

GIBRALTAR

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Meeting of
8 December 1982
274 to 359

8.12.82

NO. 274 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government introduce an appointment system for the testing of commercial vehicles?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir, the Government intends to introduce an appointments system for the fitness testing of commercial vehicles as soon as the necessary legal amendment, which is currently being drafted, is enacted. This will provide for such testing of commercial vehicles to be carried out on a staggered basis throughout the year.

8.12.82

NO. 275 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether on current trends of Revenue and Expenditure it still estimates to have a Consolidated Fund Balance of £10,646,419 at the end of March, 1983?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, the Estimated Consolidated Fund Balance as at 31 March, 1982, when the Estimates for 1982/83 were presented to the House in April this year was £10,646,419; the actual balance on closing the accounts was £11,390,320 an improvement of £743,901.

Based on the latest available information it is not inconceivable that there could be a deficit in the out-turn for 1982/83, mainly as a result of increases in expenditure. £0.7m in unforeseen expenditure has been or is presently before the House for appropriation. On balance, therefore, the Consolidated Fund Balance on 31 March, 1983, is not expected, at this stage, to show any significant variation from the projection in the Approved Estimates.

8.12.82

NO. 276 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state the receipts in respect of a) income tax, and b) indirect taxation in the first six months of the current financial year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the net yields from income tax and indirect taxation during the first six months of this financial year are £9.483m and £3.082m, respectively, including £34,100 from the export tax.

NO. 277 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, why have the garages which were built as part of the Westside School not been allocated together with the corresponding flats as had originally been intended?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, Government has seen it appropriate for the flats at Westside School to be earmarked for the exclusive use of teachers. This decision has affected the number of flats which Government, under an Agreement signed in 1973, makes available for allocation to officers, and the matter is being discussed with the Staff Side representatives.

With regard to the allocation of the garages, Government is of the opinion that preference should be given to the tenants of the flats. The allocation of the garages is, therefore, pending that of the flats.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 277 OF 1982

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is it not a fact that one of the flats is in fact reserved for the resident caretaker and does that criteria not apply to that case?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I should have made that clear that in general principle for the teachers, in fact, one is for the resident caretaker.

NO. 278 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether or not the Police Reservists were informed, prior to being engaged, that their employment was conditional or temporary and will Government state the original terms and present position as regards the extra clerks and the extra Customs officials?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Yes, Sir. Applicants for Police Reservist vacancies were informed during the interviews by a Selection Board that successful candidates would be engaged on temporary and non-pensionable terms. These conditions of employment were included in their Letter of Appointment.

Customs Officers were treated in a similar manner as Police Reservists. However, the Customs Department was long overdue for a Staff Inspection. The Inspection is now in its final stages and Government decided to keep the extra staff pending implementation of the report.

The extra clerks were also taken on temporary terms, but have since been placed on permanent vacancies which have arisen since then.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 278 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Attorney-General confirm or deny that the Customs officials and the clerks have been retained because they have Unions to which they belong and the Police do not?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, I would not agree with that, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the Attorney-General in a position to cite the letter in which the agreement was ratified as between the Reservists and the Police Force?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I would be grateful, Sir, if the Hon and Learned Member would clarify what he means.

HON A J HAYNES:

As I understood it, Mr Speaker, the Attorney-General indicated that the Police both when they were interviewing applicants and at a later stage when they decided on whom they were going to take, they informed the Reservists, or the potential Reservists, that they would

be employed on a temporary basis and as I understand it the Attorney-General said, Mr Speaker, that apart from informing them at the time of the interview, they were also informed in a letter on their appointment. Is the Attorney-General in a position to cite from that letter?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I have not got the letter here, Sir, perhaps the Hon and Learned Member is not quite clear as to what I mean. Once a person has been selected he gets a Letter of Appointment and those Letters of Appointment made it clear that the appointment was on a temporary basis. Can I perhaps add that under the Police Ordinance I think it is fairly clear that as distinct from other Police Officers, Reservists are a temporary type of appointment, a less integral type of employment.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Attorney-General say what this temporary or conditional employment was conditional on?

MR SPEAKER:

No, that is information which must have been included in the Letter of Appointment and it is a simple matter of information you can get from looking at the Letter of Appointment. It is fair to say that the Hon and Learned Attorney-General has said that when someone is appointed on a conditional basis, that on the Letter of Appointment he is given the conditions on which he is appointed. You are now asking for those conditions. My answer to you is you can have sight of the letter and its information which is easily available, it is as simple as that. We are not going to discuss the conditions of employment.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I believe I do know the answer and I would like this confirmed by Government.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, what are you asking that is what I want to know?

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am asking what the conditions were.

MR SPEAKER:

And I am telling you that that information is easily available.

HON A J HAYNES:

If I may rephrase it, Mr Speaker. Will the Attorney-General confirm or deny that the appointment of the Reservists was as car park attendants and as a result of Union intervention they will no longer be required as car park attendants?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I do not think that is correct, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, what is the position?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

They were recruited as Reservists at the time of the prospective opening of the frontier and they were appointed on temporary terms. At one stage I think it may have been correct that it was contemplated to use them for car parking purposes but I do not think it is correct that that changed because of Union pressure.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the position going to change now that the frontier may open on Wednesday of next week?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

That is really a matter of Government policy, I think, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the Reservists are anxious to know. Is there any indication from Government as to the terms and conditions under which they were employed being still standing or still being operative in the event of an open frontier, that is really what I would like to know?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I cannot answer that at this stage, I think it is a matter of Government policy, Mr Speaker. After all the situation only arose, as far as I am aware, last night.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I accept that it is a matter of Government policy but if we were aware of the conditions and terms we would be able to decide for ourselves whether on a fair interpretation one can read into those conditions the likelihood

MR SPEAKER:

We must not debate. We are prolonging this and I am not having it under any circumstances. The answer has been very clear. It is a matter of policy on which they have not yet taken a decision, that is what you have been told.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, but that confuses me insofar as I am informed that there were conditions and terms on their appointment and, surely, there must still

MR SPEAKER:

You have asked whether those conditions will still apply and whether they will still be employed for the same purposes that they were originally employed. You have been told that that is a matter of Government policy on which they have as yet not taken a decision. That is the position.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Attorney-General undertake to inform me as and when a policy decision is taken?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think I cannot give that undertaking, I think it is a matter for the Government. Mr Speaker, may I just clarify a point, however, I am sorry to prolong the matter, but I was asked whether there had been some pressure which led to the Police Reservists when they were initially recruited, being taken off what was planned for them and that was car parking attendant duties. I have just been reminded and it should have come to me at the time, that a major reason for them being taken on, in fact, very possibly the reason, was that we were asked to advise on what the proper range of functions the Police Reservists was and having looked at the Police Ordinance I came to the view that car parking duties were not properly duties for Police Reservists and I tendered that advice to the Government.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does that mean that the Police Reservists were employed on terms that could not be fulfilled by Government even if the frontier had been open?

MR SPEAKER:

It might well do but that does not arise.

HON A J HAYNES:

Surely, it is a matter for redress and grievance on the part of the Police Reservists?

MR SPEAKER:

Perhaps it is.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Government look into this matter?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I do not agree, Mr Speaker. The Police Reservists were appointed temporarily as Police Reservists. Government may have had one thing in mind but that does not limit the Government's options.

HON J BOSSANO:

Perhaps this may help to clear up things. Is it not the case, Mr Speaker, that the job on which the Police Reservists might or might not have been used does not in any way alter their terms and conditions of employment, that is their terms and conditions of employment as Police Reservists is laid down in the Police Ordinance and that is the terms on which they were employed? The use to which they could be put was a matter to which there was a Union objection on the basis that there was an indication that it was the intention to employ a Policeman on what was properly the work of an industrial worker, like the Union might object to a Policeman doing painting or doing anything else, but that has nothing to do with the terms and conditions of employment of the Reservists, is this not the accurate position?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

That may have been the background but as the Hon Member has lucidly pointed out that in fact what a Police Reservist can do does happen to be a matter of law.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 279 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, will Government state how many houses are yet to be allocated to the Civil Service?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, by an Agreement signed in 1973, all quarters in the C1, C2 and B2 category were de-quarterised. In return Government agreed to make available 8% of all new flats built, up to a maximum of 151, for allocation to officers who had been eligible for these quarters. To date 96 flats have been made available leaving a total of 55 flats yet to be allocated.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 279 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can the Attorney-General state whether the 50-odd houses yet to be allocated to the Civil Service are of three rooms, four rooms, etc?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I cannot say how they are broken up, it is a quota available to be filled. I cannot tell you what they will consist of at any particular time but no doubt they will be allocated having regard at the need of each individual family.

HON A J HAYNES:

I am not sure I understand, Mr Speaker. Does that mean to say that 8% of whatever Government actually build is given to civil servants?

MR SPEAKER:

Up to 151 flats.

HON A J HAYNES:

It seems a very loose agreement. Mr Speaker, as I understand it if the maximum is 151, there are 55 yet to be completed. Is the Attorney-General telling us that 55 flats of any description will be handed to the Civil Service or 55 specific flats of which 10 are still to be built?

MR SPEAKER:

I think the Hon the Attorney-General has said that he has not got the details as to your supplementary.

HON A J HAYNES:

But there is a difference, Mr Speaker, as I understand it, between not having the details and those details not being in existence anywhere else. Are there any specifics hidden anywhere that one could find?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I would have to enquire, Mr Speaker, but if I can make the point I was trying to make before clear. As I understand it this is a quota, a proportion of new houses, so in a sense it is a thing in principle or a thing in general terms in that allocations would be according to what is the appropriate need for the various people who are interested but I will enquire to see whether there is specific information.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the other question is, when is it projected that the remaining 55 will be completed, in the year 2000 or are we talking about a new Government?

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Attorney-General, the Agreement of 1973 which gave civil servants 151 flats, how many quarters were de-quarterised, in other words, who got the best deal, if anybody?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am sorry, I would have to enquire into that point.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I think it is 151.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, all the premises which were de-quarterised as the Attorney-General concisely stated, are they all habitable or are these among the derelict houses that we have burdening our housing stock? Is there an answer, Mr Speaker, to that question, I can hear muttering across the floor?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I believe they are inhabited.

HON A J HAYNES:

They are inhabited, what is the constitutional position, Mr Speaker?

MR SPEAKER:

No, I will not have that.

HON W T SCOTT:

Perhaps on a hypothetical case that might well have occurred. Out of the 96 quarters that have already been allocated to the Civil Service, on the assumption that a quarter obviously becomes a quarter and is allocated to a civil servant, on his retirement is that unit still used by Government as a quarter?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think it is still a Government quarter but I think on his retirement it is made up somewhere else.

HON W T SCOTT:

So, in fact, that number is therefore reduced by one and the numbers continuously increase so, effectively, what we are saying is that the quarters that civil servants or that have been given to civil servants are on the increase and at any one time in fact it is obviously far larger than the 96 that we are talking about?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

We are talking, as I understand it, about new quarters.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 280 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state when it will be able to commence negotiations with staff representatives on the implementation of pension rights for part-time employees?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

The conditions under which part-time service should become pensionable have been finally decided and the Government is now in a position to make the details available to the staff representatives.

The Industrial Relations Officer will initiate discussions with the Staff Side during the course of next week.

NO. 281 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing say how long it will be before Mr Albert Traverso will be allowed to move into the flat he has been allocated at Westside School?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, the answer to this question is directly related to that of question No. 277. Because of the dispute there is at present regarding the allocation of the Westside School flats it has not been thought prudent to proceed with Mr Traverso's move to Westside.

The Government would have wished to have settled already this particular problem, for whom great sympathy is felt.

/ SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 281 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

But, Mr Speaker, am I not correct in assuming that Mr Traverso has already been allocated the flat and that the reason why he has not been allowed to move is because the flat that he will be vacating is the subject of discussions between two Unions?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think the situation may have changed but the present position is no.

HON A T LODDO:

So, Mr Speaker, do I take it that Mr Traverso was actually allocated the flat and now he has been deprived of this flat? What is the position?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

There was a proposal to allocate him a flat but I believe the position is that he has not been allocated it at the moment.

MR SPEAKER:

The Hon and Learned Attorney-General has been asked what is the present position vis-a-vis the flat. If we get that perhaps you will clear everything.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I rise on a point of order, or a point of explanation or whatever. The question is clear, when will he be allowed to move into the flat he has been allocated at Westside School? I am surprised to hear the Attorney-General saying in a supplementary that it was just a proposal and not in the first answer to the question, he never said it has not been allocated, he referred to discussions.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. In fairness to the Hon Attorney-General the questioner may have misinformation. As far as the questioner is concerned his information is that it has been allocated and you have been given an answer to say that it was never allocated.

HON P J ISOLA:

But the answer was not that.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, I think I could be of help in this because at the request of the Teachers' Association which is one of the Associations concerned with this, I saw them yesterday. The point is that before the dispute arose it was the intention, at the request of Mr Traverso for whom we have every sympathy and desire to help, it was intended that he would move from another flat to a flat at Westside School because that suited his particular family circumstances in his recent tragic loss and so on. Then the dispute arose so that there was no allocation as was intended. Then the dispute arose from the other Unions or SACC about the question of the allocations of the flats, whether they should come generally or whether it should be to the School and so on and the matter is the subject of dispute still. At the request of the Teachers' Association I saw them yesterday and without in any way dealing with the matter which is still the subject of discussion between SACC and the GTA and the IRO, I can assure Hon Members that I made my feelings very strong to them about the particular situation of Mr Traverso in the context of the whole problem.

HON A T LODDO:

I thank the Chief Minister for that explanation, Mr Speaker, but am I not right in saying that the flat in contention is not the one at Westside but the one that Mr Traverso would be vacating and that therefore there should be no problem in Mr Traverso being allowed to move and the discussions continuing ad infinitum if necessary on the flat that he will be vacating, why make this man suffer?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

May I say that that was precisely what I put to the GTA yesterday in order to help the particular case and they took it away to think about it.

HON P J ISOLA:

But, Mr Speaker, if a flat is empty and somebody has been allocated that flat, what I cannot understand is, as my Hon Friend Mr Loddó has said, why Government who after all own the flats cannot say to him: "You move into that, that is not in dispute"?

HON A J CANEPA:

If Government were to say that and Mr Traverso were to move in and you were to find that the other Unions which are in dispute with the Teachers' Association over the matter were to black that flat and refuse to connect the electricity, the water and so on, it would serve Mr Traverso very little purpose.

HON A T LODDO:

But, Mr Speaker, the flat that Mr Traverso will be moving into is not in dispute, it is the one that he will be vacating.

HON A J CANEPA:

But nevertheless they would be blacking the one that he would be moving into.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

And, in fact, there is already some element of blacking in respect of one flat which was agreed originally in respect of a teacher who was living in a school which required expansion, it was agreed that she should have one and we are having difficulties even to get the tenancy agreement signed.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Transport and General Workers Union involved in this as well?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There are other Unions in Gibraltar other than the Transport and General Workers Union.

HON P J ISOLA:

But I thought the blacking of services like connecting water and electricity is in the province of my Hon Friend's Union and not in any other Union.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The signing of contracts and so on is in the hands of the GGCA.

HON P J ISOLA:

The signing of contracts for what?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Of contracts, of tenancy agreements.

HON P J ISOLA:

What does that matter, Mr Speaker, if they let the man move in if they do not want to sign the contract, surely, the Government can write a letter?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is what has happened, they have moved in but the blacking action on the part of the GGCA on behalf of SACC has meant that the person in possession have not been able to sign an agreement but I only give that as an indication of the other kind of blacking that could come if we were to force the issue without having come to an agreement or to a decision on the matter. We are trying to get the Unions together to try and solve the problem and I hope that it can be done, that is all I can say.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, what I cannot understand is why is Government forcing the issue if it allows the man to take up a flat he has been allocated and leave the other one empty?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There has been no allocation of that flat at all. It was intended, it looked reasonable, it looked natural, it looks convenient but by the time the matter was expressed the conflict arose and everything has stopped.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, if there has been no allocation can somebody please explain to me why Mr Traverso was informed by Mr Mellor to get packed to move into the new flat?

MR SPEAKER:

Question time is for the purpose of information. I think you have had as much information and we are beginning to debate now.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I would like to answer the last question, Mr Speaker, I think it is only fair that I should answer the last question. Because it was intended and it was not anticipated that there was going to be a conflict and that is one of the hardships that he is suffering, that he is packed to move, we know all that but we have the difficulties.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state on what class Government personnel travel by air?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, all Government officers travelling on official business do so by the cheapest means available ie tourist class, though there may be occasions when circumstances demand that Club class travel is authorised.

Under the Passages concession previously enjoyed by Civil Servants, and coming to an end at the end of this year, officers in grades 1 and 2 only were entitled to travel first or Club class.

In future only officers whose contract of employment so stipulates will make use of Club class. This will only apply to officers recruited to grades 1 and 2.

8.12.82

NO. 283 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, when will the Select Committee on the Matrimonial Causes Ordinance be in a position to make a report to this House?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, I will not give a firm date, but it is hoped to do so shortly.

NO. 284 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government make a statement as to the progress it has made with the British Government in order to resolve the issue of Crown Lands in Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, the Gibraltar Government has submitted to the British Government a formal request for the re-negotiation of the arrangements that govern the holding of Crown Lands in Gibraltar for defence purposes and their disposal when surplus to defence requirements. The request relates to reclaimed land and to buildings that have a continuing value to the Gibraltar Government. It was discussed between UK and Gibraltar Government officials at meetings held in London in October and November. The matter is under discussion among the UK Ministries concerned and I am pleased to be able to inform the House that we can expect a paper outlining new ideas on this matter in the very near future. This question has, of course, an important bearing on Gibraltar's economic development and we have therefore been pursuing it as energetically as possible along with the question of Development Aid.

NO. 285 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, has Government considered any plans to amend the law regarding the qualifications of jurors particularly as far as women are concerned?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir. The Government has not considered the matter. However, the Law Revision Committee has this matter under consideration.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 285 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, would the body that the Hon and Learned Attorney-General has mentioned treat this as a matter of some priority because I think women are, and rightly so, continuing to play an increasingly important part in our local community and I think that perhaps we should move into a direction where we can see them qualified to serve rather than on a voluntary basis as exists at present.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Sir, the Law Revision Committee is a technical committee, it is not a policy committee and what the Law Revision Committee does has to be submitted for consideration as a matter of policy. The Law Revision Committee, as I say, is looking at it and I can in fact say that yesterday, and it has got nothing to do with the fact that the House was sitting today, but yesterday, in response to an enquiry I made some time ago, I got some documentation on women jurors from another jurisdiction and it is in the process of circulating it to the other members of the Law Revision Committee for their consideration.

HON W T SCOTT:

Did the Attorney-General say that they will be submitting some recommendations to Government for a statement of policy?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Not necessarily, Sir. At the moment the matter is being considered at a technical level by the Law Revision Committee.

HON W T SCOTT:

So the Hon Attorney-General is saying, in fact, that it is not necessarily a matter for Government to decide?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am not saying that at all, Sir, I am saying that at the moment a Committee of lawyers is studying the matter, no more.

HON W T SCOTT:

If, indeed, this Committee does make recommendations to Government, is Government at liberty to say what their views are, generally, on this matter?

MR SPEAKER:

No, these are all hypothetical questions, with due respect. Next question.

NO. 286 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, is Government now in a position to take appropriate legal action against the consultants originally appointed to the Sand Recovery Scheme on the East Side?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, the Government will be in a position to make a statement on this matter shortly.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 286 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

By later is it later in the proceedings of this present meeting?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think that would be a little optimistic but shortly. It may prove to be the case but all I am saying is the Government expects to be able to make an announcement on this shortly.

HON W T SCOTT:

I continually ask questions of a similar nature, Mr Speaker, and I am continually being told by the Government, sometimes by the Hon and Learned Attorney-General and sometimes by the Minister for Public Works. It was only in October of this year that the Hon Minister for Public Works said, and I am quoting from Hansard on the legal action: "The meeting was held on the 2nd of September, I think it is not unfair to give them six or eight weeks but if by the end of this month" - meaning October - "we have no reply that is of any value to us, then I think we shall have to take absolute action".

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think those words are qualified by "if we have" and then whatever the Hon Member said. The position is negotiations with the consultants have been going on, I am not in a position immediately to say what the outcome of those is but, as I say, the Government does expect it will be in a position to make a statement shortly.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I have other questions on the sand and perhaps I might progress the questions a little bit further on but it seems to me, and I am trying not to make a statement, it seems to me a ridiculous situation where as time goes on no action is taken by Government and it is costing the public purse more and more money.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect, you are making a statement. Will you please ask a simple question, will they please qualify "shortly" by stating within what period of time, that is all you are asking.

HON W T SCOTT:

Within what period of time does Government expect some legal action to be taken by them?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I will answer the question directly if I may, I am not going away from it, but can I say that legal action happens to be one particular avenue of redress and I have said that the Government has been undertaking discussions with the consultants. If I were to give you a firm date I would be looking into the future.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the question is a fair one and one which can be answered. If legal proceedings are going to be taken can you tell us when these are going to be instituted, it is as simple as that.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Legal proceedings are not being taken. I do expect to be able to give an answer on what the outcome of this matter is, I would think in a matter of two weeks.

HON G T RESTANO:

For the first time we have had a statement from the Hon and Learned Attorney-General that there might be other avenues.

MR SPEAKER:

But we are not going to discuss the other avenues, we are not going to discuss the without prejudice consultations that may take place between the parties for the purpose of coming to a settlement and not necessitating legal proceedings, that is all that the Attorney-General has said.

HON G T RESTANO:

This is the first time we have been told that there were other avenues. We have always been told that the avenue was the legal proceedings one, that that was the only redress the Government had at the end of the day, now we are being told that there are other avenues. Can perhaps the Attorney-General give us an explanation?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I am sure the Hon Member understands the position. It is only necessary to issue actual legal proceedings if the matter cannot be resolved otherwise and I do not have the advantage of having the answer in front of me from the last House but from what the Hon Member read out what the Hon the Minister for Public Works said was that if it proved necessary legal action would be taken but I am sure the Hon Member must know what I mean.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Hon Attorney-General confirm or deny that the other avenue was highlighted by the Varyl Begg roofs settlement?

MR SPEAKER:

No, next question.

NO. 287 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state the position as regards the publication of the index of the Laws of Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the index is in the final stage of preparation; the current proof is with the printer.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 287 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, what will the index be called, the index for January, 1983, or for January, 1980?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think, Mr Speaker, I would like to say a bit more about it. I am aware that I hoped to be able to have the index produced earlier this year and told the Hon and Learned Member that. The index, I think he will find as I said before, is a bigger and better index. It really is almost at the stage of completion and if he will bear with us we will have it ready.

MR SPEAKER:

But you are being asked what periods will it encompass, I think that is what you are being asked.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

It will be for the year 1981, up to the beginning of this year.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is it proposed to make it obsolete within a few months?

MR SPEAKER:

No, next question.

8.12.82

NO. 288 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state the position as regards the revision of the Laws of Gibraltar and when do they expect them to be published?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Tenders for the printing have now been called for. The closing date for tenders is 29 December, 1982. The expected date of publication remains unchanged, ie 31 March, 1984.

NO. 289 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state the position as regards the readings of the aural levels at King's Bastion Generating Station and the new Generating Station?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

The Environmental Health Department's sound level equipment is at present undergoing one of its periodic maintenance and recalibration servicings in the United Kingdom. It has not therefore been possible to undertake the noise level surveys at either of the two Generating Stations. The readings will be taken and the House informed as soon as the equipment is once more operational.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 289 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, going forward a few steps and imagining that they come back and are fixed and that they take readings and the readings are not favourable, will the Minister in those circumstances undertake any remedial measures in King's Bastion?

HON J B PEREZ:

I think, Mr Speaker, that is a hypothetical question. We will take the readings and then we will see.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, has the Minister any ideas and any information which he can give the House as regards inexpensive means of improving noise levels?

MR SPEAKER:

No, he has told you quite rightly that the soundings have not been able to be taken because the instruments are not available and he has told you that once the results are available the policy decision will be taken, until such time everything is hypothetical.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, my question has been coming and going for the last few months.

MR SPEAKER:

I commiserate, that is all I can say, but no more.

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, in fairness he did ask a question in October and I did say that I would be taking the readings. However, the equipment had to be sent to the United Kingdom, it did not break down but it is part of the maintenance period and the guarantee but when the equipment arrives back which we expect to be very shortly, we will take the readings.

HON A J HAYNES:

And it won't be necessary for me to ask a question if the Minister undertakes to supply me with the information?

HON J B PEREZ:

I said I would.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government explain why it has been necessary to carry out an extensive fumigation exercise at the St Bernard's Hospital?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, in recent weeks there had been complaints from patients, staff and visitors that cockroaches in considerable numbers had been seen in several Wards and Departments of the Hospital. After examination of the buildings it was clear that a disinfection programme for almost the entire Hospital was required.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 290 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask, when was the last time that such an exercise was carried out at the hospital?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, this is a continuing process which we have but, however, in order to fumigate a ward it involves the complete decanting of all the patients so what the department has been doing in the last year is periodically, say, on a monthly basis, we do apply other means of fumigation like using aerosols and insecticides but we have not done so in the last twelve months, we have not actually fumigated a complete ward but we have done the kitchen, that is done on a monthly basis, and other departments which in fact do not need a full decanting as a ward does. It is not something that is completely new, this has been an on-going thing.

HON G T RESTANO:

My question was, Mr Speaker, when was the last time that this sort of exercise was carried out?

HON J B PEREZ:

It is a continuing process.

MR SPEAKER:

It is a continuing process therefore it must have been done before, do you know the date?

HON J B PEREZ:

I know that the kitchen and other departments have been done, not wards, in the last twelve months but I can tell the House that in the last twelve months this has definitely not been done. I do not know exactly when the last time was when a ward was completely fumigated, I have not got the answer to that.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister not confirm that if the state of infiltration by cockroaches has been to the extent that a fumigation exercise had to be carried out, the type of exercises that were carried out in the last twelve months could not have been very successful?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, what I am saying is, Mr Speaker, precisely what the Hon Member is saying, yes, during the last twelve months we were carrying out certain procedures which we found to be completely wrong, we had to do a complete fumigation exercise, that is what has been done, and it has not yet finished it will be finished within two weeks.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, could the Minister inform me what this implies? I can understand cockroaches being in the kitchen, Mr Speaker, but in the wards themselves?

HON J B PEREZ:

There are pipes and all sorts of things going up into the wards, heaters, boilers, water pipes.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 291 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Is Government satisfied that Duty Chemists possess adequate stocks of common drugs and medicines?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, the Government is not aware that stocks of common drugs and medicines are inadequate but would welcome any information to the contrary which the Hon Member might have.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 291 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

I will certainly be taking the Minister up on that.

NO. 292 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government indicate or display the names of "Knight's Court" and "St John's Court" on the said buildings?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, it has been the general practice to display names of buildings in housing estates only. Names are not always displayed on individual blocks of flats. Government has recently held meetings with tenants representatives of both these blocks as well as representatives of Penney House, and this subject has not been raised. If tenants feel that the display of names on these buildings is desirable Government will certainly consider the proposal sympathetically.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 292 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I have been approached by some of the tenants of these houses and asked whether I could ask this question. Apparently there is difficulty in differentiating between these two, they are very close together the names are quite similar and sometimes doctors, particularly doctors, find it difficult to find their way around. I think it would be a great help to the tenants if the names were displayed. I believe that with the exception of possibly Penney House, all the other blocks of flats in Gibraltar have their names.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would not agree with the last statement of the Hon Member. However, I will next time I meet the tenants association of these blocks put the suggestion to them, would they like the names, and as I have already said if they so desire it will be sympathetically considered.

HON P J ISOLA:

Isn't it desirable as a matter of policy for buildings to have their name of the building for people who visit the building, for visitors who are invited to the building? Does Government have to wait always for somebody to ask for something before it does it? It is an extraordinary situation, Mr Speaker.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think there are a number of areas both in the private sector and the Government sector where there are not specific names on the buildings. If it is considered as a general policy that everywhere in Gibraltar must have its name on so be it but up to the moment the situation seems to have worked reasonably well, this is the first time that we have had any, I won't call it a complaint, any notification of such necessity.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state how many houses have been provided in the last 12 months giving a breakdown of their location and size ie 3 rooms, kitchen and bathroom, 4 rooms, kitchen and bathroom, and stating whether new or modernised and give the figures for the next 12 months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, Government has provided 151 units in the last 12 months out of which 122 were of new construction and 29 modernised.

The particulars are as follows:-

62 Bedsitters, 19 - 2RKB, 16 - 3RKB, 46 - 4RKB, 6 - 5RKB and 2 - 6RKB and are located in Tank Ramp, Flat Bastion Road, Lime Kiln Steps, St Jago's, St Joseph's, Rosia Steps Shelter, 14 Flat Bastion Road, 37A Devil's Tower Road, Danino's Ramp and Westside.

Apart from all housing projects submitted to ODA which are awaiting approval, a further 43 units will be made available.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 293 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, a further 43 units made available when? 43 of what type, Mr Speaker, new or modernised?

HON J B PEREZ:

It is new and old but I am afraid I have not got the exact details of how many 2 rooms, 3 rooms. New and modernised, both. It is the same fraction as the other figures that I gave you.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, that is what they have got planned for next year?

MR SPEAKER:

No, they are under construction and will become available.

HON J B PEREZ:

The question asked how many are we certain will be ready for occupation.

HON A J HAYNES:

Planned for occupation, 43.

HON J B PEREZ:

We have plans to build over 500 houses, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

May I make another comment on these figures, will the Minister confirm or deny

MR SPEAKER:

No comments please, questions.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm or deny, I said. I know Mr Speaker does not like Members to comment.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, I wish you would remember more often.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, in answer to a similar question last year the figures we were given were 50 in total, can the Minister explain both the increase and comment on it?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, if he would refer me to which answer to which question of last year it would be helpful.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister confirm or deny that when I asked in December of last year for figures of similar houses built over the last 12 months, on the question of new houses I was given the answer as 33 and when asked whether this was the average amount they said it was slightly lower than the average. Mr Speaker, if 33 is slightly lower than the average, is 151 a sort of one-off which is not going to be repeated or what?

HON J B PEREZ:

I am afraid I do not understand the question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has been talking about the Government's record of building 200 houses per annum. As I see it in the last 24 months, in the last two years, their average is 100 looking at it the most favourable way and if one looks over a three-year with what they have planned for next year as well, their average is down to about 75 per annum or less.

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the question asked how many houses have we built in the last 12 months and how many we hope to have ready in the next 12 months. I have given you all the details that I can.

MR SPEAKER:

The inference you draw from that, with respect to the questioner, perhaps may give rise to further questions but not to supplementaries.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am aware that the Minister has been saying that the record is of 200 being built per annum so where are the 200 that are being built per annum? I have asked for figures now for three years, where does one get the figure of 200 built per annum, it is just not there.

HON J B PEREZ:

I think the Member is referring to a letter which I wrote to him.

MR SPEAKER:

I think we shall go on to the next question.

8.12.82

NO. 294 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state how many housing social cases are waiting to be processed and how many of the 48 approved social cases referred to in October 1982 have been accommodated?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, seven social cases are awaiting consideration by the Housing Advisory Committee and eight are still pending investigation by the Family Care Unit prior to submission to this Committee.

Ten cases have been allocated pre-war accommodation out of the 48 cases that were referred to in October 1982.

NO. 295 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state the position as regards the implementation of Clause 1G of the Housing Pointage Scheme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, the implementation of Clause 1G is governed by the provisions contained in the Terms of Reference of the Housing Allocation Committee which provide inter alia:-

"To recommend the allocation to applicants under the Scheme of suitable accommodation according to their needs and requirements. However, should the Public Interest so demand, these recommendations may take the form of an allocation to one or more of the other family units forming part of the same household or of the provision of suitable alternative premises on an exchange or transfer basis for the household, or any other arrangement of this nature which, in the opinion of the Committee, adequately meets the situation".

No changes have been made to this particular term of reference.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 295 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister confirm that there is a discretionary aspect in the provisions of Clause 1G and is it the Minister's personal view that Clause 1G should be dropped, and this is the basis of the question? As I understand it there is an indication that it is being dropped.

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, I can confirm Clause 1G has not been dropped. This is why I said in answer to the question, the last part was: "No changes have been made to this particular term of reference".

HON A J CANEPA:

In other words, it has not been pinched from your manifesto.

HON A J HAYNES:

My concern, Mr Speaker, is that if the Minister is going to revise the pointage scheme in any way that we should be informed and will the Minister undertake to do so?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

And the other point, Mr Speaker, on Clause 1G, will the Minister confirm that through the implementation of Clause 1G circumstances can arise whereby a young recently married couple can be given a brand new house?

HON J B PEREZ:

If that would be the recommendation of the Committee, as the law stands today, I would not accept that recommendation.

NO. 296 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state the position as regards the transfer of authority for the allocation of housing to the relevant committees?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, I have already consulted the Housing Allocation Committee on this matter, but discussions are still proceeding.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 296 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

What does that mean, Mr Speaker?

HON J B PEREZ:

What it means is that I have had various meetings with the Housing Allocation Committee and we are discussing the whole matter.

HON A J HAYNES:

What is it that they are discussing, Mr Speaker, what is the present position?

MR SPEAKER:

It is a simple question and you have got a simple answer which may be unsatisfactory. The transfer of authority has not taken place because discussions are still taking place, it is as simple as that.

HON A J HAYNES:

What is the present position of the discussions, Mr Speaker?

MR SPEAKER:

Do you wish to answer that?

HON J B PEREZ:

I am not trying to be awkward with the Hon Member, Mr Speaker, what I am saying is there are many aspects to consider in the transfer of authority and all these matters are being discussed, for example, whether the Committee will give interviews. We have not yet reached a final decision in which the Committee have told me: "Yes, to this, no to that, yes to that". We are still meeting.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister allow Members of the Opposition, more precisely myself, to sit in on a meeting of the Committee when they are considering allocations?

HON J B PEREZ:

I am prepared to answer that. That request was put to me by the Hon Member, I have put it to the Committee again and the Committee say no.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 297 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state the position as regards increasing the list of the highest housing applicants, and will Government give the pointage under the new assessment basis for the 1st, 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th and 25th applicant in the different categories?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, Government has decided to publish the first 50 applicants in each category of the waiting list which would include the 1st, 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th and 25th applicant in the different categories.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 297 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

I am very glad they are going to do that, Mr Speaker, I think we have had a major victory on this side. Will the Minister confirm that, please? The point I wanted to make was

MR SPEAKER:

No, I am sorry, you are not going to make your point. Order. Are you asking a question?

HON A J HAYNES:

Yes, Mr Speaker, when will the lists be prepared?

HON J B PEREZ:

Publication of the list will be made on completion of the new assessment of all applicants. The Hon Member will recall that in the last House I announced the new pointage system for waiting time, when we complete that and also when we complete the Housing Survey which is to be put out to the general public.

HON P J ISOLA:

Having got over the administrative problems of publishing the first 50, because when this was first raised by the Opposition two years ago the Minister answered that it was an impossible exercise to perform, have there been new administrative arrangements or is it just the new Minister?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I never said it was an impossible task, I said it was an expensive task.

HON J B PEREZ:

I am not saying it is an easy or a cheap task, all I am telling the House is that the Government has decided to publish the first 50 on each category.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Is the Minister for Municipal Services now in a position to inform the House whether discussions between Management and Staff on the future manning of the Waterport Power Station have now been completed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

No, Mr Speaker, I am not in a position to tell the House that these discussions between Management and Staff have been completed.

What I can say is that the Steering Committee under the chairmanship of Mr Ray Edwards continues to meet and discussions are proceeding.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 298 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

Can the Minister say whether agreement has been reached on most of the points, or not?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I certainly cannot say this, any statements I would make would obviously prejudice any negotiations that are taking place and I can only reiterate what I have said in the second part of the answer, that discussions are still proceeding.

HON G T RESTANO:

Has the Minister any idea of how long it will take before the negotiations are completed?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, this is a very difficult question to answer. The Government knows exactly what they want. How long negotiations are going to continue is really a matter of agreement between the respective bodies which is Government and the Union so it is virtually impossible for me at this stage to say when the negotiations are going to be completed.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can the Minister say whether agreement has been reached on 75% of the areas or 50% of the areas?

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether Government can say whether there has been any partial agreement, that is all. Yes or no, it is as simple as that.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

We have made progress but what percentage of agreement has been reached or not, this is a matter of giving to and fro so this is an impossible question to answer.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, will the official opening of the Waterport Power Station have to await the completion of these discussions?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

The official opening of the Waterport Power Station can take place at a time decided by Government. It is certainly not necessary to await the end of the discussions though it is certainly desirable that the discussions have been terminated to a major degree.

HON P J ISOLA:

How can Government open a Power Station when the manning levels of the Power Station have not been agreed? How will it open, how will it function if the discussions have not been completed?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, with due respect to the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition, this is a separate and entirely different question of which no notice has been given and I feel it is outside the ambit of this particular question.

MR SPEAKER:

In fairness to the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition, it follows from the original question, in other words, what you are being asked since you have not agreed on the terms of reference for the manning of the Station is this going to delay the official opening and it does follow from the original question.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, if he wants to know when the new Power Station is going to be opened, it will be a matter of policy by Government when the time is right.

HON P J ISOLA:

I can understand that but what I am really asking is can it be opened without it being manned?

MR SPEAKER:

In fairness to the Minister I do not think that is a fair question. Can it be opened when the terms of manning have not been agreed upon?

HON P J ISOLA:

And how is it to be manned? As I understand the statement made by the Minister, in the Steering Committee they were having discussions as to how the Power Station was to be manned because apparently nothing had been done about it and the only question I am asking really is, can it be opened without these discussions being brought to a fruitful conclusion, I do not know for who but, anyway, to a fruitful conclusion?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, this is one of the aspects which the Steering Committee is consulting with the Union at the moment but I am afraid it is difficult to go very far on this question at this precise moment in time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I right then, Mr Speaker, I ask the Minister, in concluding that in practical terms until the Steering Committee has come to an agreement and all parties have come to an agreement, we cannot have the new Power Station officially opened, that is the reality, is it not?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I would like to correct that. The opening of the new Power Station can take place any time, in fact, it can take place even though the Station has been running for some considerable time or period. The physical side of opening a Power Station really has

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not prolong the issue, you have been asked a simple question. Is there going to be an official opening for the Power Station and is this official opening being delayed as a result of the non-agreement of the manning, it is as simple as that, because otherwise we are going to go on and on.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

It is a fact that there has been delay in the official opening of the Power Station due to the conversations that are taking place.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Have the reliability periods for the two engines at the Waterport Power Station now been concluded?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, there appears to be some confusion generally as to what these reliability periods really are, and I therefore think that an introductory explanation is called for.

The reliability test is designed to give the Contractor an opportunity to prove to the Engineer and the client that the plant has been satisfactorily installed and commissioned before certification occurs. It also establishes the date when the warranty period commences, being the commencement date of a successful reliability run.

Contractually, each individual set and all its auxiliaries are required to operate under the working conditions of the station, within the limits of the output specified, without failure or interruption of any kind for a period of thirty days.

However, should any failure or interruption occur in any portion of the plant due to or arising from faulty design, materials or workmanship, or due to omission or incorrect erection but not otherwise, sufficient to prevent the full commercial use of the plant during the reliability period, then the period will be cancelled and a new reliability period of thirty days shall commence.

The two engines have each been running for periods which are well in excess of the thirty days, but there have been a number of interruptions which have been the cause of the recent supply failures.

I do not propose to go into details of the various causes, which fall outside the scope of this question. All I will say is that certification has not taken place as the causes are being categorised to qualify them for contractual purposes. This does not mean however, the certification may not be agreed with retrospective effect once the analysis of the causes has been completed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 299 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I take it then that Government is not yet satisfied that the engines have been installed in such a way as they can be taken over by the Government to produce electricity efficiently, is that correct?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is not that we are not satisfied, it is that we have got to adhere to the terms of the contract and we have got to make sure that when the contractual period falls due the machines are in such a state as we want them to be and until then the certification will not take place. The certification could well be done with retrospective effect, in fact, there is a meeting with the contractors next week when we are going to discuss this whole issue.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has said that the reliability period is for 30 full running days and if there are any interruptions then the whole process starts afresh. Can he tell us how many days either of the sets have been running at the present moment?

MR SPEAKER:

You have been told that they have both been running for over 30 days.

HON G T RESTANO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, but I think the Minister did say that if there had been interruptions then the 30 day period begins again.

MR SPEAKER:

What you are asking is whether there have been interruptions which come within the definition of the reliability period.

HON G T RESTANO:

I think he has said that.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect, the Minister has said that there had been interruptions but I do not think the Minister has explained the reasons for the interruptions and whether they come within the trial period, is that correct?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

That is right, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

What I am asking is for how long have they now been running and how long can we expect to wait until the reliability period, a full 30 days of working without interruption, can be expected?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Well, Sir, I said initially that they had been running for about 30 days but that there had been a number of interruptions. It is pure conjecture on my part to answer the Hon Member's question because we are going to do another 30 days reliability period but something may crop up in the meantime and therefore we may have to start all over again and I think this is the question that the Hon Member asked.

HON G T RESTANO:

No, that was not the question. The question was, at the present moment in time for how long have they been running without interruption?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

I am sorry, I beg your pardon. I do not have those details to hand and if you want I will get those details and I will give them to you later on in the House.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, am I right in thinking that until the engines have been tested consecutively for 30 days, in fact, they would not be officially the Gibraltar Government's responsibility, is that the case?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

That is right, Sir, yes.

HON J BOSSANO:

Then, surely, in answer to the previous question, the question of the official opening of the Station is not being delayed because of discussions, surely, you cannot have the official opening until the plant becomes the Gibraltar Government's responsibility?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 300 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government give the figures in units and value of electricity borrowed or lent between the Gibraltar Government and the Ministry of Defence during 1981 and the first three quarters of 1982 including cash transactions made during these period or which are outstanding?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, the electricity imported from the Ministry of Defence during 1981 amounted to 392,757 kWH and 349,123 kWH during the first three quarters of 1982. The electricity exported by the Gibraltar Government during the same period were 175,622 kWH and 394,440 kWH respectively.

The cash transactions made amounted to payments to the Ministry of Defence totalling £19,509.96 for electricity supplied between 1st January, 1981, and 31st March, 1982. A balance of 75,739 kWH stood in favour of the Gibraltar Government as at 30th September, 1982.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what further costs have been incurred to date, since the reply to question No. 30 of 1982, for the hire of the four skid-mounted and the trailer-mounted generators broken down into hire, maintenance, repairs, spares, dismantling and repatriation and furthermore will Government state for how many hours these sets have been used since their installation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, the costs incurred from 1 April, 1982, to the 30 November, 1982, for the four skid-mounted generators are as follows:

Hire charges	£93,472.80
Repairs and maintenance	£ 4,267.00 (Estimated)
Spares	£ 545.68
Bank charges	£ 233.71

The costs incurred on the trailer-mounted generator which has now been returned to the United Kingdom are as follows:

Hire charges	£50,684.80
Repairs and maintenance	£ 1,066.88 (Estimated)
Spares	NIL
Dismantling	£ 1,957.00
Repatriation	£ 4,210.53
Bank charges	£ 127.72

Since their installation these sets have been run for a total of 10,469 hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 301 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, for how long does the Minister expect that the four skid-mounted generators will remain in Gibraltar?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I had a preliminary meeting this morning which we are going to carry on throughout the week regarding the four skid generators at present in service and a decision will be taken within a very short time as to when we are going to dispose of these four temporary skid generators and I hope to be able to answer this question to the Hon Member's satisfaction in a fuller way at the next House.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister not agree now that the figure of £395,000 which was what the sets would have cost, whether that figure has now really been reached and the sets do not belong to the Government?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I said initially a very long time ago there are very different things. If the sets had been obtained by Government initially

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to debate at question time. You have been asked a question which is clear, do you agree with the questioner as to whether if they had been bought you would have spent the same amount of money and you still would have the skid generators?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Well, obviously, Sir, the answer is no for the reasons I gave about six months ago.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, when the question was first asked the total cost of the four skid generators was £292,000 at that time and now we have an extra £100,000 for the skid-mounted generators and that is £390,000-odd and the cost to have purchased would have been £395,000. Would the Minister not agree?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, may I assist the Hon Member in judging the various amounts. You cannot really look at it from the point of view of establishing whether an amount has been reached. If the skids had been bought outright we would have been paying the full amount on day one and that amount would have been obviously borrowed on a loan. If you are paying it through time, obviously if you discount that at the end of the day you pay less but the financial analysis showed that you needed to have the skids for about five years or more before it was really worth buying rather than hiring.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Minister said that these five sets had been operating for a total of 10,469 hours, may I ask him if he has the information and if he doesn't that I can be circulated with it, how many kilowatt hours was generated in this time period?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I am sorry I do not have a breakdown of the kilowatt hours. I can get it for you.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister what considerations make it necessary to keep these skid generators another day in Gibraltar having regard to the fact that we have read in press announcements that the two engines at Waterport are already supplying the public? What is the need to keep these generators in Gibraltar a single day further, what are the factors that are influencing the decision?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

There is really only some minor factors and in fact this is what we are discussing this week. One is the fact that we are doing a top overhaul on No. 13 engine which we hope to finish at the beginning of next week but what we want to ensure is a continuous supply of electricity over the Christmas period and this is what we are going to discuss this week but we shall send the generators back to UK as soon as possible because, obviously, this is a save in money.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON. G T RESTANO

Will Government state what extra revenue has resulted from the metering of telephones during October and November?

ANSWERTHE HON. THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, the metering of local calls has resulted in extra revenue to Government for the month of October of approximately £12,000.

The figure for November is not yet available.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 302 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I just ask, this is purely for local calls and does not include trunk calls, I understand, is that correct?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, yes, because the IDD trunk calls, the total amount was £96,000 of which £12,000 were due to local calls in fact it was just under £12,000 and £84,000 are due to IDD calls but on the whole there has been no increase, really, in international traffic or money accruing to Government during this month. The extra revenue is exclusively derived from local metering which is £12,000.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister in a position to state whether or not the units consumed by way of local calls is, in his opinion, less or average for the month of October?

MR SPEAKER:

Taking into consideration what, it is the first month since the introduction of metering.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, I was thinking about prior to the introduction of metering.

MR SPEAKER:

There was no metering before and they have no way of comparing. Next question.

NO. 303 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, would Government consider installing a Public Telephone in the Public Markets?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, the installation of a Public telephone in the Public Markets has already been considered by the Department, but will have to await other more urgent and pressing needs, for which requests have already been received from the Medical Department.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 303 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister give any indication as to when the Public Markets would be in line for a public telephone?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I am afraid I cannot do so but I promise the Hon Member that I shall do my utmost to make sure that there is a public telephone at the Public Markets as soon as I am able to put one there.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is priority being given to installing public telephones in Government departments, to the Public Markets?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Priority is being given to certain areas, one of them being Government Secretariat but the main thing is things like the Hospital, the Health Centre where they are far more urgently needed and sometimes are a matter of great personal inconvenience to people and this is how we will tackle it. In fact, we obtained a priority list from the Director of Medical and Health Services and we are going down that priority list and we shall do everything we can to expedite the matter.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I think one can understand giving priority to the Health Department, the Hospital, but I cannot understand why any other Government Department should have priority over the Public Markets and the convenience of the public. Will he reconsider the list of priorities in that line?

MR SPEAKER:

Well, that is a matter of policy. Next question.

NO. 304 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many teachers enrolled for the degree course, and how many have since dropped out?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, after an initial response from over 50 teachers for the BA(Ed) Course now running in Gibraltar, a total of 42 teachers were actually registered with Hull University as part-time students and approved by the Senate. To date only four teachers have felt the need to withdraw from the course.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 304 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, how many teachers does the Minister actually estimate will go the whole distance? Surely, there must be an expected wastage and I would like to know what would be the figure.

MR SPEAKER:

No, that is a hypothetical question which I do not think the Minister is required to answer. Next question.

NO. 305 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will the Minister for Education make a statement regarding the leaky roofs of the new Girls' Comprehensive at Westside?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, there were some minor faults with the flashing, which allowed some small amount of water penetration. This has now been remedied by the Contractor following immediate reports from the PWD Clerk of Works, who is on site checking the snagging lists of all minor faults as they arise.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 305 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, did these penetrations cause damage to other parts of the school and have these been remedied?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I am not aware that they caused any damage.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will the Minister for Education state Government's views on the position of the non-teaching staff at the Dockyard Technical College once it is handed to local Government?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, with the exception of just one post of Laboratory Technician, all the non-teaching staff at the Gibraltar and Dockyard Technical College are MOD(N) appointments. Discussions are already in progress, in consultation with the Trade Unions concerned, regarding the future position of these non-teaching staff following the proposed transfer of the College to the Gibraltar Government. Whilst there is no objection in principle to the transfer of these staff to Gibraltar Government the future position must be discussed with the Trade Unions concerned before agreement can be reached on individual appointments.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 306 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can I take it that in fact there is a provision for the direct transfer of one EO per year from the DOE, or whatever it is called, to Government service?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I know nothing of that provision, Mr Speaker.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister find out whether this is the case?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

There is no such thing, Mr Speaker.

HON A T LODDO:

Well, the Minister did not know a minute ago and now he says there is no such thing. It is my information that there is provision for direct transfer of one EO directly into the Government service a year, there is provision for that, and if there is a case would the Minister take it up and find out?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Ministers are not involved in this kind of work, Mr Speaker, I do not know anything about this, I have never heard of it.

HON A T LODDO:

Well, can the Minister find out?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, I will not find out because it has got nothing to do with me, Sir.

HON A T LODDO:

The Minister refuses to find out whether or not it is a fact that there is the possibility of one EO transferring directly to Government and this has already been agreed to with the Union?

MR SPEAKER:

Agreed to by whom? Let us not work on assumptions because it is not right to come to this House and throw things at Ministers which cannot be substantiated by the questioner. If you have a definite information then you say so.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I have definite information that there is provision for the transfer of one EO per year directly into the Gibraltar Government's service.

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister has answered that they have no information whatsoever or no knowledge of this fact and therefore that they cannot do anything about it, it is as simple as that. If you can give further information to the Minister then they will enquire, I am sure, but they have got to be told chapter and verse.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, he has been told.

MR SPEAKER:

That is what I am asking you to do.

HON P J ISOLA:

My Hon Friend asked the Minister to enquire about the position and he has refused. The answer has been that he has refused to enquire because he has nothing to do with establishment.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect to the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition, the Hon questioner has been asked whether he will give his source of information so that they can enquire.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, if I may throw some light on this. This question has arisen because of the length of time the Minister has taken in answering correspondence which I am having with him and I tried to get the thing moving by bringing the question to the House. The Minister knows what I am trying to get at, I haven't just thrown it at him now, this has been going on since October. All I am asking is whether it is in fact true that an EO position can be transferred directly one a year and if that is the case there should be no difficulty with the transfer of this staff.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I have never heard of any arrangement of one EO per year coming into Government and if he mentioned the private correspondence that we have had I answered to him almost immediately. The thing is he gave his address as the House of Assembly and there are problems in collecting the mail and he received it eight days later which was not my fault. He wrote to me again and I immediately wrote back to him and gave him the information that he required. There is only one reference that I know of of an Executive Officer post and that is one that exists now in the Dockyard Technical College, that is the only reference I know of an Executive Officer post in relation to any transfer to the Gibraltar Government. I do know of any arrangement on a yearly basis, this does not exist and it is not my concern.

MR SPEAKER:

Fair enough. Next question.

NO. 307 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state how many prospective students able to obtain a place in further education in UK were unable to obtain a Government grant by virtue of the criteria of the points system in the current academic year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, as any offer of a place in further and higher education establishments in the UK is made to the individual applicant concerned there is no information available within the Department of Education as to the number of local students who actually obtain places at Universities/Polytechnics or Colleges for the current academic year. As far as Government grants are concerned, a total of 53 applications were received for Mandatory Awards in order to undertake degree courses at Universities in the UK. Based on the criteria of the points system a total of 23 Mandatory Awards were granted with effect from September, 1982. In addition, out of 48 applications a total of 19 Non-Mandatory Awards were granted by Government with effect from September, 1982, for Teacher Training courses and a range of other technical and specialist courses of a non-degree nature.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 307 OF 1982

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member said that there had been 53 requests of which 23 had been granted, I think, have I got the figures right, in the first part of his answer?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes, Mr Speaker.

HON J BOSSANO:

Does that mean, in fact, that the 30 people who were not given Mandatory Awards had been able to obtain places and they were asking for an award in order to take up the place they had obtained?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, Sir. The applications for Mandatory Awards are made even before the 'A' level results are received and some of them were quite frivolous, in fact, they had no chance of passing any 'A' levels.

HON J BOSSANO:

Does the Minister know how many people in fact were able to get sufficient 'A' levels to be offered a place but not sufficient to be offered a grant, does he know that?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, I do not.

MR SPEAKER:

In other words, what you are being asked is out of the applicants who were successful and who qualified for the mandatory scholarships were they all given the necessary grants or were some left out, is that correct?

HON J BOSSANO:

No, Mr Speaker, the ones who qualified for the mandatory scholarship obviously got it. What I am asking is of the people who were not frivolous that the Hon Member has mentioned, the ones who were actually successful in being offered the place in the UK that they had applied for and they did not get a mandatory grant, does he know how many of those there were?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

We do not know if they were offered a place, Mr Speaker. The two secondary schools complete confidential reports on all the students who apply for places in Universities/College through the Universities Central Council on admissions but the individuals concerned are then notified direct of the results of their application. All other applications outside the UCCA system for higher places in Polytechnics and most other Colleges of higher education are sent by the individuals concerned direct to the establishment in UK. These applications are not administered through the schools and any offer of places are notified to the individual applicants direct.

HON J BOSSANO:

Does he know how many of the people who did not get a grant were able to get two 'A' level passes and three 'O' levels, does he know that?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

No, I do not but I can find out.

HON J BOSSANO:

He does know, Mr Speaker, I take it that this is the minimum entrance requirement for further education in the United Kingdom?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

That is not so, I know of at least one entry this year where not even a pass in English Language was required, it just depends what College of further education, higher education Polytechnic you apply, they are desperate for applicants.

HON J BOSSANO:

I have said the minimum laid down in the United Kingdom is that, I think if the Hon Member reads the rules I think he would find that is right because if that is not the case then I do not see how he can consistently be telling me every year that he cannot afford to give grants without knowing what it costs because he does not know how many people would be entitled. How has he arrived at the answer that he has given me every year of saying that the major consideration is financial constraint of not being able to give grants on the same basis as in UK if he does not know how many people are being left out?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Because we have a fund which is based on mandatory awards according to our regulations. We do not know because they are not processed by us. People write direct to Universities and places of further education and we do not control this.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, surely, if the Hon Member tells me that he cannot afford to bring the criteria for obtaining a grant in Gibraltar into line with the criteria in UK he must know what it would cost to do so and he can only know what it would cost to do so if he knows how many people meeting the criteria in UK are failing to meet the criteria in Gibraltar, there is no other way of doing it.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I must make it quite clear that we do not actually know the criteria of all the Colleges in England and all the places of further education, they have different standards. I have just quoted him an instance where somebody was taken on a two-year course without an English Language 'O' level.

HON J BOSSANO:

That depends on what he is going to do.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Exactly.

HON J BOSSANO:

This is totally irrelevant because the Hon Member must know that mandatory grants by local authorities in the United Kingdom are subject to the achievement of certain qualifications which are not

as high as the qualifications demanded by his Department in Gibraltar for mandatory grants in Gibraltar. Therefore, by comparing the UK mandatory grant standard which is the standard used as the minimum entrance requirement in the overwhelming majority of the institutions, the Hon Member if he has in his possession the school results should be able to subtract one from the other and come up with a figure.

MR SPEAKER:

What is the question?

HON J BOSSANO:

The question that I am asking is, how is it that he is able to tell me on successive years that the Government cannot afford to give a grant here on the same basis as a mandatory grant is given in UK if he does not know how many people are being deprived? How does he know what it costs? He must know what it costs if he knows he cannot afford it, Mr Speaker, so I am asking him how he is able to say one thing without being able to say the other?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, we have a Mandatory Awards System. I have no intention of changing that Mandatory Awards System to meet the requirements of Mr Bossano who is in the Opposition as to giving awards to anybody who can get a place in University or further education or higher education in a Polytechnic and is trying to lead me in that way and I am giving him what I usually say which is no. I do not care if I know the figures or I do not know the figures. Whilst I am Minister and I have the support of my colleagues, I will not change the Mandatory Awards Regulations and that is as far as I will go.

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not debate because I think you have been given a very explicit answer. You have not been given the reasons but you most certainly have been given a very explicit answer as to the policy decision.

HON J BOSSANO:

The Hon Member may have misunderstood the question. I do not want a grant for myself, Mr Speaker, I already possess two degrees which may not qualify me for being Minister of Education but I do assure the Hon Member that what I am asking him is in order to satisfy the people who are being deprived of the opportunity of studying in UK, what is the reason? If the reason is that he will not give it because I ask for it then that is fair enough, that is the answer that I have been given, I will have to find another way of sending people to persuade him, I will tell the people who want the grant to see him then, it won't come from me.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 308 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, with respect to Question No. 210 of 1982, has Government received the recommendations of the Industrial Training Board and if so what are these?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

No, Sir. No recommendations have been received from the Industrial Training Board.

I understand that the Chairman of the Industrial Training Board feels that until there are indications of the pattern for the future economy of Gibraltar, especially as a result of the proposed closure of HM Dockyard, the Board is unable to make any recommendations.

NO. 309 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, having regard to a Report recently published in the United Kingdom, will Government investigate the possible consequences of the introduction of an equal retirement age for men and women?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION ANDLABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, if the Hon Questioner is referring to a recent report by an all-party committee of the House of Commons, which was reported in the British press, I can only say that I expect to receive a copy shortly, and that it will be interesting to see to what extent its recommendations are accepted and/or implemented in the United Kingdom. We can then also look into the implications of adopting all or any of the recommendations here in Gibraltar.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 309 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

Can I ask the Minister, Mr Speaker, if on the receipt of this report he would be good enough to hand a copy to me if he receives two or perhaps send it to me and I can photocopy it?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I think I will probably get one copy and I will make it readily available to the Hon Member.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 310 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if a meeting of the Tourist Advisory Board has been held since the last House of Assembly meeting and, if so, if any recommendations emanated from the meeting?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

No, Sir. The last meeting was held on the 9 August, 1982.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 310 OF 1982

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does not the Minister think it is a pity that here we have a forum where I think a lot of interest could be generated to improve tourism in Gibraltar and hasn't he got the leadership to try and get the members of this Board together and try and encourage them to make suggestions and so on to improve the very severely damaged tourism trade in Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I have tried to keep my cool on this but I am again very surprised at the Hon and Gallant Major's lack of knowledge of what is happening in Gibraltar because if he knew what was happening he probably would not ask this supplementary. I think recent events have occurred where it has been in the interest of the Tourist Advisory Board not to hold meetings on account of something which is taking place in England this very day. I won't go into further details but I think he should know there are interested parties contained within the Tourist Advisory Board where since the end of last August, early September, I visited UK and interest was shown by another carrier to come to Gibraltar.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, all I can say is that if there is some controversial issue and if that is so, isn't it better to try and get the parties concerned together rather than do nothing about it.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, no one intends to leave it for a fight outside, what I do not want to lose my head about is the fact that the Hon Member straight away accuses me of not having leadership. Well, I can assure the Hon Member that it is a consensus of the Tourist Advisory Board not to meet until after a decision is taken on the recent application taking place at this particular time.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 311 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what are the conditions under which the Company handling passengers and freight operate at the air terminal?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

Sir, the Company handling passengers and freight at the Air Terminal has an agreement with the MOD to the effect that the Company have the sole right to handle and service all aircraft at the airfield and to handle all passengers and baggage beyond the check-in point within the Terminal building.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 311 OF 1982

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Am I right then in understanding that this is purely a condition laid or some contract with the MOD over which the Government of Gibraltar have no say even though the handling of the luggage is really done from the air terminal?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the handling agreement is a contract between the tenderer, should I say, and the MOD, the Gibraltar Government is not involved within that contract at all. The liability of handling certainly for security areas on the tarmac is done by the MOD and I take the point of the Hon Member within the air terminal but as it happens to be the same operator the whole concept is enshrined within the same contract.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Don't you think that if this is a matter which obviously is going to affect the good running of the air terminal and the air terminal being a matter which is the concern of the Government, it is time that this contract was arranged between whoever might be the handler and the Gibraltar Government and also that this should be put to tender?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I don't know about the tender procedure because I understand there has only been one party up to now interested in this venture. Individual airlines are entitled to handle their own affairs within the air terminal, they do not necessarily have to have a contract with MOD.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

As I understand it there is a charge for handling to whoever may be operating the plane that is coming to Gibraltar. I do not know what the costs are and I do not know whether the Minister can give me what the costs are to the actual airline themselves but if he could I would like to hear it.

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not debate.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Can the Minister, Mr Speaker, tell me what are the charges to the planes coming in and does he not think that if it was a free-for-all of everybody wanting to handle their own plane it would be chaotic and perhaps even more costly for the plane coming in?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am afraid I do not understand the question, Mr Speaker, because if it is chaotic this is exactly why a particular operator handles and therefore it is not chaotic but as I said airlines are entitled once the luggage is off the tarmac, for the check-in points both ways, both accepting and issuing.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So what the Minister is suggesting is that anyone who operates an airline coming to Gibraltar can have its own people handling their own luggage and so on, is that what he is saying? Is that the situation?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, an airline coming to Gibraltar can handle its own luggage once it is off the tarmac but for security reasons MOD have a contract with a company to do the plane on the tarmac and for luggage and passengers from the plane off the tarmac up to the air terminal.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

It is now clearer to me. So what the Minister is saying, in fact, is that there are two stages. The first stage is the actual bringing the luggage from the plane to the air terminal.

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not complicate the issue. The Ministry of Defence have a contract with the present operator on anything to do with the handling of luggage or the aircraft from outside the air terminal and within the tarmac and within the air terminal operators can do as they choose. It is as simple as that.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

That is what I wanted to establish, Mr Speaker, I was not very sure what the Minister meant. If that is the situation it is obvious that whoever has got the contract

MR SPEAKER:

You must ask a question.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, if in fact there is only one company which has a contract with the MOD to move the luggage from the plane to the air terminal, it is they who set what the cost is for handling that plane. Is the Minister satisfied that the charges being made by the company are reasonable or does he believe that it may be there is a situation where the whole matter could be looked into, that that should come under the Gibraltar Government and not the MOD and if that is so could he revise the whole situation and if necessary put that particular function to tender?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think there are about four questions asked within the contents of that, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

No, there is only one. Is Government prepared to look into the position so that they can revise if they feel that there is reason for revision?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I think Government is always prepared to consider anything which is feasible and for the benefit of tourists in particular.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister aware that certain airlines are saying that they are overcharged for the handling and this is really the point?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I have not received a complaint from an airline stating that they are being overcharged in handling precisely because the company that is doing the handling is a subsidiary company of the two airlines that are operating to Gibraltar.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I would like to correct something.

MR SPEAKER:

No, with due respect, we are debating and I will not have that.
Next question.

NO. 312 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government undertake to arrange, or cause to be arranged, emergency facilities to be implemented in the event of another "stranded" day-tourists episode?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

No, Sir. The Government (Tourist Office) will however provide a service as happened recently when a group of visitors were stranded in Gibraltar due to inclement weather. The Tourist Office staff are available to help book accommodation on their behalf, intercede with local agents and generally liaise with all parties concerned to ensure that as little hardship as possible is suffered by those stranded.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 312 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister in a position to confirm or deny whether the Gibraltar Government had advertised hydrofoil services to Gibraltar in Tangier?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, we have, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, since that is the position, will Government therefore accept that they have some obligation towards the tourists whom they encouraged to come to Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That is absolute rubbish, Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member can quote any Government that pays for any passengers stranded in their country on account of inclement weather then I would like to have the reference, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, that is not the answer to the question. Is the Government prepared to accept any form of responsibility?

MR SPEAKER:

The answer is no, you have been told that.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Minister confirm or deny that passengers, day trippers, from Morocco are not given any information regarding the potential risks which they run vis-a-vis the weather?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, why should Government have to provide that kind of information? Why doesn't the Hon Member ask the operator to provide that kind of information?

HON A J HAYNES:

Is Government aware whether any conditions are stipulated or not?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, no one stipulates conditions that the aircraft may not leave from Gatwick next Wednesday.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does the Minister propose to answer questions or not?

MR SPEAKER:

He is answering questions.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am saying no.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer is no.

HON A J HAYNES:

No, he is aware or, no, he is not aware?

MR SPEAKER:

He is not aware. You have asked whether he is aware and he has said no, he is not aware, it is as simple as that. I have no doubt in my mind as to what the Minister has answered. He is not aware of these conditions.

HON A J HAYNES:

Another question, Mr Speaker. Is the Minister aware that no one from the Tourist Office was at Waterport Wharf to inform the passengers of their problem?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am aware that no one from the Tourist Office was at Waterport, Mr Speaker, but there wasn't anybody from the Tourist Office in London at Gatwick when the Hon the Leader of the Opposition and myself found ourselves stranded there.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I wish he would not harp on about the airline because the airlines, as he well knows, Mr Speaker

MR SPEAKER:

Order. You have been given a straight answer. It is not for Government to be at a particular place when any particular passenger is stranded, that is what you have been told.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I asked him whether he was aware that there was no one from the Tourist Office at Waterport Wharf and he accepted that. Is he also aware, Mr Speaker, that the predicament of the stranded tourists was only brought to the attention of the Tourist Office as a result of the work of certain taxi drivers?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am aware that the taxi drivers interceded, Mr Speaker, what I think the Hon Member is not aware is that the whole thing took place immediately below us in the Gibraltar Tourist Office in the Piazza and the Tourist Office at once took the situation up.

MR SPEAKER:

I am not going to have any further questions on this particular episode in any manner or form.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I was there and the Minister was on a jolly in London, I know exactly what happened.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I was joined by the Leader of the Opposition and we were both stranded in Gatwick.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 313 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government undertake to provide a Waiting Room for passengers at Waterport Wharf?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Government would have to look into the provision of adequate facilities with other interested parties in the longer term. Some facilities are now provided by the operators for their departing passengers.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 313 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there going to be a Waiting Room or not, Mr Speaker?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, if we are able to get together with people who have premises at Waterport Wharf, operators that use them for other purposes, then there will be a Waiting Room.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is there a specific area which they have outlined for use as a Waiting Room and what kind of priority are they going to give to the implementation of plans to build a Waiting Room?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

As I said in answer to the general question, Mr Speaker, some facilities are now provided by the operators for their departing passengers, there are Waiting Rooms.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 314 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government afford financial assistance to enable the next Subbuteo finals to be held in Gibraltar in 1983?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, every year Government provides funds for the purpose of granting financial assistance to sporting bodies. Applications are considered by the Gibraltar Sports Committee under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Sport.

In past years financial assistance has been granted by Government to the Gibraltar Table Soccer Association (Subbuteo is the commercial name of the game). However, on 16 March, 1981, the Gibraltar Sports Committee was reconstituted to accommodate the wishes of the Gibraltar Sports Federation, whereby 7 out of the 10 members appointed to this Committee are nominated by the Federation. The Gibraltar Sports Committee has subsequently decided that Table Soccer does not rank as a sport and therefore is not eligible for financial assistance through this Committee.

Government is nevertheless prepared to look into the merits of the Gibraltar Table Soccer Association's request, and to consider whether it justifies the provision of special funds for this venture.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 314 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does not Government consider that Gibraltar having won the World Championship is certainly worthy of consideration as far as financial assistance is concerned, you cannot go much higher than that, it has put Gibraltar on the map and isn't the Government satisfied that this would be of benefit touristically to Gibraltar to enable them to make a financial contribution?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

This is precisely why, Mr Speaker, I have said that Government will consider. I assume that the Hon Member knows that there was a request from this Association for something like £5,000 and this is something which of course had to be balanced, the input against the output.

HON A T LODDO:

I did not know anything about these £5,000.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state how many employees are engaged in hosing the thoroughfares of Gibraltar and if it is really necessary to have two men to operate each hose?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, twelve pairs of men are engaged in hosing thoroughfares.

It is necessary for two men to work each hose as one of the men operates the water valve and helps with the handling of the hoses, whilst the second man actually does the hosing.

These men are normally employed as sweepers and are only engaged on flushing duties during part of the afternoons.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 315 OF 1982

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

In view of the fact that I think it has been stressed before that there is a need to water our streets more and the fact that I think anyone who sees the operation can see that one man is more than sufficient, couldn't the Government perhaps by using one man at a time double the amount of flushing? Isn't that productivity on the part of the Government?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I invite the Hon Member to try and hose the streets himself, operate water valves and to take the consequences while he is turning the valve off of the hose lashing around probably breaking a window, soaking the people, etc.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am prepared to undertake the test if the Minister will allow me.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if they intend ever to remove the ropes that are dangling on the east wall of the Tourist Office and clean up the facade of this side of the building, to which I have called the attention on various previous occasions?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, all fixing ropes and tarpaulins over the roof of the Tourist Office will be removed when work on the renewal of this roof is commenced in a few days time, now that the roofing tiles have been received from UK. The facade of the east side of the building was cleaned up and painted in March this year, having previously been painted in May, 1979. The location of this building is however, such that the walls are quickly soiled by the exhaust fumes from traffic travelling along Secretary's Lane.

Not as part of the question, Sir, but now that the traffic is going in the opposite direction perhaps the exhaust fumes will not be so bad.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 316 OF 1982

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, with all due respect to the Minister it has nothing to do with the exhaust fumes, it is the state of those ropes, Mr Speaker, to which I have called the attention of this House on numerous occasions which anybody can do in five minutes and doesn't he think that someone in his department is neglecting his duty?

MR SPEAKER:

What is the question?

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

The question is, Mr Speaker, why is it that those ropes that have been dangling there and that facade which has been in a terrible state for months if not years the department has not put right a long time ago having the fact that I have called attention to that on numerous occasions and, in fact, as I have said before, on many occasions that they have done everything possible and blame the public for not cooperating when in fact it is his own department who is not cooperating.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 317 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if they intend to clean up the area at the bottom of Jumper's Bastion which has been a dumping ground for some months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, as far as the south Jumper's Bastion is concerned this area has been taken over by a private concern, and the removal of rubbish is not the responsibility of the Government.

North Jumper's Bastion has also been leased to a number of firms, these firms are responsible for the removal and disposal of any rubbish which they produce.

The rest of the North Jumper's site is scheduled for a general clean up by the Cleansing Section in the near future.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 317 OF 1982

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister aware that the place is supposed to be one of the amenity areas of Gibraltar for tourists and anybody going past that place and looking down is revolted by the sight of what he sees down there? Hasn't he got any foreman or someone who is supposed to be looking at these areas and making sure that action is taken that whoever may be the tenant of the area puts the place in a different state?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think advances have been made to the people who have their firms down there to keep the place neat and tidy.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't there a way of enforcing it, if necessary cancelling the tenancy or whatever or even the Public Health taking action?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I will pass your remarks to the relevant department.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 318 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Would the Government state a) why so many Crown Properties including Government Housing have not been painted exteriorly for the past fifteen years and b) what is its programme to repaint these buildings?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, financial constraints over the past few years have only permitted a limited number of Crown Properties, including Government Housing, to be painted. Next year's painting programme will depend on the funds that this House approves for the purpose.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 318 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Minister said financial constraints over the past few years but we are talking about fifteen years. For fifteen years over 200 Government houses have not been repainted and yet the law states that private landlords have to paint their buildings, their facades, can Government state why that same law does not apply to the Government?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, I cannot say why.

MR SPEAKER:

In fairness to the Minister he has given you a straight answer. You have asked a question and he has given you the answer.

HON G T RESTANO:

What is the programme for the next twelve months?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

If you are willing to give me all the money that I wish to ask for painting, then the programme will be a very extensive and very wide programme. If on the other hand there are restrictions on the amount of money that you are willing to give me, then the amount of painting will have to be restrained within certain limits.

HON G T RESTANO:

I do not think it is up to me when he says how much money I am prepared to give him. The Government brings forward its proposals and passes them by majority so what is the programme that it has at the moment for the next twelve months?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, we could put a very wide painting programme and put up thruppence on the income tax and naturally the Opposition will vote for that thruppence in view that it is required to do painting.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, but surely that is what the second part of the question is asking for, what is the programme?

MR SPEAKER:

The second part of the question has been answered by the Minister saying that he does not know why Government is not bound to do what other people are required to do but that the reason why they are not doing it is because there are financial constraints, it is as simple as that.

HON G T RESTANO:

But I am asking is there a programme or is there not a programme for the next twelve months?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I will try and produce as comprehensive a programme as I can but I must point out that there are financial constraints.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 319 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how often is the sand in the sand pits in the different parks changed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the sand in the sand pits in the different parks is replaced once a year. Nevertheless if it is found to be dirty we endeavour to have it changed more frequently.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 319 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is this sand, in fact, during that year treated in any way?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am afraid I do not know the answer to that question, Sir, I will look into it.

HON W T SCOTT:

Do the local Public Health Department inspect these pits every so often?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I understand they do, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 320 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, when does Government intend to reprovide the swings in the Alameda Gardens?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, one set of swings at the Alameda Gardens has been recently repaired, the other was removed as it was in a dangerous condition.

Funds will be included in the draft 1983/84 estimates for the complete renewal of one set of swings.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 320 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister telling me that the other set of swings will not be installed until well into next year?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That is correct, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

What is the position with young children who go to the park, do they have to wait until next year to have a swing? Does it require estimates? The Government comes to this House for supplementary provision for everything, is the Minister telling us seriously that the recreation of the children will have to wait for 1983/84, is that what he is telling us?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, there is no queue of children waiting to go on the swings, we have one set of swings there, it can cope under normal circumstances with the demand for that form of recreation.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, if it is going to take this long, could the Minister then ensure that half the swings in the top playground at least are moved down to the bottom park so that the children have swings in both parks, would that be too much to ask?

HON J B PEREZ:

I do not agree, I use the top one.

HON A T LODDO:

But would the Minister agree that perhaps it would be best to have two at the top and two at the bottom?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I will look into that for you.

8.12.82

NO. 321 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, why has it been found necessary for additional works to be undertaken on the storm water drains at the Westside Girls' Comprehensive?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the old storm water drain running under the school site was extended to allow a temporary access to the site whilst the old PWD Garage was still in operation.

The heavy construction traffic appears to have caused some settlement on this reclaimed area causing the pipe to block. Attempts to clear the blockage by rodding and water jetting proved unsuccessful, and it has been necessary to open up the pipe.

8.12.82

NO. 322 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government provide fencing around the paddling pool at Varyl Begg Housing Estate to prevent dogs fouling the water?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, the Government is considering fencing the paddling pool at Varyl Begg Estate following representations made by some of the tenants.

8.12.82

NO. 323 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government ensure that the two empty shops in Main Street situated at No. 139/141 and No. 272 are boarded up so that they cease to be unofficial rubbish dumps?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr Speaker, the shops in question are privately owned and there is no provision in law under which the owners of same can be required to provide boarding as a preventive measure to the dumping of refuse.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 323 OF 1982

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, then perhaps these owners, would the Minister not agree, could be made to clean them out periodically. They are in an absolutely filthy state and a disgrace to Gibraltar and although I appreciate that there is nothing in the law, could not the Minister or the department concerned advise the owners of these premises under section bluff or section goodwill to, in fact, board these up? It would be to their advantage and to the benefit of everybody.

HON J B PEREZ:

That has already been done, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 324 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, to what level is Government committed in guaranteeing the increasing overdraft facilities of the Gibraltar Quarry Company Limited?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, Government is in no way committed to act as guarantor to the Gibraltar Quarry Company Limited. It has, however, issued a guarantee to a maximum of £60,000.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 324 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wonder if the Hon Member is aware and if so can he state to the House because the last published accounts date back to over a year ago, November 1981, when the overdraft secured was £51,249 having jumped from almost £36,000 from the previous year. Is the Hon Member aware of what the bank overdraft for that company is in the last month or so if it has risen to beyond that figure?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I am not sure if it is quite in order to ask questions on something which was actually laid at the table at this meeting. However, I do know that some time in the month of October the accounts of the Gibraltar Quarry Company were such that they had some £10,000 on deposit in the bank and some £5,000 in current account in the bank so at least in October there was no overdraft whatsoever.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, on how many occasions has the guarantee to the bank had to be upped?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Once, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

From what to what?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

£40,000 to £60,000.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 325 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government make a comprehensive statement on the future of the Water Catchments?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, Government, through ODA, are in the process of appointing consultants to undertake a study of the Water Catchments area. The consultants are to provide a full report to cover the economic and structural viability of the following options:-

- (i) maintain the catchments in their present role, contrasting and comparing the present and future costs of this and water derived from other viable sources
- (ii) leave the use of the catchments, with recommendations as to any works which may be required to ensure the stability of the area.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 325 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

When is the appointment and the subsequent report expected by Government and in the interim period does Government intend to carry out any works to bring the sheeting and so forth back to its original state?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The consultants report will take some four or five months to do and we should get it by possibly June next year. However, the damage that the storm caused the other week is already in the process of being made good so that the catchments will be back to a reasonable standard in a very short time.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is it correct to say that the damage caused by the recent storm was compounded by the lack of maintenance generally on the water catchments?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, that is absolutely incorrect.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister confirm or deny that in previous years and I go back to, say, the 1970's and 1960's, the work undertaken in the water catchments area during the summer months was far greater than it is at present?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would deny that, Sir. The work every year on the catchments run more or less to the same schedule.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, my information is that at a time prior to the departure of the Spanish workforce the work used to be considerable and ensured that a storm had to be very severe for any damage to take place.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, the amount of work done on the catchments every year has been maintained over the last ten years at approximately the same level irrespective of whether they are Spanish, Moroccan, Gibraltarian, English or what have you workers. The damage that was caused the other week was by the most severe storm that Gibraltar has experienced, I think, in at least 100 years.

NO. 326 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government confirm that during the recent rains there was further ingress of rainwater in some of the blocks at the Varyl Begg Estate giving the reasons why this occurred and what measures are being taken to prevent a reoccurrence and at whose cost?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, following the recent rains there was some rain penetration of a minor nature. In one instance a rain water pipe was found to be blocked. In another block a gutter joint was leaking. Both anomalies were immediately corrected by the contractor at no cost to Government.

Apart from these minor problems, the indications are that the new roofs are eminently satisfactory.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 326 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, am I not right in saying or correct in saying that some of the ingress of rainwater was caused because some of the gutters that extend underneath the new roofs overflowed?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, I do not think the gutter itself overflowed what happened was that the actual guttering itself had a leak in it.

HON W T SCOTT:

On how many instances and in how many blocks did this occur?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

In one instance there was a leaky gutter, in the other instance the actual downpipe was blocked, that is perhaps what you meant by it overflowing.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 327 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, what services does the management company to the Gibraltar Quarry Company Limited provide and what action does Government propose taking having regard to the annual fee of £9,000 and that the two owners of the management company are employees of the Gibraltar Quarry Company Limited?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, this £9,000 annual fee is actually part of the Manager's salary. He has set himself up as a Company and requested that part of his salary (to the sum stated) should be paid to the Company. There was no reason to refuse the request.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 327 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

In the report which has been laid on the table, Mr Speaker, the Acting Principal Auditor makes reference to the need to employ a management company and that the services that this company provides are not clear and I am asking the Government what services does the management company provide having regard that the Acting Principal Auditor said he is himself not clear?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, in actual fact the services provided by the management company are the actual work of the manager himself. I understand, however, that Government is not fully happy with this situation of a management company and steps are being taken to regularise the position and in the future the whole of the salary will be paid to the manager in his personal capacity, the management company will then disappear.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 328 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government prepared to provide specialised training to the craftsmen responsible for the maintenance of equipment in the hospital?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the St Bernard's Hospital and the King George V Hospital have a fully qualified Maintenance Technician (PTO IV) full-time attached to the Medical Department, and he is fully backed by the resources, manpower and materials of the PWD Electrical Section.

At the beginning of this year two industrials, one an Electrical Fitter and the other an Electrician, both recent ex apprentices, were chosen from the personnel of the Electrical Section and attached to the Hospital under the Maintenance Technician in order to familiarise and train them on the various aspects of the equipment and installation.

It is envisaged that once these two industrials have absorbed this training fruitfully, they might be sent for specialised training in the United Kingdom.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state the position as regards communal antenna at the Varyl Begg Estate?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Additional equipment was installed in May this year at Canton House to permit reception throughout the Estate of GBC Vhf, TVE Vhf and Uhf and Morocco.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 329 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Canton House being one of the estates.

MR SPEAKER:

To provide reception throughout the Estate.

HON A J HAYNES:

Who have the Government consulted on this point? Have they put the matter out to tender?

MR SPEAKER:

It has been installed.

HON A J HAYNES:

In one particular estate.

MR SPEAKER:

In one particular building to provide for the whole Estate, that is the answer.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The actual antenna is located on the block known as Canton House. However, it serves the whole Estate.

HON A J HAYNES:

One antenna on one estate serves the entire Estate? Does that function properly at the moment?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

This was the way the consulting firm considered it was most satisfactory to do the work.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 330 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, is Government satisfied that the quantity of steel used in the St Joseph's Estate project was not excessive and will Government give a breakdown of the cost of the steel used in the project?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, my Department did in fact query the amount of steel planned for the above project on the 16 September, 1980. A reply was received from the Consultants on the 5 November, 1980, setting out the reasons why such an amount of steel was required.

The Department was still not completely satisfied with the Consultant's explanations and arranged for a set of photographs to be taken in late November. A set was sent to the Consultants and a meeting took place in the offices of the PWD on the Consultants next visit to Gibraltar in December, together with on site visits and discussions as a result of which the Consultants prepared a detailed report on the 9 January, 1981, which justified the amount of steel to be used in the project.

The final account has still not been agreed for this project. Until such time as this is concluded we will not be in a position to give a breakdown of costs.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 330 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Who provided the steel for this Estate?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I do not know, I think it was a firm named Rom River Co but I am not exactly sure.

HON A J HAYNES:

Who were the Consultants, Mr Speaker?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would need notice of that question. I will undertake to let the Hon Member know should he so desire.

HON A J HAYNES:

Were Rom River the Consultants and the suppliers of the steel, Mr Speaker?

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister said he does not know because he does not know who the Consultants were and who the suppliers were. I think he is going to provide the information later on. Next question.

NO. 331 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government publish a list of those Government buildings which have been reported by the Environmental Health Department as buildings which require to be repaired giving dates when repair requirements were first reported and the dates of subsequent reminders if any?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 331 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

No, there haven't been any buildings or no they won't?

MR SPEAKER:

They will not publish a list.

HON A J HAYNES:

The high-handed Government hand, is that a fair explanation, Mr Speaker? Would Government go any way towards explaining their position on this?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not at the moment, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, do I understand then that not only will they not give me a list but they won't give any reasons for not publishing it, that is the position is it?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Part of the reason is there is an enormous amount of work involved to do this.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is it part of the reason, Mr Speaker, that it is extremely embarrassing to Government just to reveal the list?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether or not the roofs at Varyl Begg Estate needed to be painted in a non-reflective paint for air safety reasons?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, there has never been a requirement, either before, during or after the re-roofing contract to paint the roof sheeting in non-reflective paint.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 332 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Is that for not painting it in non-reflective paint or painted at all?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

As far as I understand they have not been painted at all but we have not had any applications from anybody that they should be painted in non-reflective paint.

HON A J HAYNES:

It seems from either the top or from the side, it appears to me, Mr Speaker, as if some of the roofs in the Estate have a different colour to the others. Is the Minister saying that they are all of the same finish?

MR SPEAKER:

In fairness to the Minister you have asked him whether there has been a requirement that they should be painted with non-reflective paint and the answer has been no. I do not think the Minister is entitled to be asked what colour the roofs are painted.

HON A J HAYNES:

I am not asking what colour, I am asking whether all the roofs and all parts of the roofs are finished in the same way.

MR SPEAKER:

I do not think the Minister is the person to answer a question like this, in other words, you can go and see for yourself.

HON A J HAYNES:

Well, I have and that is why I am asking. Mr Speaker, it strikes me as if they have been painted in part and I want to know whether that is true or not.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, if there is any difficulty when the Hon Member is landing his own private plane that he finds that the roofs are creating a lot of reflection I will look into it. As far as I know all the roofs have the same finish.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 333 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government make available their plans for refurbishing the Piazza and will they disclose details as to cost? It seems once again as if I have pre-empted Government, Mr Speaker.

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, an exhibition of Public Works Department's designed buildings recently completed is currently open to the public at the John Mackintosh Hall - as an aside I would say this exhibition was prepared over a month ago. The exhibition also includes buildings which are at the drawing board stage and proposals for the Piazza. The latter is intended as an exercise in public participation and Government will welcome comments from the public in general, be they individuals or groups or societies or even political parties. Final plans and costings will again be made public following the response received as a result of the exhibition. No political decision on the future of the Piazza is being taken now.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 333 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Looking back at the Government's record and what they have done at the Piazza I should hope that they do look for public participation, Mr Speaker. On this point, Mr Speaker, is the announced model for the Piazza and John Mackintosh Square as a whole which is being made open to the public on Sunday, is that model taken from the plan devised by the same people who proposed things for the Command Education Centre?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am not quite sure what the Hon Member is referring to about the model which is going to be open on Sunday. As far as I understand there is no model of the Piazza at all, there are drawings of the future possibilities of how the Piazza will look.

HON A J HAYNES:

Plans or whatever, Mr Speaker, I thought they were models. If it is a plan we are talking about what I would like to know is whether the plan is going to be open to the public, whether these are the plans advised or indicated or suggested by that same group of consultants who came to look at the possibilities for the Command Education Centre or is it something entirely different and devised by others or is it a hotch-potch made up of various things?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, these are plans which have been prepared basically by a member of the Public Works Department who I know has taken the opportunity to speak to Messrs Atkinson Associates and possibly has got ideas from them.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, do any other plans exist for the Piazza and if so are they going to be shown at the same time? Is there going to be any scope for alternatives in this display which he is going to open to the public and is there also going to be any indications made available to the public of the different costs of the various alternatives?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Whether any drawings exist in the architectural department of the Opposition I do not know. As far as I can say the only plans that the PWD have available are the only ones that are circulating in Gibraltar but if somebody has a private idea then as I have said, as a member of the public participation we shall be happy to look at them, consider them and once we have come to a reasonably good idea of what we want and what the public wants then costings will take place.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, is this project contained within the 1981/86 development programme?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, part of the requests that we have made to the ODA is for a whole pedestrianisation scheme in Main Street which will include the refurbishing of the Piazza.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 334 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, is it Government's intention to allow boats to park at the parking area opposite the Torpedo Camber, and if not, why has a boat been allowed to remain parked there?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, it is not intended to allow boats to park opposite the Torpedo Camber in fact instructions were issued to remove the boat in question prior to notice of the question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Would Government consider amending the law to allow consistent and persistent parking offenders to be fined heavier penalties than is now the case?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the fixed penalty for parking tickets is £2.

The maximum penalty for parking offences under the Traffic Ordinance was increased from £10 to £25 in 1972. As this maximum penalty is not often imposed by the courts, it is not considered necessary at the present time to amend the law.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 335 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is it not a fact that because greater penalties than £2 are seldom meted out to offenders it virtually encourages offenders to park in no parking areas because they can afford to pay £2 and nothing worse happens to them? Would the Minister not consider taking measures so as to discourage people from parking in no parking areas?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I do not know if the Hon Member saw me on television some little time ago but I did mention that one of the things that we were intending to look at in the reasonably near future are what are known as double yellow line areas and those areas which we feel are really areas where nobody should park at all will be looked at very strongly by the Police and anybody parking there will get a ticket immediately. Other areas which today are double line areas may not be so necessary and they will be removed from double line. I think there might be something in the Hon Member's suggestion that perhaps the fixed penalty of £2 might be increased and I am willing to look at it.

HON G T RESTANO:

I did say in the question, Mr Speaker, consistent and persistent offenders. I think that it is those people who obstruct continually who are those who should be discouraged, not necessarily, I would have thought, a fixed high penalty for parking on a double yellow line but if it is a repeated offence.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I accept that viewpoint, the difficulty is administrative, how is the normal Policeman to know that it is number XYZ which is actually creating the parking offence on a regular basis unless they set up a whole administration in the Police Department to see that every time a ticket is passed it is co-related with previous tickets. I think possibly the better answer might be that the fixed penalty were to be increased because at the moment a number of people feel that if they are pressed for time or what have you it is often better to pay a £2 fine and dump it in a no-parking area.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I would have thought though that perhaps this could have been monitored not by the Police, I entirely take the point of the Policeman on the beat will not know, but it could be monitored at the Magistrate's Court itself where payments have to be made and perhaps if instead of having a fixed penalty on the parking ticket it could be an if/or dependent on the number of times that a person has committed the offence.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are willing to look at that, Sir, and I will come back in due course.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 336 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, does Government intend to continue the Modernisation Scheme at Road to the Lines after the existing Phase has been completed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, all design and structural drawings have been completed for an additional 24 units. This project forms part of the ODA submission.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 336 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

Was this second phase not supposed to have been contained within the existing 1978/81 development programme?

HON A J CANEPA:

I would require notice I think of that, Mr Speaker, because I was not Minister for Economic Development at the time in question. I am really not sure.

HON W T SCOTT:

Perhaps I could be informed of that at a later stage by the Minister.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I may be able to assist. I think the reason why the phase was phased into two was that in the first place there were difficulties in decanting all the families from the estate to enable the contractor to get on site and the Government did not wish to see delay regarding costs and in fact in not getting the project off the ground at all so by slicing it it was much easier to get on with the first phase. In the event, the cost of the scheme itself proved to be much higher than estimated and therefore had the Government left the matter to a complete project it would have found itself not being able to proceed. In this way we managed to get something off the ground and provide housing at an earlier date.

HON W T SCOTT:

I am very grateful for that comment by the Acting Financial and Development Secretary but my point really is twofold, that the whole project was originally scheduled for the 1978/81 development programme insofar as modernisation is concerned and I obviously take the point that it had to be phased out for the problems of decanting people but the whole object of it is that there has been some slippage, substantial slippage.

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not know what he means by slippage. In any case we have had to provide more funds for housing, the money that was available for housing in the 1978/81 development programme in the event proved to be insufficient for the number of units that have actually been constructed as a result of that programme and for the cost involved and we have had to put plenty of our own Gibraltar money into it.

HON W T SCOTT:

On this side of the House we are very aware of it and we have been fighting a losing battle up to now, Mr Speaker, on modernisation as far as we see it because every time a scheme is refurbished or remodernised the costs seem to be going up and up and up and really no new housing is built.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I think we are beginning to debate but the point that has to be borne in mind is that the earlier modernisation schemes such as the one at Flat Bastion Road involved much more straightforward access than, for instance, in Tank Ramp or Lime Kiln Steps or Castle Road/Road to the Lines but these are, I think, schemes that we have to go forward with if only from an urban improvement point of view.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 337 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, is Government satisfied with the service provided to incoming yachts by the new Customs arrivals berth?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Yes, Sir. Since its inception on the 17th May, 1982, all yachts are now reporting at the arrivals berth, and are cleared simultaneously by the three Departments involved, namely Port, Police Immigration and Customs. Once cleared the yacht is free to berth at either Marina without requiring any further official clearance. Crew members and guests are therefore able to go ashore as soon as they are berthed at the Marina without having to await any further clearance from official departments.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 337 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister in a position to confirm or deny that a large and, in fact, alarming number of yachts are indicating that they will not be returning to Gibraltar on the basis of the red tape and difficult customs procedure which exists in Gibraltar?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am not aware of that, Mr Speaker, I am not responsible for Customs, I am responsible for the Port side of the yacht reporting berth. If the Hon Member has any information he can make it available to the Financial and Development Secretary whom I am sure will pursue the matter because this is serious, this is an important matter.

HON A J HAYNES:

I take the point, Mr Speaker, as the Minister has stated, all the services are provided in one, regrettably, it is not able to comply with a sudden demand and that creates considerable problems that I am not sure the Minister is aware of and I shall inform him or the Financial and Development Secretary of the current problems.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 338 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has Government made any progress with a view to amending the Merchant Shipping Ordinance so that ships registered in Gibraltar may be deemed to comply with manning requirements if officers of these ships are certified officers in EEC Countries?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, ships are registered in Gibraltar in compliance with the 1894 Merchant Shipping Act. In the reply to the Hon Member's original question, No. 101 of 1982, the Attorney-General stated that the whole structure of the Merchant Shipping Act was under review including the role of registry ports in dependent territories, such as Gibraltar.

Since then there has been further correspondence between the Captain of the Port and the UK Department of Trade on this matter. A meeting with officials from the Department has been arranged during the week commencing Monday 13th December, 1982, to be held here in Gibraltar.

At this stage, Sir, I would reply that although no actual progress has been made towards the desired objective the matter is very much in hand.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 338 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

I welcome that reply.

8.12.82

NO. 339 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if they could remove the tangled-up remnants of the wire fence that divides a stretch of the road leading to the commercial mole and the pockets used by tourists disembarking from cruise liners?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, financial provision for the necessary works to be carried out by the PWD has been included in the Port Department's draft estimates for 1983/84. The renewal of the fencing is envisaged from the new Generating Station to the "Flying Angel" Club.

8.12.82

NO. 340 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, with regard to Question No. 260 of 1982 is Government now in a position to inform this House of the projects which do not require ODA funds?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

No, Sir. As I explained in answer to Question No. 260 of 1982, the Government has to await the final outcome of a reply to the aid submission before listing those projects which might not qualify for ODA funding. Moreover, the eligibility of individual projects will, inter alia, depend on the criteria applied by the ODA for project selection.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 340 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, does Government now have any indication as to when a reply will be received to the aid submission?

HON A. J. CANEPA:

I think it is a subject of a separate question, isn't it, Mr Speaker, which I think is down for the Hon the Chief Minister to answer.

MR SPEAKER:

I think it is. Next question.

NO. 341 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government disclose the amount of money which they are prepared to expend on a new prison or on the rehabilitation of the old prison, giving the different figures, if any, pursuant to a reduced ODA programme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, I cannot at this stage say whether, and if so how much, the Government will be able to spend on a new or rehabilitated prison. This will depend not only on the measure of development aid but on the Government's own ability to fund development, particularly in the light of HMG's decision on the future of the Dockyard. The Government will consider expenditure on the prison in the context of its priorities which lie mainly on housing and on infrastructure.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 341 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I do not need to be told where the priorities lie, Mr Speaker, but I need to be told if, as has been the case, in fact, will the Minister confirm or deny this, that in the event of ODA not being forthcoming the Government has alternative plans? I have asked specifically in another question what those alternative plans are and I was told nothing doing, now I have asked how much money those alternative plans are costed at and now I am told that they have no idea, where are we, Mr Speaker?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think I have covered the point in the answer, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

I do not think so, Mr Speaker. Will the Minister confirm or deny that in answer to a question based along these lines I was told that if the ODA was forthcoming they would be able to do a marvellous programme, if it was not forthcoming they would implement a more economic and conservative type of project. When asked what those plans were in a later question in another meeting of the House I was told they would not be given to me and now I am asking if they are not going to tell me what the plans are at least can I be told the money they are prepared to spend and I am told that they do not know, anyway.

HON A J CANEPA:

That is not the question that he has asked. He has asked, Mr Speaker, will the Government disclose the amount of money they are prepared to expend on a new prison and I am telling him that I am in no position to give any indication.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister accept that the question also covers the figures in the event of reduced ODA?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, in the event of reduced ODA provision, and we would need to know not only how much money ODA are prepared to give us but as I said in answer to the earlier question, what are the criteria involved, then we will have to reconsider. If ODA, for instance, are not prepared to give us any money on housing we have to find it from Gibraltar's own resources and that is a much higher priority than the prison.

HON A J HAYNES:

I don't want a sermon on housing, Mr Speaker, I think we have told him about housing.

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, he is going to get a sermon on housing because that is his shadow and that is where he is attacking the Government all the time.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government press the British Government to make a statement on the measure and extent of Development Aid it proposes for Gibraltar in the context of the Five Year Development Programme submitted by the Gibraltar Government to the British Government?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, I must make it clear that the Government has been pressing the British Government, on every possible occasion since early 1981, at both ministerial and official level, to come to an early and favourable conclusion on our submission for a new Development Programme.

This has been a matter of great concern to the Gibraltar Government for reasons which are obvious to all and I think the House should know the background to the efforts we have been making and the difficulties we have encountered because in fact Members opposite are also equally concerned.

The House will recall that, in late November 1981, a team of British Government officials visited Gibraltar for talks. This was the occasion on which the British Government's decision to close the Dockyard was announced. In these talks we raised the question of the Development Programme, which had been submitted as far back as February 1981, and were told that the ODA were not convinced that Gibraltar had a case for any aid at all in view of the apparently high standard of living here. We naturally and strongly contested this view and continued to press for urgent consideration of our submission on numerous subsequent occasions - including, in particular my meeting with Lord Carrington on 14 December, 1981, during Lord Belstead's visit to Gibraltar in July 1982, and at my meeting with Mr Pym on 24 September, 1982.

Throughout this period, while no final decision was taken, the difficulties as seen from London were explained to us. We were told, for instance, that the amount of money that might be made available as aid would have to be considered against the new situation brought about by the decision to close the Dockyard, a decision which itself could require the allocation of substantial funds to provide alternative means of supporting the economy. We were reminded of the very difficult economic circumstances in Britain itself and the cutting back of social and public services there - and indeed of the economic problems facing most countries in the world. We were told that British overseas aid expenditure had been cut substantially and that whatever aid might be given to Gibraltar would have to be at the expense of others whose need might be greater.

My own impression is that a breakthrough on this matter came as a result of my meeting with Mr Pym on 24 September. Be that as it may, the fact is that a more sympathetic attitude became apparent on the part of British Government officials at the talks held in London with Gibraltar Government officials in October and November of this year.

I was thus able to say at the various meetings I held with public bodies on 23 November that Gibraltar's request for development aid was being urgently and sympathetically considered and that an announcement could be expected soon, hopefully before the end of that month. While this did not prove possible, we have since been in contact with the FCO and have today been informed that an appreciable contribution to Gibraltar's Development Programme has been approved. We now await details and I will make these known as soon as I am in a position to do so.

NO. 343 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government make a statement on the latest position of the proposed East Side Reclamation Scheme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the position is that the two schemes chosen out of the three outline proposals are still under detailed consideration.

As I have already explained to the Hon Questioner, a project of this nature requires a very close study of all the inter-related factors. These range from the technical, legal and environmental to the wider economic and social considerations. I regret that owing to the confidentiality of the proposals I am unable to disclose any further information at this stage. I can say, however, that both parties have been asked to provide certain information regarding the provision of infrastructure and their proposals for the necessary hydrographic studies. This information must be submitted before the 15 December and on receipt will be examined closely in relation to the criteria previously mentioned.

8.12.82

NO. 344 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government make a statement with regard to the land adjoining and to the east of the newly completed St Joseph's Housing Estate with particular reference to why this land was not earmarked as a possible St Joseph's Housing Phase 2?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the land to the east of St Joseph's Housing Estate is leased to New Laundry Ltd for a term of 28 years with effect from 1st September, 1974 for use as a laundry. To the south of these premises there is a small area of Crown Land measuring some 2000 sq ft which is incapable of separate development. The Company has submitted proposals for a residential development of their leased area which also envisages making use of the adjoining waste land. The application for this additional land is still under consideration.

The land could not therefore be incorporated in the Housing Scheme as the lease still has 20 years to run.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 344 OF 1982

HON W T SCOTT:

Would the Minister therefore, in fact he has already said it, confirm or deny that there was either a new lease or a re-negotiation of the existing one in the last few years for the plot of land in question?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, what happened is that the lease has been recently executed, the lease has been I think granted to the company in question.

HON W T SCOTT:

And is it not a fact that a feasibility study, including drawings, was undertaken by the Public Works precisely on that project for a possible Phase 2?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not know whether my colleague, the Hon Minister for Public Works, has some information on that. I have not seen any plans myself.

HON W T SCOTT:

I have been assured that working drawings were prepared particularly to take over that land to make it as a Phase 2 and enlarge that housing project perhaps to a publicly owned one rather than divide it into two?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I do not deny that there are a number of "deep throats" within Government departments who are obviously providing better information to Hon Members opposite than what they provide to me.

HON W T SCOTT:

No, that is not the point that I am asking, Mr Speaker. What I am saying is that if the lease was negotiated for 20 years in 1974 and there was no chance at all of Government acquiring that land, why go to the expense of coming up with working drawings on that land which I am assured, not by one individual, by a number of individuals, that that exercise was undertaken?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, the lease was executed fairly recently, a few months ago. I am not aware in the time that I have been a Member of the Development and Planning Commission or in the time that I have been Minister for Economic Development, that there were any plans within the Public Works Department to have an additional phase of St Joseph's. If some architect or other in the Drawing Office has produced those plans I would only say that that has been without political direction.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, if I may revert to, I forget what the question was, the one about St Joseph's. I have a note here from my colleague the Minister for Public Works who has been making enquiries on the point raised by the Hon Mr Scott. I am informed, Sir, that only a rough sketch plan was made, there were never any working drawings.

8.12.82

NO. 345 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, could the open area opposite Transport House, which has remained undeveloped for years, be made available as a temporary parking site?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the open area referred to is privately owned on a freehold basis, so that any suggestion of using it on a temporary basis is subject to the owner's consent.

In February this year, when considering proposals submitted by the owners for the development of the site, the Development and Planning Commission considered the possibility of using the site as a temporary car park in the interim period. The owners were therefore approached on the matter but I am afraid that this met with no response.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Is Government satisfied with the manner in which the Old Line Wall School building is being allowed to continue disused and does Government intend to take steps to remedy the situation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, the Government would wish that properties such as the one which the Hon Member is referring to were put to good use. The Old Line Wall School is however a freehold property and as with any private property in Gibraltar, is free from Government interference unless, of course, there is a breach of law.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 346 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

In this particular case, Mr Speaker, was the building sold to the owners because it was going to be a school?

HON A J CANEPA:

I know that the building is held by the Congregation of Christian Brothers, I know that it has in the past been used only as a school but I am not aware whether in the terms of the agreement of purchase of the property there was any restriction as to user, I am not aware of that, I do not honestly know.

MR SPEAKER:

Anyway, that is beyond the orbit of the question, we must not get involved in that.

HON G T RESTANO:

Well, that apart, has Government made any approaches to the landlords to see if this building could be put to some use even if it is not sold or whatever, but some use for the betterment of the community?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not think that the Government has made any official enquiries. Whether unofficial enquiries have been made is another matter but I am not aware of the Government officially approaching the Congregation of Christian Brothers and asking them to put the building to use.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister not consider that it might be a good idea to do so and if he does would he undertake to do it himself?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, may I disclose a professional interest and help the House with some information on that matter. The property is the property of the Congregation of Christian Brothers, it is a freehold property which when the Brothers left Gibraltar they intended to put out for sale. Unfortunately because of a caretaker who has extended the original part of the premises given to him has proved difficult to remove there has been delay in putting out the property for tender. I understand that a representative of the Order is likely to come to Gibraltar before the end of the year to make up their minds what they are going to do with the property.

HON G T RESTANO:

I would then ask, Mr Speaker, if after the representative's visit it is decided not to put the building up for sale, would the Government then approach the representative so that use could be made of the building in the interest of the community?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I seem to have been misunderstood. The proposal is to put it out for sale, there is no question of anything else because the Brothers have no use for it in Gibraltar. The only question is how to deal with the difficulty of an occupant who is not a tenant.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 347 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Is Government satisfied with the way that the Theatre Royal has been allowed to deteriorate to the extent that it has and does Government intend to take any steps to remedy the situation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

No, Sir. The Government is not satisfied with the way that the Theatre Royal has been allowed to deteriorate. In fact the Government has already taken steps to remedy the situation by serving a notice under Section 23 of the Town Planning Ordinance. This requires the owners to repair, refurbish and redecorate the external facades of the premises as specified by the Development and Planning Commission. The said notice was served as far back as March 1980 but in spite of persistent pressure on the owners, the requirements have not yet been complied with. The matter has therefore been referred to the Law Officer's Department for instigation of the necessary Court proceedings under the Ordinance.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 347 OF 1982

HON G. T RESTANO:

Is it the Government's intention that the Theatre Royal should be retained as a cultural centre?

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, put it this way, Mr Speaker, it is not for the Government to dictate what the use should be but we have received proposals earlier this year, in May 1982, in fact, from the owners proposing to develop the Theatre Royal as a theatre and cultural centre which would also permit them to hold bingo sessions, dancing and other cultural activities and in fact approval, in principle, has been given and we are awaiting a formal application from the owners.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 348 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

To what use, other than in the short term for the registration for British Nationality, does Government intend to put the old Loreto Convent?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

Sir, it is proposed to convert the ex-Loreto High School Building for use as Government Office accommodation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 348 OF 1982

HON G T RESTANO:

Will this mean, Mr Speaker, that Government will give up other office accommodation which it is hiring at the moment?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is the strategy, Mr Speaker, it is aimed at releasing rented office accommodation and also relieving congestion in existing Government offices.

NO. 349 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what are the current landing charges at the airport and if they have received any indications of their being reviewed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND SPORT

Sir, the landing charges at the airport are £1.60 per half metric tonne up to 3 metric tonnes and £3.18 per metric tonne or part metric tonne over 3 metric tonnes. Navigation service charges are also levied at £1.64 per half metric tonne up to 3 metric tonnes and £3.28 per metric tonne or part metric tonne over 3 metric tonnes.

In effect therefore depending on weight, a Boeing 737 would pay approximately £370 and a Viscount £192. These landing charges have been in effect since 1st June, 1981, and we have no indication at present that they are being reviewed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 349 OF 1982

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I am very grateful to the Minister for such a clear answer. Could he say to what extent the cost of landing in Gibraltar compares with that of other nearby airports?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, we are slightly more expensive on landing charges. A 737 in Malaga would be £64.07, in Seville the same, £64.07, Lisbon £83.46, Faro £83.46, Tangier £67.23 during the day and £76.63 during the night.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 350 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Have any decisions been taken on the operating hours of the airport and if so can the Government say what are the arrangements?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir, but as I said in reply to Question No. 270 at the last meeting, the British Government (Ministry of Defence) have said that the present hours will continue for the time being.

NO. 351 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state whether all problems have now been resolved between GBC, the Gibraltar Chamber of Commerce and Airtime International?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

The problems as between GBC and the Chamber of Commerce have been resolved. As far as Airtime International are concerned, GBC have formally revoked the agreement but the matter continues to be the subject of correspondence.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 351 OF 1982

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, has Airtime International sought legal advice and if so is the Chief Minister in a position to say whether or not they have gone to his Chambers for this legal advice?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I beg your pardon?

MR SPEAKER:

The Hon Member has asked whether Airtime have sought legal advice and whether they have gone to your Chambers for legal advice.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, the answer to the second part is no but I was going to say that as the House is aware the Government took the view that this was essentially a matter for the Board of the Corporation to deal with subject to the question of exclusivity and the possible effects on the Corporation's finances. I am glad that the problem has now been substantially overcome.

HON A J HAYNES:

I cannot hear the Chief Minister, Mr Speaker, can he repeat the written part of his answer?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I said that as the House is aware the Government took the view that this was essentially a matter for the Board of the Corporation to deal with, the question of its relations with Airtime International, subject to the question of exclusivity and the possible effect on the Corporation's finances.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, as far as the Gibraltar Chamber of Commerce is concerned, have all problems been resolved?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, it looks as if they have all been resolved.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, are there any problems now in the way for the House broadcasting to go ahead or not?

MR SPEAKER:

No, I am afraid I over-ruled that question and I am sad that you have had to ask it because it was an original question. I never disclose whether questions have been allowed or disallowed before they come to the House and a similar question to your supplementary which has nothing to do with the question you are asking is not in order.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I answered the second part of the Hon Member's question voluntarily though I resent the innuendo.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 352 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government ensure that those who wish to change their passport to a British Citizen Passport will be able to do so and that any period of time still unexpired in their existing passports will be credited to them against the fees payable for the new passport?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

All current passports whether issued in the United Kingdom or in Gibraltar will remain valid after 1 January, 1983. Therefore, persons who acquire British citizenship and who hold valid passports issued in Gibraltar will not be required to change their passports unless they themselves opt for a new passport with the appropriate endorsement under the new Act. In this context Government has no plans to credit unexpired time on existing passports against the fee payable for new passports.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 352 OF 1982

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean that anybody who wishes to acquire a British Citizen Passport who may only just have obtained a Gibraltar Passport will have to pay the full fee for registration of £5 and in addition the full fee for a new passport? Does the Government consider that to be fair?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not know whether it will be necessary, it could well be that that passport which they have been recently issued can be endorsed adequately for the purposes of the British Citizenship and Nationality, the form itself is not going to change very much.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 353 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, in view of the substantial amounts that the House is being asked to vote at the meeting commencing on December 8th, 1982, for the purposes of registration of persons as British Citizens, will Government make a full statement to the House on how it intends to process applications and as to what explanatory leaflets it proposes to make available to the public on the matter?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, a special unit is being set up in the ex-Loreto Convent building to deal with applications under Section 5 of the new Nationality Act. The Unit will become operational on the 4th January, 1983 and will be open to the public between the hours of 9 am to 12.45 pm. Application forms and guidance notes on how to apply will be available at the unit and at the Passport Office in Secretary's Lane. Completed application forms together with the fee and whatever supporting documentary evidence is required will be received and processed at the unit. The processing of applications will to a large extent be effected in Gibraltar but registration and the issue of certificates will take place in the United Kingdom. Successful applicants will be notified in writing and asked to call at the unit to collect their registration certificates when these are received from the United Kingdom. It is expected that in the majority of cases the registration process would take approximately four weeks. An explanatory leaflet on the new Nationality Act will be made available to the public. The leaflet will contain information on the Act in general and full details regarding registration under Section 5, passports, etc.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 353 OF 1982

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Chief Minister, Sir, say when these leaflets are going to be made available to the public, will it be before the end of this year?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, when the unit opens on the 4th January.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Can the Chief Minister say if the leaflet will explain the legal implications for registering or not registering, in other words, how it will affect the status of the individual, what the legal position of the individual will be as a British Citizen and what it will be as a citizen of a dependent territory?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not know how far we can go in the leaflet as regards the statement of the law. I think perhaps the position may become clearer when I present the amendment to the Immigration Ordinance later on in these proceedings which is for First and Second Reading and perhaps arising out of that we may take some ideas of what ought to go in there or not. My statement on the Second Reading will make the position clear and it could be used for that.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I will pursue the matter later on.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 354 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, are any regulations to be made in Gibraltar in relation to applications for UK Citizenship on January 1st, 1983, and if so can Government state why they have not yet been published or laid on the table of the House?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the only legislation required to be enacted locally to enable registration as British Citizens under Section 5 of the British Nationality Act, 1981, to proceed is the amendment to the Second Schedule of the Licensing and Fees Ordinance. A motion to this effect is being introduced for the approval of the House at this meeting.

NO. 355 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

In view of the Government commitment to provide financial assistance to the John Mackintosh Homes will Government consider the desirability of having negotiations under the auspices of the Industrial Relations Office with a view to bringing employees of the Homes closer into line with Government employees?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir. The appropriate forum for negotiations on pay and conditions of service is between the employees and their employers, in this case the Board of Governors of the Homes. In the context of the Government subsidy to the John Mackintosh Homes, the Government is always prepared to consider representations from the Board of Governors.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 355 OF 1982

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Chief Minister not aware that in fact the only argument that the employer in this case is able to put up is lack of finance and that consequently if there is a need to have recourse to Government the Government is de facto the employer because anything that is required by the employees is agreed by the employer subject to the Government being prepared to finance it and that it will be more consistent with the reality of the situation that the Government should be made aware of the negotiations by having those negotiations undertaken under the auspices of the Government's own negotiating machinery?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I appreciate that that would make sense from the point of view of the employees from the Union to which the Hon Member belongs or represents but unfortunately the legal position and the employer/employee position is one that the Government cannot accept as being different to what it is, it would bring very serious implications, but as I say the Government is always ready to consider and I do not know that I can accept what the Hon Member has said as being that they will say yes to everything if the Government gives them the money. I presume that they say yes if the claim is fair and if the claim is fair and representations are made to the Government in respect of any required subsidy I have said that if it is in conformity with others very much the same as it happens with the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation, that the Government is always ready to help. We cannot alter that relationship without a much bigger change and the Trust is the Trust of the Governors and the employees are the employees of the Governors and not of the Government.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 356 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government confirm that it has been in possession of the A & P Appledore's International Limited proposals since May and if so why is it not yet in a position to know whether the proposals are viable or not?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

The answer to the first part of the question is yes.

The short answer to the second part of the question is that this is a very complex matter which has required - and continues to require - the most thorough and detailed investigation without which neither the British nor the Gibraltar Government could enter into a commitment. To expand on this, Sir, I would remind the House that all proposals for the possible commercialisation of HM Dockyard were received by the prescribed closing date of the 31 May, 1982. Since then, they have been evaluated by a team of consultants, who held discussions as necessary with the potential operators to clarify any outstanding issues. The British and Gibraltar Governments participated in these discussions where appropriate. The consultants concluded that given certain pre-requisites a commercially managed Dockyard could be viable. The Gibraltar Government for its part is not yet satisfied that this proposal would fill the gap, in its widest sense, left in the economy by the closure of the Naval Dockyard. It wishes to look further in detailed discussions with Appledore and other interested parties at the viability of the proposal itself as well as the broader implications for the stability of the economy in both the short and long term. The Government will also require to be satisfied on the provision of development aid and the release of land for the diversification of the economy.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 356 OF 1982

HON J BOSSANO:

Separating for one moment the wider issues of whether it fills the gap and the question of land and aid and so on, is the Government saying that as regards the viability, that is, the profitability of the operation proposed by Appledore is concerned, it is not yet known whether this works or does not work, is that the case?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not want to allow the Hon Member to put words into my mouth. I will just repeat what I said before that we are not in a position at this stage to appreciate nor is the British Government as I shall say in a later question, the question of the money that is going to have to be put in is a very substantial amount and I am quite sure that the British Government itself wants to make sure that the money that has to be put in to make a commercial Dockyard is justified and for that they require more study and we require study with them. I think the simple answer is that we have not yet gone through all the processes that are required to be able to make a real concrete evaluation in the final analysis.

NO. 357 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government been told that the intention of Her Majesty's Government is to close the Naval Dockyard in 1983 even if the proposals made by A & P Appledore International Limited do not prove acceptable?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, as the House is aware, Her Majesty's Government have stated on several occasions that the decision to close the Dockyard remains unchanged. That statement has not been linked specifically to the outcome of the current study of a possible commercially-operated ship-repair yard. Should the conclusion reached as a result of this study be negative, a new and very difficult situation would arise and the matter would of course become one for urgent consideration by the British and Gibraltar Governments.

I would remind the House that the British Government has on many occasions reiterated its commitment to support and sustain Gibraltar, the most relevant of these being the Defence White Paper of June 1981 which spoke of the British "Government's obligation to support the economy of Gibraltar if it is decided that the Dockyard work there cannot be kept up indefinitely". I have no doubt that this obligation will be honoured. I must, however, add that if the results of the current study were to prove negative, not for any technical, financial or commercial reason but for reasons which could be attributed to unreasonableness on the part of Gibraltar itself, this would no doubt be a factor which the British Government would take into account in determining its attitude to the new situation which would then have arisen.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 357 OF 1982

HON J BOSSANO:

Would it be correct, Mr Speaker, to conclude from what the Chief Minister has said that the British Government will not be implementing any moves related to the Dockyard closure before a final decision has been taken on the acceptability or otherwise of Appledore's proposals?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I would put it the other way and that is the process that is required to make the project study requires certain decisions to be taken and attitudes to be known whilst the Dockyard is still open but that is a different matter to putting it the other way, I think the time-table of what is required is within the period whilst the Dockyard is open.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will Government resign on the event of proposals for Appledore International not being acceptable?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not think I have to answer that question.

MR SPEAKER:

I do not think it arises from the question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the question states that in the event of the Dockyard closure going ahead in 1983 and the Appledore proposals not being acceptable, what will Government's position be and I am asking, is Government going to resign

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect, I still say that it is not relevant to the original question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the Chief Minister in his reply to a supplementary by the Hon Mr Bossano stated that the British Government might have to review the position in the event of all the ingredients for success being there except unreasonableness on the part of Gibraltar. Can the Chief Minister be more specific as to what kind of unreasonableness he anticipates or envisages might occur?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I did not say that, Mr Speaker, and I would refer to the latter part which was not in a supplementary it is in the substantial answer where I said: "I have no doubt that this obligation will be honoured. I must, however, add that if the results of the current study were to prove negative, not for any technical, financial or commercial reasons but for reasons which could be attributed to unreasonableness on the part of Gibraltar itself, this would no doubt be a factor which the British Government would take into account in determining its attitude to the new situation which would then have arisen". That reinforces what I have said throughout that without in any way committing ourselves to accepting the question of the commercial Dockyard we, for our part, must do everything possible to help the British Government to make the right assessment together with all other people who require to contribute to that.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will the Chief Minister be more specific and outline the kind of unreasonableness which is envisaged in the answer to that question?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, Sir, the answer is no.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does that mean that the Chief Minister is not prepared to explain to the people of Gibraltar the problems which he envisages might occur with the event of the closure of the Dockyard, is that the kind of open Government that we have, Mr Speaker?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not think it is worth really getting up.

HON A J HAYNES:

It may not be in their interest, Mr Speaker. Will the Chief Minister make a statement as regards Trade Union approaches on the question of the Dockyard closure?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, that is not relevant.

HON A J HAYNES:

We on our side of the House have made our views known on this, we would like to know what the Chief Minister's views are.

MR SPEAKER:

I am telling you that this is not the proper time to ask this question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can I re-phrase the question?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

He can re-phrase it twenty times and I will not answer, that is my privilege.

NO. 358 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, in view of the fact that detailed discussions are shortly to take place with A & P Appledore International Limited in relation to the possible commercialisation of the Dockyard, will Government make a statement as to how it envisages that these discussions will develop and at what stage it expects to make final decisions on the matter and the nature and extent of the consultations that are now expected to take place?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, detailed discussions are expected to commence shortly between officials of both the British and Gibraltar Governments and the preferred operator A & P Appledore International Limited. Other interested parties will also be invited to participate as and when necessary. It is envisaged that these discussions will take some four to six months. Meetings are expected to take place in Gibraltar or London on a monthly basis, with working sessions locally on matters of technical detail on a more regular basis. A & P Appledore International Limited plan to base a small project team of senior personnel in Gibraltar for these discussions. The Gibraltar Government team will be retaining the assistance of accountants from Coopers & Lybrand and the ship repair adviser. In addition, a legal adviser specialised in the commercial ship-repairing field will be recruited shortly.

The Gibraltar Government will wish to monitor progress and await the outcome of these discussions before it takes a final decision on the matter.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 358 OF 1982

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, these project schemes and so on being set up by A & P Appledore, is this at their own expense? Presumably, at the end of the day the answer would still be negative so this is something that they are prepared to finance themselves in the hope of getting a positive answer, is it?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

This is a matter which has been discussed between A & P Appledore International and the ODA in consultation with the Gibraltar Government at present.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, has A & P given a date in which the Gibraltar Government hopes or expects to make a final decision?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The answer to the question stated that the discussions were envisaged to take four to six months, they may well take four weeks, they may well take longer. Until the outcome of the discussions are known, until we know what progress has been achieved I do not think one can give a definite answer at all.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would it be correct then to deduce that the fact that the proposals of Appledore have been selected by the existing consultants does not of itself infer that they are workable, it just infers that they are more attractive than the alternative, is that correct?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The answer to the question, in fact, specifically and deliberately says "the preferred operator, A & P Appledore International Limited". They are the firm chosen by the consultants as the preferred firm with which we will discuss the matter further.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I would ask the Government whether they are aware that certainly at management level in the Dockyard the impression is being given that the selection of Appledore as the preferred operator of itself means that Appledore has proved that they have got something workable or something worthwhile or something viable. I am saying can he confirm that the fact that they have been selected just indicates that the alternatives are considered worse than what Appledore was offering, not necessarily that what Appledore is offering is of itself viable and that that has yet to be proved?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I cannot speak for the Management of the Dockyard, they may have their own views, I can only go by the recommendations in the consultants' report which were presented to the Gibraltar Government and it is quite clear from that report right across the range of all the various issues which were analysed and which were publicly shown to selected groups of individuals and firms, that Appledore at face value presents the best solution or best viable solution in terms of the analysis carried out by the consultants.

HON J BOSSANO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, that is the point I am trying to make that to say that it is the best, the best is not necessarily good, the best just means that the rest are worse, is that right?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

This is precisely I think why we have to enter into the project stage.

HON J BOSSANO:

This is why I am asking, am I right in deducing from what he has said that the implications of that is that Appledore has been selected as the best out of a number of possible alternatives but that does not necessarily mean that in isolation what Appledore has to offer is itself a good thing or that the fact that it has been selected proves that it is in itself a good thing?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I totally accept that assumption. In fact, I would say that you might have a series of proposals and you may find that there is one which suggests that you have a yard in the Dockyard where you have a tug-boat and ten men working on it and that may prove to be the most viable, the most profitable operation amongst a whole series of proposals but that does not necessarily mean that it is the best solution in terms of the wider issues which concern the economy and this is precisely the point which the Chief Minister made in answer to the previous question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, will the Government confirm or deny that there are five pre-requisites to successful commercialisation and these are, the cooperation of the British Government

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to discuss the viability of commercialisation in any manner or form under this question. We are talking about the matters related to the acceptance of A & P Appledore International Limited as to the proposals which are going to be studied by Government and that is all that we are going to discuss.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, the context in which Appledore is being considered comes in within the larger framework of the pre-requisites for successful commercialisation and these must be matters which in my opinion Government

MR SPEAKER:

I am sure and I know for a fact that the information you are seeking is common knowledge now but if any Hon Member had wished to know what these conditions were it should have been asked as a direct question but not under a supplementary to this one because it is not relevant.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, if you will allow me to pose the question before you rule on it?

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, do so by all means.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will Government confirm or deny that the pre-requisites for a successful commercialisation and in the context of which the Government will not consider the Appledore project are the following: the cooperation of the British Government in financial terms, and that seems to have been given, the end of the shipping recession and that is yet to be seen, competent management facilities as seems to be offered by Appledore, the willingness of the Gibraltar Government and that is yet to be seen, Mr Speaker, and the co-operation of the workforce and that is in the hands of the unions?

MR SPEAKER:

I will only allow an answer of yes or no.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I think it is irrelevant in the context of this question, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

I am completely and utterly in agreement with you.

HON A J HAYNES:

It is only irrelevant because they do not wish to answer.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Mr Speaker, I am quite willing to answer any questions, the thing is that it states in this question how discussions are envisaged to develop or how the Government envisages these discussions will develop and at what stage it expects to take a decision, it does not make any reference to what are the pre-requisites from the point of view of the Gibraltar Government for a successful or a viable commercialisation of the Dockyard.

HON A J HAYNES:

How do they hope to answer in six months time when they make final decisions unless they consider all the ramifications of commercialisation?

MR SPEAKER:

We are not suggesting that that is not something which has to be considered, what we are suggesting here is that it is not relevant in the context of the present question, that is all we are saying. Next question.

8.12.82

NO. 359 OF 1982

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government ensure that the appropriate Apprentice Training Schemes are included as part of the proposed operation of Appledore in a possible commercialised Dockyard?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir. The Appledore proposals include provision for the training of apprentices.