
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 14th April, 1981.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P., (Speaker); Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, C.B.E., J.P.; Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment); Mr. E. F. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M.; Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs); Mr. J. G. ODLE, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees); Hon. L.R. TULL, M.A., (Minister of Education and Culture); Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, and Mr. L. L. SISNETT.

Prayers were read by Archdeacon F. A. Cayless.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN entered the Chamber and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 31st March, 1981.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 31st March, 1981 be taken as read and confirmed.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations from Honourable Members, let those Minutes stand confirmed. (PAUSE) Those Minutes are confirmed.

The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 7th April, 1981.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 7th April, 1981 be taken as read and confirmed.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations from Honourable Members, let those Minutes stand confirmed. (PAUSE) Those Minutes are confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay:

The Designated Commonwealth Countries Extradition Order 1980.

The Designated Commonwealth Countries Extradition (Amendment) Order 1980.

On behalf of the Honourable Minister of Finance and Planning Sir, I am commanded to lay:

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 4) Order 1981.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of:

A Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Cheapside, St. Michael, for the purpose of road improvement and for parking facilities for the New General Post Office.

Also Sir: —

A Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at the junction of Fontabelle and Lakes Folly, St. Michael for the purpose of road improvement.

Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Haggatt Hall — Chapel Gap and Mapp Hill, St. Michael, for the purpose of road improvement.

Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Indian Ground, Lands End, St. Michael, to facilitate the exchange of that land for other lands at Passage Road, St. Michael, for housing and community purposes.

Sir, on behalf of the Rt. Hon. Minister of Finance and Planning, I beg to give notice of:

A Bill to amend the Sugar Workers (Provident Fund) Act.

Mr. SANDIFORD entered the Chamber and took his seat.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Sugar Workers (Provident Fund) Act be now read a first time.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the Instant Order of the Day.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that Item Three be the Instant Order of the Day, but before my colleague gets up to address the Honourable House, I believe that I would be failing in my duty, if I did not thank the two Honourable Members of the Opposition Benches, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and the Honourable Member for St. Philip South for making it possible to have a Quorum. I like to give credit where credit is due Sir. When the Opposition walks out, I am going to go North, South, East and West and talk about them, when they fail to come in here, I am going to talk about it when they come in, I am going to commend them for coming in and equally cry shame on some of my colleagues who seem to think that Parliament is secondary to them.

I have repeated on the Floor of this Honourable House that as far as I am concerned, when I am elected, I am elected, sent here by the people to see after the people's business and when a Government is given 18 or

19 seats, it is the duty of the Government to form a Quorum.

12.30 p.m.

My colleagues must understand that as long as I am Acting Leader of the House, those of them who seem to think that they have other things more important than Parliament on that particular day, I believe should hang their heads in shame. I feel very disappointed this morning, Sir, very angry with some of my colleagues who walked in here after Prayers had been taken, sat down and did not even have the courtesy to simply say, "well, Mr. Acting Leader", or "Lionel", or whatever they feel like calling me, "I am sorry to be late".

This, as far as I am concerned, is important. I do not know how I would have been able to face the public if the two members of the Opposition did not sit down here and form a quorum, when the House would have had to be adjourned with a very important Bill, such as the Education Bill, to be dealt with today. I have always told myself in life, I tell a person how I feel about that person if the gun is at my head. There is no blood running through my veins that has any kind of hypocrisy. I am not going to stand up and say you are wrong when you are right, neither am I going to say you are right when you are wrong. Some people dislike me for it, but I believe it is the courage of my convictions, and as Acting Leader of the House I must express my dissatisfaction with some of my colleagues.

I beg to move, Sir, that Item No. 3 be the Instant Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have listened to the Hon. Minister, but I very much regret that he did not make his little address under the appropriate Head — Congratulatory and/or.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, you may look at it as a ministerial statement, which I happen to know can be made any time without due notice, so it may be a statement, Mr. Speaker. It is a statement of fact, anyhow, and not of impressions.

Mr. SPEAKER: I agree, but when the Minister wants to make a ministerial statement he still has to inform His Honour the Speaker first.

Item No. 3 under Government Business.

THE EDUCATION ACT, 1981

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, for most of the past decade successive Ministries of Education have been concerned about a number of ambiguities and anachronisms in the education system of Barbados, particularly at the secondary level. It is important, before I

go into details of the Bill that is before Parliament today, that I give a brief background of the education system in Barbados so that we can have the whole matter in its proper perspective.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Government financing of education in Barbados started ever since the first grant of, I think it was £750 a year, was made by the Legislature in 1846, and this grant was made to provide some form of education for the emancipated slaves. The first Education Act, Sir, established an Education Committee, and that Committee served as the agent of Government, the Executing Agent of Government, to carry out educational policy of the Government, and that Education Committee was served by a part time Inspector of Schools, and he functioned, and the Education Committee functioned until it was replaced by the Education Board, and ultimately it was replaced by the Director of Education, I think it was in 1943, who carried out the role as Executing Authority for educational policy in this country.

The Act that we have before Parliament today, Sir, is the sixth Education Act that has been passed in this country. They had in 1850 the first Act, and the subsequent ones were in 1858, 1878 and 1890, and there was a lapse of some 85 years before there was another substantial Education Act, the Act of 1975.

It is important, Sir, that I mention that the Act of 1975 has been proclaimed only in respect of Part VIII, sections 66 to 73, which deal with scholarships and exhibitions. That is the only part of the Act that is actually operative, so that in fact the educational system of this country still operates under the legal framework of the Education Act, 1890-12, an Act that has been consolidated by no fewer than a dozen pieces of subsidiary legislation.

Now, the Government started financing of education, as I said, Sir, in 1850, and even at that stage the grants to education were minimal. Indeed, it is not a matter of common knowledge, but one had to pay for primary education in Barbados for a lot of the last century. My research shows that the fees were a penny, or tuppence, or threepence a term for education in primary schools, but this money was used as part of the resources for paying teachers in those days. By 1900, Sir, some ten years after the passing of the Education Act, 1890, there were 169 elementary schools in Barbados with an official student population of something just under 25,000 children. Eventually, Sir, the elementary schools came under the full control of the Education Committee, subsequently called the Education Board, and there was a certain local devolution of authority from the Education Committee or Education Board to local Boards of Management, usually chaired by the local parson, Sir, whether Anglican, Moravian or Methodist, of the district.

He was generally the Chairman of the Committee of the local School Board for primary schools.

The tradition, therefore, has been for full control of elementary education in this country for well over 200 years, either through the Education Committee, or the Education Board, or from 1943 the Director of Education. But with the advent of ministerial Government and the responsibility of a Minister for the financing, supervision of the funds allotted to him for the running of his Ministry, the question of accountability and responsibility was one that should logically have been transferred to the Minister of Education.

This was the position in the primary schools. The Minister of Education had full accountability and responsibility for the primary sector of Education. This, unhappily, has not been the case with a number of secondary schools. These schools, Sir — there are now nine of them since the amalgamation of the Boys' and Girls' Foundation Schools — but these nine Grammar Schools, as they were called at one stage, now commonly known as the older secondary schools, these schools have not been up to now under the direct control and responsibility of the Minister of Education. These schools were all established in the 18th century under the wills of certain private benefactors.

The Boys' Foundation School was established in 1709 under the will of Captain Francis Williams, Harrison School — now called Harrison College — was established in 1733 under the will of one Thomas Harrison.
12.40 p.m.

The Codrington Grammar School now known as the Lodge School was established under the will of Sir Christopher Codrington in 1745, and the Alleyne School was established in 1785 under the will of Sir John Gay Alleyne. I am trying to research the foundation of Queens College and I find that its foundation is shrouded in even greater antiquity because tradition avers that the school was established originally under the provisions of the will in the second half of the 17th Century by a Drax, I think he was a Henry Drax, and I think he was the owner of Drax Hall Plantation.

These grammar schools were established initially to provide secondary education for the children of the planters and the slave owners who ran the country at the time. It is common knowledge or it should be that in those days it was not considered in the best interest of the stability of the country to give education to the slaves. It was felt that if they were educated they would be able to read seditious pamphlets and documents and it would give them too much sense as was quoted by one of the authorities so that they might disturb the existing social and economic order. So for a long time the slaves were kept at a reasonable pace from education.

Eventually religious education was started among the slaves in a very limited area, and gradually as a number of more enlightened Anglican and Moravian missionaries and priests came to Barbados, the attitude in respect of the liberalisation of education was changed, and limited scope for primary elementary education was given to the children of the slaves.

Now by the middle of the 19th Century, around 1960 or so, there was a Robert Lowe who was a leading educational thinker in Britain at the time and all the dominant thinking in educational reform was connected mainly to the concepts of this man Robert Lowe, and one of the tragedies for a place like Barbados and the colonies was that in those days the concepts and ideas and innovations in the metropolitan country of England were uprooted and brought and foisted on the people here who were unsuited by the very geography, the economy, the social and historical background, the state of development for the type of education that was being foisted on them. Now in 1876 a Mitcheson Commission reflected the thinking of Robert Lowe in his philosophy, and that philosophy really was to dominate the Education Acts of 1878. This Act in effect increased the education grant and reconstituted the governing bodies of Harrison College and the Lodge School and these schools were elevated to a status then known as first grade schools. The Central School for boys which was established by a Lord Combermere was established then as a second grade school, the now Combermere School.

I say this, Mr. Speaker, to point out that from that very early period in our educational history the distinction between first grade schools, Harrison College and Lodge School, and the Combermere School, a second grade school, was established. The fact of the matter, Sir, is that this distinction was to plague the development of education in certain areas for well over a century after it was instituted. These schools were given grants-in-aid by Government, I mean the Lodge School and Harrison College, and the governing bodies with full executive authority for the spending of those grants, spent them exactly as they pleased and as they saw fit for the development or lack of it in those schools.

Now whenever a secondary school was established afterwards, it became a grant-in-aid school. For instance the Alleyne School, the Coleridge School and the Parry School were given grant-in-aid status in 1880, and the Act of 1890 which has been substantially governing education in this country for the last 85 years paid special attention to these grant-aided schools, and particularly in its direction for the administration of Harrison College, Lodge School and Queens College and they also governed the granting of exhibitions and scholarships to these schools. In 1900, Mr. Speaker, the fees to secondary schools ranged according to my research from £5 to £15 per annum, and it is significant that this fee structure

lasted until the abolition of fees in 1962. Now the reason for this moratorium of fees and the fact that it took all those many years from 1890 to 1962 to have any significant change in the structure of fee paying secondary schools in Barbados was that the Government year after year increased its grant to those schools so that the subsidy could enable the governing bodies of those schools to expand and also to function without an increase of fees from the parents of the children who attended those schools.

It is also significant, Sir, and this is my own observation, that it was a means of making the masses subsidise the education of the elite, because in those days it was only the elite who were benefiting from the type of education to which I am making reference. The fact that over a period of some six decades the masses had been made to contribute to the upkeep and running and maintenance of these schools seems to me to be a device for making the masses pay for what was indeed a privilege of the elite. Now since the passing of the 1890 Act, Sir, the following schools were added to the grant aided schools: Alexandra in 1894, Christ Church Boys' Foundation in 1906, St. Michael's Girls' School in 1926 and the Girls' Foundation School in 1928. Now these older secondary schools so called, all nine of them, are governed by schemes of Government after they used the device to give the Director of Education in 1943 the authority to make provisions and regulations under Sections 32 and 39 of the Education Act of 1890. That is, from 1943 the Education Board gave to the Director of Education powers under the scheme of Government to make certain provisions for the running of those schools.

Now the present scheme, the one that currently obtains, with the exception of the one at the Foundation School which was changed some two years ago when the two schools the Boys' Foundation and the Girls' Foundation were amalgamated, and with the exception of the scheme of Government of the St. Michael's School which was changed last year or two years ago as a result of the policy of co-education — from the time boys were admitted we had to change the scheme of Government to rename the school St. Michael's School instead of St. Michael's Girls' School — with the exception of these two, these schemes of Government have been operative in Barbados from 1890. These schemes gave to the Governing Bodies, as I said, executive powers for the administration and management of these schools, and I am submitting, Sir, that that type of arrangement suited a period when the Governors managed the financial affairs of the school using income that was derived from fees, from endowments and from property in trust. I think that is where the bulk of the funds that was spent by these schools came from — school fees, endowments and property in trust, and it was perhaps not as unreasonable in those days for the Governing Body to have and to use the powers that were vested in them in the 1890 Act.

I am submitting, Sir, that these schemes are now archaic and do not take into account the full responsibility of a Minister of Education.
12.50 p.m.

It does not take into consideration, Sir, the fact that financing of schools since the tuition fees were abolished in 1962, falls fairly and squarely on Central Government. The schemes of Government of the Older Secondary Schools, Mr. Speaker, in my submission do not take into account constitutional changes that have taken place in this country with the Minister of Education being responsible to Parliament and to the nation and accountable for all monies that have been given to his charge in the annual Estimates. It is totally an anachronistic position in which members of a Governing Body of any School can be in a position to dictate what happens in those schools without reference to a Minister of Education.

The Education Act of 1981, Sir, seeks to remove once and for all that inner situation that no democratic society can continue to allow to exist. Under the present arrangements, Sir, the Minister as the agent responsible for the execution of Government educational policy has no real dictation over these Older Secondary Schools and his influence over these Schools depends on the goodwill of the Governing Body and the Headteacher of those Schools and in the case of one Governing Body, the Governing Body of the Lodge School, Sir, the members are appointed with two exceptions by the Act of 1890. They are appointed ex-officio by the Act of 1890.

I repeat, Sir, that the people who form the Governing Body of the Lodge School are the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Assembly, the Rector of St. John, the Principal of Codrington College, the Parliamentary representative for the parish of St. John. These are ex-officio members of the Governing Body of the Lodge School as a result of the 1890 Act.

The Minister has a right only to appoint two members to the Governing Body, who by share arithmetic are always outnumbered. The irony of the matter, Sir, is and that has been pointed out by the Chairman of the Governing Body of the Lodge School in a Press statement some two or three weeks ago, it was pointed out that these ex-officio members cannot resign, even if they wanted to and indeed they cannot be replaced by the Minister even if they refuse to turn up to meetings as a member has not done for a long period of years.

There is one member of the Governing Body of the Lodge School who has not been to a Governing Body meeting for probably 20 years and the Minister of Education has no authority, under the existing law, to do anything about it and this Act, Sir, will remove once and for all that type of ironic situation.

In general then, Mr. Speaker, I am submitting that most of the clauses in the respective schemes of governing in these older Secondary Schools have become outdated, Sir, but there have been recent cases, Sir, where at least one Headmaster, one, Sir, invoking the scheme of governing for his school to the letter has shown that the Minister of Education has no authority over him and the administration of his school. That state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue.

In these days, Sir, when education is an important tool in national development, it is absolutely essential that a Government which has to finance schools, should have control over the admission of pupils, the advising of the curriculum so that they can put into the curriculum subjects and topics that are in tune with the thinking of that Government for their own development. It must be in control of examinations, Sir, and it must be in charge of other areas of public policy and it must be in charge of the administration and the general supervision of all schools in this country.

Now, in 1962, I have already pointed out that the so-called Newer Secondary Schools are in a position that bring them under the direct control of the Minister of Education. In 1962, the first Newer Secondary School, so-called, was introduced. In those days, Sir, I think they called it, the Secondary Modern School and later they refined the name to call it the Comprehensive School, again, the apish copying of every wind that blew across the Atlantic from Britain but these schools are now commonly called the Newer Secondary Schools.

I have been trying, Sir, over the past 4½ years, to do a job of trying to remove the dichotomous situation that existed between the so-called Older and Newer Secondary Schools and I have tried to the best of my ability with the resources available to me, Sir, to establish some kind of parity between the Older Secondary Schools, so-called, and the Newer Secondary Schools, so-called, and the objective of the realization of this full parity is well on its way towards that achievement.

It is important, Sir, that I point out that the Teachers in the Newer Secondary Schools are public officers. They are employed by the Ministry of Education and their schools are administered directly by the Ministry of Education and their Governing Bodies have Advisory powers rather than executive powers. They advise the Minister in the management and administration of the School to which they have been assigned, thus, unlike the situation in the Older Secondary Schools where the Governing Bodies have executive powers.

The Act of 1975 – 13, Sir, and this is the Act that the previous Government brought before Parliament in late 1975, I am submitting, Sir, that if there is any

weakness in that Act, the weakness lies in the fact that the then Government did not even bother to get the Act proclaimed. By the time it had passed Parliament they seemed to have lost heart and did not seek to get the Act proclaimed except the Section dealing with the awards of Scholarships and Exhibitions.

There are other things which were wrong with the Act, Mr. Speaker. It perpetuated the dichotomy, the disparity between the Older Secondary Schools and the Newer Secondary Schools so that a situation that had evolved out of the thinking of the master slave mentality nearly over 150 years ago was perpetuated in a bit of legislation brought by the previous administration passed in 1975 and I said at the time, Sir, when I was a member of the Other Place, after I had heard about all of the talk about a new Education Act and all the discussion between the people in the Ministry of Education, the Teachers' Unions and so on, when I saw the Act itself I said in the Other Place that the mountain has laboured and produced one tiny, ridiculous, little mouse because that Act did not deal substantially with any of the infelicities that existed in the Law relating to Education in Barbados.

Now, Sir, I have decided to bite the bullet and in this Bill, Sir, I have made provision for ending once and for all this disparity between the Older and the Newer Secondary Schools.
1.00 p.m.

It will be a long time in coming Sir, when the psychological pressure over a period of time will be applied to the Barbadian public for them to accept that the secondary schools in Barbados are equal, but we will work on it, Sir. There are a few areas in which terms and conditions of service are being equalised between the newer secondary schools and the older secondary schools and all this has been recent Sir. In a few areas for instance like the salaries for teachers in the older secondary schools and the newer secondary schools are based on qualifications and the qualifications are the same for all schools. It was a long time, Mr. Speaker, Sir, before that became a reality in Barbados. It was only two years ago Sir that I used my Ministerial prerogative to make an equal school year between the newer secondary schools and the older secondary schools because the older secondary school had a school year of 38 weeks and the newer secondary schools had a school year of 39 weeks and it perpetuated a feeling of inferiority in the minds both of the teachers and children in the newer secondary schools that somehow or other, the people on the other side were a little better than they. Now two years ago, Sir, I changed that and gave a directive that the secondary schools both older and newer secondary schools to have the same length and duration of their school year. Newer secondary schools Sir now have posts of special responsibility rewarded at the same level of remuneration,

as those in the older secondary schools and I am talking about Heads of Department and persons in that category.

Now this Bill fundamentally strikes at the inequality that exists up to now between the older secondary and the newer secondary schools and in that regard, I commend it to Parliament and to the people of Barbados. The Bill also provides Sir, that all secondary schools should have a Board of Management appointed by the Minister. All of these *ex officio* positions, Sir that we passed with the repeal of the schemes of Government will fall hard on the heels of this legislation, Sir. It is therefore, Mr. Speaker timely for me to say that all the teachers who are appointed by the old Governing Bodies in the older secondary schools will be saved under the provisions of this Act from any change in the terms and conditions of service. In short, we might have a period Sir, in fact, it might not be in short, it might be in long because it will take a long time for teachers in the schools, who are already appointed in the old secondary schools to reach the age of retirement and move out of the system, but we are keeping as we should the terms and conditions of service of the teachers, who are already appointed in the older secondary schools, so that we will have this phasing out period with those teachers, who are thereby appointed. We have left the door open for any of those teachers, who want to come under the umbrella of the provisions for central employment, by the Public Service Commission and Central Government that teachers in the older secondary schools, who are appointed under the old arrangement can opt to come into the new dispensation Sir.

The appointments Sir for teachers in the future will all be made by the time the Act is passed by the Crown acting on the advice of the Public Service Commission and on the recommendation of their respective Boards of Management. Now the situation in the newer secondary schools Sir in respect of management of the schools will be enhanced. In short, what we are seeking to do in respect of the powers and authority given to Boards of Management in the new order will be for a half way house between the omnipotence and the weakness of the position of the Advisory Bodies and the newer Governing Bodies. In other words, we will take away some of the power of the Governing Bodies in the older secondary schools and we will give more power to the Governing Bodies of the newer secondary schools and equate them, Sir. The management of the newer secondary schools will then be given finally some flexibility, in which they can carry out executive functions at those schools.

One of the ludicrous facets of the existing system Sir is that the Governing Bodies of the newer secondary schools are mere messengers, Sir. They do not have any authority to make any substantial decisions affecting any school and it seems to be a more decorative position Sir than one of substance. It is the intention in this Bill

before Parliament to give to the Boards of Management of the newer secondary schools some clout for the first time. This will therefore encourage greater accountability of the administration and management of these schools, while at the same time enhancing their capability and efficiency of proper management of the schools over which they have some control.

Now, I want to emphasise Sir, that in this whole re-arrangement that it is no intention on the part of this Government, certainly not on my part, Sir, to dilute the standards academic, or otherwise, of the existing older secondary schools. That is no part of my intention. As a matter of fact, it might be significant for me to mention at this stage that under the provisions of the World Bank Education Loan Project that is currently being implemented, Sir, that provisions are made for the upgrading and the enhancing of the facilities of four of the older secondary schools, Coleridge Parry, Lodge School, Alexandra and Alleyne, so that we are not at all diverting our resources to raising the standards of the newer secondary schools and allowing at the same time, the standards in the older secondary schools to fall. I have no intention of initiating, condoning, or perpetuating any such system. I want to give the assurance to Parliament, Sir and to the people of Barbados that in our efforts to bring about equity in a secondary school system that we will not at all be watering down, or diluting the standards in the older secondary schools.

It is also perhaps important that I mention, Sir, that the Roebuck Secondary School, Sir, which is a newer secondary school, the Garrison Secondary School, the St. James Secondary School and the proposed newer secondary school like the one they built in Wotton in Christ Church will also have facilities and equipment better not comparable, Sir, than the facilities and equipment available in the older secondary schools in Barbados. It is important that people get to realise that because it is very hard to destroy old chivalrous, Sir. People get in their heads a lot of notions that are hallowed by long acceptance, Sir, and in a society such as ours, Sir, where there is a great reluctance to change, it is difficult to bring into the thinking of our people what has happened gradually over a period of time.

So, I am saying, Sir, that the Garrison Secondary School because it bears recognition, Sir, the St. James Secondary, the Roebuck Secondary School and the proposed new secondary school at Wotton will have facilities not equal, Sir, but better than the facilities in any other secondary school in Barbados and we will continue, Sir, within the limits imposed and finances to keep upgrading the facilities of all schools in Barbados because we are not resting on our laurels, Sir, I am talking about the people of Barbados, Sir, I am not talking about the Government, or the Ministry of

Education. We, the people of Barbados are not prepared to rest on our laurels in Education. We have come from far back Sir, and we have gone a long way. We have boasted for many, many years of having a high literacy rate in the Caribbean and indeed, looking at the figures being put out by a number of international organisations, perhaps the highest rate in the world, Sir. It depends on how one defines literacy.
1.10 p.m.

We have been able, Sir, as the beneficiaries of an education system that was given to us by the British 200 years ago, to absorb the underlying philosophy and thinking of classical education, education of the humanities, that has allowed Barbados to develop a corps of people over two centuries with the flexibility of thought, Sir, and the adaptability to new knowledge and learning, that they have been able to make significant contributions throughout the Caribbean, and in many cases, farther abroad, as public officers in the Civil Services in many countries and in the Teaching Services of many countries in this region and beyond, so we are proud of what we have achieved, but we will not rest on our pride, we will not rest on our laurels, we will continue. This Government, we on this side, are committed to moving with change. The pace of change in our society is rapid and blinding, and as I have to say from time to time, what is valid today is of no value tomorrow, and we in this society must move in our educational system towards a system that is vibrant and alive, that can initiate change where change is necessary and to follow change where that is necessary to keep Barbados in the position it has enjoyed for so many decades as an area of high educational system.

Mr. Speaker, if I may just make reference to one or two aspects of the Bill, we are seeking to create a unified teaching service, especially at the secondary level. What happens at the moment, Sir, is that the older secondary schools, the Governing Bodies appoint their own teachers from whatever pool of resources they can find, and the Ministry of Education appoints teachers for all the newer secondary schools. It happens quite often, and it is a matter of great embarrassment to me at times, although it does not seem to embarrass some people who run some of the other schools, that one school in Barbados can have four specialist maths teachers and another school has not got a single specialist maths teacher. The Ministry of Education under its ridiculous, out-dated, archaic legislation has no power to transfer one of those specialist maths teachers from school A to school B, and quite often you cannot count on the Governors or Head Teacher of a particular school to co-operate with the Ministry of Education in meeting any definite need.

We want a unified teaching service with all the teachers in the secondary schools employed by the

Ministry of Education, the Government, the Crown, whatever name you want to use, with the power that the Minister of Education will be able to move, transfer — not wantonly and recklessly, or spitefully, Sir — to move them around to satisfy clear and definite needs in the system. I believe that this creation of a unified teaching service will go the whole way, not a long way, Sir, towards meeting that particular need.

Mr. Speaker, I have had about 15 meetings with the various sectors of the Education industry, if you can call it that, Sir. I have had meetings with the two Teachers' Union — the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union and the Barbados Union of Teachers — I have had meetings with the representatives of several organisations of Head Teachers, I have had meetings with the Head Teachers of the Approved Secondary Schools, I have had meetings with the National Council of Parent-Teacher Associations, I have had submissions from private individuals, and I have for a period of some five months turned over with these various persons what we would like to see as an education blueprint well beyond the next 50 years, and perhaps even 100 years, and we managed to reach a remarkable degree of consensus.

I am bringing before Parliament a Bill that is supported by all the Teachers' Organisations in Barbados. I am bringing before Parliament a Bill that is supported by the National Parent-Teacher Association, I am bringing before Parliament a Bill that is supported by the Head Teachers in their various Associations in Barbados. In other words, I have brought a Bill that will be proclaimed as soon as it passes in the Senate, unlike the situation in 1975, Sir, because there was no agreement between the Unions and the other Government on major areas of the Bill that was brought before Parliament, and the then Government knew that to have proclaimed that Bill in the form in which it was passed in Parliament was to have created severe chaos and disorder in the schools in Barbados. If I must congratulate them for anything, Sir, I must congratulate them for not having had it proclaimed because of the amount of damage it would have done, so the 1975 Act is to all intents and purposes useless, it has been stillborn, and this Bill of 1981 seeks to repeal that Bill which can be forgotten as an exercise that was hardly worth the paper on which it was written.

Mr. Speaker, I have also provided for the various changes of procedure, which are very important, it does not always come through that way, but it is very important, changes of procedure in dealing with management. I am not talking about appointing managers, and as I go into the various sections of the Bill in Committee, Sir, I will be able to point out what the situation was, why it has been changed, what it has been changed

to, and I will try to give as best I can the rationale for the changes that have been brought about.

Mr. Speaker, if this Bill before Parliament today has done anything, or will do anything, it will bring into line the education system with the social philosophy of the now Government of Barbados, because this Government feels an unswerving commitment to the removal of all classes and groupings, and sees the people of this country as one with a common purpose, common objectives and a common destiny, and the Education Act is at the heart of the new thinking current on this side of the House, and I am hopeful that all the many and long hours that I have spent studying the Education Acts of several Commonwealth countries, all the time I have spent reading the notes and the comments and the commentary behind, and the pieces of legislation in other territories, I am hopeful that the conclusion of all would be that what would be left for the people of Barbados would be a lasting monument of the good sense, wisdom and goodwill of all those involved in education in this country at this period in our history as we seek to provide an instrument that can do nothing but promote the national good of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that.
1.20 p.m.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, speaking from this side on this new Education Bill which is before Parliament, I would like to make a point at the very outset that the Democratic Labour Party is committed to the improvement of the educational system in this country, and it is clear from the policies and programmes which were pursued by the Democratic Labour Party when it formed the Government that this commitment was extremely clear. Now we are looking today at a new Education Act, an Act which purports to review and revise, as it were, the major administrative arrangements surrounding the whole question of education.

Now in 1975 as you would very well recall, Mr. Speaker, the former administration brought to Parliament a Bill which set out to revise the 1890 Education Act. If one were to look at this Act which we have before us now and indeed compare it with the Act which went before Parliament in 1975 and which was passed by this Honourable House, there are in truth and in fact very few departures from what was contained in the 1975 Act. The present Minister of Education I know has been very concerned about the Lodge School and the independence of the Governing Body and indeed the independence which the Headmaster of that particular institution sought to use when it came to the question of policy.

I do not think there is anybody on this side who would have any particular quarrel with that. We firmly believe that the whole question of educational policy and educational administration must rest with the Minister of Education and indeed the provisions of the 1975 Act made this very clear, and as a matter of fact, the then Minister of Education, the present member for St. Michael South who is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made this point very clear in the debate when he introduced the Bill on that particular occasion. I can very well recall, Mr. Speaker, that you yourself as the chief spokesman for the Opposition on that occasion were very critical of the fact that the Bill sought to put power into the hands of the Minister and you were concerned that there was too much concentration of power into the hands of the Minister of Education. We on this side started out by saying in 1975 that the whole question of educational policy was a political matter. Any party which forms the Government of the day must be in a position to determine and to decide the policies which were going to be pursued in Education and it was for that reason that the Bill attempted to put power for generally speaking the administration and the policy in the hands of the Minister of Education. That is contained in the debates. I am sure you will recall the position which the Opposition took on that particular occasion, so that when we are now looking at this Bill and some of us had a look and were able to compare what is contained in the present Bill which is before us with what was contained in the 1975 Act, basically we do not see any major departure from the particular Bill.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that when we come to discuss the question of education and the whole administrative arrangements which this Bill seeks to deal with, one must also look at the entire question of education and indeed the educational policy which relates to the needs of the community, because under Part I — Central Administration, the functions of the Minister are set out very clearly. One of its functions, Mr. Speaker, is and I quote: "to frame an educational policy designed to provide a varied and comprehensive educational service in Barbados" and "(e) to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental, physical, social and economic development of the community by ensuring that efficient education is available to meet the needs of Barbados."

I therefore think that any discussion which we should be embarking on must pay some attention and indeed must refer to the whole question of the educational needs of this society or indeed of any society in which we live. It is an accepted fact that education determines the kind of society which we have, and we have therefore to be gearing our system to meet the needs and the demands of the society. If we are going to look at education as it relates to the needs of our society in the 80s and beyond, there are a number of factors which one has to take into consideration.

In the first instance, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that we need at this point in time of our development in education to have set out very clearly a broad philosophy of education and a statement of policy on education in this country, what we hope to achieve at the end and indeed the methods which we are going to use to be able to achieve the special objectives which we set ourselves. I think this is extremely important because we are living in a world which is rapidly changing, we are living in a world, Mr. Speaker, where there are a number of new pressures and new problems which arise from time to time; we are living in a world where technology and technological development are playing a more and more important part in our whole scheme of things, and it is the view of this side that our educational system must therefore be geared to meeting these kinds of needs and demands in any kind of system that we are going to implement, whether it is from the administrative point of view or from the point of view of philosophy of education or a policy of education. These are the kinds of things which must be determined; so that first and foremost the point which must be made as far as a policy relating to education is concerned has to do in my view, Mr. Speaker, with the kind of emphasis which we in this country consider necessary to be placed on technological and vocational type of education, and therefore the kind of administrative arrangement and institutions which we will set up to deal with this particular problem, because make no bones about it, as I said, this is very important particularly in the kind of age in which we are living, and we are in a situation where from the economic point of view presumably we would want to provide our citizens and our young people with the wherewithal to fit into the world at work.

1.30 p.m.

This is very important, the demands of the world of work and if, therefore, we are going to do this in terms of being able to assist and indeed provide for the general economic development of this country, then our Educational system must be geared to meet this particular need.

One can recall a number of statements which have been made about the general economic development of this country and one hears from time to time the problems which the country is faced with as far as earning foreign exchange is concerned. One recognises that in order for us to develop the economy we have to, for example, get into the area of export promotion and just let me link this up with our educational needs.

If we are going to be moving into this area, it is fairly clear that we have to provide the kind of skills, workmen, the kind of people, the expertise, and technology who would be able to produce the kind of goods and the kind of products which can, from the

point of view of quality, match with the products of other countries.

I believe that Japan, for example, is a case in point and certainly the Educational system in that country was geared to meet this particular need especially making that country one of the most productive and indeed one of the foremost countries in the export trade in the world so that if we are going to be talking in terms of diversifying our economy and if we are going to be talking of providing some kind of stability within our society, then it seems to me and it is very clear that whatever arrangements we make in the field of Education must bear some kind of relationship and indeed must address itself to that particular problem.

Now, in the area of Technical and Vocational Education, it seems to me that there has to be some kind of co-ordinated policy and programme in this area because at the present moment we have the Polytechnic functioning at one level, we have the Skills Training Programme operated by the Ministry of Education and then in the Newer Secondary Schools and the Older Secondary Schools we have what is called the Industrial Arts Sections of the Schools.

Now I believe that from the point of view of Administration and from the point of view of being able to get the most out of this situation we must have a co-ordinated approach to this and I would like to impress upon the Minister that rather than having the situation where, let us say, in the Industrial Arts Division of the Secondary Schools there is no clear indication as to where they are going. There is a lack of proper insights as far as objectives are concerned, that there must be some very close co-ordination and integration in the general needs and Educational planning in this society because at the present moment, if my memory serves me correctly, there seems to be some problem even at the level of the CXC and the Industrial Arts Programme which is at present being offered at the level of the Secondary Schools where, as I understand it, there are a number of Schools, all the schools which offer Industrial Arts, are claiming that they cannot respond to the demand of the syllabus of that particular Examination because they do not have the kind of equipment and indeed the kind of arrangements which are necessary for them to be able to match what is required for that particular Examination so that from the point of view of the Administration and from the point of view of charting an Educational policy, I believe that some particular direction has to be given in this particular area because I would want to re-emphasise that we need to pay very, very close attention to this area.

If I would just move on at a higher level, at the level of the University of the West Indies which would form part of our Tertiary System of Education, that there

is some important need to impress upon the University that it has to get into the wider area of providing the Caribbean society with the kind of Technologists who can meet the needs of the society and the demands of Technology in this particular area and if it comes to the point, Mr. Speaker, where Governments in the Caribbean will have to give some kind of lead or take the kind of decisions to establish, for the lack of a better term, a College of Technology which would deal specifically with this.

I would like to think that the Government of Barbados in designing an Educational policy and an Educational programme for the need of our society would be in the forefront of impressing upon the University of the West Indies that this is an area which has got to be embarked on because no longer, Mr. Speaker, can we continue with a policy where the old tradition of the classics, where the old tradition of persons coming out of our school systems, with four, five, six and seven 'O' levels are finding it difficult to get jobs where we know that in spite of the fact that the Prime Minister did not provide the information which was requested during the Estimates Debate that they are literally thousands of persons who have applied for jobs of a clerical type at the Services Commissions and who are going without the kind of jobs which they feel they are qualified to do. We want to avoid that kind of situation and that is why I am making the point that any kind of educational system or policy which we devise in this country must be realistic and must be able to answer to the present needs of the young people and at the same time to the present needs of this society.

I believe that it is a scandal in this society where we can have a situation where over 4,000 persons living in Barbados can be consigned to a Statistical terminology called the "Voluntary Idle". I believe it is a sad commentary on our Educational system that we can have such a large proportion of our society confined into that area and it is, in my view, a commentary on the type of education which is being offered in this society.

We have got to be able, Mr. Speaker, to produce persons who can fit into the needs of the society and who can make a meaningful contribution and who feel that what contribution they can make is appreciated and therefore who do not feel that they have to, as it were, drop out of the society because that is what is happening and that, in my view, accounts for the rise in the kind of cults that we see developing in this society.

1.40 p.m.

We are talking therefore about the whole question of change, change in the educational policy change in

emphasis and by changing the emphasis, I am submitting that we would have a change in some of the general attitudes to work, attitudes of youngsters who leave school and who now come into the work force and this is very important because if any society is going to move forward, if any society is going to be able to maximise the energies of the people who live in the society, then the whole question of the kind of people who come out of the system and the kind of people who live in the society that these attitudes are attitudes which have to be determined from the school system. So that, change then is very important.

Quite apart, as I said from some of the general administrative changes which the Honourable Minister has indicated in this Bill, we on this Side do not see and have not heard any major change in policy, any major shift in our approach to education and this I believe, that if at any time, there was the necessity for a shift and a change in our approach to education, it is now. Allied to the point I was making about the question of technology and the need for a greater emphasis in this area, so that we would be able, as I said, if I can make that kind of comparison, like Japan to be able to take advantage of some of the opportunities which exist in the world for change and for trade.

We would like to suggest from this Side and recall very clearly that the former Honourable Minister of Education, the hon. member for St. Michael South, made this point and indeed, attempted to move this kind of approach into the system, the need for a second language in Barbados. Now with our close proximity to Latin America, the many opportunities which exist for trading with that continent demands that if we are going to be able to take advantage of these types of opportunities that we must have built-in within our education system a second language and I am suggesting that Spanish should be the kind of language which should be built into the system not at the present moment as what happens. It is true that in the secondary schools, French is done, Spanish, they are the two languages which are mainly done in the school system. But, it would seem as if the whole method and approach to teaching of these languages leave pupils with the kind of situation, where they cannot really cope and whereas you might have pupils having a certificate in Spanish, or in French, when they are thrown into a working situation, then they find that they are incapable of dealing with, or at least mastering the particular language.

So when I say that we need to develop a second language in our system, I am suggesting that the emphasis must be on the understanding and certainly on the spoken aspect of the language and we are satisfied that

the other qualities would come as time goes on. I think that it is very, very important for us to be able to do this. Again, if I may use the comparison of the Japanese, the businessmen, one of the requirements of people going into the area of business in Japan is that they must have a thorough knowledge of the English Language. The evidence which is coming out is that they have been able to match, compete with and indeed out-manoeuvre businessmen from the United States and from England whose mother tongue is the English Language. So that, what I am saying is what I am positive about is that we have allied with the kind of development which I am talking about, we have to be able to marry this with the development of a second language in our system.

One observer on Education a few years ago stated that and I quote:

"A healthy school system must win the allegiance of teachers, parents and the public."

I said at some point in my presentation that we are at a very interesting stage of our development in education in Barbados. There are a number of criticisms which can be made, there are a number of things which are going wrong and which need to be identified and there obviously must be solutions, or attempts made to solve these problems.

Now, one of the areas which I would like to focus on is the whole question of the involvement of parents more closely in the whole question of educational policy-making and the general administration of schools. Like the Act which was brought to this Honourable House in 1975, this Act of 1981 recognises this and has made statutory provision for the possibility of the formation of Parent Teachers' Associations, but in my view, the Act does not go as far as it should go because there is nothing mandatory in the section which relates to the formation of Parent Teachers' Associations, the terminology is that they may be formed. What I am saying and what we are saying from this Side is that it should be mandatory, the question of Parent Teachers' Associations at the secondary school level and at the primary school level and it should be part and parcel of the entire system because if we are going to seek to correct some of the problems which arise in the school system from time to time, problems of discipline, problems of drugs some of which I will allude to as I go along, if we are going to be able to deal and to cope with these problems, then it seems to me that there must be a very close working relationship between parents, teachers and the general administrative arrangements in the schools.

There is no doubt that if parents became more intimately involved with school administration that they would take a greater interest in what goes on at schools

and a great interest in what their children do at schools at the present moment. Discipline is one of the problems which has been identified, or the lack of discipline as one of the major issues in the school system and drugs as I said earlier on is being acknowledged from all reports that it is becoming and has become a very serious problem in the schools. We have to be able to deal with these problems, we have to be able to devise an approach to handle these particular problems because in a way they will affect, Mr. Speaker, the general performance of pupils in the school system and they will in the long run have an affect if they are not dealt with on the kinds of persons, who will eventually emerge in the work force and who will eventually emerge, as leaders in our society. The whole question therefore of value is something which we must pay some attention to.

I am submitting that the whole involvement therefore of parents in the system and in the whole policy-making and the general administration of schools is a step in the right direction and certainly a step which the 1975 Act recognised and catered for and which this Act also catered for.

1.50 p.m.

I go further to make the point that since it is recognised, and from reports, that the whole question of drugs is a serious problem in the school system, that teachers in the schools must be trained to identify drugs and try to identify or recognise those pupils who are using drugs, so that some kind of assistance could be given to them from very early. I think this is a very important area in the general administration and certainly in our educational policy.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that teachers and the whole attitude of teachers will be crucial to the implementation of any educational policy which we have in this country, and will be crucial in the general administrative arrangements. So that we believe from this side that every encouragement should be given to the teachers so that they can do an effective job of teaching, and the first prerequisite for this no doubt is that the teachers should be properly compensated, because if they are properly compensated, then the kinds of demands which are made of them in the new era, in our new approach to education, with the many problems with which they will have to deal, I believe it will put them in the kind of frame of mind to be able to deal with these problems.

In the 1975 Education Act there was provision made for the registration of teachers. This new Act does not make provision for that. I believe that teachers are professionals, they argue all the time that they are professionals. In the same way that doctors, lawyers and other professionals have to be registered, I believe that teachers in this country should also be registered, and I

would think that this is one of the failings of the present Act, because it does not make provision for this particular arrangement, and I believe that the registration of teachers would assist in bringing some measure of professionalism to the teaching, some added measure of professionalism to teaching, and I would like to certainly hear the Hon. Minister on this, as to the reason why in his wisdom or otherwise he did not consider it necessary to ensure that the teachers are registered. This kind of approach, as I said, would have the effect of ensuring that we have the kind of quality teachers in our schools who would be able to deliver the kind of instructions and give the kind of guidance which is necessary in this particular area. This is one, if we may say so, one major area of departure as far as the present Minister is concerned and the former administration on this question of the administrative arrangements for education in this country.

Now, at the present moment, as I understand it, at the level of the primary schools where you have a teacher who has gained a degree, or who might have advanced status for dealing with problems relating to young children, there is often a tendency to shift them into the secondary schools. As I understand it, if a teacher in the primary schools gets a degree, some arrangement is usually made for that person to be shifted into a secondary school. Now, we believe, from this side, if that is the kind of policy and approach.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member likely to complete his address by 10 minutes after 2.00?

Mr. GREAVES: No, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting now stands suspended until 2.45 p.m. today.
1.58 p.m.

On resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. I am advised that there are no replies to questions ready, so we automatically go into Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Item 1 under Private Members' Business stands in the name of the hon. member for Christ Church East whom I do not now see in his place.

Item 2 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Michael South Central whom I do not now observe in

his place. Likewise Item 3 and similarly Item 4. I do not see the hon. member in his place.

This brings us to the end of Private Members' Business.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the instant order of the day. When the suspension was taken the hon. member for St. Lucy was addressing the Chair. The said hon. member may continue if he now so desires.

Mr. GREAVES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we took the break for lunch, Mr. Speaker, I was on the point about teachers in primary schools, and I was stating that as far as I understand at present, we have a situation where a teacher in a primary school who might have gone to the University and gained a degree is usually transferred out of that system into the secondary system of education, and I was taking the view that we should in our administrative arrangements make provision for ensuring that any teacher if he or she has a degree or any special skill and who wants to remain in the primary system of education to offer whatever assistance and indeed whatever contribution a teacher can make at that level of education, the administrative arrangements should be such that they should remain in that particular system, because at that level it is our view that there is need for a considerable amount of assistance and indeed expertise, and what you find generally speaking in the primary schools, quite apart from the fact that a teacher might have been trained, is that beyond the particular area of teacher training they may not necessarily have the kind of skills and inputs which might go for an even greater contribution at that particular level, and I would like to think, Mr. Speaker, that some arrangements could be made for that particular area.

Under the Bill which we are now discussing, there is provision for the Minister to make regulations regarding the administration of the text book scheme. Now if I may just address my mind to the text book scheme for a brief moment, I believe that this was a very far-reaching social measure which was introduced by the last administration because with the rise in the price of text books and even today with the kind of prices which one has to pay for text books, it is very clear that it would have been a very serious financial burden on the pockets particularly of the poor parents in this community to be able to provide their children with text books. So it is generally accepted, I believe, even by the other side that this measure has far-reaching social implications in our educational system. I would like to further suggest that we might not be getting the maximum out of the system probably because there are not proper administrative arrangements which are made for the administration of the scheme, and we might very well find ourselves in a

situation where a good scheme, a scheme which offers far-reaching benefits for the children in the schools can, as it were, collapse or flounder on the sands of inefficiency, and I would like to therefore urge the Hon. Minister to take a close look at the general administrative arrangements in this particular scheme to ensure that they are tighter and that there is greater efficiency, and that in the final analysis the children are able to benefit from it in the way in which the whole concept was designed for them to benefit from it. This I think would be another problem area which I would identify.

Now still on the area of the teachers and their general relationship to the carrying out of the educational policy in this country and functioning within the general administrative arrangements, I would just like to allude to the Caribbean Examinations Council Exam which have now generally taken over in our Caribbean education. I think that the teachers generally speaking admit that the exams pose a greater difficulty for them in terms of the utilisation of their time and in terms of their input. Now I believe that it is a useful departure because the examination relates more to life in the Caribbean and to the preparation of our students for the kind of areas which they will go into when they go into the working world, but from the complaints which have been made by the teachers, it would seem as if there should be some attempt to reduce some of the work load, the teaching periods, so that teachers would get a greater opportunity to do the necessary preparation for the kind of course which they are called upon to give to their students, and again I think this is an area which has got to be looked at, and certainly if we are going to be talking generally speaking about bringing a new approach to education, and making new administrative arrangements, I am suggesting that this cannot be done in isolation to the kind of problems which are experienced on a day to day basis in the school, and this is why I am identifying some of these areas.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, to move to another area where I think there has to be some consideration given, and it is interesting to note that the Minister did not allude to this either when he was introducing the Head in the Estimates or today when he was introducing this particular Bill which according to him has far-reaching implications for our general educational policy and the development of education for the 80s and beyond, and I refer Mr. Speaker, to the use of radio and general television and more specifically educational television, the effective use of these areas in our educational programmes and in getting information across to people both in the schools and in the nation generally. As a developing country, Mr. Speaker, I am suggesting that we cannot afford to waste the kind of time which we see being wasted on television in programmes of doubtful value. We believe that educational television and radio can be more effectively used in promoting our various aspects

of education and getting not only the children but also the general population, parents included, acclimatised to the new trends, new developments and new directions in our educational policy, and I would plead with the educational authorities.

3.00 p.m.

Of course I do not think it will be much longer for us to do this because in the not too distant future we on this side will be debating the policies which we have outlined but I think these can play a very important role in our whole development of Education in Barbados.

I want next, Mr. Speaker, to allude to the Boards of Management and the general functioning of these Boards. This seemed to be one of the major thrusts in the presentation which the Hon. Minister made and indeed it seems to be one of the major thrusts in this new Bill which we have here. We can recall, of course, the kind of agitation, the emotional way in which the Minister some weeks ago was talking about the Lodge School and the Lodge School in terms of the kind of autonomy which the Governing Body of that School exercises and which the Governing Body has.

One can very well, therefore, appreciate the kind of vigour with which the Hon. Minister has pursued this particular objective and, as I said earlier on, we on this side are not at all opposed to his attempts to bring that Institution into line and into the mainstream of the general educational, administration and planning in this society.

I agree with him that arrangements at the Lodge School are anachronistic and not in keeping with what we expect of a School like the Lodge School or any School which spends public money in this day and age and so we are in agreement with him when he seeks, therefore, to bring about this particular change.

I think that the whole concept of Boards of Management, whether it is at the level of Secondary Schools or the level of Primary Schools is one which should be commended and which I would want to point out was also included in the 1975 Education Act.

I would like to make just one more suggestion as far as the operation of the Boards of Management or Committees of Management are concerned. Now, at the present, it is my humble opinion that the Governing Bodies and the Advisory Boards which are supposed to administer or run the various schools in Barbados are too far removed from the School situation in terms of being able to identify with and to deal with a lot of the problems which arise at the schools from time to time.

I, therefore, would like to see the Governing Bodies meet more frequently, number one, and secondly, I would like to see a situation developed where Governing Bodies would at least twice a year make it possible for them to meet with the Teachers and the other professionals or para-professionals within the school system in this kind of way, Mr. Speaker.

I believe that some of the problems which at the present escaped the Governing Bodies, some of the problems in the Schools which are sometimes hidden from the Governing Bodies, some of the real problems can be identified and a strategy can be worked out to deal with these problems because, remember that the Hon. Minister has said that one of the aims he is trying to do as far as the Newer Secondary Schools, the Older Secondary Schools are concerned, he wants to replace some of the power which already exists in the hands of the Older Secondary Schools and give some more power to the Boards of the Newer Secondary Schools to more or less bring them in line as far as Executive power is concerned and I believe that it is a useful step and certainly a step further could be gone if that kind of meeting point could be arranged where the Governing Bodies will get an opportunity to meet with the Teachers to discuss some of the problems which they encounter and in this way the Governing Bodies would be able to get a little closer to the root of the problems of some of the Schools.

It is interesting that the Minister when he was speaking did not refer to the whole question of zoning. This is very much in the air now. I seem to recall that the Prime Minister at a stage, I think it was the Prime Minister, referred to this whole question and to the fact that his Government would be implementing a plan for zoning all the schools in this country.

I would like to hear from the Hon. Minister of Education something in this area. It is something which concerns the public. It concerns the children and of course it concerns the parents in this community and certainly an opportunity like this should be taken to give some kind of indication to the public at large about the Government's plans and programme for zoning and whether the Minister thinks that in the present circumstances with the different levels which obtain at the various schools, whether he sees Zoning as feasible within the next year, within the next five years, or within the next ten years. In short, I think that the Minister should be able to give some type of time frame within which he sees the achievement of Zoning in our School System.

I also would have thought, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. Minister would have given some indication about the abolition of the Eleven Plus Examination bearing in mind that this is contained in the Manifesto of the

Barbados Labour Party in bold type and we are now into the fifth year of the administration of the Barbados Labour Party but yet we are no clearer or any closer as to what is the Government's Programme for this, apart from a general statement that they will abolish the Eleven Plus Examination in this country.

I think that the point has been raised in the Other Place by someone who has been closely associated with Education in this country for many years that with the abolition of the Eleven Plus Examination there will have to be some kind of system for selection and I wonder if the Minister could give any indication as to whether or not the Eleven Plus Examination, if they remove it and, of course, it will have to be done within a matter of weeks, I believe, what would be the alternative that they would pursue.

All of these are matters which I believe would be of concern and we should be addressing our minds to on a crucial piece of legislation like the one we had here before.
3.10 p.m.

The Act makes provision for special education, nursery education, adult education, teacher training. Again, Mr. Speaker, all of these, particularly special education and nursery education were identified by the Democratic Labour Party, as areas of special concern and areas where there had to be an emphasis and you would recall I am sure that the 1975 Bill made specific reference and provision for that and our Manifesto for the last campaign, the Democratic Labour Party Manifesto specifically referred to the whole question of special education and I just want to — it is already a document of the House — and I am sure that I would just want to make reference to that and also to the question of nursery education:

"Provide more facilities for nursery education in nursery schools, in existing primary schools and in day nurseries. Extend the programme of special education for those who are handicapped."

I think that not only because this year has been designated by the United Nations as the year for the disabled and the handicapped, we did not have to wait until the United Nations designate a year for special attention to these areas, but the foresight of the Democratic Labour Party's Honourable Minister of Education made it possible for our educational system to accommodate and indeed to offer facilities for this kind of people within the society because after all, they are people in the society too. I would.....

Hon. L. R. TULL: If the Honourable Member would give way.

Mr. SPEAKER: On what does the Honourable Member rise?

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am rising the Honourable Member is giving way, Sir. On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member said that the Democratic Labour Party Government made provision for the places of the training of people for the handicapped and disabled Sir. I would like to know from the Honourable Member, where were these places provided?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is really not a point of order.

Mr. GREAVES: I believe that the Honourable Minister is aware of the School for the Deaf and the Handicapped.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a point of order, so you need not reply.

Mr. GREAVES: I need not reply because I would start to list a number of them like the Wilkie Cumberbatch and a number of others, but that is beside the point.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we from this Side believe that our educational system must cater to the broad needs of the people, particularly the young people within the society, but we have got to move beyond that point also because the whole concept of adult education, UNESCO, as far as I recall has a particular phrase for it, "Lifelong education". This is something which we have to pay a lot more attention to. I believe, and I think that I have been critical of the Democratic Labour Party in this particular regard. I think that the same thing can be said of the Barbados Labour Party that not enough attention has been paid by either Administration to this whole concept of "Lifelong education" and the kind of role it can play in further equipping people to deal with life, with the changing life which we have to live.

I said at the outset that we live in a society which is changing very rapidly, one commentator for example made the point that "Today's inventions are tomorrow's obsolescence" and we therefore must even at the level of adult be in a position to equip him, train him and retrain him to match the changes which are coming on a daily basis within the society. So that, I think that much more emphasis and much more attention has to be paid within this area. I am not one of those persons who will say that nothing at all is being done. We of course live in an age where things move on and when once a foundation has been laid, then of course you will find that people coming after will build on the foundation and will move on as for example the Community College, which was a concept and indeed an institution developed by the Democratic Labour Party, which stands to the credit of

the Honourable Member for St. Michael South and other areas of adult training, but I would like to think that there should be greater attention in this area.

The teacher training programme which we are embarking on and which needs to be extended in a much wider area must also be a matter of concern. I recall some years ago, I believe it must have been in about 1973, 1974, a contribution I think it was in the Estimates, I was making the point then that the management of an educational institution requires certain managerial skills and techniques because we were in a situation where no longer we could sit back and say that we had children and the children were just going to accept what we say, or that teachers would just accept the instructions of a headteacher and that was all.

We are living in an age where workers are prepared to challenge authority, where teachers are prepared to challenge heads and therefore the headteacher must possess the kind of skills of management, personnel management and personnel administration because they are managing as it were a big plan and we believe that in situations where particularly, a number of the schools now have staff in excess of thirty, or forty, some schools have a staff I believe running into sixty, or eighty which could be the equivalent of a medium sized factory in Barbados and therefore, the heads and people at the administrative level must have the kind of skills and training to be able to deal with the personnel problems which will arise at the school. Therefore, when we are talking about the general administration and about the management of the School Boards and what have you, one would see that the situation today is much more complicated than it was ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five years ago. So that, the Act therefore and certainly any kind of policy which we are going to be devising must be able to deal with these problems and must be able to direct its attention to them.

The final point which I would like to make relates to a point which the Honourable Minister in his introduction made finding of, that is the question of literacy. He indicated that Barbados had possibly the highest literacy rate in the world, that we were recognised as a country where education has played a very important role in our development, the latter I found is true, however, I believe that any discerning person would take with a pinch of salt this question of how high our literacy rate is because for me and I believe for a number of people literacy involves not only the ability to write one's name, or to sign one's name, or to write a couple of figures, literacy is wider than that, I am submitting and I think that we have to in looking at the whole question of literacy look at an area which is of some concern to a number of people, who have to deal with people on a close basis. I believe that those of us who are politicians

will recognise this, the number of people in our society who find it difficult to fill out forms, application forms and other forms which they have to fill out. That in my humble submission Mr. Speaker is an indication of some form of what education authorities call "functional illiteracy" and I think that we have functional illiteracy.

We have there, particularly in our adult education programme and certainly we have to ensure that those persons who pass through the school system, when they go into the world of work that they can function and that they are able not only to write their names, but they are able to understand what they read, understand other than just the mere simple things which they would come across.

3.20 p.m.

It is in my view an indictment on our educational system when we have those kinds of persons escaping, as it were, from our educational system, and I would like to think that the Hon. Minister could give some indication in this area.

The art of letter writing, if I could just allude to another aspect, is something which seems to have escaped a number of people, even people whom one would expect would know better or could function better. All of those, I am submitting, are matters which are intimately bound up with our educational system and with our educational policy making. I believe, therefore, that now that we are talking about introducing new, generally speaking, administrative arrangements with the broad outlines about the functions of the Minister, that some of the points which I have raised, some are new points, should be given some kind of consideration, and indeed should feature prominently in our educational system.

Before I sit down I would just want to make one further point and to agree with the Hon. Minister, from a submission which he made previously, about the need for career guidance within the school system. I am sure you would appreciate that all of the points which I have been making on this Bill would be neatly tied together if within the entire system we move very quickly to establish a proper and a functional Career Guidance Unit within the system. At present there is talk about it, but much has not been implemented. Allied to this, Mr. Speaker, because of the kind of problems and the variety of problems which are encountered in the schools, and because of the many functions which have got to be performed in the schools, I think that the time has come where we will have to look very carefully, or indeed introduce what has been introduced in the United States system, the setting up of para-professionals whose duty it would be to assist in some of the non-teaching areas and take off some of the general load off the teachers and at the same time where possible, if they have the kind of

skills which could be used in the schools, where they can also come in and assist, and I believe that with that kind of approach we would be able to answer some of the crying needs of our educational system.

Advances have been made, but there are still a lot of problems which have to be ironed out, and as I pointed out at the beginning, we have now to devise an educational system and an approach to education which will take us well into the year 2000 and certainly take us into the technological age where as a country we can take advantage of the many opportunities which exist there for us to take advantage of, provided we have the will, and provided that we have the wherewithal, which I am suggesting can be provided through the educational system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by stating that this House certainly owes a debt of gratitude to the member for St. Lucy for his very wide ranging, incisive, cogent and in-depth presentation on this subject of education here this evening. (*Aside*). I would like to continue, Mr. Speaker, and to tell the hon. member for St. James through you that the hon. member may make any comment while I am speaking. He knows I can take care of myself.

Mr. SPEAKER: Kindly address the Chair, not the hon. member.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I believe it was a poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow who penned the immortal words:

"Tell me not in mournful numbers
Life is but an empty dream
And the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem."

I think particularly that last line, or to be technical in this, the last verse — the purist would say what we call a line is a verse in poetry — that last verse there is most appropriate.

I listened to my colleague and friend, the Minister of Education and member for St. George South, and he said that the 1975 Education Bill was useless, it was not worth the paper it was written on, and I believe he also said that it was stillborn. Now, hearing that, Mr. Speaker, one would assume that this piece of legislation that is here before us today would constitute some major departure, some major change, would stipulate some great difference between what the Democratic Labour Party and this Parliament put on the Statute Book in 1975 and this particular measure here today.

I have searched, Mr. Speaker, and I cannot find any significant difference, any major difference between the

piece of legislation that we are discussing here today and that which this House passed in the last Parliament in 1975, so how does it become useless? How was it still-born? What are the new thoughts and new ideas that have gone into education between the period 1975 and this point where we find ourselves today? Let us do the comparison stage by stage, section by section, idea by idea. Let us look first of all at the area of the major objectives for education in this country. What is the difference between what was said in 1975 and what is being said here in 1981 today in this new Bill? Indeed, if we start at the very purposes of this piece of legislation, the 1975 Act describes the purpose of the Bill — and if I can find it, Cap. 41 — it says: "An Act to repeal the Education Act, 1890 and to provide for a co-ordinated and effective system of public education,... etc. etc.", exactly the same words that we find in this piece of legislation that we are looking at here in 1981.

3.30 p.m.

If we look at the purposes for education, these were set out in the 1975 Act as follows: "To promote the education of the people of Barbados and to establish and develop institutions for that purpose; to frame an educational policy; to ensure the effective execution of the educational policy of the Government; to establish a co-ordinated educational system etc.; to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental, physical, social and economic development of the community etc. Five specific functions assigned to the Minister of Education in 1975 and exactly the same five functions in this particular Bill which is before us in 1981. Well 1975 is useless and 1981 is useful. We could go right down the line, Mr. Speaker. We can look in terms of the stages of education in this country in 1975. These were set out to include pre-school, primary, secondary, tertiary, exactly the same stages of education set out in this Bill that we are considering here today. Yet the Minister says that the 1975 Act was useless and not worthy of the paper it was written on. The 1975 Act made provision for private schools and matters related thereto. This Act that is before us in 1981 makes in exactly the same terms provision for the private and assisted schools in this country, yet the Minister says that the 1975 Act was useless, but the Minister is a learned man. We look at the area next of school attendance, almost exactly the same words made and the same provisions that were set out in the 1975 Act are set out in this Act here in 1981, yet the Minister says that the 1975 Act was useless and the Minister is a learned man. In the area of school attendance, in the area of inspection of schools, in the area of scholarships, in terms of the inclusion of a conscience clause, except for some stylistic changes coming out of the difference in drafting, the ideas and indeed the phraseology follows very closely that of the 1975 Act, yet the Minister says that the 1975 Act was useless and not worth the paper it was written on and

stillborn; the Minister however is an honourable and learned gentleman.

We can go on, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the provision for parent teacher associations included in the 1975 Act, these are included in the 1981 Act, yet the Minister says that that 1975 Act was useless and not worth the paper it was written on, but the Minister is a learned and intelligent man. Provision for the wilful disturbance at schools, to protect the teachers and those who are in the schools against such disturbances and the assaults which may take place from time to time, the provision in the present Act is almost identical with those of the 1975 Act, yet we are told today that that 1975 Act was useless and not worth the paper it was written on. Provision to establish a National Advisory Commission on Education; exactly the same terms, and power to set up advisory and other committees, exactly the same terms as in 1975, yet the Minister says that that Act of 1975 was useless and not worth the paper it was written on. Down to the making of regulations, virtually the same area of regulations are included, yet the Minister says that that Act of 1975 was useless.

Mr. Speaker, I have identified the common elements between this Act. Mr. Speaker, I hope you feel safe as I see some movement behind you and I hope things are all right in that area. When we look at these two measures, what are the major differences? I find two major differences. One is that there is no provision for the registration of teachers. That has been omitted from the legislation. My colleague the hon. member for St. Lucy has dealt with that particular area and he feels that that makes the Bill the poorer for that particular omission. I do not propose to go into that because he has dealt with that adequately, and then there is the omission also of the Teaching Service Commission.

Now I would like to spend a little time on the Teaching Service Commission because of what he considers is important to the 1975 piece of legislation. Now the Minister has made the point that he is making for a coordinated system a unified system, a unified teaching service, exactly the same words that were used in 1975 as well, but in this case he is putting all of the secondary schools under Boards of Management as well. In 1975 we made provision for the establishment of a Teaching Service Commission entrenched in the Constitution like other Commissions, the Public Service Commission, the Police Service Commission and the other Commissions whatever they may be. We entrenched it in there because that body was the body which would safeguard, make appointments to and make promotions, transfers and so on if necessary relating to these teachers in the older secondary schools. In other words, they would have had the guarantee of an appointing body or an overseeing body entrenched in the Constitution

of Barbados which is to ensure that all due fairness and all relevant considerations would be taken into account when it came to matters of appointment, promotion, transfer and discipline. In other words, there would have been fundamental guarantees to them, guaranteed by the Constitution itself, but this Bill makes no provision for that Teaching Service Commission. Instead the appointments will be done by the Boards of Management, whereas before it would have been done by the Boards of Management but on the advice and through the consideration of a Teaching Service Commission entrenched in the Constitution. In this particular Bill it will be done only by the Board of Management. Now, in my view, Mr. Speaker, I think this is taking away something from the teachers even if that may not be obvious to them at this particular time, but I point it out. Under the former provision it is my view that they had more guarantees especially in circumstances where their terms and conditions of service.....

3.40 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Some of the speakers are feeding back. Something is wrong with the system.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I will lay that point to rest and proceed then to a few other points in the remaining time at my disposal. I would like to make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that in terms of the objectives and purposes of this legislation, we decided that the Opposition have no quarrel with this particular piece of legislation because it reflects very closely to the philosophy, the ideas and the thinking which have been permeating education in this country for several years now.

The Act which came on the Statute Book in 1975 was the result of the widest possible confrontations ever to have taken place in this country on Education. A vast array of bodies were consulted and that Act of 1975 was as a result of all of that consultation so we basically have no quarrel with what is here now.

Now, Sir, if we have to point out certain defects or if we have to make certain observations, I hope the Minister would not take it in the wrong spirit because we agree in principle with what is in here. I am not begging off anything. I do not have to beg off anything. I have made some contribution to Education in this country and I do not have to beg off anything. What I have done, I have done and the people will be the judge of that. I do not have to beg off anything.

Likewise I believe that the Speaker of this Assembly has made some contribution in the field.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, try and do not involve the Chair in this. Please.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I believe that the member for St. Peter has made some contribution.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please do not involve the Chair into the debate.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I will not involve the Chair in any debate but I believe that if the member for St. George South, the Minister, has something to tell the members of the Governing Body of any school in this country get up openly and tell them, not by any side sweep. Get up and tell them openly. If you are going to dismiss them or get rid of them, get up and tell them openly not by implication or innuendos or anything like that. Nobody can send you out from in here unless you break the Rules, only the Speaker can do that and you know that that can only happen if you break the Rules so if you have something to tell the members of the Governing Body of some of the schools, tell them openly, speak forthrightly. I will rest on that point.

Now much has been made about the parity between the Older Secondary Schools and the Newer Secondary Schools and I was very pleased and heartened to hear the Minister enunciate the policies that he will do nothing at all to lower the standards in the Older Secondary Schools, *vis-a-vis* the Newer Secondary Schools.

Unfortunately he proceeded almost in the next breath to say that he would provide facilities in certain schools. I believe they were four of them, to the Newer Secondary Schools, which in his view, would be far superior to anything in the Older Secondary Schools. Now, I would not expect to hear the Minister make that statement.

Hon. L. R. TULL: On a point of order, Sir. I think the hon. member is misrepresenting what I said.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it that the Hon. Minister has risen to elucidate a point.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Yes, Sir. You see, there are two points. One is a point of order which was misrepresented and the other is to elucidate.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member has been misrepresented, you will have to elucidate, put it right.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I will put it right, Sir. Certainly nothing was said in my contribution in the Second Reading to suggest that I was going to provide equipment and facilities in the Newer Secondary Schools that would make them better off than the Older Secondary Schools. What I said was that the facilities at the Garrison Secondary School and the Newer Secondary School at Trents, and the Roebuck Secondary School and the proposed Secondary School at Wotton will have equipment and facilities that are better than those existing in the Older Secondary Schools. That is the point I made and that is a statement of fact.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I take the point of elucidation, Sir. The point I was really going on to make was that I would have hoped that having made that point the Minister would have gone on to say that he will provide in the Older Secondary Schools similar facilities as those provided in the Newer Secondary Schools.

Hon. L. R. TULL: On a point of elucidation. That is precisely what I said. I said that under the World Bank Loan Project, we are providing funds for the improvement of facilities at four of the Older Secondary Schools, Coleridge and Parry, Alexandra, Alleyne School and the Lodge School. I wish the hon. member will listen to what I say.

Mr. SANDIFORD: He himself said there were nine. We only heard about four. There are nine. We want to hear a general statement in relation to all Secondary Schools, in relation to the general principle outlined for the Newer Secondary Schools. There cannot be any favouritism on this business. We are talking about Secondary Education.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister has a final right of reply.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Anyhow, we would pass on from that. Let me deal with this question of the parity between the Older and the Newer Secondary Schools. Now this does not..... (ASIDES). I am not giving you any lashes today. Do not mind all the wrangling.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please address the Chair, please.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Now, the parity between the Older and the Newer Secondary Schools. It is, of course, one thing to pass a piece of legislation and we are not going to get parity merely by passing a new Education Act or merely by making statements. The question of equalisation in our Secondary School system is one that has been at the heart of our educational policy for several years now.

I know that you, Mr. Speaker, will recall that during the late 1950's and the early 1960's there was no equalisation. There was discrimination for a number of years. Indeed, female teachers in our Educational system were paid less than their males performing the same function in our Educational system and that was corrected by the Democratic Labour Party Government. There were Headteachers and others in our Newer Secondary Schools who were being paid less than Headteachers doing similar jobs in the Newer Secondary Schools. That was corrected by the Democratic Labour Party Government. The correction was not two years ago.

3.50 p.m.

The fundamental correction took place before that. If it is in terms of the upgrading of the facilities in the newer secondary schools, we can give concrete examples of steps taken, these include the provision of better equipped libraries and staff to man those libraries, the provision of Library Assistants in each of those secondary schools, an important contribution towards the concept of equalisation of those schools. There is still more to be done, but the steps have been taken.

In terms of providing access to textbooks, a textbook loan scheme was provided for all the secondary schools, so that all pupils and students would have access to the necessary textbooks and other supplementary teaching materials. We provided training courses to enable a flow of trained teachers to the newer secondary schools and indeed, to the older secondary schools. All of this is well-known. We provided educational television. These are the steps not merely the passing of an Act, but concrete measures taken by the educational administration in this country prior to 1976, in order to ensure more equalisation in the system and a better system throughout the country.

There are other areas of vocational guidance. Much is made of this whole area of guidance in the schools. I recall myself leading the provision, or leading the demand for bringing on to the staff of the Ministry of Education the post of Vocational Guidance Officer to lead the professional thinking inside of the Ministry, in educational circles and in the schools themselves for an adequate guidance both general educational guidance and vocational guidance more specifically in the entire school system and I recall that at Queen's College with the kind permission of a farseeing head mistress the facilities of those schools being made available for the first concerted local course in guidance in Barbados. There were tutors brought in from England, I do not remember at this stage which of the universities they were from, but that particular course was put on for teachers in the schools, so that they could go back to the schools and be of greater assistance to the students of those schools. Heads of Department, these were provided, these are the measures that made for equalisation in the schools.

Now, I would like, I would invite the Honourable Minister, I have said, I have outlined some of the areas, not all because from this distance the memory fades a little and one may not recall everything exactly, but I have set out with those powers of recall to identify some of the measures taken towards equalisation in the school system. I would invite the Honourable Minister to get up and say what specific measures he has introduced since September, 1976 towards this parity of esteem. I think that the education society in this country would be very interested in that type of detailed exposure, so that they can judge what new initiatives have been taken in education since 1976.

As far as my analysis is concerned this particular piece of legislation does not take us very much further along the road because it is merely a rehash of what was there in 1975. I have already established that and what I am amazed about is that it should take almost five years merely to do what was already done in 1975 to bring in a piece of measure with two omissions in the area of registration of teachers and in the area of the Teaching Service Commission. That is the amazing thing and anyone who thinks deeply about what has happened would perforce come to the same conclusion.

I recall very well, I do not know what used to go on in the Other Place. I understand that the Honourable Member for St. George South, he was an Honourable Senator then used to make some very long and pretty speeches up there. Unfortunately, nobody used to hear them, but I know that down here, there was a major criticism that it was a power Bill too much power in the hands of the Minister. I recall it very well, some of the speakers over here were over six feet tall. They were six footers speaking on Education, principal spokesman on Education. They came from all over, from the North in particular, I see the Honourable Member for St. James laughing. (ASIDES). But, I remember hearing about this power Bill, too much power in the hands of the Minister. The same legislation is here before us and even a similar quantum of power in the hands of the Honourable Minister. In fact I heard the Honourable Minister say, I will willingly give way, if he wishes to correct my interpretation of what he said, but I am under the impression that I heard him say that he cannot dictate to the Governors of the Lodge School, under the present schemes of Government, whoever those Governors are, some of them are there *ex officio*. I believe that he mentioned some of them, the Bishop of Barbados, the representative for the constituency of St. John and others, he cannot dictate to them. I thought I sensed a wistful tone in his voice, as if he wanted to be able to dictate to them and he said that this Bill will now give the Minister power to deal with them, not to deal with them, but at least that they cannot dictate to him, or deal with him.

4.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister went over the whole ground, the need for some ability to be able to transfer teachers, he said that at one school they have four trained teachers of mathematics. I do not know which school that is, for trained people in mathematics. I used the example of science in 1975, this year, 1981, he is using mathematics.

I would like to make this point in the remaining time, the remaining minutes that may be available to me, that we have to be very serious about our education provision in this country, and we must not make any mistake about it. Ever so often people in this country get a certain feeling of doubt, uncertainty, and in that mood of uncertainty and doubt they tend to run down the principal institutions in this country. I think that type of attitude does a disservice to the principal institutions in this country. I am not saying that from time to time we must not be critical of our educational institutions or of any of the principal institutions in our country, but I believe that such criticisms should be informed, and I would like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the whole educational establishment and the whole educational society in this country for the contribution that they have made all over the years. I am not limiting myself to 1961 to 1976, I am saying down to this particular point I am making that particular appraisal of the contribution made by the whole educational establishment and society in this country — parents, teachers, students and those who work in non-teaching relationships in the educational system — everybody connected with education, for the contribution that they have made, the dedication that has been put in, because without that type of contribution this country could not have seen the development, economic, social or political, that it has registered, could never have happened, and when we are critical of the educational system, let us realise that.

Whether it is in terms of industrial development, development in our infrastructure, roads, water, light, whatever it is, it is these same people, the Barbadians and those who come among us from outside to make a contribution, who have made all of these developments possible, and I think sometimes we should pause and we should wait. (I see the Speaker is telling me I should pause at this stage, too). We should pay tribute for that particular development.

Unfortunately, apparently, my time has run out, so I believe having made those few general principles I will wait for the Committee stage.

Mr. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, the Minister in setting out the history of education in Barbados made a very comprehensive review of the development of education starting with the 1890 Act and coming forward until the present, the 1981 Act. I believe, Sir, that he made

some very cogent observations regarding the nature, structure and administration of education in Barbados over those years. It is fair to say that the educational process in Barbados has not always been predicated upon objective availability of opportunities, because if you were to do a fair examination of the selection process in the early years, it would be possible to conclude that secondary education as we understand it was generally structured in such a fashion as to favour certain classes in our society.

He referred to the First Grade Secondary Schools, and those were the bailiwick of the privileged in Barbados. They did not have an 11 plus examination in those days, but the selection criterion was largely determined by money, privilege and prestige, because if you were to look at Harrison College in the years when I would have been a youngster at school, I think the school fees in those days used to be about \$24 a term at Harrison College and \$8 a term at Coleridge and Parry, and only those who were relatively well placed financially, or those who were in a position to exact enormous sacrifices were able to compete for the limited allocations at Harrison College and Lodge.

Lodge, Sir, was ruled largely by colour. (Mr. SIMMONS: Do not trespass). The hon. member for St. Philip North, Sir, is a gentleman of colour, but I do not believe that was the colour that had the bulk of opportunity at Lodge, so he would know, Sir, that he got into Lodge School hard against the grain of the day, because if you were to check the number of privileged members of colour who were at Lodge you would have counted them perhaps on one or two hands. They were very limited indeed, so those persons who made it were able to find the knob through which to enter into those hallowed halls.

The hon. member for St. Lucy in making his contribution referred to the fact that the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto of 1976 had a promissory note that we were going to re-examine the 11 plus system of space allocation at secondary schools, and he was calling on us to do something about that promise. I am no more happy about the 11 plus examination than I am about the system that it has replaced, because it manages to distribute places in the way that is not always in the eyes of those persons competing, and in the eyes of those persons who are screened out of the system always equitable.

4.10 p.m.

Now, Sir, when you are dealing with scarce allocation of resources, it is always possible that some persons are going to be in and some persons are going to be out, because the fact of scarcity determines that only some can have access. I as a representative for a constituency that is made up fairly substantially of low middle class

persons and constantly bombarded by persons who are complaining of the system. Indeed, Sir, only last Monday I was called by one of my constituents who told me they had a serious matter of business to discuss, and it turned out to be that that persons's child has been allocated a place at one of the newer secondary schools and that parent was adamant in his charge that his child did better in terms of marks than another child who went to one of the first grade secondary schools. Now, Sir, whether or not that claim is true, the fact is that the perception of that parent is that it is true, and if you were to look closely, Sir, it is possible to point to examples where again class status and privilege manage to assert themselves in what some people would ordinarily regard as an objective system of space allocation and supersede the objective criteria that would ordinarily prevail in the selection process.

I do not know if the present Education Act as envisaged by the Minister is going to address these problems, but there are problems which in my view cry out for redress. Either we are going to come up with an educational process in Barbados that guarantees of those who so desire a place in secondary schools based upon some minimum criteria for entry, or the problem will remain. In the United States of America free access is accorded to all students who graduate from a junior high school. They go into the public high school system without any test. They just enter, and it is almost compulsory, as a matter of fact it is, and if you do not go to high school it is because you want to play truant. I am not sure that that system necessarily is a system that we should adopt in Barbados, but what I am certain about is that we need to come up with a programme that is going to make secondary school access more readily available to all classes of parents whose children are able to present certain basic qualifications.

Now I hope we are not concluding that persons who fail to gain access to Harrison College are not able to benefit from secondary education. I do not believe that is so because the newer secondary schools have demonstrated that a good many of those students who are rejected in the first selection process at 11+ are able to do significantly better in some of the new secondary schools than some of those students who gained access to Harrison College or Lodge. There are a number of factors that go into education, Sir. There is a well-known psychological test in education which was used for the purpose of demonstrating that students are largely or to a very significant degree products of the environment into which they are placed. Certain students were selected and given to a batch of teachers and those teachers were told that those students were dull, and in almost every case those students tested as dull. Their grades came out universally poor. The same batch of students were given to another control group of teachers and told that the students were

bright and almost universally all of those students tested as bright. The purpose of that exercise, Sir, was to demonstrate that teacher expectation plays a significant role in the performance of children in school, because if a child goes to a secondary school or any school for that matter and he is regarded as being incapable of assimilating knowledge, then the teacher attitude is likely to be such that he will not make any great effort unless he is one of those very gifted people who is able to transcend the prejudices of class and race and privilege. The likelihood is that that child is going to come out doing significantly worse than it would do under a set of circumstances that did not contain a strong component of prejudice. By prejudice I am not necessarily referring to racial or class prejudice, but I am talking in terms of prejudice as it relates to teacher expectation.

I therefore, Sir, would want to find out from the Minister as much as any other hon. member on the other side would want to find out what programme, if any, can he reasonably devise, even as a long term projection, and by long term I do not mean 40 or 50 years, I mean a reasonable projection, that would allow Barbadian parents to expect that the 11+ exam for as long as it remains in force will be (1) as objective as humanly possible and (2) what system does he propose when the 11+ exam is finally phased out that will allow all parents to feel that their children will have an opportunity of a secondary education in Barbados without having to go through the psychological trauma of testing at such an early age when children are usually in such emotional stress as to guarantee that they are not likely to do their best work in the circumstances.

I believe, Sir, that if the Minister is able to provide us with such a programme, he is going to be able to answer the unspoken needs of a vast cross section of Barbadians who have come in this age of rising expectations to reasonably expect that their children will be able to benefit from an educational process which they themselves may not have had, and an educational process that will guarantee that they are not selected for failure, but are selected to be participants in a growing environment in which we are supposed to look forward to 100% utilisation of all our human resources.

4.20 p.m.

Sir, I do not believe that it is possible any longer for Barbados to indulge in the luxury of screening out a large number of our students under the pretext that we are selecting the best cream of the crop but we have to find a way to structure our educational process and we have made an additional tentative step to restructure our educational process in such a way as to guarantee that all of our young people, especially our most prized resource, are able to realise their fullest potential and in

the process make a significant contribution towards the building of this nation.

The hon. member for St. Lucy, Sir, in leading off on behalf of the Opposition, made what was described as a powerful speech by the Acting Leader and one of the things, Sir, that he criticised the Minister of Education for was the fact that he did not include in the Bill a Clause that would make it compulsory for parents to belong to a Parent Teachers' Association. He did not say, Sir, what prison term he would attach, in the event that parents chose not to belong to Parent Teachers' Associations but I believe that he would have something in mind. Like six months of hard labour.

I am sure, Sir, that as he reflects upon it, he will want to disassociate himself with what was perhaps a rash statement because in Barbados we pride ourselves as being one of the freest nations on earth and we do not envisage as part of a modern and enlightened educational process that we should put a gun to the heads of parents and tell them that they have to go to P.T.A. Meetings or else, because, Sir, I must confess that I have not gone to one for a long time and under his regime I expect I would be pilloried or perhaps I would have chains around my ankles all like now.

I, Sir, believe that the Minister was absolutely correct in trying to provide a climate in which parents like myself would feel a responsibility to support their children and the Teachers that teach them by participating in a voluntary Parent Teachers' Association. And, Sir, I would like to hope that as nearly as possible all of these worthwhile objectives which we have in mind can be enforced through the means of voluntary persuasion rather than by putting down some hard regime of compulsion to get people to do things which they know, perhaps that they ought to be doing.

The hon. member for St. Michael South, former Minister of Education with an illustrious 10 year reign, I think it must have been 10 years' reign, Sir, I believe, Sir, that Joe Louis is described here in this paper as being the greatest Heavyweight Champion in the World and that member for St. Michael South has the distinction of being the longest reigning Lightweight Champion of Education in the History of Barbados.

He is criticising the Bill, Sir, because he says it does not in anyway depart from the 1975 Act, particularly in the words that it employs in setting out the objectives of the Bill. Whether he is a gentleman of some wild perception and I know that his perception goes beyond what he said because he certainly knows that even though the words may be the same, the substance and the style may be entirely different.

He is quarrelling because there is no provision for the Registration of Teachers and he has also mentioned,

Sir, that there is no Teacher Service Commission but, Sir, he knows as well as anybody else, I believe even the member for St. Lucy knows, that Teachers in Barbados in the newer Secondary Schools are employed under the Public Service Commission and if there are provisions made for them to be employed through the auspices of the Public Service Commission, they certainly cannot be any compelling need for a second and duplicating Commission to do the function which has already been well provided for under the terms of the Constitution of Barbados. Therefore, Sir, that cannot be regarded as a serious argument and he has not been able, in my view, to demonstrate any great weakness in the structure of the Bill and I cannot see any gaps put up by his arguments with respect to the method used by employment of Teachers in the Newer Secondary Schools.

Mr. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Speaker, and the point in relation to the Teacher Service Commission was in relation to the Teachers in the Older Secondary Schools who are not appointed by the Public Service Commission and the point was that being appointed through a Teaching Service Commission entrenched in the Constitution might have greater security of tenure than appointment through a Board of Management nominated by the Minister of Education only.

Mr. JOHNSON: I will allow the Minister of Education to deal with you in greater detail when he replies. I am not going to steal his thunder because I know he is there quivering, not from fear but adrenaline is flowing and he wants to deal with you when he gets back up again and I will leave him some room, Sir, to do that.

Now, Sir, in terms of the allocation of resources and I am speaking now of the plant resources at Secondary Schools, I believe, Sir, that it is fair to state that most of the Secondary Schools that were classified as Second Grade Secondary Schools, have suffered for a long time because of a general unavailability of very needed resources and I have heard the argument put forward for a long time now that the Newer Secondary Schools have superior plant and equipment when you compare them with the Older established Secondary Schools.

That, Sir, is a good thing but there are a number of questions that come up. I know, Sir, that it is not possible to answer all of the questions that plagued education in five years. This Government under the distinguished leadership, especially in the area of education, of the Hon. Minister and member for St. George South, has in the short period of existence done a tremendous job in bringing Education into the 1980's but I still have, from time to time, to address one or two parochial matters and one of the things I have had to deal with over the last week was that the physical facilities at the Ellerslie Secondary School, to be precise now, leaves somewhat to be desired.

4.30 p.m.

I do not know if this is a temporary situation, or whether or not it is a general problem that is affecting some of the newer schools, but apparently there are a number of students, who for whatever reason have to spend a good portion of the day standing, or propping up against the wall because there is no desk and chair space available to them. Now, Sir, I would not have hoped or expected.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure that the hon. member would agree that when the Bill goes into Committee, that is admirable time for us to go into those details.

Mr. JOHNSON: Alright Sir, point well taken. I will deal with it at Committee stage. But thinking generally in terms of resources, it would appear to me that under this new system of administering education, it would be possible to look at the provision of a full range of services at these schools not only in the technical plant not only in the laboratory, but the broad range of services which contribute towards the good learning atmosphere and I hope that the Honourable Minister is making provision to correct whatever problems exist in this area.

The hon. member for St. Lucy, Sir, touched on the subject of zoning and he correctly referred to the speech made by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, on the occasion of the recent Speech Day of the Coleridge and Parry School when he mentioned that one of the aims of this Barbados Labour Party is to provide for a more sensible distribution of school space, or school places on a regional basis. I know, Sir, the problems that are associated, the problems of concept more than real problems, problems which reside in the minds of a number of parents who for many, many, many years now have been led to believe that it is not possible to produce brilliant, shining lights in regional and by regional, Sir, I mean country secondary schools. But Sir, I would like to point to the illustrious hon. member for St. Lucy to give the lie to that feeling because he after all, Sir, is a product of the Coleridge and Parry Secondary School and everybody will accept, Sir, that he is one of the brightest men we have in Barbados today and you, Sir, although I am not allowed to bring you into this are a product of the Parry School, another regional institution and we have been plagued with a situation where people come from Pie Corner in St. Lucy leaving home at five, or six o'clock in the morning to get to Harrison College for nine o'clock and then having to line up in the bus stands on evenings to try to make it back to Pie Corner and getting home by eight o'clock. The journey to and from is exhausting and I, Sir, would like to see the day soon, where it is

possible for any reasonable person using objective criteria to evaluate the programme at these schools, Coleridge and Parry, Alleyne, Alexandra, Trents, Eilerslie, Garrison, and so on all of these schools and be able to say that the programmes offered at all of those schools are programmes in which we can have every degree of confidence and are programmes which will redound to the benefit of all of those students and parents who are involved in attending those schools. Now, Sir.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us see if the Honourable Member can get home by 4.38 p.m.

Mr. JOHNSON: I will be home by 4.38 Sir. I do not know how this learning process will work, but I have always been toying with the notion that we have to come up with some novel programme for making it possible for people to perceive Harrison College and Queens College as institutions to which they must aspire, but which at the same time are not offered as part of the competitive process of the eleven plus allocation system. By that I mean I feel that a programme where Harrison College and perhaps Queens College could be regarded as colleges, two colleges in that simple sense in order to take them out of the realm of competition make them colleges and let all of the other regional schools feed into those, after they have passed through the fifth form go into that sixth form programme. These are the kinds of things that I think that we have to sit down and look at critically to see if they do not offer a solution to both parties. One of those who do not want to see Harrison College become a school of the past and Queens and those who want to see their children get the best that both schools offer and Sir I think that the Honourable Minister of Education will have to in due course give some consideration to some programme similar to that, so as to see if it is not possible to end forever, this bug bearer which we have now under the eleven plus system.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it had not been my intention earlier to participate in this debate, but on reflection and with some persuasion, I have decided to make a small contribution to this Bill in a very general way and I wish Mr. Speaker, at the very outset to follow on from a trend that is being worked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South before the closure of his speech in which he merely was able to scour the contribution that Barbados has made to the educational development of the Caribbean over very many years.

Mr. Speaker, if we think a little bit, I think that we will all recognise that over the years Barbados had been a focal point for educational development in the Caribbean, whether it was by virtue of its export of teachers to other Caribbean countries and Your Honour will recall very

many of our esteemed Barbadian teachers holding very senior positions in Jamaica, in Tobago, in Trinidad, I mean as separate entities, in St. Kitts, even in Guyana and perhaps until the middle of the sixties, the exportation of teachers did not cease. There are very many Barbadians who went to Mona when that Campus was first opened in the late forties, 1947 I think it was Sir and stayed on and made a contribution in the Grammar Schools of Jamaica.

At the same time as we witnessed the exportation of teachers of eminence from Barbados, Erdiston College and perhaps to a greater degree Codrington College and the Royal Training Institute with which my father had some connection, they were themselves centres to which persons from other Caribbean territories could come and receive training and instruction with a view to the improvement of their status as teachers.

4.40 p.m.

My acquaintance with secondary education began in 1950 on the 10th of January, Sir, at Lodge School and for as long as I have been in this House of Assembly, this Hon. Chamber, I have eschewed debates involving the Lodge School, but I think I can no longer resist any desire not to contribute and to make certain facts about the Lodge pertinently clear, but I will come to Lodge School as a separate matter later, Sir.

Clause 3 of the Bill before this Hon. House sets out in the broadest possible terms the scope and function of the Minister in relation to policy, and to that extent it is necessarily loose and specifics will have to be sought from the Minister in Committee.

What I would wish to hear from the Hon. Minister is as broad a statement as he can make as to the thrust that is going to be sought by his Ministry in the eighties and nineties in terms of education. I will break it down into very simple facets, because when I started at the Lodge School in January 1950, whether by accident or by design one was caught up in a dichotomy of educational development in which the blacks studied and excelled in the classics, and what was then called Modern Studies, and the whites opted — as I said, whether by accident or design — for the more technical subjects, science, maths and that sort of subject. The trend gradually changed. The result was for the society of Barbados at large that by virtue of that secondary training those blacks who have attained positions of distinction in this society for the most part, and coming out of the thirties, forties and fifties, for the most part have tended to be administrative types and be lawyers and so on, but the technicians have been of a different race.

Now, the balance will redress itself, has to redress itself with the gradual diminution of emphasis on the classics. I believe in such schools Greek is definitely not taught, and Latin, but what I would like to hear from the Minister is to what extent his Ministry, not only to reverse the trend of former decades, but with a view to satisfying perhaps the technological needs and skills of the eighties and the nineties, to what extent his Ministry is going to so shape its policy as to lay emphasis on matters perhaps of greater practical value for those particular decades that we will be going into from now on, Sir, because it cannot be said that developing countries such as ours will need to make the greatest possible use of those skills which would assist in the rapid promotion of the developmental process, and the emphasis therefore in education will have to shift, in my submission. I may be totally wrong, I am not an educationist and I am speaking purely from a subjective point of view or perhaps from a point of view of prejudice, but it is my view, sincerely held, that the emphasis in education in the next few decades must be of a more technical, or if you like, vocational flavour, and the Act itself cannot spell out that direction, but the Minister by way of explanation of some of the general statements of his functions as laid down in the Act can perhaps give the country some indication as to the thrust.

It appears to me, Mr. Speaker, that in today's situation in Barbados, particularly in the area of construction, and I do not mean just in the area of labourers or masons or carpenters, but looking over the whole spread of the construction industry, there is a clear dearth of personnel required properly to work in the construction industry at the speed and with the degree of efficiency that is required in the eighties. This weakness that has now shown itself within the last three or four years by reason of the boom in the construction industry, and then you find you have a host of projects but not the personnel to give the best, who can efficaciously see through the host of projects that have come on stream. This situation, I believe, has shown up the weakness in the planning of the former Government.

I tend not to look back, and I do not wish after we have been in power for nearly five years to harp back and to blame everything on the DLP. I believe that the country wants us to look forward and to hear what we intend to do, but sometimes it is necessary to make a speech in its historical context or to make the speech mindful of the historical context, and I think that there was an under-emphasis in the planning in the last administration in terms of having the facilities available to train and throw up the personnel who would be required, and the fact that there are shortages today and so on of skilled personnel is not so much the fault of this Government as it is the fault of the former Government in its planning. I therefore welcome the establishment of an

enlarged polytechnic at Wildey, and I trust that it shall get off the ground fairly shortly and do the job for which it has been constructed.

At the same time as I may have been critical of the lack of planning in the DLP in respect of vocational and technical training, I think that the establishment of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity, another educational institution but of a different type, was a step in the right direction, and I wish to counsel the Minister today, and I hope that some note will be taken, Mr. Speaker, of the point I am coming to, and I will say it with all modesty.

4.50 p.m.

I wish to counsel the Minister today and I hope that some note will be taken of the point I am coming to, and I say it with all modesty. I had occasion to speak to the Chamber of Commerce in 1981, I do not remember the month it was, and I made the point to the Chamber of Commerce then that as it appeared to me not only as a politician but also from my experience having been Chairman of two Statutory Boards at the time, that one of the greatest challenges facing Barbados in the 1980s, and this is the point I am making, is the question of management, the training of management personnel. You can have all the projects, you can have all the money, if you have not got managers to implement the policies and projects, there will be great wastage of funds in this country; and even though the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity will be fulfilling its functions, I believe that some serious consideration should be given to the training of specially middle management by whatever means the Ministry of Education has at its disposal. I make that call today for serious consideration to be paid to the training of managers or people of management level in this decade.

Similarly I hope that the interest that has been shown in training persons in accounting is pursued with vigour and increased because especially in the public sector of this country, in Government and quasi-governmental organisations, there is a very grave weakness in the area of accounting skills, and again that is one of the aspects of educational training or development to which I think the Ministry should pay particular attention in respect of its planning for the 80s.

Now, Sir, coming to the Lodge School. Before I do that by way of preface, it seems that this Bill from my comparison with the Education Act, Cap. 41 is in basic form, structure and even substance similar, I am not saying it is the same, to the Act of 1975 now Cap. 41A of the Laws of Barbados, and I understand the Parts and divisions of the Bill and what is aimed at in the Bill. In particular, if the Minister is satisfied with the abolition of the old schemes of Government which regulated Governing Bodies at many of our schools and

indeed the Lodge School, and the substitution of the system in the Bill before us will relieve the problems in some of our secondary schools, and as an old Lodge boy the problems at Lodge School, I will rely on his own deliberate judgment to which I am sure he must have given great thought over the past few years.

It has come home to me, Sir, that there have been many problems at Lodge School in the last five or six years, problems of discipline at all levels involving members of staff as well as pupils, and it has really saddened to have witnessed a decline at Lodge School. Now I do not wish to appear in any way to be or to have been a supporter of the class system which operated in secondary education in Barbados because I suffered under it as a school boy. Lodge School during the ten years that I was there, 1950 to 1960, had certain standards, certain levels of expectations in this community, a certain tone, all of which have disappeared within the last five or six years, and as I say, Sir, it distresses me greatly.

In 1979 I was asked to deliver the feature address at Speech Day at Lodge School, and I was saddened to see pupils coming up to receive prizes from the Governor-General dressed any old how, with one sock down by the ankle and the other one at knee length, any colour shirt, any colour pants, sauntering up, slouching in a very slovenly manner to receive prizes from His Excellency the Governor-General. I spoke to a person in a very senior position — I do not want to be invidious and I am not going to identify him more than saying that — at the Lodge School and complained at the standards that I saw on Speech Day 1979, and his answer to me was that the parents could not afford to buy proper clothes for the students. Now this is somebody who should have known better, and I do not accept that rationalisation that was proffered to me on the day. I cannot accept it in the light of those children having the benefit of free secondary education and free textbooks and all of that. When I went to Lodge School my father had three of us there. Initially we started off paying \$24 per term per child and everything had to be found. I won a Lodge School senior scholarship and one of my brothers won a Lodge School junior which eased some of the burden of fee paying, but we still had to pay upon the salary which my father was working for in those days in the 50s for books, games fees, the lot, and there was no Speech Day at Lodge School that any boy could dare come to school without being properly attired, to wit, grey flannel pants, if you were a little fellow shorts, bigger boys long grey pants, white shirt, school tie and blazer. Those days are dead at Lodge School and no one seems willing within the establishment to return to some semblance of discipline and what I call tone. If there is a falling away of standards and there is no insistence upon the maintenance of proper standards and discipline, what is to happen?

5.00 p.m.

Are we worried now that it is difficult for people to get three 'o' level subjects and many do not get any A's at all? Everything is collapsing. If this Bill is going to have the effect to bolster discipline and standards in Barbados in Education once again, it deserves the support of every Barbadian, not only those who are in the House of Assembly because we are in a serious state of Education.

I have refused to go to any Inter-School Sports. I have been once since I have been back to Barbados within 11 years and it is not a thing that I would normally miss being once Sprint Champion of Barbados, Sir. I have a record. You all do not know. Go and get the Advocate for June 6th, 1960. I have a record in Barbados of running the 100 yards in 10 seconds flat, Sir, equalled Michael Anosteni's record. Let it be shown in the records of this House. If there are doubting Thomases, let it be shown, Sir, but I have refused to go to Inter-School Sports because the bad language, the indecent language used by the pupils at the Inter-School Sports disgusted me. Nobody seems willing to do anything about it.

I have heard them abuse Policemen on one of the occasions that I went and I said that I was not going back so something has to be done seriously in Education in Barbados. Apart from our putting \$137 million in this year's Estimates in Education, there is more to be done. Pouring money is not going to solve the problem.

I do not know what sort of person the Hon. Minister has in mind for this person mentioned in the Bill, "Child Attendance Officer". I do not know of what educational standard or level of intelligence, general competence this Child Attendance Officer what type of person he is going to be. I would like some indication from the Minister as to the type of person he would be looking for. If the Child Attendance Officer, together with the Teachers, can assist in raising the standard there again, Sir, we would be on the right track and if this legislation would give the teeth that it would be necessary for the proper carrying out of those functions then again, the Bill deserves support.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we can move towards the situation where all of the Secondary Schools in Barbados will be treated or seen by the general public as being on the same level. We have to move towards this to get rid of the old class system of Harrison's College, Queen's College and Lodge in the one group and St. Michael, Foundation, Combermere and others but not so much in fact as in terms of a person's psychological make-up in people's assumption that there is a class system in operation.

I am not denying that it may still be in operation. In fact, what I am saying is that it is also perceived by the society to be in existence and the eradication of this will take years, many, many years before we reach the stage

where a parent will indicate on the Eleven Plus application form or whatever it is called, a document that you have to fill up as to the choice of schools. It will take many years to unwash the psychological brain washing that has been there for years to the extent that a parent will willingly write down as his first choice, let us say, St. George's Secondary School and not Harrison's College. That is a matter of getting it out of the psychological system and, as I said, steps can be taken towards the eradication of that kind of attitude by upgrading the facilities and standards, staff and equipment and so on at some of those now second-class schools. That is in the process of time.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the National Advisory Commission on Education. I am not sure... How many minutes, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, you must not challenge the Chair.

Mr. SIMMONS: I am asking how many minutes, Sir. I was anticipating that you were bringing me to two minutes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two minutes.

Mr. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, I'll be over in two minutes, Sir. I believe this may have been in the previous Act, a National Advisory Commission. If it was not, I wish to welcome it. We have had Commissions and Commissions and so on and we have taken some criticisms from certain members on the Other Side about Government by Commissions but, as I have said, on a debate on the Duffus Commission, the more we extend the consultative processes of Government, the more we will cause democracy to flower, the more we will involve people who have contributions to make outside of the Parliamentary sector, the more we will involve them, in the decision-making, the more the country can benefit and I think it is an aspect of Government to which greater attention should be paid.

There are certain Ministries which I believe would better operate with a National Advisory Council; You have the National Economic Council. The Ministry of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs, the Ministry of Trade, those are two Ministries which could have set up a National Advisory Body on trade or whatever to assist the Ministry in proper decision-making and planning at the same time.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is good education. Thanks for that.

Mr. SIMMONS: I have finished midway. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I welcome this Bill before this Honourable Chamber in that it sets about among other things to provide for a coordinated and effective system of education relating to the needs of the people of Barbados.

This Bill is very significant, very important to us, especially when we bear in mind that large sums of money is spent in the area of education. It is not an area that should be dismissed lightly and, therefore, any full-scale debate on this subject should be welcomed because it is not an area that should be confined to the Ministry of Education and the staff at the Ministry.

5.10 p.m.

It is an area which touches on the livelihood, the future of this country and it embraces all facets of our development and therefore we must see this Bill as an attempt not only to harness the problems in education, but to plan a programme of action which will help in the overall development of this country over the next couple of years. It is my view and it has always been my view that education has too often been dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis and that has been responsible for the decline of the system which we have and what we were proud of over the past years.

We are overtaken by events and ever so often successive Governments find themselves trying to adjust itself to the particular situation and this has come about because there was no proper plan and the Ministry of Education did not take into consideration the development package of the future of our country. If we are to tackle Education and to find an effective system of Education, Mr. Speaker, we must ask ourselves and address ourselves to the question as to where we are going, what do we expect of our country, what do we expect our country to look like ten, twenty years ahead? It is only after considering this question that we can come up with a proper, co-ordinated and effective system, or a policy towards education because when we talk in terms of harnessing the educational problems surely, we should not be looking at the problems as they presently are, we should be looking at how best we can resolve the problems in the years to come. It is my feeling that the purpose of this Bill is to put things in that particular perspective.

The former Administration in 1975 did embark on a similar programme. They brought to this Honourable Chamber an Education Act and I want to say that I am not critical of that particular Act because I do agree that there are certain aspects of that Bill that re-appear in this Bill today and therefore we must concede that both Sides have got an interest in the educational future of our country, but there are some fundamental differences which the present Administration has addressed itself to

and this is so because of the changing pattern of our society.

For instance, we have had Tourism as a major industry in Barbados and certainly any educational policy must and should take into consideration, the introduction of Tourism education in schools and therefore, we must look at the industrial development of our country and the educational policy must reflect the type of industrial programme which the Government, or any country is pursuing. Therefore, the purpose of this Bill would be, or should be seeking to address itself to the development of our country and the direction in which it is going.

Now, there are particular areas which the Bill has addressed itself to. The question of the involvement of the private schools. Now, the private schools have served this country well, although there is a tendency, by some people in this society to underrate and to undermine the significant role which the private schools have played in this country. I am one who is very proud to say that the private schools have played a very vital role in the educational system of this country. No one can ignore the role which the Modern High School, the Federal High School, the Unique, the Co-operative High School and other schools have played in the educational system and it is to the credit of successive Honourable Ministers of Education, when they have decided to grant aid and increase the aid to those schools.

I must say of the present Honourable Minister of Education that he has acceded to a number of requests when he decided to increase the grants and assistance to the private schools because it was my contention that the private schools, although they had played and demonstrated that they had played a very significant role in the educational system yet, they were not encouraged to continue to play in that role and it is regrettable because when we look back at the scholars who have been produced at those schools and the positions which people who have come out of those private schools now hold, we must conclude that those private schools have been very instrumental in developing the educational system in this country. But, there have been some constraints as these private assisted schools have operated against some factors which one can term as undesirable because they were asked to produce the same quality of education, the same type of results, but Mr. Speaker, I submit that they were not given the same type of aid by the Government and I am not satisfied that the private schools are given the sort of assistance which would enable them to give of their best, or to give of the standard that is obtained at the Government schools.

I am not critical of the Honourable Minister because I know that he has done whatever he could

based on the budget which he has allocated to him to the private schools, but what I am saying is this and it is based on reason and facts that it takes more than \$100 per term to educate a child in one of the Government aided schools. Statistics have proven this and there is no one who can criticise me on this particular fact. Therefore, what we must address ourselves to in future if we want and if we admit that the private schools are playing a vital role and we want them to continue to play that role, then we must be realistic. We have to look at the level of the financial assistance, which we are giving them and we must also look at the sort of training and the opportunities that are afforded the private schools because in my opinion, a teacher is a teacher whether he is in a Government school, or whether he is in a private school, he has got a role to play and he has got a function to discharge, or several functions to discharge and therefore, if we accept that he is a teacher and that he is trying to inculcate in the young children some of the academic brilliance which that child should have, well, we have got to give him some assistance and consider him in that light. Therefore, I am suggesting that in the very near future that further assistance is given to the private schools with a view to enabling them to occupy more places at Erdiston Teachers' College. That is my appeal because I feel that those teachers deserve it, they have demonstrated without Mr. Speaker, having that training from Erdiston that they have been able to produce very good results, or excellent results, in some cases better than those teachers who have had University and Erdiston training.

5.20 p.m.

That is why I contend that if those private schools are given increased opportunities to further their skills and techniques at Erdiston Training College, then I am sure that their role will be even more important and significant in the whole educational system.

Now, it leads me to ask the question what about the School Leaving Certificate. Any educational policy or Bill must take into consideration the future or must address itself to the Barbados School Leaving Certificate. Mr. Speaker, the Barbados School Leaving Certificate was introduced in the former administration. I well accept that there was a reason for introducing it at that time, because there was a time when many pupils or students did not qualify with the necessary four 'O' Levels to get into the Teaching Service, and the qualifications were dropped to two and sometimes one 'O' Level in order to get people to teach in the schools, and we can see at that time why the level of education dropped. That is the answer. (*Aside*). The Deputy Leader of the Opposition was Minister of Education and I am sure he will not criticise me for saying this, that the reason why we have these problems with us, and the reason why the Minister of Education had to face up to the ugly task of

eliminating those who had three and less certificates was because the former administration encouraged it. They encouraged those people who had one and two 'O' Levels to come into the Teaching Service, and it was that administration that brought about the Barbados School Leaving Certificate, and I wonder. I hope the hon. member will help me on this, but what about Grade I of the Barbados Secondary School Leaving Certificate?

I was made to understand, when I was in the role as Headmaster of a school — and I must say the school used to get good results, contrary to what the Hon. Leader of the Opposition used to think — because I would like to tell him they used to get seven out of seven passes in English with distinctions, and yours truly used to do that. Anyhow, I do not want to go on that now, I just said it by the way. But what about that, when I was told, and the other Heads of Schools were told, that the Grade I of the Barbados Secondary School Leaving Certificate was to be rated or counted as a certificate equal or equivalent to a Grade A, B or C in the University of London or the Cambridge Examination? We were told that. I would still like to hear from the Minister of Education what is his policy in relation to that? What is his attitude? I would like to know, because I do not know, I have not heard about any employer in Barbados accepting the Barbados School Leaving Certificate Grade I as a G.C.E. Grade A, B or C equivalent, so I think that the country is entitled to know and I am asking for an explanation either from the Minister now or at a later stage of the status of that examination. We cannot go on and on having a situation where people get certificates, and the children are frustrated when they are asked to take an examination only to find out that the piece of paper which they get does not have any value. That is where the frustration starts, and we have got to address ourselves to this situation. Do not let us fool ourselves, the problem is with this present Government, and it is something which we will have to address ourselves to. We have to get our priorities straight, and we have got to clear the air on that particular matter.

I feel also that the Minister has got wide ranging powers under this particular Act, and I do hope that the Minister would take into consideration the fact that there are some examinations that are not worth their salt, and therefore there is nothing wrong with the Minister or the Ministry taking a bold step and saying scrap that examination. If the L.C.C. Elementary does not worth anything, as it does not, I think the Minister should come out and say it does not worth anything, because I feel it is a waste of time. You cannot get a job with the Elementary Stage, why are we encouraging it? I think we have got to address ourselves to it. It is true that in my time, and in your time, Mr. Speaker, when we had a Distinction at Elementary we knew it was a stepping stone, but today the parents have to pay for this examination — that is the

point I am making — and therefore the parents feel when a child takes L.C.C. or Pitmans or ISA Elementary that the child has done something. I have seen many children, walking around with School Certificates with Grades D and E and they cannot get jobs, and I am sure they are frustrated, and we have got to correct this.

I hope the Minister will address himself to this, and I am sure he will, because one thing about the Minister, I must say this, he is the type of Minister who listens and he takes advice. He is unlike certain Ministers on the other side, when I told them that the answer was not to send the children out of school but to establish trade schools, they told me I was talking nonsense. Thank God this administration has taken up my suggestion and we have got the trade schools and the children have benefited. They are all now employed and are adding to the overall economic development of this country. That is what I call educational planning.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the hon. member talking. I wonder if the hon. member remembers when the school meals used to get late to the schools, and his colleague, Mr. F. G. Smith, was then Minister of Education. He was a member of the Cabinet then, Sir, and the Minister then said that his solution to the lateness of the school meals was to extend the school hours, to start late at 10 o'clock and end at 4 o'clock. That was the madness, the sort of policy that they had. I would hope that this Minister, or any Minister on this side, never attempt such foolishness as a policy. Because the school meals service is late he is going to suggest.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Is this a School Meals Bill?

Mr. BRADSHAW: No, Mr. Speaker, but it is education and it is dealing with policy and the effective and co-ordinated system relating to education and the future development of this country. That is why I am saying you have to understand that if you have something wrong, if you have a late school meals service you cannot change the hours, because it affects entirely the educational system. The teachers would have to work later, Mr. Speaker, and you would have the Parent-Teacher meetings meeting later and it is going to disrupt the whole system of Education.

We must look at this Bill and understand it is not the overall answer, we must not take this as the gospel, that it cannot be disputed, that it cannot be amended. I would hate to hear anyone suggest or feel that this is sacred. It is not the Bible, as far as I am concerned, because my concept about education is, and my approach to education, or the approach to education should be that it should be a flexible policy. There should be a certain bit of rigidity, but education must be flexible to take into consideration the development of the country. Surely, Mr.

Speaker, if you are going to have an effective policy, you have got to have the teachers, you have got to have a body which will control their behaviour and you must have the children disciplined as well. The parents must be part and parcel of the whole system, we cannot leave out the parents. I welcome the idea of Parent-Teacher Associations, though I do not share the view that there should be any penalty attached. I feel that this is a democratic society and any attempt at all to impose fines on parents because they do not attend Parent-Teacher meetings is going to meet with a lot of resistance, and I am sure the Government will find itself with a thorn up its sleeve to defend. But, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Parent-Teacher Association in that through that organisation lots of useful discussions, lots of useful exchanges can be had and obtained with a view to determining the sort of policy, or to recommend to the Minister and his Ministry the sort of policy which can go a long way towards helping him to develop a better policy.

Mr. Speaker, let us understand what is going on. I would like to see the Ministry of Education in pursuing a more effective system of education to take into consideration introducing tourism education in schools. I am saying that.

5.30 p.m.

I feel it is a must. We cannot ignore it. The same way we have introduced agricultural science, we have got to pay some attention to tourism because we must understand that there are lots of social and economic impacts on tourism and they need to be taught at a very early stage in the schools, and the policy of education should encompass that aspect of it. We cannot lose sight of it. It is very fundamental that we look along those lines. How are we going to appreciate tourism, how are we going to look at the negative attitude of tourism, how are we going to understand how tourism redounds to each and every one of us in this country if we do not start at a very early stage to understand how to appreciate people, the industry and where it is going, how we are developing along these lines? It is therefore essential that the educational system address itself to that.

We are moving into the industrial aspect, the technological aspect of life. We are not in the conventional agricultural area and therefore the educational policy should be related to this; it should have some bearing and we should not think along the short term. We should not be thinking of short term in education, so I do not think that one could just look at the schools and concentrate on or be concerned with one particular school. I am thinking about policy and how the whole system of education should be looked at. No Minister will be able to come up with a solution to all the educational needs of this country. If you are going to tackle the boards or the management of the schools, that is not going to be the answer. That is but one problem.

We have to look at the pupil-teacher relationship, we have to look at the serious problems that creep in the schools, the vices that move in the schools; we have got to look at them with a view to arresting them because those are some of the factors. We have to look at the social problems that find themselves in the very schools which make it impossible for the system to work. It is not just a simple matter.

When we look at this Bill, we welcome it. As I said, I want to give Jack his jacket. The Hon. Acting Leader of the Opposition attempting to bring a Bill before the House, but as I said, he was way out; it was far removed from the realities of the educational system. They were not with it; they tried. And I must say this: this Bill is coming before this Chamber a little too late. I told the Minister earlier today that I am a little concerned about this Bill coming at this time. This is too important. The last administration brought it at the eleventh hour and it died a natural death. Only one section of it was proclaimed. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that I am a pessimist. I am sure that the Hon. Minister of Education will be returned to take over and to carry on from where he left off after this Session, and therefore my problem as far as I am concerned is resolved; but I feel that since there were principles on which this Bill is based before the Ministry, I feel that it should have been before this House before now. I do agree that there were lots of pressure, but I feel it should have been here before now. I am not criticising the Minister. I see education as a priority and I feel that this Bill is a credit to the Minister. I welcome the Minister introducing it, but I would still have liked to see it a little earlier, but Mr. Speaker, I give my fullest support to the Bill.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I am a bit overwhelmed at the wide range at which this debate has taken. It is the first serious and indepth debate on education in this term, and I will make reference to it as I go along; but it really is my duty at this stage to correct a number of misconceptions that have obviously arisen during the course of this debate, and also to give some explanation of some of the points raised by hon. members.

The hon. member for St. Lucy found himself in some trouble very early on in his contribution to the debate because although he submitted that there were very few differences in this Act from the 1975 Act, he went on to say further that a policy of education must rest with the Minister of Education, and then he refused or omitted to turn his attention to what indeed is the fundamental of this new Bill today, and that is that it has for the first time rationalised the administration and management of secondary schools.

Now I heard the hon. member for St. Michael South in a rather anaemic contribution to the debate.

He was below his best standards, he made a speech that was lacking in substance, a speech that was directed towards more form and shadows than really what is the substance of this particular Bill before Parliament, and I really believe that he has done himself a disservice for a man who has spent so many years looking over the educational policies of this country. I know, Mr. Speaker, that cynicism is a legitimate tool in debate. I also know that sardonic wit is a good device, but it does not speak well for any hon. member to use debating tactics, for instance, like setting up false arguments and knocking them down and ascribing these arguments to an opponent. I think that is beneath the level of third form debating clubs, and I will show you exactly what I am talking about.

The hon. member says that a lot of what appears in the Bill of 1981 appeared in the Bill of 1975, and he read some things out. I was surprised he did not read out the citation to the Bill, that the Bill may be cited as "The Education Act" and say that that also was the citation for the Bill in 1975. The most important aspect, as I said, is the re-organisation of the secondary school management and administration. Now, Sir, I want to deal with one of the points that I think did not do him very much credit. He says that in 1975 members of this Honourable Chamber said it was a power Bill, giving the Minister of Education too much power, and I have heard in the debate today one or two hon. members making some reference to the wide range of powers of the Minister of Education. Well they are no wider in a substantial sense than they were except in relation to nine schools. There are 140 odd educational institutions in Barbados and all one has been trying to do is to bring nine schools in line with the other 130 odd schools in Barbados, and I do not see where the power play is. I will tell you where the power play was in 1975. In 1975 under the section dealing with the Registration Board, the Act gave the Minister power after the Registration Board had refused to register a person as a teacher and to allow him to teach in the schools of Barbados that the Minister could over-ride the power unilaterally, even though the person did not have the qualifications to teach, and give the direction that the person should go into the school and teach. That was in the Act of 1975 and when I saw it I felt the thing was so abhorrent that immediately that was struck out of the Act. To me that is the widest power given in any Education Act in this Century. 5.40 p.m.

Whether it is Subsidiary Legislation or not, there is no power in this section that has given the Minister of Education more power than that particular Clause in 1975.

I hear too, Mr. Speaker, that this Act reflects to a very great extent a lot of what was in the Act of 1975

and the hon. member for St. Michael South goes on to talk about a division of Education into Pre-School, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary. That was in the 1975 Act. It appears again in this Act. I would just remind the hon. member that before the 1975 Act there was a division of Education into Pre-School, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary and this Government is not concerned about making changes for the sake of making changes.

It is well-known in Barbados that there are Pre-School children who go to Nursery Schools. There are Primary Schools that have been in existence for two centuries. There are Secondary Schools and there are Tertiary Institutions and to suggest that because the same categories exist in the 1981 Act as in the 1975 Act is a repetition of what they wanted to do in 1975 to me is an insult to the intelligence of every hon. member in here.

He goes on, Sir, and he makes reference to the aims and objectives of Education and says that there were defined by the Democratic Labour Party Government in 1975 and the same aims and objectives are set for 1981 and there is a quarrel with it. I would like to think that all hon. members and all decent and right thinking people in this community would like to see the aims and objectives of Education in this country as roughly the same. The substance, however, goes not to these frills so to speak, but rather to the whole question of management in schools, particularly at the Secondary level.

The hon. member says that the only difference he has seen is that there is no provision for Registration of Teachers. There are two points made by the Opposition in that regard. The hon. member for St. Lucy quarrels with the fact that the provision of Registration for Teachers has been removed and very wrongly argues that the mere fact of a Registration Board would give professionalism to teachers and acceptance by the public and the establishment of professionalism around the teachers. Now, that is an argument that is extremely difficult to take, Sir. I have had discussions with the Teachers' Unions and the question of Registration of teachers was raised by the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union. I had to point out, Sir, that if you are going to set up a Registration Board you must set certain basic academic requirements for our professionals and the mere acquisition of academic qualifications, O'levels, or A'levels or Degrees does not make a person a professional teacher, that they must in fact be trained as professionals and the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union accepted that.

I went further, Sir, I said to the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union, suppose at any given time there are not enough Registered Teachers, those who

have got the qualifications and registered to man all the classrooms in Barbados. Suppose at the beginning of the September Term I have 5,000 children without a teacher because there are not sufficient teachers registered under the Registration Board with the minimal requirements. What am I, the Minister of Education to do? Am I to say we do not have these people and therefore 5,000 children must go without teachers and go home or do I use the powers in here in my position as Minister to find the people to go to the classrooms and do the teaching and the Unions accepted the position that the provision of a Registration Board at this particular period was inimical to the proper administration of the Educational system.

I say this, Mr. Speaker, with a great deal of emphasis because the hon. member for St. Michael South under my peroration sought to capture a little sympathy by playing with the motive terms of the wider public. He is going to commend and compliment Teachers and the wider public and the parents and everybody in Barbados for making their significant contributions to Education in this country. That is what the hon. member will do.

Why did not the same hon. member in 1975 instead of fostering on Parliament and the people of Barbados, instead of trying to foster on the people of Barbados an Education Act that did not meet the approval of the whole Teaching Force. Not a single Union or representative of any Teacher or Education Authority accepted the Bill that was put before Parliament by the Rt. Hon. member.

When I had gone through all the problems and sought a consensus of all the people in Education, the same constituency that he is appealing to in his peroration, all the parents, all the Teachers all the children, the same constituency he is appealing to, Sir, I sat down and talked with them and came up with a Bill that I am putting forward through Parliament today as a Bill that has been endorsed by every reputable group in Barbados.

Now the hon. member goes a little further, Sir. He makes the point that there was provision in the old 1975 Act for a Teaching Service Commission and he says that that had an entrenched provision through a Service Commission in the Constitution of Barbados to protect the rights of Teachers. Really, Sir, the hon. member knows better than that so I can only assume that he was grandstanding because of the provision of this particular Bill here and I must read the section, Section 65(1) which reads as follows:—

"Teachers who, immediately before the commencement of this Act, are employed by the Governing Bodies of the schools specified in the Third Schedule shall, with effect from the commencement

of this Act, be deemed to have been appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution relating to the appointment of public officers."

If this, Sir, does not ensure the rights of all Teachers in the system, I do not know what will because they would come under the aegis of the Public Service Commission which is a Commission, as the hon. member rightly knows, a Constitutional Commission set up with certain refined powers and in respect of the Third Schedule to which the Section makes reference, those include, Sir, the nine Older Secondary Schools, the Alexandra, Alleyne, Christ Church Foundation, Coleridge and Parry, Combermere, Harrison's College, Queen's College, St. Michael's and the Lodge School.

Now, I do not think that the hon. member could really seriously think that the Teachers' Unions would have sat down and agreed to something that would have robbed them of the adequate protection of their fundamental rights.

Another point the hon. member raised, Sir, was the question of the parity between the two sets of Secondary Schools. I tried very carefully in my introductory speech, Sir, to point out that the Government was totally committed, doing all it could to upgrade the facilities of all Secondary Schools in Barbados and I am talking not only about facilities and equipment, Sir, but I am talking about the drain of personnel and the allocation of competent and well-trained Teachers in the system to deliver a comparable education throughout the Secondary School system.

I want to make the point, Sir, that we did not in our plans seek to neglect the position of the Older Secondary Schools but we have set aside a million dollars to continue to upgrade the Older Secondary Schools and thereby maintain and indeed improve the quality of Education delivered in those schools. The hon. member, Sir, did a great Rastafarian act talking about I and I all the time, Sir.

5.50 p.m.

What he did as Minister, I put libraries in the schools, I did this and I did that and I did the next thing, Sir and he wants to know what is the position with this Government, what has this Honourable Minister, or this Administration done? I do not propose within the ambit of this debate on this Act to go into all the achievements of the Ministry over the past four and a half years. There will be adequate time, in other forum to talk about all the achievements. Suffice it to say Sir, that while the Honourable Member for St. Lucy says that all he hears is talk about Vocational Guidance in the schools, that all he hears is talk, that is what he said Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South gets up a few minutes after him and pats himself on the back and

says sometime in 1973, or 1974, or whenever he mentioned it, Sir, he conceived a short course for Guidance Officers, training of teacher in guidance and career counselling at Queen's College apparently for a couple of weeks one Summer.

The Ministry of Education is not involved in mere talk in respect of career and guidance counselling in schools, nor indeed, is the Ministry of Education concerned with two weeks Summer course to a few teachers and feel that they are equipped after two weeks to go back into a school situation and be competent counsellors. The Ministry of Education Sir has set up a course with a reputable United States University for the training of teachers and other persons, not only teachers, other persons who will meet certain qualifications to be given two years of training and to be put into the schools one assigned to each Government secondary school and a few others who will be peripatetic and would cover the private schools and will be programmed, scheduled and timetabled into the school programme not as teachers of some academic subject who after school does a Programme of guidance for counsellors, but who are scheduled, or timetabled throughout the school day, hour after hour to be providing guidance and counselling to the children who so badly need it with the stresses and the strains of modern society.

The Honourable Member also gives talk about what specific measures are being made toward the parity of esteem of schools. This Act more than any other measure that has been taken in the last eighty-five years lays the path for the establishment of parity between the two sets of secondary schools in Barbados because what the Act seeks to do Sir is to remove the differences between the two sets of schools because Mr. Speaker, it is very easy for us to speak glibly about a lot of the psychological pressures that are brought by having a dual system. An even system in any democracy Sir whether in Education, or in any institution in democracy creates a feeling of disillusionment, it creates a certain divident among certain sectors of the community and it makes for a divisiveness of the society that creates all kinds of problems.

Now, I know for a fact and as every Honourable Member knows that the children who go to certain newer secondary schools have almost a built in inferiority complex. They feel that somehow they are second class citizens in the educational system and that the children who go to other secondary schools are people who are better off. I am not sure Sir that that does not even permeate through not only the children in the classrooms, but the teachers themselves. I have been a little bit embarrassed at times when teachers in newer secondary schools feel and express opinions to show that they themselves do not consider themselves as equal with

the people in the older secondary schools and the Act here envisages an end to that dichotomy that would make for a feeling of harmony in the secondary school system in Barbados.

Now, if I may deal with the points made by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, Sir. I think that the Honourable Member touched on a number of very interesting aspects of the educational policy of the current Government and he dealt with some degree of details in a number of areas of what he would like to see and I will deal with them quickly one after the other. He raises the question Sir about the primary school teacher, who after he goes to Cave Hill and gets a Degree is transferred as he puts it into secondary schools, the result is that the primary school is deprived of the services of perhaps a good primary school teacher. Let me assure the Honourable Member that that is not the policy of the Ministry of Education. It might have been the policy of the previous Administration. We do not transfer primary school teachers who get a Degree in some subject to secondary schools. What quite often happens is that the teachers themselves request transfers into the secondary schools system and although I seek to discourage it because I believe that our best primary school teachers should remain in the primary school system even if they have a PhD. Sir because it is important that our primary level of education should continually be given greater part of our emphasis because there is no point in spending all of our energies in the secondary and tertiary levels of education if there is a defective primary system of education. So, I can assure the Honourable Member that that really is not the policy of the Ministry of Education.

The Honourable Member also asked Sir for the greater use of radio and television for education. It is an important part of the strategy for the new education order that audio and visual techniques should be expanded and enhanced for the delivery of education in the schools. In this society, Sir, as in many others, many of the citizens of the modern world bemoan the fact that the screen, the cinemas, the television put across the type of programmes which have adverse effect on the children of today. They make reference to the violence, sex and all this that appears on the screen on television and they say that this is a harmful effect on the children who view these programmes. Now, I am not getting into that debate at this stage, Sir. All I do know is that if the visual media can create deleterious effects on children, it can also create good effects on the children and all the experts in this area — and one has during the normal course of the job to be exposed to these things — are saying that the use of audio and visual techniques, what they hear and what they see make for quicker and more effective learning than a teacher standing before a classroom with a piece of chalk and talking to them and we therefore are looking at these new strategy Sir. You walk around Bridgetown and you see the young fellows with these big

juke boxes, they walk about with them Sir and they make a lot of noise and the result is that young people whether they are bright, or are not bright will know the name of every pop singer in the world and every word of every tune they sing and so on, that is because of the impact made from the audio, Sir, the same thing happens with the media with the visual media.

So we, in the Ministry of Education are beefing up our audio visual area. Indeed, this year for the first time, I have diverted funds from the textbooks scheme from the secondary schools because there is abundant evidence that there is a certain minority percentage of children in the secondary schools, who do not benefit from textbooks. They do not understand them, they do not read them, they take them home, Sir, they pile them up and they bring them back at the end of year unopen and it costs a lot of money to keep the textbooks system going and I have this year given directives in my Ministry that some of the funds that are allocated, that would have been allocated for textbooks purchase should be diverted to the development of audio and visual techniques to make learning and teaching easier for many children who are slow at learning and indeed the bright ones Sir in the schools in Barbados.

The Honourable Member also makes reference to zoning. He says that the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister made reference to zoning at the Coleridge Parry School's Speech Day.
6.00 p.m.

It is inevitable, Sir, that some form of zoning will have to take place at some stage. It is not the most welcome measure in Barbados. However, nobody seems to be satisfied with the Common Entrance system. The Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party have in their Manifestoes of 1976 come out strongly against the continuation of the Common Entrance Examination, and it is necessary to seek alternatives to the Common Entrance Examination. Zoning is naturally one of the alternatives that any sensible Government must look at, and the Government is taking a very close look at the possibilities, the strengths and weaknesses of zoning, and will in the process of time make a decision one way or the other in that regard.

I must, however, point out that before any Government can embark on a zoning exercise, it must first of all try and upgrade the facilities and equipment, the provision of teachers and so on, competent and qualified teachers in a system that will allow for a fairly even distribution of resources among all the schools at the primary level before one can talk about zoning people's children, so at the moment all I can say is that we are taking a look at it and will make a decision when all the circumstances are properly evaluated.

The hon. member also mentioned the emphasis on special education, Sir, and I did seek to find out from him what provisions of special education he was talking about. The physically and mentally handicapped have been given since this Government came into power, two schools, one at the Erdiston Primary School Annexe and an Annexe at the Charles Broome Primary School for handicapped children, because we feel very strongly as a moral commitment that the less privileged, whether the privilege is for economic reasons or for social or for physical reasons, should be brought within the mainstream of the educational system in Barbados, and we have started these two Annexes for special education for the handicapped children, at Erdiston and at Charles Broome. This year is the International Year of the Handicapped, and we do not have to wait, as the hon. member says, until the International Year of the Handicapped, I have taken the decision to open a new Annexe for handicapped children, a new school in St. Philip, and that will come some time during this financial year. In addition, Sir, we have increased the facilities and equipment at the School for the Deaf in the Pine and we have given an increased subvention to the Challenor Memorial School that is carrying on a sterling job for the training and teaching of handicapped children in St. Thomas.

The hon. member wants to know what we have been doing. I cannot spend time to give him all, but that is some.

The hon. member for St. Lucy again made reference to literacy. All I can do, Sir, is to caution him. Do not let us sell ourselves short. This whole question of what is functional literacy and what is not, and so on, whatever criteria you use, Barbados has one of the highest literacy rates in the world. I do not care what criteria you use, whether it is the criterion of being able to fill in a form and write your name, or to read Shakespeare. If you use a uniform set of criteria throughout the world, Barbados has one of the highest literacy rates in the world. I am not saying that, Sir, as any clap on the back for anybody, that is long before our time. The British came in here with a few slaves and exploited them, and after a while the moral force of the day made them educate the people, and they started it, and this has been so a long time, so I did not make the reference in my introductory comment to claim any credit for it, but it is a fact.

What I was saying then, and I repeat, we have had a very proud heritage in education, and therefore we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. I agree with all the hon. members who spoke that whatever we have achieved so far is nothing to compare with what we have to achieve for the future. Education is not a static discipline, education is a living organism. (Mr. TAITT: A living dynamic). A living dynamic, Sir. I

use the English word, he uses the North American word. You see, it is a living organism, it is a living dynamic and it must adjust to change, and it must meet the new realities of the society in which we live, and therefore nobody can sit back and say I have delivered the education utopia, and that is the end of the matter.

It is of importance also for me to say in respect of this Education Act that one of the major misconceptions that has come through in the course of the debate is that this Act is supposed to encompass policy. You do not spell out the policy in an Act of Parliament, Sir, the policy is determined in the Ministry day after day and is reflected in what happens in the system through what is said in here and the directives to the schools and so on. The Act is merely a mechanism for the proper effectuating of the policy, the Act does not put in the policy, and for all the hon. members on the other side to get up and say they did not see this, or they did not see that, what must you see in the Act? The Act is a mechanism designed to make the administration of the whole system run with a little bit more facility, Sir.

Now, the hon. member for St. Michael West raised the question of the rationalisation of secondary institutions. That is not the way he put it, Sir, but he was thinking that with the increasing concern in Barbados over the psychological damage of a Common Entrance examination, and the fact that zoning is anathema to many people in this society, particularly the middle class who feel threatened if their children do not go to school at Harrison College, that he did put up a proposal about the rationalisation of institutions, and his proposal was that Harrison College and Queen's College might perhaps be taken out of the secondary school system and put for use in the tertiary system, and it is only after children have completed the fifth form level, the 'O' Level, or the CXC General and Basic Proficiency Level, that they will then go into the post secondary level at Harrison College and Queen's College, thereby making them sixth form schools, the dream of the hon. member for St. Michael South. The hon. member for St. Michael South came up with that proposal, Sir, I do not claim any authorship of it. It was his proposal, but he had some heavies that he sat with in that Cabinet who slapped down every honest and forward thinking proposal that he brought up, and I think the hon. member would have done himself more justice if he had got up in here today and said what I know he believes, that this Bill before Parliament is one of which he would have been proud to bring, but they would not let him bring it, Sir.

He wanted to bring this Bill with the same provisions in it, Sir, and he was blocked in two areas. That is the difference between a Minister who can achieve and one who cannot. To be a successful politician you have first of all to be able to convince the people. After you

have passed that you have to be able to exercise influence on your colleagues. If you cannot influence your colleagues to get what you want, you still are not very much use.

6.10 p.m.

If you are in a specific area of Government endeavour like education, you have to be able also to pursue further interest groups in that particular area, in this case the Unions. The hon. member for St. Michael South had his head screwed on the right way and his heart in the right place, but he was blocked at every move by a recalcitrant and sometimes ignorant Cabinet that he worked with, and on the other hand he was so insensitive to the legitimate position of a teachers' union as a bargaining body for teachers that he felt that he could have laid down the law from on high, stand on a mount Olympus like Zeus and speak down to lesser mortals, and the Unions told him where to get off. That is why he was not able to bring this Act; so instead of the hon. member getting up and making these rather facetious comments about their having an Act saying there should be school attendance officers in 1975 and we come now saying that there should be school attendance officers in 1981, and because they made provision for some scholarships in 1975, our Act says we have provision for scholarships, and because we say there should be one thing or another, he dismisses it as if because they recommended in 1975 that you should have scholarships, we should come in 1981 and say the Democratic Labour Party said there should be scholarships for children in Barbados, the Barbados Labour Party must take the opposite position and not give any scholarships to anybody. Or because they say there should be school attendance officers who would go out and make sure that the children are not playing traunt and running around all through town and out on the beaches all day and so on and not being in the class room, he expects that we are so irresponsible on this side that we would say the DLP said in 1975 to have school attendance officers, so we must say the exact opposite; do not have any.

I would like to think that the debate has perhaps given scope to a lot of the thinking that is permeating the society and that in a way that has not been articulated by people in the highest councils of Government in the country for a long time, because all through the past five years there has been debate in this Chamber on all areas of public activity including areas that really do not carry more than a passing comment but has exercised the energies of the Opposition with a vehemence far beyond what they merited, but in the field as important as education in 1981 after being in here from 1976, this is the first serious debate we have had. I came in here last month with a provision in the Annual Estimates of Expenditure for \$137 million to be spent on Education

in this financial year and there was hardly a whisper from the Opposition; but the incurable know-all of the Opposition benches got up and in a moment of either tremendous magnanimity or more likely a moment of stupidity said "Oh, we have nothing to say on Education; Education is all right!"

You see, Mr. Chairman, I am so glad to hear that because I will be repeating that verbatim outside these walls on the platforms and so on when we get out in the public forum, because it is interesting to get that kind of vote of confidence from the Opposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not tonight; the rain is set for the night.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I understand, Mr. Speaker. I think that I have covered the substance. There are one or two minor points that I should answer. The hon. member for St. Michael South East raised the question of the contribution of the private schools to the development of education in Barbados. I have gone on record on a number of occasions during my tenure in the Ministry of Education of expressing my appreciation for that type of contribution that has been made in education, but I do want the hon. member to know that I did not myself get a chance to participate in the Budget debate because I was out of the country on University business, but I heard in the Budget because I was here for the presentation, but left the following morning, when I came into the Ministry of Education approved secondary schools were getting grants of \$250 a year for commercial subjects and industrial arts and things like that. The Government was giving them \$250 and some \$400 a year to assist them in getting equipment. Now you take Home Economics. You teach English Literature out of a mere textbook that you can buy for \$4 or \$5, but when you teach Home Economics you must have stoves, ovens, dryers, washing machines, irons and that sort of thing, therefore there is a high cost factor in non-academic education, and the Democratic Labour Party administration was giving these people in 1976, not so long ago, \$250 as a subvention for a whole school for a whole year. (Asides) Now we are giving them \$4,000 a year; from \$250 measley dollars by the Democratic Labour Party given to these schools to keep them going, to these poor children, children of the agricultural workers out there in that rain getting wet now cutting canes, and tomorrow the sun will be 90 degrees and they will get baked out there keeping this country going, and all they could come up with was a measley \$250 to give the schools to help deliver the type of non-traditional education. \$4,000 we are now giving them, Sir. My mathematics has never been very good and I would have to work out what percentage increase that is over the short period of four years.

I go further. Talking about upgrading schools, we decided that we are going to double in the time we have been in Government the cost of bursaries. We came in and found children getting \$50 a term to help pay the school fees at the private schools, and we are now giving them \$100, and I can say that \$100 in some schools cover the whole school fees, so they do not have to pull their pockets for any more, but in addition I heard the hon. member for St. Philip North make reference to some senior official in the Lodge School saying that the reason why the children came to school looking, to use his words, slovenly and shabbily dressed was because the parents could not afford to give them the money to buy the uniforms and what not. I do not accept that. I believe that that is a diabolical untruth and I do not believe that that could be the reason. I am not saying that the hon. member for St. Philip North is telling us a diabolical untruth; I believe he was told that. Who is telling the diabolical untruth is the person who told it to him. We assist in that area by giving \$100 to help in the purchasing of uniforms for children going to secondary schools. The children who did the Common Entrance are getting \$100 grant including the children of some of the members on the other side. We are giving the money again this year and we will continue to give it until the whole system is covered.

I want to make this very important point. When the Government set about to implement its election manifesto promise of assistance with school uniforms, there was a reaction from people opposed to them saying that they could better spend the money in other areas because people could afford to buy uniforms, and I said at the time that my experience has been that there are a number of parents in Barbados who still cannot afford to spend a great deal of money on their children in respect of clothes and so on.

6.20 p.m.

If the hon. member for St. Philip North had said to me that he was told by someone higher up in the school that the children could not change their clothes too often that would make sense to me, Sir, because they could not afford four or five sets of uniforms but if he is telling me that they are dressing sloppy and wearing one sock up and one sock down and their shirt tails out and a yellow shirt to a Speech Day and that sort of thing, Sir, that is an entirely different matter.

I generally believe that there are some parents in Barbados who cannot afford to meet the total cost of providing clothing, equipment, and so on for their children to go to school and this Government is making available, apart from these Clothing Grants of \$100.00,

Contingency Funds to the Schools so that perceptive Headteachers of the Schools who see that some children cannot make it, whether they cannot get money to buy lunch, or cannot get their uniforms and so on because of the lack of funds, that the Headteachers would be able to use the money from that Contingency Fund to help those children without making them feel that they are pariahs of the system and that is important.

I am not interested in introducing any blatant welfarism in the Schools to make one set of children feel better or worst off than other children who sit in the same form as they do. I believe that perceptive and sensitive Teachers will be able to spot the children who are experiencing that kind of difficulty and would be able to make grants to them and assist them and not keep records, Sir, I do not want people keeping any records to say that John Doe was given 85cents because he did not have anything to eat. I do not want those records kept. That is the policy of a sensitive and feeling Government, Sir.

Now, the hon. member for St. Michael West raised the question of overcrowding at some School in his constituency, that the children had to stand up against the wall, that there was no room to put the desks and chairs. Mr. Speaker, I am saying categorically that every school in Barbados is given an adequate number of chairs and desks for the children who should be in that school and I say for the children who should be in that school.

We start off that way and if 30 chairs get broken in one week, you cannot blame the Ministry, Sir. You have to get a Report from the School that 30 chairs were broken up during the week. We have to order chairs, requisition they call it, go through Central Purchasing, all that long route before you get new equipment and furniture put into the schools but why we have had problems with shortages of furniture in schools, Sir, is because of the number of Headteachers who would not stick to the limits that are set by the Ministry.

Now, you do not pack children in a school. What you do is you limit the classroom space and determine that according to the space this school will carry X number of children but a lot of Headteachers have been filing the children into the schools over and above the limits set by the Ministry of Education. The result is that there are some schools that you can drive a truck through because there are a lot of empty classrooms but other schools that have a certain reputation are bursting at the seams and I feel that if Headteachers were to co-operate a little bit more with the Ministry we would be able to do a better distribution of the children through the system, the Primary system I am talking about so that this whole question of a shortage of furniture in one school would exist in one case and

in another case there are empty classrooms and a super-abundance of furniture because of the problem I have just referred to.

Mr. Speaker, I did not want to get into this on-going debate about the Lodge School. I really do not want to continue that. I do not believe it is any part of my responsibility to attack Institutions over which I have responsibility. I get the feeling, Sir, that if something goes wrong in any section of my Ministry, whether it is a school or otherwise, that I as Minister should bear responsibility for it and it is almost, Sir, as if I am going through an exercise in self imagination if I feel too much about the situation at the Lodge School but it is a matter of compelling national interest.

I shall not be provoked by the hon. member for St. Michael South-West. While some people will think that it is perhaps better to sweep the dust under the carpet and forget that the problem exists, I feel that it is a vested sore, an open cancer, that has to be addressed. I am getting heckled, Sir. I have to be slow and deliberate with what I say, Sir. I have continual complaints mostly on a weekly basis from parents of children at the Lodge School who complain of one infelicity or the other.

I try and every time there is a complaint made to me I feel I have a duty to investigate the basis of the complaint and I have found it extremely difficult over the past two years or so in getting the type of response and reaction from the schools for complaints raised by the parents and members of the public and it is unfair, to say the least, that I should be made to carry the responsibility of a whole system without the type of co-operation that is necessary to help me carry that system with ease.

Now I have been taken up on a number of things I have said by somebody else somewhere, Sir. I want to react just to one or two things. I reiterate that there is a breakdown in communication at the Lodge School, that there is no proper communication between the Headmaster and the Ministry, no proper communication between the Governing Body and the staff, no proper communication between the Headmaster and the staff. At times, no proper communication between the Governing Body and the Ministry of Education. At times I am moved to believe that there is an antagonism existing between the school on the one hand and the Ministry on the other and whenever I seek to discover what is the cause of it the whole situation becomes blurred.

I have sought on a number of occasions to get to the root of it by holding discussions with the Governing Body of the Lodge School and let me point out, Sir, that I have spoken with the Governing Body of the Lodge School on more occasions than I have spoken to

the Governing Bodies of all the other schools in Barbados put together. I have talked to the Governing Body of the Lodge School on three occasions and I have never yet spoken to the Governing Body of any other Secondary School in Barbados except the Alexandra School. They wanted to talk to me on a technical matter that was not a contentious matter. 6.30 p.m.

I have sought Sir to find out what is the difficulty because I think I have a duty to allay the fears of the parents and I have not been getting the help or co-operation that I need to keep a great school from sliding right down the ladder. I do not care Sir who is vex, I am not happy about the situation at the Lodge School, I am not at all happy about it Sir. When I hear complaints that people who are allocated places on the basis of the Common Entrance Examination to the Lodge School and the Headmaster refuses to accept them into the school and when I as Minister try to find out what is the problem, I am rudely treated, then this Act becomes necessary, Sir. When I have complaints from parents that children have been sent home from School and told not to come back for what appears to me to be minor misdemeanours and I try to enquire what is the problem and either receive no reply, or I am told through a third party that I do not employ certain people at the Lodge School, so I cannot tell them what to do, this Act becomes necessary.

When the Government of Barbados through the Cabinet issues a directive that all secondary schools in Barbados must write Caribbean Examinations Council Examinations in the subjects that are offered including the private schools who receive subventions from the Government and that every, single secondary school in Barbados wrote those examinations, in accordance with that directive other than the Lodge School, then this Act becomes necessary. When the Chairman of the Governing Body can say in public broadcasting that the writing of the Caribbean examinations were put off for one year, when in fact he knows that they were put off for two years and that not a single student at the Lodge School had been entered for Caribbean Examinations Council for 1981, this Act becomes necessary. (ASIDE: Is that the Bishop you are talking about?) I do not quarrel with the Episcopal people, Sir, I do not get into that kind of business. I am dealing with education. When I want my blessings I look for the salt of the earth, the old women in Barbados, that is where I look for them.

When Mr. Speaker, this Government decided that there must be co-education in the secondary schools of Barbados, the Combermere School became co-educational I think it was in 1975. No quarrel, Sir, the Governing Body was told that the Government wanted the schools to be co-educational, they accepted that. When the Foundation Girls' and Boys' Schools were amalgama-

ted to make that co-ed, the Governing Body accepted the directive of the Minister of Education. When St. Michael's Girls' School became the St. Michael School by the admission of Boys, the Governing Body co-operated and there was no quarrel with the directive of the Ministry. When Harrison College decided to accept girls from the directive of the Honourable Minister of Education, there was no quarrel, girls went into Harrison College. This year, girls will be going into the Coleridge and Parry School for the first time and the Governing Body has neither questioned, nor failed to give its co-operation to the Ministry of Education. This year Queen's College will take some boys in, there is no quarrel with that Governing Body.

When they Mr. Speaker — a directive issued by the supreme authority of this country Sir, the Cabinet of this country that the Lodge School shall become co-educational as of September, 1980, I think it was Sir, and the Ministry in pursuance to that has issued notices all over the place to the media and to the parents that they can pick the Lodge School as an appropriate school for their daughters and when we come to the Allocations Committee which comprise of twenty-one headteachers in the Secondary Schools in Barbados and Canon Payne, the Rector of St. John and the Deputy Chief Education Officer of Exams — not me Sir, I do not get in it — when they sat down and decided to do the allocation of girls to the Lodge School and the Headmaster of Lodge School says, "There will be no girls coming into my school, I do not care what the Government says" and when you call the Governors, when you summons the Governors to a meeting with the Honourable Minister, they say, "How can this man employed by you seek to frustrate the policy of the Government?" The first question that you receive is, "When is Queen's College going co-ed?" Then, you understand what you are dealing with. Implicit in that question, Sir, was you cannot tell me that I must put girls in my school, let me see you put some boys in Queen's College too.

Now, that is the background against which this Minister has had to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune inflicted by an uncooperative establishment at the Lodge School, Sir. (ASIDES) I have to clear the air on this, Sir because too many rumours are going around and anybody who wants to engage in debate on this with me, Sir, they are welcomed to do so, Sir. What I know, Sir, is that I am not going to take anybody's time, paid for by other people to engage in any arguments with anybody. I am not getting into that. Sir, not at all, Sir. I have further problems, Sir. I am going to let it all hang out, Sir. For many decades, Sir, when every single one of us in this Honourable Chamber was going to school, the Government of Barbados paid the examination fees for

every person in the Government school system who was taking overseas examinations. None of us in here ever had to pay fees to take the 'O' Level or the 'A' Level, the Government always paid the examination fees and there is and has been in the Estimates of Expenditure for years, a provision for the payment of examination fees for public examinations.

When the Headmaster at the Lodge School can make children in that school pay to take public examinations and the Governing Body does nothing about it when the matter is raised by the Ministry of Education, it is treated with short thrift, it is time for this piece of legislation. I have had, Mr. Speaker, if you do not know, Sir, I have had parents who have come to me and told me that their children in fifth form are getting ready to do 'O' Levels and they do not have a cent and they are told that if they want to write the examinations, they will have to pay the examination fees to write them and the parents say I do not have any money, are my children to be deprived of the privilege of writing 'O' Level exams just because I am poor? The Government makes provision for funds to pay for all the children in Barbados in their public examinations. It has not been easy, Sir, but I feel I have a responsibility for the integrity of the whole education system and not to rock the boat and that I would suffer and suffer long.

It is a matter of deep regret, Sir, that I have to say this finally. The Governing Body and the Headmaster of the Lodge School came into my office and pleaded with me to close the Boarding establishment at the Lodge School because as they say and let me say publicly now for the record, the Headmaster was being undermined in his authority of the school by somebody who was running the Boarding establishment. I did not want to say these things because it does not help to keep a balance in the school to have these things out, but I have my own position to defend. When they pleaded with me to close the Boarding establishment, to give the Headmaster more authority in the school and not to be undermined by the people who were seen by them as power seekers, I decided that I would accede to the request of the Governing Body and the Headmaster because I felt I had a moral responsibility to give weight to the authority of a Headteacher in any school in a system over which I superintend. When I met very strong resistance against the closing of the Boarding establishment from certain people in Government, I held out and said, I must defend the position of my Headteacher and my Governing Body and if they want it closed, it will be closed and it was eventually closed. 6.40 p.m.

When I got back, for closing the boarding establishment at the behest of the Governing Body and the Head

Teacher, a public diatribe attacking me at a Speech Day at the Lodge School for closing the same establishment, I really wondered what was happening. The very people who had asked me to close the boarding establishment, either condemned me for doing it, or condoned the condemnation, because I did not see anybody buy 15 minutes of radio time, paid for by God knows who, Sir, to denounce the fickleness of a person to go and beg me to do something, and when I did it abused me for doing it. They did not buy any time to do that, they did not make any public statement saying that this was a tremendous breach of faith. That is the Lodge School over which I have to superintend, Sir. A great school, a school that has made a significant contribution to the educational development of this country. Not that it has not had its defects in the past like most schools, but a school nonetheless that has made a significant contribution and is still in the position, it is not too late, with a new dispensation to reach the levels that it once reached.

We will not be taking any rash or intemperate steps in dealing with these problems. Nobody is going to stampede me into doing anything for a save of face or saving my pride or anything to do a great deal of harm to the educational system, I prefer to sit back and wait, Sir.

This Act, contrary to the ineffective mouthings of two members on the other side, who will seek to say it is nothing more than a pale reflection of an Act they brought in 1975, and who in their hearts know that that is not true, this Act, Mr. Speaker, is going to put things on a better footing for whoever is my successor in the Ministry of Education.

I want finally, Mr. Speaker, to say where I started in this reply. This Bill should not be perceived as being an instrument of policy. We do not put our policy in Statutes like this, the policy is conceived and articulated in the Ministry of Education daily, weekly, monthly and yearly, Sir. This does not seek to set out policy in the areas in which the hon. member for St. Lucy, particularly, was raising. I, Mr. Speaker, in commending this Bill to Parliament say with a great deal of conviction that it is the most important and far-reaching piece of legislation in education in this century. I am prepared to be challenged on that, the most far-reaching piece of education legislation in this century. I believe, Sir, that for that reason the levity with which it was treated by certain hon. members was perhaps a little bit inapposite, and I hope that as it moves on through the other processes of Government it will be treated with a little bit more seriousness, the type of seriousness that a Bill of this nature deserves.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. L. R. TULL, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, if it is agreeable to all hon. members, I would like to take this Bill in Committee in Parts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is agreeable.

Clause 1 was called.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to move that clause 1 stand part.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on the question of the functions of the Minister, I am very moved to hear the Minister making his swan song in this his last speech on education in this Hon. House, Sir, and I do not think we should look at the functions of the Minister without taking note of some of the points made by the Minister in relation to the functions.

Now, Sir, I am not certain in the context of his statement that the policy is going to be articulated on a day to day basis and the execution of that policy will now fall to the Boards of Management, it would seem to me that there is some question, at least in my mind, as to whether the new Boards of Management are going to be in the process of carrying out the policy of education as outlined or indicated on a day to day basis by the Minister or by the Ministry. Mr. Chairman, I am not raising this question to be argumentative, I am merely seeking the Minister's view and the Minister's position so that posterity will be able to understand what the Act envisaged and what it anticipated in the carrying out of education policy in Barbados for the next 50 years. Unlike the Dogs Act, Sir, I do not expect that this Act will be brought down for repeal in another two months, or even another two years.

We had an Education Act that lasted from 1890 to 1975, for good or for ill, and one of the failings of that particular Act, it would seem to me, was that it had not articulated or spelt out in clear terms what the role of the Minister would be, and that was primarily because such a thing as a Minister did not exist when that particular Act had been put together.

6.50 p.m.

Now that we have an Act that does in fact set out in fairly broad terms to indicate what the Minister's

role will be, I think it is important and imperative. He said, if I recall, that he will be taking power from some Boards, those Boards that seem to be in excess of their power from the older secondary schools and he will be adding some power to the newer secondary schools whom I believe he described as fulfilling the role of mere messengers. Now my question is, in the light of the functions outlined in this Part 1 for the Minister if the new Boards of Management will in fact be super messengers of the policy as outlined by the Minister, because if he says the policy is going to be articulated on a day to day, week to week basis, then it would seem that the Boards of Management may constantly be referring to the Ministry for policy direction.

I am under the impression that whereas an institution like the Industrial Development Corporation or the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation — well I had better not say the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation because that seems to be subject to no direction from anybody or it seems not to have anybody to give it directions, that just drifts along and seems not to be concerned with the norms of operation — let me go back and say the IDC or the National Housing Corporation or one of those Boards, one expects that the policy is going to come down from the Minister, but that the Boards within the framework of a particular policy will seek to carry out a particular policy. However in the case of an educational institution, it seems to me that whereas a particular objective would be outlined in the policy position of a Minister, to wit, there shall be 38 weeks of school for a school year, that the actual running of the institution which itself must embrace formulation of policy with regard to how that particular institution is to function, must perforce be within the hands of the Board of Management if the objectives as outlined in the Minister's presentation are to be achieved. I therefore find myself in some difficulty when I look at the functions outlined in the Act, when I hear the Minister's statement with which I do not necessarily agree or disagree, when I hear his statement as to how the policy is to be formulated and when I hear his earlier statement as to the role which the Boards of Management will have to play.

Now I have some views on the Boards of Management which I would prefer to leave until we come to that section of the Bill, but my views on the Boards of Management would be dictated to some extent by the position which the Minister takes in regard to the functions as outlined here. The educational policy of the Government, of any Government, can only be the four broad corners within which the community expects to educate itself, to pass on the mores and norms of the society. That is what education is about. In the end it is a question of

moving from one generation to another and maintaining certain standards within the society. The quality education which is provided cannot be dictated from or directed from a Ministry. The quality education provided in an institution must bear some relationship to the, for example, recruitment policies of the Board of Management, to the attitudes of the managers of the particular institution. It is clear, for example, that if what the Minister says of the Lodge School is nearly true, that the quality education at the Lodge School must necessarily be poor. Whatever the results, the quality of education which emanates from that school over the next generation of students from that school must necessarily be poor, because even if they are able to demonstrate success at the certification level, they would not be able to demonstrate the kind of erudite perspicacity which is associated with persons of worth who have had their intellect expanded into a forum that provides them with the basis for saying they are educated. Hence, Sir, the management of an institution is as important to the institution as the guidelines which have been dictated from the Ministry for the broad directions in which we are going to be going.

Certainly no one would question the Minister's right or the desirability of the Minister determining that a school shall be established in a particular place and at a particular time, nor indeed will anyone question the Minister's right to make provision for examination and testing of pupils and the awards of certificates and diplomas etc., but again when one looks at the way in which education in Barbados has been organised over the years where they have tended to separate the policy directors from the technical directors, to wit, there is a Chief Education Officer — I think in the early days there used to be a Director of Education.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: If I may interrupt the hon. member, I hope this will not cause any problems, but it does appear to me, with great respect to you, that this is like a second reading speech the hon. member is making, and I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that you will guide him to stick to the clause a little more. He was at a funeral all evening, we know the rain is falling, he cannot attend the meeting, and we welcome the showers for the harvesting of the national crop. Read the stars then and you will see that they say you will have an early night. You are Taurus. An early night is indicated for you. Try and go home, man! This is a second reading speech he is making, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am advised that it is 7 o'clock. I shall report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Mr. CHAIRMAN left the Chair and Mr. SPEAKER took the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman has reported progress and asked for leave to sit again.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: The time is now 7 o'clock. This sitting now stands suspended until 8 o'clock.
7.00 p.m.

On Resumption

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is now resumed. When the Suspension was taken the House was in Committee to that it now reverts.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. CHAIRMAN resumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee. I believe it would be in order to put the question for Clauses 1 and 2 and then on to Part I and so on.

The question that Clause 1 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 2 was called and passed.

Part I was called.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to you for straightening out the records of the House. I do not propose to add much to what I was saying on the question. I would rather if the Minister clarified the position of this rather than my going further on the point. Perhaps if the Minister could take the opportunity to clarify how he envisages the relationship between his functions or the functions of the Minister. I had better not say his functions, but the functions of the Minister as they relate to the Board of Management. I have a few suggestions to make on the Board of Management but I would rather wait until then. Perhaps the Minister would wish to respond briefly.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I just wish in Part I to point out a small typographical error less it goes up to the Other Place and then comes back down. I believe on page 9, (4) (e), right at the top of the page, on the fourth line right after "tertiary", there should be a comma inserted after "tertiary". I think you will find it in the Old Act.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am grateful to the hon. member. There should be a comma between "tertiary" and "adult", Sir. If I can just answer the point made by the hon. member for St. Michael South-West. My view on the role of a Minister in relation to Statutory Boards

and so on is one perhaps I should put on the records. I believe that Ministers should deal with general areas of policy and the Board should be given a relatively free hand to carry out the day-to-day operations of the Boards.

Now I believe that the Ministry of Education has more Boards than any other Ministry and it has not been my practice to interfere although I feel I am entitled to by Law. I am always a little bit amazed about people talking of Ministerial interference. A Minister cannot interfere with what belongs to him. You cannot have Ministerial interference with CBC if you are the Minister responsible for CBC. You cannot have Ministerial interference into the Barbados Marketing Corporation if you are the Minister responsible for the Barbados Marketing Corporation but I believe and in my practice that a Minister should concern himself primarily with the broad areas of policy-thinking and allow fairly untravelling the responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Chairman and members of Statutory Boards.

As I said in the Second Reading part of this debate, I myself have only met two Governing Bodies for the whole time I have been in the Ministry because I believe that it is their job to run the schools but I do think also it is the responsibility of the Minister to intervene if he sees that things are going drastically wrong.

The question that Part I stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Part II was called.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I have said that I would have a few questions and comments on Part II. Generally, I do not think, as my colleague has pointed out, that this bears such close resemblance to the 1975 Bill that I do not think I have any questions on the particulars of the Bill but I would like to raise with the Minister and offer the suggestion to the Minister that since in his reply on Part I, I think he misunderstood the point I was raising in that he indicated how he as an individual would perform *vis-a-vis* the Board for which the Minister has supervisory responsibilities.

I was concerned in the light of his statement, for example, that he was going to be reducing the power in some of the present Older Secondary Schools and increasing the power in some of the Newer Secondary Schools, I wanted to get from him some focus as to how he envisaged that the Boards would function in the Schools. I was particular to point out that one understood the relationship of the Marketing Corporation and similar Corporations but where Education is concerned, the particular Institution ought to be allowed to formulate a policy with regard to how it could implement the broad policy.

Mr. Chairman, if you look at the present Older Secondary Schools in their scheme of Government they have a substantial amount of autonomy in the area of hiring, in the area of curriculum arrangements, the methodology that would be used in the class and although they get some guidance in the technical part of the Ministry through the Education Officers, I think it is fair to say that at the Secondary level there has not been a lot of guidance from the Ministers of Education at the technical level.

Now, Sir, one of the things that has been constantly mouthed about with Newer Secondary Schools has to do with the amount of vandalism, the amount of difficulties which Headteachers in these Institutions claim that they get. I would like to suggest to the Minister and to his Government a policy which I hope and I know will be implemented by this Government, the Government formed by this side when it comes to that responsibility shortly, a policy where in the appointment of the Board of Management a look be taken at the inclusion of people from the neighbourhood as part of the Board of Management. It seems to me that if the people living in the neighbourhood have a real interest in what happens in a particular school, outside of the fact that their children go to that school, if they form part of the Management of that school, the interest which they would take in seeing that that school is protected and guarded and that the standards are high will be infinitely higher than the interest which is generated by a few old tie types who may get people on Boards because they happen to support the political Party or whatever or even because they have an interest in Education *per se* (*Asides*).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, Please. Let us carry on.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, in the circumstances, I look, for example, at the Chairman of the Parent Teachers' Association of the St. Leonard's School, a lady whose name I believe is Mrs. Chandler. I think that she is a woman who did not have the benefit of Higher Education. Nevertheless, I attended a Graduation function of that institution and I saw that lady's performance as Chairman of the Parent Teachers' Association. She was the person in charge of the total arrangement for the Graduation.

Now, Sir, the manner in which she performed suggested to me that her interest in that school, a school where the Parent Teachers' Association was responsible for raising the funds for a hard court for the girls to play Netball and who had great difficulties incidentally from the Ministry of Education who had promised to them to pay part of the cost and eventually did not pay part of the cost from what I understand but that is not the point I am making.

8.10 p.m.

I may be inaccurate in that. The point I am making though Sir is that that Parent Teachers' Association has perhaps been the guiding light in trying to bring some measure of quality to the after school activities of the girls who go to the St. Leonard's Secondary School. I am saying that such a person serving on the Board of Management of that institution is bound to bring a level of interest and commitment which could only redound to the credit of the school and the better management of the school.

I am not going to allude here to the unfortunate decision of the Honourable Minister soon after he came into office. I believe that if he had to make that decision at a later time that he would probably not have made the same decision in the same way on the question of the desirability of having one of the Ecclesiastical persons in the neighbourhood, not necessarily the Anglican Ecclesiastic, but one of them participating as one of the Governors of that particular school, or not participating as the case may be. But the point I am making Mr. Chairman is this, the Educationists will always be interested in education and they will tend to be narrow in their view of a particular institution. The people who qualify for appointment to Boards in that peculiar method of appointment in Barbados common to both political parties are not always interested in the institutions to which they are appointed or if they are interested, they do not have as high an interest in the institutions as would some of the people living in the same vicinity where those institutions are located.

I am therefore suggesting as a policy which ought to be accepted by all the Parties that among the persons appointed to Boards of Management of the various schools should be persons living in the neighbourhood should be persons who would assist in the after school care of the facilities which we have heard are not treated well by people from the vicinity. I think that there is a certain amount of pride attaching to such appointments which would allow the people in the neighbourhood to view the school as being part of their neighbourhood.

Indeed Mr. Chairman, I think it is fair to say that over the last eight years, there has been a steady decline in the relationship between schools and their neighbourhoods and it has been intensified during the last five years Sir. I do not necessarily say it is because of the Honourable Minister, but I am saying that it has become more noticeable in the last five years, where once before the Headmaster of a school, or the Headmistress of a school had a rapport with the parents in the neighbourhood and that rapport extended down to the

kind of relationship between the Headmaster, his staff and the children in the neighbourhood.

Now Sir, in order for the people in the neighbourhood, one of the neighbourhoods which I represent, I now have some additional neighbourhoods added, but one of the neighbourhoods which I represent, the children who had been pupils of St. Leonard's only a few months, or years before would have such great difficulty using the facilities of St. Leonard's after school that their relationship between their former Headmaster and them would reach the point where their former Headmaster felt, or put down to feel that he would be in mortal danger from the attitudes of these young people suggests to me that the breakdown which has occurred needs to be looked at and rectified. There was a time as you would recall Mr. Chairman, when the amount of respect which children had for the policeman, the priest and the headmaster and other senior people in the neighbourhood even the local Government representative. The amount of respect which the children had was not based only on fear, or was not based only on rote learning, it was based too on the interest which these institutions demonstrated towards the neighbourhood and that was usually manifested through the Headmaster and the senior staff.

I am saying that we can go some way towards a return to those shall we say, Halcion days when the role of the school in the neighbourhood was indistinguishable from the role of other units and institutions in the neighbourhood in that it formed a substantial part of the neighbourhood. I have noticed that St. Leonard's and I am not sure if the Honourable Minister is aware of this, that we have now enclosed the school with a fence, a not at all attractive fence, a fence which seems to suggest that as we have seen with other institutions, that there is a separation of St. Leonard's School from Richmond Gap, Upper Goodland, in other words, the area surrounding Richmond School. It is proper that there should be security measures taken, it is proper that the plant and equipment of the school should be secure. But, I am saying that that is not a solution to a problem which would get worse if we do not attempt to solve it now. I am saying that perhaps part of the solution lies in the methodology in the appointment of Boards of Management.

I hope that the Honourable Minister will take that in the spirit in which it is offered. It is certainly something which will form part of the policy of this Side, but we do not mind if the Honourable Minister adumbrates it, as part of the policy which he is following now because as we have heard, Sir, the policy in the Ministry of Education has been a continuing policy going back to the 1960's and there has not been much change, so that telling him what we intend to do is not putting any secrets out, Sir.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make a brief contribution here. The first one is merely in the form of a question. I know that in Clause 16(3) on page 16 there is a statement:

"An order made under subsection 1 may provide for the management of one Board of Management of not more than two schools."

Then, in Clause 17(a), there is a statement:

"The Board of Management is responsible to the Minister for the management, control, operation and maintenance of the school."

This may be a slight drafting point. I do not know if the wording should have been, "such school, or schools". Perhaps it does not make any difference, maybe just a slight difference in drafting. If the Honourable Minister is satisfied with this particular wording, all is well with me.
8.20 p.m.

The more substantial point I wish to make relates – perhaps I am a bit diffident to speak on it – it relates to management of schools, and my diffidence comes from the fact that I am speaking in the presence of a distinguished Management Consultant on this side and a Management Sociologist on that side, and it is with a little trepidation that I raise a matter relating to management, but I would like to point out that this Act was intended – certainly the new Education Act of 1975, and I assume this one too – was intended as a break with the old administrative and management practices, and I believe that the point which was being made by my colleague, the member for St. Michael South West, is that modern management techniques should be imported into the administration of these schools, and I would merely like to state that I hope we would not just pass this Act and set up Boards of Management without realising that there is a dire need for significant improvement in the management and administration of these schools.

I hope that we will not only say that the Board of Management is responsible to the Minister for the management, control, operation and maintenance of the school, but that we would in fact ensure that the necessary resources are made available to those schools so that they can carry out the necessary personnel functions in a professional way, and that they would have the necessary organisation charts and the necessary lines of communication and so on, so dear to the hearts of Management Consultants and Management Sociologists. I hope that they will have the necessary resources to do this.

In terms of the provision of adequate staff to implement the educational goals of the institution, I hope

that we would not forget that management of the property of the school is important, and if we have substantial plant with over 40 classrooms or however many there may be, whatever the number of classrooms may be, and the grounds, and so on, that some officer at the appropriate level is available to the Head of the school in order to assist in monitoring and superintending the building and the ancillary works. I make this plea, I am certain it is on the mind of the Minister, but a little reminder and a jolt would not be bad in the circumstances and at this time.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, before the Minister responds, I wish him to explain 24(1), which says: "All rights, powers, privileges and authorities that, immediately before the appointed day, were vested in or exercisable by the Governing Body of a school mentioned in the Third Schedule are,....." and that Third Schedule lists from Alexandra to the Lodge School, ".....with effect from that day, vested in and exercisable by the Crown."

Now, as I understand it, people who are employed by the older secondary Governing Bodies have contracts with those Governing Bodies. If all the rights, privileges, etc. are now vested in the Crown, it seems to me that the Crown is now taking over those contracts. This Bill does not have a Teaching Service. Contracts with Government are not necessarily the same as contracts with other bodies, although they are contracts. I do not want to go into a long exposition on that, but this particular clause seems to vest all the powers and privileges in the Crown.

I take note that later on in the Bill there is a saving clause for teachers who had been employed before, but I would submit that in spite of the saving clause so long as you vest the entire rights, privileges, etc. in the Crown, that when the teacher who had been employed by the Governing Body seeks to exercise his part of the contract, and if he exercises that part of the contract in the accustomed manner, then the policy statement made by the Minister which suggested that the Ministry of Education would be in a position to direct staff, may in fact not be so.

I hope I have put it in a way that the Minister can understand what I am getting at. I would like to hear him on that as well.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, if I may briefly answer the various points raised by the two hon. members, dealing with them from the last first. In respect of the point made by the hon. member for St. Michael South West as to the transfer of the rights, responsibilities and powers, the position will be that the powers enjoyed by the Governing Bodies in respect of matters like employment and disciplining of staff and so on, will be transferred to the Crown. As he rightly states, all the terms and conditions of service of the people who are

already appointed in the older secondary schools by the Governing Bodies, all those terms and conditions will be transferred and honoured in the new contracts by the Crown.

In respect of the point he made about directions given by the Minister, the Ministry is only an agent of the Crown and will give such general directions on policy that the Ministry has up to now sought to give to the same teachers in the older secondary schools via their Governing Bodies. The only trouble now is that they will not have to pass through the intermediary of the Governing Body, but all the terms and conditions of service of the teachers of the older secondary schools, those who are already appointed, will be preserved and honoured.

With respect to the question raised by the hon. member for St. Michael South who calls quite rightly for modern management techniques in the management and administration of the schools, I feel very strongly that the new school situations, big diverse situations and so on, require management techniques of the highest order, and I agree with him. The only thing is that I do not know what to do with the Opposition, Sir, because while the Acting Leader of the Opposition is asking for high class modern management techniques and managers, the hon. member for St. Michael South West is asking that the school be managed by the people in Eagle Hall, for instance, and it is quite possible that the people in the immediate environs of a school, the immediate community that that school serves, may not have the management skills required for the running of that school.

Mr. TAITT: If the hon. member will give way, to preclude his going further down this dark road, I am sure the hon. member for St. Michael South did not confuse two levels of what we may call management in a broad sense. The management techniques which have to be applied to a plant the size of some of our secondary schools, for which the hon. member is calling, would require certain forms, would require that for example the Headmaster of the school be equipped at the level of a top executive, that the Deputy Headmaster or Headmistress be so equipped, that certain supplementary requirements for the running of such an institution would be provided.

8.30 p.m.

That does not however mean that the persons who sit on a Board, who observe how the techniques being implemented are affecting the policy, who observe what is happening generally with the school and who help to formulate the policy that will inform both the Ministry and the high class manager, do not have to be equipped

at the level of the Chief Technical Director, the Headmaster. An example of that can be seen in the very system we operate. The very system we operate is this, Sir: it makes provision for total idiots to sit in a Cabinet. Our system makes provision, it says that people who are not schooled in anything at all.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are making a speech now.

Mr. TAITT: No, Sir. He gave way and we are in Committee. The point I am making is this, and I am finishing now; while fortunately we do not have that, our system of Government makes provision for the managers at the policy level, the members who sit in Cabinet to be totally unlearned in the sense that we talk about people being learnt. It is perfectly possible that 27 or 24 people can be elected whose educational level was not higher than primary and that they can form a Cabinet. That does not preclude the necessity to ensure that the Permanent Secretary and other managers are highly skilled people; so there is absolutely no conflict in my calling for the commonsense committed people, some of the commonsense committed people of Eagle Hall to sit on a Board for, say, St. Leonard's school and the hon. member calling for high quality management techniques. I am sure the Minister understands now.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I understood the point the hon. member was making from his first sentence. I do not know why he needed to go that long, but let me just put it very quickly in perspective. An interesting policy of the Ministry of Education is to make the schools in Barbados community schools in the sense that they are an integral part of the community, and they exude daylight in the community and they seek to bring the community into the operation of the school, and we are trying to foster as best we can a respect by the community for the school plant, the buildings and also the school as an institution. For this reason we do involve people in the immediate environs of the school in the management of the school, and we will continue to do that, but we do also have a hybrid system because we do not only involve people from the immediate vicinity of the school into the running of the school, but we bring into the Governing Bodies also other skills which might not be available in the immediate neighbourhood, and the Governing Bodies are given large sums of money, grants of Parliament and they will continue to have grants of Parliament, and therefore one for instance needs someone with experience in finances, accounting and so on who can lend that sort of expertise to the deliberations of a Board of Management. So we will continue to operate a hybrid system both of involving the community as far as possible in the running of the school and also bring in expertise that is not available in the immediate vicinity from further afield.

Now in respect of management of the school, I must tell the hon. member, and I said it on more than one occasion already here on the floor of Parliament, that the Ministry has started a course in the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill in educational administration and management, and it is a course designed to equip Headteachers and senior people, Deputy Heads, Heads of Department, people of that level, in the skills for the management of large and complex educational plant and indeed of all the personnel both teaching and students in the plant. So we have seen that problem and we are meeting it head on by the provision of this training course funded 100% by the Barbados Government, and the course has been in the second year of operation at Cave Hill.

Now the hon. member for St. Michael South West also raised the question specifically of the St. Leonard's School and the use of the grounds. I have gone through this on a number of occasions. It was brought to my attention that the people in Eagle Hall area were not being allowed to use the grounds of the St. Leonard's Schools. As soon as it was brought to my attention I instructed the Headteacher at the school there to work out an arrangement with the young people of the community so that they will be able to use the school grounds without disrupting the normal school activities, and indeed that is the policy of the Ministry of Education in respect of Government schools. We believe that the schools should be used by the community in a constructive way and that the people should be made to feel that the school is part of their environment and an integral part of them.

The question that Part II stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Part III was called and passed.

Part IV was called.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, in moving that Part IV stand part, I would like to emphasise that the Ministry of Education is very concerned about the high rate of absenteeism among children at school. We see it as a growing problem, and this is the part of the Act which deals with the attendance of pupils at schools and the provision for school attendance officers with additional responsibility thrown on parents to look after the children and ensuring that they are in school. These provisions are made in this part of the Act and I believe it will give more clout to the school attendance officers and we intend as soon as the Act is passed to appoint these officers and to get them in the field based on zones throughout Barbados, and we hope to lick the problem of absenteeism and truancy at a very early date.

I beg to move that Part IV stand part.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Part V was called and passed.

Part VI was called.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Part VI stand part.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, in Part VI, just one very quick question to the Minister. For some considerable time it has been virtually impossible for a Barbadian boy or girl to find a place to study veterinary medicine. I know that the Minister and his predecessor have been seized of this problem and I think it is having or will have an effect on the agricultural development of the country, because the number of Barbadian vets as far as I know that are anywhere in the world attempting to study veterinary medicine or indeed veterinary science is relatively small. I wonder if the Minister could tell us what progress if any he has been able to make, and if he has not been able to make any more progress than we had heard the last time, what steps are being taken regionally to deal with this particular problem which I see as a long term problem as well as a short term problem.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the problem of placing Barbadian students into schools of veterinary medicine has been an extremely difficult exercise. I have however over the last three years been in contact with several State Universities in Australia and New Zealand Provincial Universities in Canada, Universities in the United States, I have made direct contact and we have been able in the last two years to place a number of students in New Zealand and I have managed recently to place a student in the Tuskegee Veterinary School in Alabama.

8.40 p.m.

The difficulty remains but the first student who has ever been to Veterinary Medicine at the Tuskegee Veterinary Medical School is a young man who went into school two years ago. He is now in his third year so if the Hon. member for St. Michael South-West can claim credit for that, he has more power on this side than I thought he had.

In respect of the plans originally, the Trinidad and Tobago Government in its plans to institute its new programme of Campus autonomy in Trinidad has decided to build a new Medical Dentistry, General Medicine and Nursing at the Mount Rose Complex in Trinidad and Tobago.

We expect that construction of this new complex will start some time in the next two years and will provide a number of places for the first time in Veterinary Medicine in this part of the region. There are at the moment on-going discussions between the Government of Barbados and the Government of Trinidad with a view to earmarking a clear and definitive number of places in all the facilities for Barbadian students when the time comes and indeed Professor Waldron is the Barbados representative designated by me, Sir, to serve on a task force to plan the Medical and Veterinary Medical Complex at Trinidad and Tobago as a sort of a Joint-Venture between the two Governments so I believe that in a few years we will be able to find a few places at a Veterinary School present here in the Caribbean area.

The question that Part VI stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Part VII was called.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Part VII includes the Regulations, Sir. In Part VII I wish to briefly question the Minister and I believe that this is of a more substantive nature. Mr. Chairman, I would not wish it to be misunderstood that I am critical of the Caribbean Examination Council. I believe that it is proper that we should have the CXC Exams. I think it is proper that we, as a region, ought to plan for our own system of determining whether our people have reached certain desirable levels of competence.

I think experimentation in education is desirable as long as we do not move away from the objectives we set ourselves in education but I would like to get the Minister thinking on a phenomenon which is occurring in the Caribbean. It is occurring very slowly but I fear that unless it is dealt with now, and we at the political level make some inputs, that it may be like a run-away horse in the not too distant future.

Mr. Chairman, I have seen some of the examinations that have been set for the pupils in the Caribbean in the CXC Papers which are being written. I make bold to say that we seem to be falling into a trap which people of colour and especially people of colour in the Caribbean seem to fall into as a matter of course. Having been exposed to vigorous education in more than one system, Sir, I would like to suggest that in the United States of America, a country which has demonstrated in many ways that its educational facilities measures up to all of the requirements for living in the present world, only today, I believe, they managed to bring back a manned space craft and land it on the earth in a manner similar to an airplane and that would have to be a fantastic achievement in any era by any people.

It, therefore, is quite wrong for a number of people to continue to suggest that American education is somehow inferior. That is a fallacy which is dying very hard in Barbados. There are a lot of people who ought to know better, and you yourself, Sir, know, being exposed to North American vigours — (*Asides*) You, yourself know that it is a fallacy.

That is not the point I am making but the point I am making is that one of the advantages and one of the desirable traits of North American Education is that, — the Honourable Minister himself is a distinguished product of the North American system, so what I am saying, and I am now remembering, will find much favour with the Minister, but the point is that in North America every attempt is made to teach the student. Every attempt is made to teach the student and the student in North America has to reach some very high levels. The student does reach those high levels.

I do not think that there is any question about that but they do it without the difficulties which some of our people in the British-trained system, with its elitish concept based on difficulties of yore, of not having enough resources to educate everybody and, therefore, making sure that only the fittest would survive and this Honourable House, on both sides of the web, if I may say so, bears testimony of the fittest, generally speaking. The fittest will survive but I see no reason why the Caribbean Examinations Council in setting the levels for their examinations should seek to make these examinations higher than what is required in North America or Britain.

I make bold to say that the CXC is harder than the Cambridge Examination or any of the "O" Levels which are being taken in London. I make bold to say that that cannot be fair to our own people if we constantly set goals which are so difficult of achievement that we leave so many of them believing that they are incapable of reaching these goals but the situation gets worse, Sir, when you examine what steps we are taking at the same time to deal with that problem.

We fall into the fallacious and unnecessary trap of following the British educators almost blindly and we have this very interesting situation now where we are giving people certificates for taking examinations. If you take an examination, Mr. Chairman, Sir, you get a certificate. You do not have to pass. You get a certificate so we now have two levels of examinations. We have Basic and we have General.

I submit that they may have a good reason for it. I am sure that there are many, many reams of paper written pointing out that all that is dissident in our system has been brought to bear in the discussions concerning the setting up of the examinations. I believe, however, that when they are putting together these kinds

of policies they should listen as well to those who are not education specialists, listen to them and take what they have to say and put it together with what their education specialists come up with. There is no necessity in our society to set goals so high that people cannot reach them.

8.50 p.m.

Mr. TAITT: I will wind up in the interest of getting the Bill through. I think the point has been made, I would really have preferred to go into it in a little more detail. I really do not wish to be misunderstood, I am not criticising CXC, I do not wish it to be said that I am against CXC, but the other thing I wanted to get in is this. The CXC has been implemented, but for whatever reason we are going to find that ten years from now we are still having some of our students doing CXC in some subjects and GCE in other subjects because we are unable to provide CXC in all the areas we now teach and we are not providing CXC at Advanced Level means that we are going to find ourselves and it is unfair to our children to have them doing two sets of syllabuses in their secondary education, then moving to an advanced level with another syllabus. All of that in the course of age 11 to 20. That is not fair, Sir.

I am sorry that time is running out and I am going to let the Honourable Minister get in some of his thinking rather than go any further.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I just want to be quite certain what we are doing here. I am speaking now as a legislator and I see references to regulations and the Minister may do something and the Minister must do something. I would just want to be certain that when the Minister is given power to make these regulations they are to be laid in this Parliament and be subject either to affirmative, or negative resolution. I am not certain whether this is directive, or mandatory, or whatever it is. I am getting a little confused at this stage and I just want a little certainty that as a legislator things are going to happen that I expect to happen as a legislator.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I can give the hon. member the assurance that the regulations will be brought and laid before Parliament, some of them are subject to affirmative resolution, others are subject to negative resolution and they are set out in detail in this Act.

Again the regulations, Sir, there have been upgoing discussions with the Teachers Unions and representations of the teachers and so on to agree and reach a consensus on all the areas of the regulations and we have made appreciable progress and I expect that some

time after the passage of this Bill that the regulations will be laid in Parliament.

In respect of the point raised by the hon. member for St. Michael South West, all I can do is give the assurance that has been given to me by the Caribbean Examinations Council and by my own Curriculum and Examinations section of the Ministry that a close study and analysis of the CXC results at the general proficiency level very closely approximate the results of the Cambridge results over the few years preceding the introduction of the Caribbean Examinations Council exams. One must appreciate that the CXC is still in its formative stage.

The CXC is a concept that was developed by the Heads of Government of the Caribbean states, but the creatural panels, the syllabuses, all the mechanisms for making the exams a reality are really the product of the teachers, the education specialists as the hon. member calls them and the educators of the region, they spent thousands of hours, they did lots of travel, meeting in their panel discussions and so on, putting together their syllabuses and so on, putting together the training of examiners, the markers and so on, all this is the product of the people who are engaged in education themselves with hardly any input from the political directorate, as it is called in these modern days.

Now, obviously, there will be a few problems during this early period, there will be teething problems, but I have no doubt that with the type of dedication and commitment that I have seen shown by the Caribbean teachers over the last four years that we will in the end produce an examination system that is equal to any, anywhere in the world.

Very quickly on the point of the North American bias, or lack of it Sir, I would want the hon. member to know that the educational testing service of Princeton,

New Jersey were the main Consultants on the putting together of the Caribbean Council, so that that important examining service in Princeton which is one of the best known in the world, indeed very North American made a very important input into the devising and the development of the Caribbean Examinations Council.

The question that Part VII stands part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Schedules 1 to 3 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. L. R. TULL, seconded by Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. L. R. TULL, seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know that this is the hour of interruption and although we were hoping to do another item in all of its stages tonight, there are indications that the Opposition and other hon. members would like to make a contribution towards the item here for the sugar workers and I have an alternative, Sir, to come back tomorrow, but the Senate is on.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, Sir, that this Sitting do now stand adjourned until 12.00 noon, Tuesday, 21st April, 1981.

Mr. SIMMONS: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER accordingly adjourned the House at 9.03 p.m.
9.03 p.m.