It did not go out to tender because it is the only machine of its type within the price range that we were willing to pay, there were other machines but they were considerably higher priced.

HON W T SCOTT:

If it did not go out to tender how come the Department determined that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The Deputy Director and myself visited an annual fair of vehicles of this type and we saw all types of vehicles. We had had our eye on this type of vehicle for three years, it was about the correct size we wanted, it was on the lorry chassis that we had

knowledge of, it was within the price range we wanted, we waited three years while we contacted other City Councils which were using the vehicle to see if it was giving satisfactory results. As I say, the other vehicles were considerably larger, the great point of necessity is that it should not be wider than a certain width, the other vehicles were much wider and also much more expensive.

HON W T SCOTT:

What is the source of origin of the vehicle?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

UK, Sir.

NO. 149 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, what has been the lifespan of the Police patrol cars some of which have recently been replaced?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the last time Police patrol cars were replaced was in August 1981, when three Toyota cars were purchased to replace three Ford Escorts which had been in service five years, having been purchased in September, 1976.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 149 OF 1983

HON W T SCOTT:

Is there not an indication, in fact, Mr Speaker, where one Police car has recently been replaced which is not a Toyota?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am not aware of that, Sir.

HON W T SCOTT:

I see a Mazda car being driven by the Police every day and the registration number leads me to believe that it is only a few months old.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If you would like to give me information later I will look into it and give you a written reply.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government give its reasons and an estimate of the costs of moving the Housing Department to St Mary's First School and will Government state its proposed user, if any, for the Housing offices in the City Hall?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, a decision has been taken, in principle, to accommodate the Housing Department in the St Mary's First School building at Hospital Ramp in due course. The project has not yet been costed and action to do so will not be taken until much nearer the time of the event possibly in two or three year's time. The accommodation becoming vacant in the City Hall will be shared between the Telephone Department and the Accountant-General's Department who also have certain accommodation problems which can only be solved within the City Hall complex.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 150 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is it the case then that it is not so much that the Housing Department has to move but that the Housing Department is occupying space which Government has other use for?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, it is a little bit of both. The position is that one wishes to use one's accommodation to the best advantage and if you have a section like the Telephone Department which is basically in the City Hall already and they need some expansion and if you have pressure from the Accountant-General's Department which again is located to a great extent in the City Hall and needs expansion, it would seem reasonable that they should expand into the City Hall area rather than have one little piece here, one little piece somewhere else. There will be no difficulty in moving the Housing Department as one unit to another area.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would there be room or is there any sort of plan within Government's thinking for another user for St Mary's First School?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is estimated, Sir, that the Housing Department can be fitted into the St Mary's School and there will be room to spare. Who will take that room we do not yet know.

HON A J HAYNES:

But will another Government Department be accommodated at St Mary's School or not?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, a small department could be fitted in there.

HON A J HAYNES:

Has Government considered finding alternative premises other than St Mary's School for the Housing Department, premises which could be more central?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The Government has an Office Committee set up to look at all these things. They go through all the different possibilities and ramifications of the position and they have come up with the idea that St Mary's School may be the best place for the Housing Department.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister answer that part of the question which relates to the reasons for the move other than the negative reasons that are proposed by the Telephone Department and the Accountant-General, is there any advantage to be attained from moving to St Mary's School for the Housing Department?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, they will have considerably more room than they have at the moment where I believe two or three people, including the Director of the Housing Department, all have to share the same office.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is it proposed then to increase the size of the Housing Department or is that not included in the plan?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is proposed to increase the area that they occupy but not the number of persons employed.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 151 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government give the costings of the present repairs and maintenance of the Humphries Estate giving the average cost per block?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, we are presently not undertaking any major repairs or maintenance works at Alameda Estate. As is general to all Government Housing, the Public Works Department attends to requisitions for repairs as received from tenants or arising out of maintenance requirements. Costings of individual requisitions are not immediately available, these are charged to the main head of charge namely: "Maintenance of Buildings (Housing)". To elicit individual requisitions would be a time consuming and costly exercise.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 151 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I think the Minister has not quite understood the point of the question. I am concerned with the general external facades. I am not interested in the individual requisitions of the flats, I am aware that Humphries Estate in the last six months or a year or so, I cannot remember exactly when it started, has had block by block plastering on the outside following by paintwork, has that been costed?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir. I think the last one that was done was about £30,000.

HON A J HAYNES:

That would be the average cost or are some more expensive than others?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It will depend partly on the size of the building and partly on the condition of the building. If a lot more plastering is required before painting then the cost will go up, also if the building is larger like, I think, Alameda and Kingsway Houses, the cost is greater.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister be so kind as to give me in fact the answer to the question, I have misled him in the question.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I can find out the costs of the last one and projected costs for other buildings.

HON A J HAYNES:

I am much obliged.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 152 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government now satisfied with the remedial works carried out on a trial basis on some flats in one of the Glacis Estate Tower Blocks?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Yes, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 152 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, does that mean that the Government is now in a position to proceed with the flats in that Block and in the other one?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Hopefully, if the House votes the money at the forthcoming Estimates, work will commence on doing the whole lot over a period starting the next financial year.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether any contact or discussions have taken place with Spanish firms in relation to the Viaduct Causeway project?

ANSWERTHE HON. THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Yes, Sir, a Spanish contractor has submitted an application to the project consultants, Messrs Wallace Evans and Partners, for pre-qualification. The contractor paid a call on the Director of Public Works and met members of the PWD staff who are working on this project. The DFW had these discussions with the contractor, who intimated they would probably work in consortium with a local company, in order to obtain information which would assist consideration whether they are eligible to tender.

A decision as to their eligibility to tender has not yet been made.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 153 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

I take it, Mr Speaker, that all these consultations were cleared politically beforehand with the Minister?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The Director of Public Works approached me and I said yes, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

Does the Government not think that in view of the fact that in some other areas of the economy although the Government seems to have been taking a line of considering putting business in Spanish hands reprehensible it can hardly set a good example itself by appearing to be leaving a door open for a Spanish firm to take over a public contract?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, the Hon Member has a point there, in fact, it has been tightened up where applications come from Spanish firms but of course the first application about this firm came to us from the UK consultants who have been approached direct.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, won't this work be put out to tender anyway?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, they are asking if they will be allowed to tender in consortium with a local company and we wish to know before we accept any firm to be allowed to tender whether they are capable of doing the work and what have you, etc.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Government know who the local company is?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am not sure that I should say that in the House but we do know who it is.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, is there anything within the eventual contract that would determine a successful contractor to sublet part or all of his work to a company like this who need not be vetted by the Department?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am not sure what the conditions of the tender will actually say but of course you might get the instance that the Government was going to buy some Ford Escort cars and of course if you looked into it deeply you would find that 50% of that car was manufactured in Spain.

HON W T SCOTT:

But I am looking to the situation, Mr Speaker, which perhaps what we are discussing now might be totally academic, there might be a vetting required for tenderers but a successful tenderer having been vetted

MR SPEAKER:

What is the question you are asking?

HON W T SCOTT:

The question is, are we not being academic here and are we looking for those safeguards adequately or should we not ensure that in the terms of contract that that should not be included as a safeguard?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, I am not sure how academic it is, Sir. We have done over the last seven or eight years a considerable amount of development work and I think that development work has used a vast quantity of aggregate all of which has come from a Spanish source.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the local contractor firm involved a firm that could do a work of this kind and of this size?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, they could do the work but of course they would have to buy their materials somewhere and I presume that is why they are interested in the approach from the Spanish company.

HON P J ISOLA:

What I am asking, Mr Speaker, is whether this particular contractor is a contractor that has experience in large projects in Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is a contractor that is in the highest category of tendering procedure, that is over £1m.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 154 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government state the latest situation with regard to Development Aid since the last meeting of the House and state what progress there has been in this direction since then?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Mr Speaker, there have been no significant developments with regard to aid projects since the detailed statement which I made in this House on the 22nd February, 1983.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 154 OF 1983

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the statement correct that the development assistance to Gibraltar during the present financial year will be £2m?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is a statement which I think was made yesterday in the House of Commons. I have not been able to check whether that is correct, Mr Speaker. I do not know what is the basis of that information.

HON P J ISOLA:

The basis is the Minister for Overseas Development.

HON A J CANEPA:

But I only saw that this afternoon before coming to the House.

HON P J ISOLA:

I know but what I am asking the Minister is whether the extent of development aid during this financial year is in that region or not?

HON A J CANEPA:

I don't think so, Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

It is less?

HON A J CANEPA:

I would say so, yes.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Minister then take some steps to rectify this position?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state its reasons for the proposed increase in berthing fees at the Camber and will Government undertake to enhance the facilities there?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the Camber was handed over to Government on the 31st December, 1978. The fees then being charged remained in force till 1st November, 1982. Since taking over the Camber, Government has doubled the number of moorings available. In addition Government has spent over £41,500 in resurfacing the hard, installation of ring bolts, repairs to underwater cavities and the installation of lighting bollards. Ducts have also been provided for future telephone or electricity requirements. The facilities have therefore already been enhanced and the increase in fees is simply intended to reflect a realistic charge.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 155 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, will Government confirm or deny that they were given a lump sum by the MOD to effect necessary repairs when they took over?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is nonsense, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

He denys it?

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister has said that it is nonsense.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that the revenue at present raised from the Camber berthing fees is in the region of £12,500 per annum?

HON A J CANEPA:

What is that, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Would you confirm that the berthing fees raised from the Camber is in the region of £12,500?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not have the information available with me, I would have to check the estimates of revenue.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that the revenue increase would be from £12,500 to £25,000 per annum?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, if the £12,500 figure is correct. Broadly speaking, the charges have been doubled.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that the pontoons which have given the increased berthing facilities to the Camber were free to Government, they were part of the White Marina complex?

HON A J CANEPA:

They were laid by the Marina developers, that is correct, as part of the agreement entered into at the time with the Government.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that the following facilities do not exist to the present occupants of the Camber: water facilities, electricity facilities, there is no adequate supervision, there is no security

MR SPEAKER:

No, with due respect.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member carries on the way he is I might be tempted to double the charges further within the space of another twelve months.

HON A J HAYNES:

Bully boy, eh?

MR SPEAKER:

Order.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does the Minister believe in democracy?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, order.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member does not have a monopoly on being correct by any means. If he were to direct his attention to the Estimates for 1982/83 a copy of which I would imagine he has or he ought to have, page 11 thereof, he would find out that Subhead 18-- Camber Charges, the estimate of revenue for 1982/83 is £8,000.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister confirm that none of the facilities exist in the Camber of the ones I have listed so far?

MR SPEAKER:

No, I will not allow that question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm that road tax licences is going to be less than that required of berthing facilities at the Camber?

MR SPEAKER:

No, you can find that out by looking up the law and finding out what the road taxes are and comparing it yourself. That is information you can easily get for yourself.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, all I want to do is ask the Minister what are the facilities available to those in the Camber other than just moorings?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not know, Mr Speaker, but one thing that I can say is that they are getting it pretty cheap, people using the Camber are getting very good value for money. If they were to try and berth their boats in one of the Marinas they would soon find out what the real position is.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister consider enhancing the facilities as a result of the increase in berthing fees?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, because these charges were due to have come into effect in early 1981 and in fact they were deferred until the improvements that I have referred to in my answer had been effected.

HON A J HAYNES:

I am very sorry to hear that, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 156 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, Sir, can Government state if the new Pilot boat purchased with a Government loan has arrived in Gibraltar and if so whether import duty was paid?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the Pilot boat has indeed arrived in Gibraltar and is already serving its intended purpose. Import duty has been paid.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 156 OF 1983

HON W T SCOTT:

Can I ask the Hon Member when the boat arrived?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I do not have the exact date neither do I know exactly when duty was paid but I can tell him when the decision was taken that duty had to be paid and it was before estimates were approved during the course of the last meeting of the House of Assembly when the Financial and Development Secretary and I consulted on the matter.

HON W T SCOTT:

What I want to ask the Hon Member is whether import duty was paid at the time of importation as required by law?

HON A J CANEPA:

That I cannot say, Mr Speaker. It doesn't matter, the requirement by law is that import duty had to be paid and there can be no question of import duty being waived. If there had been an application for that the only thing the Government could have done would have been to give an ex-gratia payment in return, to make an ex-gratia reimbursement, but it would not have been considered.

HON W T SCOTT:

With respect, Mr Speaker, my question has not been answered and that was why duty was not paid at importation as required by law?

MR SPEAKER:

I think the Minister has answered your question. He has said he is not sure when it was paid. I think the Hon Minister said that it has been paid, he cannot say when, whether it was at the time of importation or after. He has given an answer.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I think the Minister said that he had had consultations with the Hon Financial and Development Secretary at the last meeting of the House about the question of import duty but the boat was already here, surely it must have been after that the consultations with the Financial Secretary took place.

HON A J CANEPA:

The Collector of Customs intimated to the Hon Financial and Development Secretary and myself the first morning of the last meeting of the House that the Pilots' Association were considering making an application, I think, to the Government for import duty to be waived and we consulted and the answer was that the import duty would not be waived and therefore the question did not arise..

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 157 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, has Government received or does it expect to receive any further applications for loans from the Pilots' Association for the purchase of boats and what new criteria will Government insist on?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, no applications have been received from the Pilots' Association in respect to further loans for the purchase of another boat. It is possible that such a request could be made in the future, as the acquisition of one new boat will not solve the present problems. However, the Hon Member will recall my statement on this matter at the last meeting of the House when I categorically stated that further loans would not be contemplated unless the boats are built here in Gibraltar.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if they would welcome a ferry service between Gibraltar and Algeciras and if they have any policy on the running of such a service to ensure that the interests of Gibraltar are safeguarded?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Mr Speaker, Government would welcome a ferry service between Gibraltar and Algeciras since it would improve maritime communications. The Government's policy on this matter is that the provision of such a service should be based on the fundamental principle of reciprocity and mutual benefit.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 158 OF 1983

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does he include in this reciprocity and mutual benefit the possibility of having a local firm doing it, not just a Spanish firm?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, indeed, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 159 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if they have received any proposals for the implementation of a ferry service between Gibraltar and Algeciras?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

No, Sir, no proposal for such a service has been received.

THE HON J BOSSANO

What use has been made of the ex Key and Anchor Club since Government paid MOD £100,000 for it?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, in the first instance let me clarify that although the value of the building transferred to the Gibraltar Government was agreed at £110,000 the amount actually paid was £63,403 this being the residual sum after deducting the cost of reprovding certain facilities within the area retained by the MOD.

As to the use that has been made, the North Wing on the first floor was allocated to the Education Department for an extension to Bishop Fitzgerald's School. The premises were in fact occupied by them in 1978 in advance of the effective date of the transfer, namely, 25 January, 1980. Part of the ground floor was then converted into office accommodation for the DLSS in connection with labour enquiries from visiting Spaniards. The first floor of the West Wing has recently been converted into further office accommodation for the Audit Department, thus decongesting the Secretariat complex. The remainder of the Ground Floor is now being actively considered as alternative accommodation for the Income Tax offices, presently in private rented accommodation, which may have to be vacated if agreement is not reached with the landlords on the terms of a new tenancy.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 160 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if that area is used by the Income Tax will that take up the whole of the available space or will there still be vacant space?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am not quite sure about that, Mr Speaker, I do not think there will be a lot of space left after that.

HON J BOSSANO:

I take it the Government does consider as a matter of policy that they ought to make full use of the place having paid money for it?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, not only in respect of this place because we have paid a considerable sum for it but because it is also the Government policy to try to provide accommodation for its departments from within its own resources having regard to the high rents being charged by the private sector.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is it Government policy to convert premises which have been used for social and cultural activities to office buildings?

MR SPEAKER:

No, I am afraid I am not going to have that question, not under this question. You can ask any questions you like on what use the Key and Anchor is going to be put. Next question.

NO. 161 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is it Government's intention to proceed with the planned pedestrianisation of Main Street even if the cost has to be met from local funds?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Yes, Sir. Government intends to proceed with the planned pedestrianisation of Main Street even if the cost has to be met from local funds. However, since the work will be carried out in phases, the extent of pedestrianisation and the projected time scales will be regulated by the cost of each phase in relation to other commitments.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 161 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Would Government not agree that if in fact it is facing a situation where it may have limitations on allocation of resources in Government expenditure, the commitment to pedestrianisation must be seen in the light of what else is being sacrificed?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I would agree with that.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 162 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, has Government any plans for the development of St Jago's Barracks?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, St Jago's building is being considered by the Office Accommodation Committee in connection with Government's policy to move departments from expensive private rented accommodation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 162 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, would Government consider making the St Jago's building available as a school and transferring Governor's Meadow from the Alameda Grand Parade?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, it is not an easy question for me to answer having regard to the fact that there could be educational considerations involved. The Minister, I think, answered the specific question this morning on the demolition of Governor's Meadow First School. I think it is too early a stage for a decision of that nature to be taken with respect to St Jago's quite apart from the fact, as I have said, Mr Speaker, that we have got it tentatively earmarked for office accommodation the extent to which we will actually require it may depend on something else which we are hoping to vote funds for in the Estimates that we will be bringing to the House for the next financial year. There has also been a recent approach in connection with an exchange of buildings that might involve St Jago's which I only got last week and I would like to be able to study the matter further. I do not think from the wide aspect of the point of view of land use there are serious objections to the use of St Jago's building for school accommodation but I would imagine that the nature of the building, Mr Speaker, is such that it would have limitations in that whereas formerly it was used as a secondary modern school what the Hon Member has in mind would entail its use by children of infant school age and I would have doubts as to whether that building is suitable for that purpose.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, could I ask the Government in view of the fact that we must be looking towards developing our tourist industry and the exposure of the main entrance to the Alameda Gardens with the beautiful wrought iron gate is I think an asset which we should develop, could I ask the Government before they take a final decision on turning St Jago's into office accommodation to really consider the possibility of moving the school so that that temporary structure which goes by the name of the Governor's Meadow First School can finally be knocked down to expose a very beautiful part of our City?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think that that is desirable, the point made by the Hon Member, but the problem, Mr Speaker, is that the Government already has identified priority requirements in respect of education which are; the reprovisioning of St Mary's First School now at Hospital Ramp and probably to go to Town Range and I think that the next one is the need for an extension to St Joseph's Middle School which is required having regard to the movement of population to the South district occasioned by Rosia Dale and by projected new housing at Gasworks. These are the two priority areas and I do not think, Mr Speaker, that there is much money left after those have been met to do what the Hon Member would like us to do, at least not for the next few years.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 163 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many sites put out to tender by Government for development are still undeveloped?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, there are eight sites awarded by tender which are awaiting development. Five of these comprise residential development and the remaining three are for commercial purposes.

All the sites are held under building licences for a limited period so that the Government is able to monitor the situation as and when these expire. Except for one case, which has become litigious, these developments are at the planning stage. However, progress in each case is constantly kept under review.

NO. 164 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many of the garages opposite the Dockyard Technical College are used as such and how many are being sublet?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, five of the ten sheds are being used as garages. From evidence which has come to light as a result of Government's action to obtain possession for demolition it appears that three are being sublet.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 164 OF 1983

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, when the time comes for these garages to be demolished, presumably alternative sites to the occupants will be made available. Can I take it that the people who are subletting their garages because obviously they do not require them as such, will not be given an alternative site or will they also be given an alternative site which they can subsequently sublet again?

HON A J CANEPA:

An offer has been made, Mr Speaker, of an alternative site in Devil's Tower Road, in the vicinity of that area, has been made to the tenants. I do not think a sufficient amount of progress has been made on the matter since the Government got a Court Order for possession for me to be able to say very much more about it. I think, Mr Speaker, that until we can come to some reasonable arrangement with the tenants as a whole since mainly the extent of sublets is a minority, unless we can make some real progress I think the question which the Hon Member is putting does not arise though it is a point which has got to be kept in mind. I am aware, in fact, that in one or two cases a light industrial use is being put to those sheds which may amount to the sole means of livelihood of the individuals concerned. I am aware of one or two cases and I have the matter very much in mind.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, will the Government take that into consideration when handing these alternative sites, in fact, to give priority to the sublet tenants rather than the tenants who obviously have no need for these garages?

HON A J CANEPA:

I will take that into consideration, Mr Speaker, but I cannot really tie my hands, well, they are not my hands they are the hands of the Surveyor and Planning Secretary, in respect of the agreements which may be arrived at, generally, to achieve what is really a requirement because the MOD demolished the Romney Huts on condition that the Government should do likewise in respect of those garages for environmental reasons.

HON P J ISOLA:

But the people in occupation are the people who have got to be rehoused, not the tenants, surely. Under the Part 2 which applies to business premises surely the tenant has no standing in the matter at all, I would have thought.

HON A J CANEPA:

The problem, Mr Speaker, is that these tenancies and the conditions thereto were taken over by the Government on transfer from the MOD in 1974.

HON P J ISOLA:

I appreciate that, Mr Speaker, but if the garages are to be demolished surely it is the people who are actually using them that should be rehoused, not the people who have them as a sort of business, surely?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think it is for the Government to take a policy decision on the matter and then for the matter to be pursued further by the Legal Department but we are at a stage now where having got an order for possession I think the Government can begin to try to come to terms with the people concerned which it has been very difficult to do.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Is it still the policy of the Government to re-site the Revenue Station at Waterport?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Yes, Sir. Now that the Port Department have moved to their new premises at the North Mole, it will be possible to move the Customs Department to the offices previously occupied by the Port Department, thus improving Customs control over the Port area.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 165 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister say why it has taken so long to do this?

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, the main problem was that the move of the Port Department to the North Mole was not effected until last June. Also, I think that the funds for both moves were supposed to have been provided out of the previous development programme, I think, and which in the event never materialised.

HON G T RESTANO:

I do not think that that is quite correct, Mr Speaker. I remember and perhaps the Minister will recall that his predecessor said that the work to commence the rehabilitation of the new Revenue Station which was taken on by the Port Department, would commence in November, 1978, funds were there, so why wasn't it done? My reckoning is it is 4½ years since the Minister's predecessor said that.

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not know if there is any purpose in debating in this House why Mr Abraham Serfaty made a statement which he made in November, 1978.

HON G T RESTANO:

No, he made it in May, 1977.

HON A J CANEPA:

Worse still. The fact of the matter is that the Port Department was not reprovided until last June and therefore the question of the Customs cannot arise. If he asked me for a date I would refuse to give him one lest my successor may also in years to come have to carry the burden of a statement which I have made.

HON G T RESTANO:

It seems to me, Mr Speaker, that we do ask questions on this side of the House and we expect to get accurate answers. Can we expect in future to get fairly accurate answers and not answers with no

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are now debating, with due respect. You have been given an answer. The answer has been that they could not do anything with the Revenue Offices until such time as the Port Department moved to its new premises which they did not do until June, 1982. Perhaps the previous Minister has made a statement which the present Minister cannot substantiate but it is not for him to do that.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I think his predecessor was answering and replying on behalf of the Government, that is how I take it. If that is not so perhaps I can get confirmation of that.

HON A J CANEPA:

What happens with the development programme is that the Government sets itself objectives, there are projects which it would like to do within a development programme and a submission is put in to Her Majesty's Government, the extent of aid might fall short or in the course of the development programme the on-going projects the cost is exceeded considerably and therefore funds run out and therefore what was a bona fide objective at a given point in time such as in 1977 or 1978 may have to be deferred and it is very difficult in this sort of fluid situation to be completely pinned down.

HON G T RESTANO:

Could the Minister say whether in fact the funds were made available and were not spent for other reasons and therefore the project approval was withdrawn?

HON A J CANEPA:

It could well be, Mr Speaker, that funds were voted here in the House and in the event the project was not proceeded with, that may well be the case, I don't know.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am not asking whether it could well be the case, I am asking if the Minister could find out whether it is the case?

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, Mr Speaker, I am a rather busy Minister and I do not mind finding out information if the information is required for a particularly valid purpose but I do not like to act as a postman when, as I say, I do try and work a reasonably long day.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does that mean that the Minister will not find out?

HON A J CANEPA:

If the purpose for which the Hon Member wants the thing is a valid one, yes, if it is just to score a debating point I will give him the debating point, he is right and I am wrong and Mr Serfaty was wrong and it has not been done.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

23.3.83

NO. 166 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Does Government have any short term and/or long term plans for the Engineer House area and if so could details be given?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Answered together with Question No. 169 of 1983.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what is the latest position regarding the construction of the proposed multi-storey car park at Casemates?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the latest position is that the developer is pursuing his enquiries with regard to the various matters which have to be resolved before commencing development. Amongst these is the question of reproviding the seven MOD quarters included as a condition of tender. The MOD have recently indicated that if the developer provided five quarters which would meet their requirements on a temporary basis, then they would be able to hand over the site in anticipation of permanent reprovisioning. This would accelerate the development process considerably. The Company is therefore making enquiries in this direction.

In addition a number of meetings have been held with other interested parties.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 167 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask first of all, Mr Speaker, has the MOD in fact handed over the land to the Gibraltar Government yet?

HON A J CANEPA:

Is he asking has there been a formal transfer of the land, I doubt whether there has been a formal transfer, no.

HON G T RESTANO:

Will the Minister say what is the normal practice for the handing over of land from the MOD to the Gibraltar Government, is there an official document or what happens?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think what would happen, Mr Speaker, would be that there would be a letter of intent to the Government.

HON G T RESTANO:

Has there been no letter of intent of any sort saying that the MOD will hand over?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, there is no problem about the fact that this site is going to be handed over, no question of any difficulties even though there has been no formal transfer as such.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is it subject, presumably, to the reprovisioning of the quarters, that is the only condition? May I ask then, was that also not the condition in the tender when the tender was awarded that the successful tenderer would in fact reprovide those quarters and may I ask why has it not yet been done?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is in the answer that I have given. I said: "Amongst these is the question of reproviding the seven MOD quarters included as a condition of tender. The MOD have recently indicated that if the developer provided five quarters which would meet their requirements on a temporary basis, then they would be able to hand over the site in anticipation".

HON G T RESTANO:

But my question was, Mr Speaker, that when this whole business was last spoken about in the House there were various tenderers and this particular tenderer was chosen because that company complied with all the conditions that the Government wanted and one was the immediate reprovisioning of the quarters and it was on that basis, presumably, and perhaps the Minister can confirm that the company was granted the tender and therefore if it granted the tender under those conditions why has that company not carried out the conditions of that tender?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not think that the fault lies with the company, Mr Speaker. The MOD requirements regarding reprovisioning has been the subject of further consideration since the announced closure of the Dockyard because the MOD are now having a new and overall look at their quartering requirements, that is why it has been possible for them to establish that they only require five instead of seven quarters and an offer has been made by the developer of five flats which are the subject of consideration by the pertinent MOD authority. I think the ball is really with the MOD at the moment.

HON P J ISOLA:

But then if the developer is now being excused from providing seven and they need only provide five, is there provision in the tender to ensure that the Government gets the benefit of the saving of two quarters rather than the developer because it is public land that is being put out to tender on a particular basis and any benefit that accrues after the date of tender surely in respect of that should accrue to the Government otherwise the Government is being possibly unfair to other tenderers who tendered on the basis of seven.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, is it suggested that we now call a halt to everything and we go out to tender again on the basis of only five quarters because that is what the MOD are asking for today or we ask the developer to pay a premium of, say, £100,000 in respect of the two quarters which they are not having to provide?

HON P J ISOLA:

No, Mr Speaker, but the developer could be asked to provide two quarters which could be used by the Government in respect of public accommodation and public housing because that is the commitment of the developer.

HON A J CANEPA:

That is a matter I think which the Government has to seriously consider, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, with your leave may I refer back to the exchanges that took place in supplementaries arising from Question No. 167.

MR SPEAKER:

Is that Engineer House?

HON A J CANEPA:

No; the multi-storey car park at Casemates and the point made by the Leader of the Opposition in respect of whether the Government should not have the benefit of the two quarters over which there might not be a reprovisioning requirement. In my answer I said that the MOD had recently indicated that if the developer provided five quarters which would meet their requirements on a temporary basis then they would be able to hand over the site in anticipation of permanent reprovisioning. At present the position is that permanent reprovisioning would still have to be settled but the MOD are in fact reconsidering that and in the event that the permanent reprovisioning requirement should be less than seven, there is already a requirement under the tender conditions for the reduction, as it were, to be reprovided for the benefit of Government or an appropriate sum to be paid in lieu to the Government.

NO. 168 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, Sir what is the latest position with regard to the East Side Development?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member will recall that I explained last December that the two parties, whose schemes were under consideration, had been asked to submit certain information on the provision of infrastructure and their proposals for the necessary hydrographic studies.

This has now been received and has been considered by the Land Board. I am afraid that owing to their confidentiality I am unable to disclose further details except to say that the information submitted by both parties does not facilitate the selection process, as had been intended. Nevertheless, the Government has engaged a Consultant who is looking at both schemes in detail and who will report to the Land Board on the outcome of his investigations. In the meantime the Government has approached the two parties with a suggestion that may well obviate the need for selection and at the same time achieve the desired objective.

A reply from the two parties is now awaited.

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state what is the present position with the Engineer House Development Scheme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, although plans have been prepared for a Housing Scheme on the Engineer House site, the Government has decided to defer construction in preference for other schemes which have been prepared in respect of the following sites: Gasworks site, Tank Ramp Phase II and Road to the Lines Phase II.

Nevertheless, in the short term it is proposed to demolish the existing structures and clear the site for use as a temporary car park. This would reprovide the car parking spaces lost as a result of the Old Command Education Centre Scheme and at the same time would serve to provide the public with an open amenity area in what is at present a very congested part of the City.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 166 AND 169 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is the overall, the long term plan, does the Government consider that to be funded by ODA or locally funded?

HON A J CANEPA:

The present position, Mr Speaker, is that ODA are not providing any funds for housing. If there is another tranche of development aid from ODA to follow the present £13m no doubt we would propose to come back to the charge on the question of ODA funds for housing.

HON G T RESTANO:

So if the ODA funds do not come about is it the Government's intention to put it out as a specific project for housing for private development?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, it would be public housing.

HON G T RESTANO:

I think the Minister got me wrong. Not for private development, housing development but carried out by tender.

HON A J CANEPA:

But how is the question of funding, Mr Speaker, the question of the money, I take it that the Hon Member means will it be locally funded, is that what he is asking? Yes, hopefully, if funds are available.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, if I recollect correctly I believe the Minister answered the question to me that the demolition was going to be carried out and that the car park was going to be done a few months back, I would say a year if not eighteen months or two years. Can the Minister state now whether in fact what he said is going to be done?

HON A J CANEPA:

It has been done because the question that the Hon Member was asking me was at the time when there was a problem in the Government taking over Engineer House and arising from that question he asked a number of supplementaries one of which was what was the use which the Government intended to put that site to and I said that it was public housing and I remember since then giving further details in the House that there is a project to build about fifty flats there.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Yes, but he also said that he was going to pull down the existing house and he was going to have a car park there.

HON A J CANEPA:

If the Hon Member can find from a Hansard evidence of that I will apologise to him for that but I do not recollect having said in the House previously what I have said in this answer.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

If the Hon Member will check he will find that he did say it. All I want to know is that on this occasion he will do that and that he will do it quickly.

HON A J CANEPA:

If they are voted for by the House, it is intended in the draft estimates to provide funds for the purpose.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I also have a very distinct recollection of what my Hon Colleague on my right has said.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. It is a simple matter, it is impossible to ask for information the way we are doing. If Members say that they do recollect it is a simple matter, we do provide Hansard, will they please quote and then we do not have to have an argument as to whether it was said or it wasn't.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, it was just a supplementary.

MR SPEAKER:

Whatever it is, if a statement of fact is being made on which an answer is required I require the statement of fact and that is I require the quotation from Hansard, it is as simple as that, but let us not argue as to whether it was made or it was not made.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, regardless of what I may or may not have said in the House before the fact is that the House has never voted funds or never been asked to vote funds for this purpose but it is intended to do that for the financial year 1983/84 and then the burden will be on the Government to get the project in motion in the course of the financial year.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does it not appear from what the Minister has said that the chances of Engineer House being used for public housing in the next five years are fairly dim?

HON A J CANEPA:

In the next five years I wouldn't say so, in the next two, yes, but in the next five I would hope that everything cannot, I am not an optimist by nature but I would very much hope, Mr Speaker, that the economy will pick up and that we might after the next couple of years be in a position to come up with another development programme which will contain a substantial chunk of housing because it is the next highest priority project for new housing, Engineer House, after Gasworks it is the one that we would like to proceed with.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can I know, Mr Speaker, when the demolition is likely to take place provided, of course, the funds are voted?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, I cannot give that information at this stage.

HON G T RESTANO:

But is it not a fact, Mr Speaker, that development generally at the moment is at a standstill and possibly now would be the best time to use the labour force to do that?

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, Mr Speaker, if we bring the funds to the House at the meeting next month then the funds are there to go out to tender for the demolition.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't the Minister confident that he will get the vote through at the next House or is the majority not going to be there?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Surely that is a matter of respect to the House to say that the money is voted by all. We are giving credit to the other side that they are contributing to the voting of the funds.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state how many houses have now been put up for tender in the home ownership scheme and give a breakdown of the estimated costs of repairs in relation to the houses made available under the above scheme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, a total of nine Crown Properties with a modernisation potential of twenty residential units have been awarded by tender. The costs of repairs vary according to the condition of the properties and the extent to which the lessees propose to carry out refurbishment. On average the estimated costs submitted by the successful tenderers ranged from £7,000 to £12,000 per modernised unit. In the case of one of the smaller units, however, the cost was given as £1,600.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 170 OF 1983

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister satisfied that the mortgage facilities required for the financing of these home ownership schemes are being adequately provided?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, does that arise from the question, the mortgage facilities?

MR SPEAKER:

Will you ask the question again?

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister satisfied that the funds required for the repairs are being made accessible in easy tranches or not?

MR SPEAKER:

That is a private commitment by the tenderer and has nothing to do with the matter.

HON A J HAYNES:

On a point of clarification, Mr Speaker, the idea, and the Minister will correct me if I am wrong, of the scheme was to enable one particular class of Gibraltarians, primarily the young married couples not those who are well off, the Minister will concur with me that the Building Society provisions in Gibraltar are fairly primitive and as such since his intent is to aid these people has he made enquiries into the banking facilities?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am aware, Mr Speaker, that the Gibraltar Building Society has provided, I think in the course of the last year, something like £360,000 in mortgage facilities.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the Minister aware of any difficulty encountered by potential tenderers or tenderers in relation to the funds to be raised?

HON A J CANEPA:

I have had an approach, Mr Speaker, from some of the interested parties in connection with the provision of the lease and the Government has been happy to accommodate the people concerned by making that possible.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can he be more explicit, I am not quite sure I follow his answer in the terms of the lease availability?

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, Mr Speaker, initially it had been the intention of the Government not to give the lease until the work had been completed but the banks are also involved and I think it has been possible for the Surveyor and Planning Secretary to arrive at a formula which will enable the people concerned to get the funds which they are seeking from the banks and for the banks as well, I think, to get the guarantees which they were after. It looks as if matters are going well, Mr Speaker. As I said, I had an approach from some of the people concerned and as a result of action taken in the Land Board I think the matter has been satisfactorily circumvented.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, how many more houses are going to be up for this scheme in the next, say, twelve months, Sir?

HON A J CANEPA:

There is another batch of properties already identified and additionally it is intended that the Minister for Housing, the Minister for Public Works and myself should view certain other properties in order to establish on the one hand the requirements, I think, of the Housing Department and also to establish which are the other, as it were, residual properties that might be suitable to put out to tender again.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister be more specific, has he any idea of how many?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, not until we have been able to survey the number of properties in question.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 171 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

What is the estimated value of the estate occupied by the UK departments in Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, I am afraid the Government is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Without wishing to labour on the technical considerations involved in such an exercise my Hon Friend is well aware that the definition of value is often the subject of diverse opinions. In crude economic terms, it is usually expressed as the price a willing purchaser would pay to a willing vendor for a particular property in the latter's possession. Where, however, value cannot be tested in the open market, then other considerations apply. In the property world these considerations are primarily influenced by the state of the property market, which in turn is largely reflected in the prevailing rental levels, the location, state of repairs, permitted user, restrictive covenants, planning restrictions and other miscellaneous factors which a valuer must assess individually.

These matters are obviously considered in depth by the Government's valuers at the appropriate times whenever the Government is in the process of either acquiring or disposing of an interest in land.

Having said that, the Government does not consider that it is, for the purpose of such an exercise, the pertinent authority to carry it out.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 171 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Given all those limitations, Mr Speaker, can the Minister give an indication of the value that the property occupied by the MOD would have if instead of it being the MOD that occupies the property it was a private company?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, I would not hazard a figure.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, how does the Government decide how much MOD should contribute in rates if they have no idea what property they are occupying?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is a matter for the Valuation Department from the rating purposes and the user purposes and that is arrived at every year in consultation between the Valuer of the Ministry of Defence and our own Valuer. It is quasi judicial in that there are many installations here that are not rateable because they do not get any services and that I think can be found from the element of percentage of rates which the Imperial Government pays in lieu of rates but it does not reflect the value of it because sometimes they are considerably undervalued because of their non-user but some element of indication could be got there if it can be found. The advantage of course is that they pay in one payment early in the year for the whole of it and we do not have to be collecting rates as we do in the rest. I know a little about that because of the City Council.

HON J BOSSANO:

Will, in fact, the Chief Minister look into the possibility of identifying that in the draft estimates, Mr Speaker?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will try, I don't know whether it appears but I know that it exists somewhere.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 172 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is it intended to compile a new register of electors prior to the next general election?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, the current register of electors was published in August, 1981. It included the names of those persons who, although they had not attained the age of 18 years at the time of publication, would attain that age by 31 March, 1983.

To compile and publish a new register would take about six months and would cost around £21,000. Taking that into account the small movement in population and the relatively few additions required to the current register, it is considered that a supplement to this register should be published later this year. Provision can be made to include persons who will attain voting age by 31 March, 1985.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 172 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

So that means that anybody who was missed out the last time will have an opportunity to be registered before the next election?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, that is right.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is there any monitoring done to take away from the register those people who have passed away?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, they are just not there to vote.

HON G T RESTANO:

Sometimes they do vote.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not think that our system is particularly susceptible to that and I think there would be great objection from the funeral directors.

MR SPEAKER:

It has been suggested that it is the practice in Gibraltar for people who are up in North Front to exercise their right to vote. I do not think it has been insinuated, I hope it isn't. Next question.

NO. 173 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government make arrangements so that holders of UK passports may have a passport issued in Gibraltar at a special rate pending arrival of their UK passport in the event of no other arrangements being possible?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir. There is no provision in Law to issue passports at a reduced rate and it is not intended to provide therefor. Arrangements exist whereby holders of UK passports may, if these are required for travel and subject to certain conditions, retain them whilst their applications for new passports are being processed. It is therefore in the interests of the holders to apply for new passports well in advance of the expiry date of their current ones.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 173 OF 1983

HON P J ISOLA:

Did I hear the Hon and Learned Chief Minister say that a holder of a UK passport does not have to hand in his passport when applying for a new one?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will repeat what I said: "Arrangements exist whereby holders of UK passports may, if these are required for travel and subject to certain conditions, retain them whilst their applications for new passports are being processed". They keep their passport, the application of the other passport is being processed and when the passport comes it is exchanged. They do not have to give it up at the time for the application for the renewal if there is good reason for their holding it.

HON P J ISOLA:

I don't know whether the Hon and Learned Chief Minister has got the point of my question, I am talking really mainly in respect of those Gibraltarian British citizens who have chosen a UK passport and who use that passport, for example, to go to Spain and who are put at a great disadvantage with holders of what the Chief Minister has called Gibraltar passports which, of course, they are not, they are also British passports, but are at a disadvantage with those people because they have to wait six weeks for their passports and does not the Chief Minister agree that it is desirable that those who wish to have UK passports as they are entitled to having applied for British citizenship, should not be in a worse position to others who have not even applied for British citizenship or who prefer to keep their British Dependent Territories citizenship and therefore get passports issued in Gibraltar?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No cases have come to my notice of anybody who has applied for registration under Section 5 who has applied for a UK passport because his Gibraltar passport is expired which is what I think the Hon Member was asking.

MR SPEAKER:

No, I think you are both speaking at cross purposes. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition could ask whether there can be facilities for the renewal of UK passports in Gibraltar, that is what you are asking.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the trouble is that the questions that I have asked should have come in the other way round. They have been put down for answer, in my view, the wrong way around because the first one should really follow the second one but it has been put the other way round so I am forced to ask it.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I was going to say that perhaps he could ask his next question and we could answer both together.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 174 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government seek authority from the United Kingdom authorising the Gibraltar Government to issue UK passports in Gibraltar as agents for the British Government to British Citizens and thus avoid the delay that obtaining such passports brings?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, enquiries at official level in connection with the arrangements for dealing with applications for registration under Section 5 of the British Nationality Act, elicited the information that it is not the policy of the United Kingdom Government to authorise the holding of stocks and the issue of United Kingdom passports elsewhere than in the United Kingdom or by Consular Posts abroad.

I have material here for supplementaries but I may as well give it out in order that we get the whole spectrum. A scheme exists whereby British citizens and British subjects with the right of abode in the United Kingdom may, while they are in a dependent territory, obtain United Kingdom passports. It is under this scheme that persons who acquire British citizenship by registration under Section 5 of the British Nationality Act may apply for the issue of United Kingdom passports. Passports applied for under this scheme normally take from six to eight weeks to be issued. However, arrangements have been with the United Kingdom Passport Office to speed up the procedure as much as possible in respect of applicants who have registered under Section 5. In any case applicants in this category who already hold valid passports will not normally be required to surrender these whilst their applications are being processed if their current passports are required for travel. I hope that this clears the matter.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 174 OF 1983

HON P J ISOLA:

But would the Chief Minister consider asking because Gibraltar is the only case and therefore there are problems, would the Chief Minister consider asking for this matter to be looked at again because is he aware that in the application form for an application for United Kingdom passport, a declaration has to be made by the person who applies in which he states that he is residing in the United Kingdom and that, obviously causes difficulties in respect of British citizens who have their permanent residence in Gibraltar?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will certainly enquire but, first of all, we have had already a number of certificates of registration issued under Section 5 and already a number of people as a result of that have made applications for UK passports and we have not had, to my knowledge, I would like to enquire and if necessary I will let the Hon Member know and I think it will have come up in the preparation of the reply to this question because they have been prepared by the

Passport Office, we have not had any complaints that the UK passports that are being asked for from here as a result of registration under Section 5 are having any difficulty in being issued. In fact, my information is the opposite that they have undertaken to accelerate those passports from about six to eight weeks to five weeks.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I am grateful for that but in fact is the Chief Minister aware that the declaration of any applicant signed are at present being signed incorrectly?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It may be that that shows the anomaly of the privilege that we were able to obtain that it was not conceived in the preparation of the passport that other people than those who were British subjects under the Nationality Act of 1981, they did not think of Section 5 registration and no doubt that should not be signed and I have no doubt that if in lieu of that you certify "I am registered under Section 5 of the Nationality Act", that should do but we have had no complaints back from people who have applied and I do not know whether in fact we have had any come-back, in fact, any UK passports issued for registered people under Section 5 since the original registrations were received. I would have to look into that.

HON P J ISOLA:

The point I want to make, Mr Speaker, is that since the case of Gibraltar is unique and in fact Gibraltar, the territory, people living here permanently are and will become, by and large, holders of UK passports, that there is a need for the Gibraltar Government to bring to the notice of the British passport authority that in actual fact the geographical area of Britain from the point of view of UK passports should really be extended to Gibraltar and that Gibraltar should accordingly be an issuing authority and this would obviate a lot of the problems that are bound to arise in the future.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will certainly bring to their notice that part of the anomaly in the application but with regard to the latter part of the question I must reiterate the fact that when officials were discussing the registration, and I think it is fair to say that we were delegated the power of checking and, in fact, to make an application you put your original paper, they are checked and they are given back to you so that they give registration as certified by our officials which I think is an extent of the trust that they have placed on us that we would register only the people who are entitled to register and even in those circumstances, with that willingness that they have shown, they have said that they are reluctant to allow UK passports to be held other than in the United Kingdom or British Consular posts. I will make the point but already I find that there has been that element of negotiation and it has not met with results. I will make it again, no problem.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Since the Government may find difficulty as the Chief Minister says in getting that, could the Chief Minister look into the possibility of having the sort of temporary ones that are issued by the Post Office in England being issued in Gibraltar to be able to cover that period in which people may want to use it and there is obviously a delay because of distance between here and the UK?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I will take both things up.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government say when they anticipate the study of the implications of Spain's membership of the EEC for the Gibraltar economy, being conducted pursuant to the motion on the subject carried by this House in July, 1980, will be completed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, as the Hon Member will recall, the Committee considered and agreed a lengthy paper on this subject in December. We have since then been engaged in correspondence with a view to bringing the study to a conclusion as soon as possible and I could add that we have some hiccups in one or two areas. I aim to reconvene the Committee in April or early May.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 175 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Does the Chief Minister not agree that when the Committee is reconvened it should set itself a target date by which time its work should be completed?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, certainly, provided of course that the target date is realistic having regard to the fact that a number of areas are outside our jurisdiction in the sense that unless we get some feedback in certain areas it may be useless to make representations but I have no complacency about the matter simply because there seems to be a delay on the part of a certain country to enter the Community.

HON J BOSSANO:

But the Government does agree that in fact the time within which this work can be completed is not entirely under our own control that in fact we are working, if you like, against the clock in the sense that the negotiations with Spain's entry are still proceeding?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is why I had that in mind and I also have in mind another factor and that is the life of this legislature.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government make a statement on the recent incident at the frontier when a GBC crew was not allowed entry into Spain with their equipment and can Government state whether the journey was really necessary?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the facts of the incident are as follows:

At 9 am on 10 March, a GBC camera crew made formal declaration to the Gibraltar Customs of the equipment they intended taking temporarily into Spain.

As is the practice, the producer crossed into Spain to obtain customs clearance for the equipment. He was seen by the Senior representative of the Spanish Customs, who explained that although the crew had the necessary permits to film in Spain, they could not bring in the equipment through the La Linea border. He pointed out that it could be imported via any other Customs port, eg Algeciras.

The documents produced were:

- (a) the accrediting Press Cards
- (b) the ATA Carnet issued by the Gibraltar Chamber of Commerce for Customs documentation purposes, and
- (c) the filming authorisation.

This latter document had been issued in Madrid by the Ministerio de la Presidencia - Direccion General de Medios de Comunicacion Social (the Ministry of the Presidency - Director-General of Social Communications). It authorised filming of commercial topics, specifically publicity spots on purchases and services. It also authorised entry of cameras and electronic equipment via the Puesto de Control de La Linea de la Concepcion (La Linea Control Post) and its use in the Campo Area and the Costa del Sol.

I am advised that GBC had not experienced problems in crossing the frontier with their equipment since they first did so on 15 December, 1982.

With regard to the second part of the question. The Corporation is an independent body and it is not for the Government to intervene in its day-to-day activities.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 176 OF 1983

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean that the Government does not know what was the purpose of the journey?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, what I say is that we are not prepared to say whether the journey was really necessary.

HON P J ISOLA:

As the Government has asked GBC for a report, obviously because they are an independent Corporation and the Government has nothing to do with them, has obviously had to ask them for a report on the incident, can the Chief Minister at least state what was the purpose of this journey?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I think this comes out specially from my answer. It authorised filming of commercial topics, specifically publicity spots on purchases and services so, obviously, they had permission to go to film material for commercials for the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is that why they were going to Spain on that particular day at that particular time, that is my question?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I have no reason to believe otherwise.

HON P J ISOLA:

So the Chief Minister has not been told why they were going there on that day, it could have been to do an interview of Mr Moran or the Mayor of La Linea or some such like personality?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I think it is a bit of a contrast between one and the other but, anyhow. I have not been told by GBC specifically for the purposes of this answer, but my understanding is that it was one of the regular number of visits that they have gone to Spain to seek publicity for their advertising revenue.

HON P J ISOLA:

So that we can enjoy our television so much more by seeing all these lovely properties to be sold in Spain and so forth. Then the journey was not really necessary, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, that is a matter of opinion and comment. Next question.

NO. 177 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state who has had access to the Port Feasibility Study since it was completed in February, 1981?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Mr Speaker, copies of the Gibraltar Port Study were circulated to Ministers, a number of Government officials, to the Leader of the Opposition, the Flag Officer (Gibraltar) and the Regional Director (PSA) on a confidential basis.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 177 OF 1983

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if the Port Study in fact has got material which is bound to make a difference to the development of trade in Gibraltar, does the Hon Member not think that people who have to take investment decisions on certain assumptions should be made aware of what is the expert advice the Government is acting on because the private sector in ignorance may be acting on certain assumptions of the Government on the basis of confidential reports on different assumptions?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I have been able to provide information to the Gibraltar Shipping Association, relevant extracts from the report, I have not been able to make the whole of the report available to them and I have also been able to arrange for queries from parties interested in the development of ferry services in the Port area, I have been able to relate from material and information to be made available. The report contains information which is confidential and since it is in respect of three matters; in respect of Spain and there is information there which if the report were to be made public could conceivably be used against us; in respect of EEC matters, which was the subject of a question to the Chief Minister a moment ago, again the advice that we are getting in respect of the EEC could be prejudicial, and there is also information in the report as I recollect, and comments about individual stevedoring firms which I do not consider that it would be proper for their competitors to have access to. I have had a request, a letter that I received only today from the Chamber of Commerce where they are asking for the report to be made public pursuant to a motion which was passed at their annual general meeting and I intend to explain to them why it cannot be made public but to invite them to arrange for any parties who are interested and who wish to have specific information to contact the Government and we would endeavour to answer any queries which they might have. Beyond that I do not think I can take it, Mr Speaker.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Minister then saying that in fact it is impossible to produce a version of the report with the parts that he considers should not be made public taken out?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, having regard to the manner in which the report has been drafted, there are paragraphs throughout the body of the report which is very lengthy, in fact there are two very fat volumes, there are paragraphs throughout the report which I think it would be an extremely laborious exercise to excise meaningfully.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I ask the Minister whether he would agree with me that in fact in the context of other reports that have been produced, for example, such as the Dockyard study which was made available to a far wider group of people, that second report kept on making references to the first report which people who had not seen the first report could not make head or tails of, would he not agree that for the sake of consistency at least he should give the people he has given the second report to a copy of the first so that they know what the second one is about?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, except about the comments that I have made with respect to these individual companies.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 178 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Does Government now hold a view as to the effect the pedestrian opening of the frontier has had so far on the Gibraltar economy?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, I have given notice of my intention to make a statement on the frontier situation which should cover this question and give the Hon Member an opportunity of asking any questions on that.

23.3.83

NO. 179 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government list all the studies, consultancies and experts that have been engaged since Preece, Cardew and Rider giving the date, purpose and cost of each?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Answered together with Question No. 181 of 1983.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government reveal what has been the weekly cost of engaging a chairman for the Steering Committee of the Electricity Department, how many times this person has travelled to Gibraltar in his official capacity, how many meetings of the Committee have taken place and how much longer the services of the chairman will be required?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, the weekly cost of engaging a chairman for the Steering Committee of the Electricity Department has averaged £1,940 over the 30-week period beginning 30 September, 1982, and ending 31 March, 1983 (excluding the Christmas week during which no expenses were incurred).

The chairman has travelled to Gibraltar on twenty-one occasions and there have been twenty-one meetings of the Steering Committee.

It is not possible to state with any certainty how much longer the services of the chairman will be required as this depends on the progress of the negotiations but it is anticipated that these negotiations should be concluded during the course of April.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 180 OF 1983

HON G T RESTANO:

May I have, Mr Speaker, a breakdown of the weekly cost, £1,940?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, certainly, Sir. The weekly expenses include a fee of £250 per working day charged by the Industrial Society, the cost of flights, accommodations and subsistence allowance. It should be noted that the fee is considerably lower than normally charged by the Industrial Society for similar consultancies in the United Kingdom.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is it not correct that the Society charges a flat rate of £1,250 a week, is that correct?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am afraid I cannot answer that question because I do not have the necessary information.

HON P J ISOLA:

But, Mr Speaker, the Hon Member is being asked the weekly cost of engaging a chairman and we were told in the House in the meeting of 8th December, 1982, by the Financial and Development Secretary, if I may quote, Mr Speaker, from page 112 of the Hansard and that was when the House was being asked to vote an additional sum to the £23,000 already voted making it up to £54,000, the House was told by the Financial and Development Secretary that: "There is a fixed, specially reduced, but a fixed rate which runs into a figure of £1,250 a week. The balance relates to the salary and travelling expenses of the chairman himself". That is what the House was told and later on, may I remind the Minister, at page 114, the Hon and Learned Chief Minister, after telling us that the first consultancy of £23,000 was covering six weeks went on to say: "It has been extended for a similar period or an extra week, I forget now, that is why it is £54,000". So we were asked then to vote provision for an additional £32,000 for a similar period of six weeks or possibly seven weeks and then I asked the question: "That means that it is costing us almost £4,000 a week", and nobody from the Government side denied. Can the Minister, because presumably the Government had the facts then as they have now, can the Minister explain why we were told it was just under £4,000 a week in December, 1982, and we are now told it is £1,940? Has there been a new agreement or are we getting the right information now or were we given the wrong information in December by the Financial and Development Secretary and by the Hon and Learned Chief Minister? Could we have an answer to that?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the information which I gave the House in December was obtained from the Establishment Branch who were paying this gentleman and I am quite certain that at that time it was correct.

HON P J ISOLA:

If the information given at that time is correct, can the Minister tell us on what new terms has this been negotiated because may I remind the House that at that particular meeting, and I am not going to go through the Hansard but it is there, it actually can be seen, the hope was expressed by the Hon and Learned Chief Minister that we might see the end of it, he was going very quickly and hopefully it would all end within the six weeks. Am I to understand from the figures now given from the Minister that due to the fact that the Government's optimism as regards the Steering Committee has not been justified, that new conditions have been worked out with the Industrial Society and if so will the Minister tell us what these are and for how long?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, these are the figures that I have at hand and in fact they are correct. I will check and give an answer to the Hon Leader of the Opposition as to what has transpired but it is obvious from the statement that the miscalculation has been due on his part to a wrong appraisal of the situation.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, how can the miscalculation be made on my part, can the Minister explain, when the Hon Financial Secretary has just told us and I accept what he says because he is the financial man, that what he said in December was correct and what he said in December and what the Chief Minister said in December led us to the irresistible conclusion that it was costing us just under £4,000 a week. How am I mistaken, it is his colleagues that are mistaken, is that the position?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I will check on the figures and that will probably prevent the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition from pushing his blood pressure too high up.

HON P J ISOLA:

I do not know if it is because he is a doctor he is able to reduce it as quickly as he increases it but may I tell the Hon Member that the statement that my party made about the person concerned costing the Gibraltar taxpayer or whoever, the electricity bill payer, was not given to us by any birdie or anything else, we took that from looking at the Hansard report of this House and we took that from a combination of statements by the Financial and Development Secretary, the Hon and Learned Chief Minister and the Hon Minister himself though he did not say a word in that particular meeting presumably he did not know what was going on but he did say it at a previous occasion so I would be grateful if he would check these figures and let us have them, I am sorry I have interrupted the line of questioning from my Hon Friend.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have said to the Hon Member that I will check these figures.

HON G T RESTANO:

When the Minister says, Mr Speaker, that the conclusion of the Committee should be sometime during April does he mean the whole of the conclusions or just that part of the conclusions that relate to the Waterport Station?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

The requirements of the Steering Committee as to the manning of Waterport Power Station.

HON G T RESTANO:

So then would it need to sit for a further period to discuss the works practice recommendations it has to recommend?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

If you read the Committee of Enquiry's Report it says that this Committee should eventually become a full Works Council and this is the intention that whilst the Committee establishes what is necessary as far as Waterport is concerned a full Works Council will be set up and they will take over the role of this Committee.

HON G T RESTANO:

So the Steering Committee will, the Minister hopes or expects, by April to recommend all the details for the Works Council, is that correct?

MR SPEAKER:

I think the answer that has been given has been very explicit. When the Steering Committee finishes its work insofar as the Waterport manning has been completed, then it will revert to its original intentions and it will sit as a Council.

HON G T RESTANO:

The programme, as I understand it, is that the Steering Committee has to, among other recommendations, make recommendations of how the Works Council which is going to succeed it is going to work so therefore it has, as I see it, two areas of recommendations, one on the manning of the Waterport Power Station and the other on the rules and procedures of its successive Committee so I would like to know whether the April date which the Minister has mentioned is for both areas or just the manning of the Waterport Power Station?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, hopefully, for both.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, in answer to Question 180, I stated that the average weekly cost for the period ending the 31st March was £1,940. The weekly cost includes a fee of £250 per working day charged by the Industrial Society. Supplementary funds were sought in the October and December meetings of the House. The rest of the amount necessary was obtained from savings in the Secretariat vote giving a total of £58,210 up to the 31 March, 1983. This averages out at the figure given by me in answer to

question 180. The fees has been constant throughout the consultancy. The supplementary funds sought were to cover the cost of the on-going consultancy and not for any specific period of time. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to correct a typing error which appeared in answer to the question, in line 3 of paragraph 1, the second figure 30 should be deleted.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, all I would like to say on that is that what the Hon Minister is saying clearly conflicts with what was said in the meeting in December and we will talk about it during the budget, possibly.

23.3.83

NO. 181 OF 1983

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state how many consultants have been employed by them since 1980 and what the total cost of these consultancies has been?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, despite the limited time available particularly on this occasion because of the Commonwealth holiday, the necessary study has been made and I am circulating a detailed analysis to Members. I do not expect any supplementaries at this stage but if there is any query, it is rather a lengthy document.