

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986 - 91

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, 26th June, 1989.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Monday, 26th June, 1989.

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. WEEKES, J.P., (Speaker)
His Honour J. J. PAYNE, (Deputy Speaker) . Rt. Hon.
L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., (Econ.), J.P., (Prime
Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)
Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.
Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.
(Hons.), (Minister of Health)
Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime
Minister, Minister of International Transport,
Telecommunications and Immigration and Leader of the
House)
Hon. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of
Trade, Industry and Commerce)
Dr. R. C. HAYNES, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P. (Edin.),
(Leader of the Opposition)
Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General,
Minister of Legal Affairs and Minister of Foreign Affairs)
Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P.,
(Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, (Minister of Employment,
Labour Relations and Community Development)
Hon. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc. (Econ.), (Minister of
Housing and Lands)
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M.
Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.)
Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH, (Parliamentary
Secretary, Ministry of Education and Culture)
Hon. C. V. WALKER, (Minister of Education and
Culture)

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P., (Chairman of
Committees)

Mr. E. BOURNE

Dr. E. A. SIMMONS, M.D.

- Hon. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M. (Minister of
Tourism and Sports)

Mr. C. A. NEBLETT, B.A., (Parliamentary Secretary,
Prime Minister's Office)

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN, M.A.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.

Mr. P. J. M. MILLER

Mr. R. P. BYER, LL.B., L.E.C.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.

Prayers 'were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of
Tuesday, 20th June, 1989.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move
that the Minutes of the proceedings of this Honourable
Chamber of the meeting that was held on Tuesday, 20th
June, 1989, be taken as read and confirmed.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations or
corrections, let those minutes stand confirmed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, before the
House embarks upon the orders of the day, it is fitting that
at this moment we should suspend the Standing Orders in

order to conclude business in accordance with the Standing Orders remaining.

I therefore beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Standing Orders accordingly.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the instant order of the day.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it is my duty as Leader of the House to move the suspension of the House at this point, and I move that this sitting be now suspended and resumed at pleasure, and that during the suspension as suits the convenience of Your Honour a Joint Commemorative Session of all of our Parliament be convened in this Chamber.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

ON RESUMPTION:

JOINT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT

SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY SIR HUGH SPRINGER
GCMG, GCVO, KA, CBE, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF
BARBADOS, TO A JOINT SITTING OF BOTH *
HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT ON THE OCCASION OF
THE 350TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARLIAMENT
OF BARBADOS

Mr. President and Members of the Senate
Mr. Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly
Presiding Officers of other Parliaments
Honourable Ministers and other Representatives of
Governments
Other Distinguished Guests

I welcome you most warmly on a very special occasion. Especially do I welcome those of you who have come from other countries to share with us our pardonable pride in what we have achieved and to join us in gratitude to Almighty God for his continued grace and favour.

We are met together to celebrate the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Parliament of Barbados, the third oldest Parliament in the Commonwealth, and indeed in the world.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly, I wish to thank you for your graceful gesture in making it possible for us for this occasion to dispense with the convention that would have prevented the Queen's Representative and the Senate from meeting with Members of the House in this Chamber. This convention has its origin in the historical evolution of the British Parliament and is not of such importance for us as to stand in the way of convenience, especially as this special meeting falls outside our constitutional procedure. The fact is that this Chamber is more commodious than the Other Place and better adapted to the requirements of our meeting today.

You may have noted that I have been sitting in the Speaker's Chair. I do so today as a special courtesy on a special occasion. There was a time when I did so as of right, during the short period when I was Deputy Speaker of the House.

It was my good fortune to serve as a Member of this House for nearly eight years of that revolutionary decade in our history when political power was transferred from a virtual oligarchy to the democracy that we then became and have been for some forty years. I wish to say a special word of greeting to those of my fellow Members of the House who are still alive and perhaps within hearing of my voice.

In 1939 when the House of Assembly celebrated its 300th anniversary, Barbados was still a colony in the British Empire and, notwithstanding what was said about democracy by some of the speakers on that occasion, the fact was that there were then only some nine thousand registered voters in a population of two hundred thousand.

Much has changed since then. In 1943 the franchise was lowered so as to embrace all employed workers who wished to register as voters, and women were given the vote on the same qualification as men; in 1950 the process was completed by legislative provision for adult suffrage; the Ministerial system was introduced in 1954; and in 1966 Barbados became a sovereign state.

Our Constitution is a legacy from Britain, which successive generations of Barbadians of British origin have preserved and adapted to the changing circumstances of Barbados as the need arose. Our Constitution came from Britain, but a dozen generations of Barbadians have made it our own.

The Constitution that we enjoy is an expression of the love of freedom. For the liberty of individual citizens to take part in the making of laws that will determine their

present welfare and their prospects for the future is the foundation of every other liberty.

The recent history of the Caribbean and Latin America, as well as recent events in eastern Europe and parts of Asia, serve to demonstrate, if demonstration were needed, how fortunate we are in having had preserved for us the democratic forms which our fathers and ourselves over the last three or four generations have been able to enlarge so as to embody the rights of all our citizens. 10.50 a.m.

It is right, on such an occasion as this, that we should remember the stout-hearted leaders of thought and action, and those who supported them, as they strove towards the happy state which we survive to enjoy. They are too numerous for all of them to be mentioned here and now - and some are better known than others, but may I be allowed to call the names of an outstanding few - Samuel Jackman Prescod, Sir Conrad Reeves, Sir Herbert Greaves, Sir Charles Pitcher Clarke, Clennel Wilsden Wickham, Charles Duncan O'Neal, Sir Grantley Adams, Errol Barrow and Tom Adams.

In the midst of our celebrations let us remind ourselves that we cannot afford to rest on our laurels, that we have no time for complacency and that we must not take for granted our good fortune. The price of freedom, like the price of peace, is eternal vigilance. We are threatened by dangers of many kinds, some from without and beyond our control, some from within and of our own making.

The history of Barbados can be looked at as a history of a crises overcome. In the past it has been our unity and the quality of our leadership that has brought us through. May it continue to be so. God grant our leaders clear vision of the goals we should pursue, the resolution and fortitude to pursue them and the largeness of mind to rise above differences and to unite in the achievement of the good and welfare of our country.

Applause.

CLERK OF PARLIAMENT: His Honour the President of the Senate.

HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: Your Excellencies, Rt. Honourable and Honourable Prime Ministers, Mr. Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly, distinguished guests, Honourable and former Members of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen.

We bring by our presence, Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members of the House of Assembly, our acknowledgement of the great honour of sharing this day with you. Our House is a little junior to your own in the achievement of this day, your 350th Anniversary. But we share with you the tribute to Barbados and to this

Parliament, the triad of which is completed by Your Excellency's presence here, expressed by the attendance here of so many distinguished Heads of Government and representatives of Heads of Government, Presiding Officers and Speakers, Secretaries General of international organizations and their representatives, former Members of both our Honourable Houses and other guests.

This assemblage serves to remind me of the beginning, as far back as 1945, in this very Chamber, of my own career as a parliamentarian, a career which, fortuitously perhaps, but fortunately nevertheless closely coincides with our total period of parliamentary democracy, our attempts at regional integration and federation, and the meaningful development of our relations with the wider world.

Forty-four years ago, Barbados was, in many important respects, a different country from that of which we can now boast. The social complexion of our Nation offered little mobility, except in the professions. Women, so often the bulwark of our work force, had acquired the vote but had little chance, until adult suffrage made that vote meaningful, of entering this Chamber. The movement which has been the pre-eminent pivot of my life, I refer to the development of trade unionism, was in its infancy struggling for its rightful place here, as it was doing elsewhere, against those who would be cushioned from its true brief of the free expression and development of rights of all workers. Primary education was a virtual obligation but secondary and higher education were a privilege. And so I could go on. Your Excellency will recall those early days.

So much has changed. Workers organisations are established and entrenched though there is always much more to be done. Free secondary education, an early dream of so many of us, was implemented in 1962 by the first administration of the late Rt. Hon. Errol Barrow, the Minister of Education then being Senator the Honourable Sir James Tudor. That single act provided much of the impetus which rocketed Barbados into the Twentieth Century and provided opportunity beyond the earlier comprehension and imagination of many of our people.

Concomitantly, I have seen the increasing involvement of the masses, indeed of all our people, in the government of themselves, to the permanent advantage and benefit of our Nation. We can demonstrate this in the continuing progress within our community, in its stability. Where Governments demonstrate their progressiveness by investing in people by allowing these people free range to assert their dignity and prove their worth, the surest defence against encroachment on any democracy is cemented.

You, Sir, shared in the struggle and it is but fitting that you should be with us as we celebrate the victory. Though we commemorate the 350th Anniversary of Parliament, we

also celebrate the success of a mass movement begun in 1937, partly as a rejection of the limits of the system which eventually changed and matured into what we now have, as we have shown in this Session today. Sir Theodore Brancker, Mr. Wynter Crawford, Sir Edwy Talma, Mr. K. N. R. Husbands, are some of those who survive the involvement of those early days. 11.00a.m.

The Senate, over which it is my honour to preside, is the successor of the Legislative Council which in earlier times was the expression of wealth and dominance in this Island. Democracy eventually caught up with our Chamber, still the Upper Chamber, also.

Now our business is to complement the work of the representatives chosen by the people, to propose initiatives where these are appropriate, to offer dispassionately support for any measure which is part of the impulse of progress in our Nation.

It is also to analyse and if need be, criticise whatever in conscience or principle we, with just cause, conclude to be matter for objection, rejection or change.

But our commitment is, too, to bear in mind the regular requirement that there are those who are answerable to the people. In final resolve, our obligation is to offer second thoughts, reflection and counsel where need be. In that, in my view, we fulfil our constitutional role which is not to govern but to be of help in the government of our Nation.

We shall look to the future with courage and hope, a yearning for just prosperity and a stable future. Let us see where we shall go in the next 350 years.

I thank you.

Applause.

CLERK OF PARLIAMENT: His Honour the Speaker of the House of Assembly.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your Excellencies, Rt. Honourable and Honourable Prime Ministers, Mr. President and Members of the Senate, distinguished guests, Honourable and former Members of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen.

I am happy today for a variety of reasons. It is my outstandingly good fortune to preside over our House of Assembly, a constituent part of one of the great Parliaments of the world. It is a great honour to have the presence of Your Excellency with us, and no less so of our colleagues of the Other Place, the Honourable the Senate. So we are fully constituted, a Parliament of Barbados in a joint commemorative session, but not in a sitting of Parliament for we would then be in your House, Mr. President.

Then there is the participation today of those who, for varying periods and sometimes over generations, have experienced the success and elation of election, and the agony and lessons of defeat. I refer to the distinguished gathering of former members of our two Houses whom we are proud to have in our midst.

But now for our guests, for we welcome our colleagues who take the Chair in the Caribbean ^ Commonwealth Parliaments, in the Parliament of the United Kingdom, that evergreen Mother of Parliaments, in Canada, one of our treasured partners in this hemisphere, and France, now 200 years into the vintage of Napoleon. We welcome also Heads of Government of all those countries and more. In each group we have more than a good quorum.

In the representatives of international organisations we have distinction flowing from our own region in the presence here of the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. Then there are, functioning within our Zone of peace, the distinguished representatives of the OAS and of the CARICOM Secretariat, whose work and whose organisations are so important to us. We greet, too, the representatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, of the Organisation of African Unity, and of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries. With all of them, distinguished by their quality and in their institutions, we *. have strong and kindred feeling.

Never relenting in our resolve, we who are in this Chamber today represent the strong and sturdy spirit of Barbados and of the wider Caribbean. We have struggled through most of our history to the achievement and success which this year represents for our Parliament. Countries untold, women and men everywhere - you notice I have put the ladies first - know that you cannot keep a good Bajan down. He will generate, manufacture or create that spirit ** and use, benevolently, the courage that abides in himself.

We have learnt to savour lovingly and with lasting feeling the blessings that our emergence into an independent, democratic nation has brought us. We have learnt to tolerate any misfortunes and to brush them aside like vagaries of the weather, to treat them as temporary, passing phases. With every breath of our inner soul we seek to cast those reverses aside, to preserve and develop the better things and to reach for the best. ^

This year of our Parliament means many things to us. We have placed our established institutions, including Parliament and its history, under proper and close scrutiny. We have looked, in analysing those institutions, to determine whence we came and how and by what course we have striven to be where we are. We can use, if I may say so, a microscope, in searching for the soul of our country. We may well feel urged towards and indeed fortified by, an eventual conclusion that the present, like the

past, may not be without weakness or other flaw. We must cast our eyes away from our shores, and use the same analysis and judgment. We may all then find, as I have done, that what we have is the best example of what is available.

We have what is known as the Westminster system, something that has so often meant different things to different persons since the term was first used just before my lifetime. But if, in my place in this House, I understand its primary principles to be as I shall briefly describe, I hope I shall not be far wrong in my perspective.

It embraces a bicameral Parliament, one House being that from which Government derives its authority, or a unicameral legislature which gives that authority. Government, through the elected House, is responsible for public expenditure. Next come Cabinet Government and a non-political civil service. Then regular elections in which governments may be changed, with a first past the post rule determining the victor in a constituency. Then there is government by a majority group or party, or by groups or parties working together, with a probability of a dissolution of Parliament leading to a general election where a Government is defeated in a motion of no-confidence. There is a constitutional provision for an Opposition, entrenched in the name of the Leader of the Opposition. There are reserve powers vested in a Head of State, usually in extreme or emergency circumstances. There is the separation of powers, of the Head of State from the Head of Government. The Head of State acts on the advice of Government. There is an independent judiciary. 11.10a.m.

A Presiding Officer in each House, whether or not he is chosen from active members of a political party, should act and is expected to act with the utmost objectivity and impartiality in the execution of his duties in the Chair, as the voice of his House, as the guardian of its privileges and as the daily regulator of all aspects of its practice and procedure. If he is not objective and impartial, scrutiny by all sides will not rest with any satisfaction in the distribution of favour. He will not be safe from the truth.

We have Westminster and better. The balance, order and good management of our society are guarded with many institutions, including our Parliament.

I view the history of our Parliament as an integral part of ourselves. I acknowledge and treasure the quality of this House and of our Parliament. I am satisfied and assured that we will, beyond our 350th Anniversary, in all our future hold high that quality.

I began by expressing my happiness on this occasion. I trust I have adequately communicated some of my reasons.

Once again, welcome to this Honourable House. Let us now begin to work towards the next generation of our time.

I thank you.

Applause

CLERK OF PARLIAMENT: The Right Honourable the Prime Minister of Barbados.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Your Excellency, the Governor-General, President of the Senate, Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament, Distinguished Representatives of Governments, Distinguished Representatives of Regional and International Organisations, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen. I join with those who have spoken before in extending a most hearty and a warm welcome to all of you, particularly to our guests from overseas, and particularly to parliamentarians who have served before in our Parliament.

An anniversary of any kind is usually a happy occasion. This 350th anniversary of the establishment of a Parliament in Barbados is no less so. Like any other anniversary, it provides an opportunity for us to look back and to look forward.

It has become rather fashionable in recent times for people to trace their family tree. They want to know where they have come from, who were their ancestors and what were they like. Sometimes what turns up as a result of their searches is not always what they would have wished for. But, except for trying to tamper with the records, there is precious little that can be done if it turns out that there was a rogue in the family somewhere along the line.

As a nation we must be equally conscious of our history, but the past is not always an unmixed blessing. We must not become so bogged down by our history that we blame the past for everything that happens to us.

It was in 1625 that the island of Barbados was first visited by the British who took possession of it in the name of their king. Two years later, the first attempt at a settlement was begun. These first settlers, in the words of an early memoirist, and I quote: "were invested with all the liberties, franchises, and privileges of English subjects" through a grant from King James the First to the Earl of Carlisle.

In other words, Barbados, like other colonies at the time, was merely an extension of England overseas and its government was the government of England.

Government in those early days was often arbitrary, violent, and tyrannical. However, from time to time some of

the freeholders were summoned to discuss matters of importance to the settlements and this group soon emerged as the Governor's Council. This was a small step in the direction of a form of representative government

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am obviously not trying to trace any family tree, but with the utmost humility I draw to your esteemed attention that, according to the records, among the list of members of Governor Hawley's Council of 1636, and subsequently also of his first general Assembly in 1639, was one William Sandiford, Esquire.

Applause.

In 1639 Captain Henry Hawley summoned a meeting of freeholders as representatives of the settlers. This body known as the House of Assembly along with himself as Governor and his Council constituted the first General Assembly or Parliament of Barbados.

Within two years of the establishment of the House of Assembly, and under the governorship of the famous Philip Bell, an Act was passed to ensure the continuance and observance of all Acts and Statutes previously enacted by the General Assembly and not otherwise repealed.

It was also at that time established that every parish should have at least two representatives, to be elected by the freeholders. The system of double member constituencies remained unaltered until 1971.

The system of government instituted in 1639 was further enshrined in the laws and history of Barbados, by the celebrated Articles of Agreement or Charter of Barbados, concluded between the Commissioners appointed by the authority for the Commonwealth of England and the Commissioners appointed by the Lord Willoughby and Island of Barbados, on the 11th January, 1652.

Article 19 reads: "That the government of this Island be by a Governor, Council and Assembly, according to the ancient and usual custom here: that the Governor be appointed by the State of England, and from time to time received and obeyed here, the Council to be chosen by him, and an Assembly by a free and voluntary election of the freeholders of the Island in the several parishes...." 11.20a.m.

Following the execution of Charles I in January 1649 and the assumption of responsibility for the colonies by the Council of State in England, Barbados showed defiance and the English Parliament countered with a series of trade restrictions. In addition, Admiral Sir George Ayscue was sent out at the head of a military expedition to subdue the Island.

In reference to the events surrounding the Ayscue expedition and the resulting negotiations, Vincent T. Harlow, writing in 1926 had this to say:

"On 18th February, the Barbadians published -a Declaration in reply to the parliamentary boycott, which for the eloquence of its expression and force of its arguments has since been repeatedly used by colonial legislatures against imperial interference."

The wording of some of the most important clauses in the American Declaration of Independence bear a striking resemblance to this document: (For example)

"Shall we be bound to the government and lordship of a Parliament in which we have no representatives, or persons chosen by us, for there to propound and consent to what might be needful to us, as also to oppose and dispute all what tend to our disadvantage and harm? In truth, this would be a slavery far exceeding all that the English nation hath yet suffered."

This \$ inciple subsequently found itself in Article 3 of the Charter which reads:

"That no taxes, customs, imports, loans, or excuse shall be laid, nor levy made on any of the inhabitants of this island without their consent in a General Assembly."

These articles of Agreement confirmed and strengthened an embryonic system of representative government, that by 1652 merited the reference of "ancient and usual custom." This representative government evolved and developed by stages in to the democratic government that we enjoy today.

The extension of the right to vote and sit in Parliament to the free coloureds, and later the blacks, the enfranchisement of women, the Bushe Experiment, universal adult suffrage, full internal self-government, independence, enfranchisement of the eighteen year olds, all form part of this process which began in 1639.

1639 is therefore a most seminal and significant year in the history of Barbados. But it must never be forgotten that the institutions of that time had their genesis in a slave society, and that the parliamentarians of that era spoke for the interests of the plantocracy and of the merchant and professional classes rather than for the interests of the entire society. We are no longer slaves, and those institutions have been adapted to serve the needs of a modern Barbados that subscribes to the principles of equality, fundamental human rights, freedom and justice for all.

Institutions, ladies and gentleman, do not exist to serve their own interests, but rather to serve the interests of

their clients. Parliament exists to serve the interests of the total society, and parliamentarians must be ever conscious of this responsibility. We have before us today, the opportunity to develop Barbados into one of the most caring and progressive countries in the world, if we follow the path of moderation and balance.

Ladies and gentlemen, Parliament has been at the centre of the political, economic and social development of Barbados down through the years. Any assessment of where we are today must take into account that a mono-crop economy providing little more than subsistence living for the majority of the population has been diversified into a finely tuned economic system.

In 1988, Real Gross Domestic Product increased by 3.5 per cent. Per Capita Income rose by 4.6 per cent to Bds.\$10 500 or US\$5 250. Inflation was moderate at 4.8 per cent. 2 300 new jobs were created although unemployment remained unacceptably high due to a growing labour force. The balance of payments was in surplus to the tune of \$70 million, and foreign exchange reserves increased by \$55.5 million. The overall deficit for the fiscal year 1988/89 was only 4.8 per cent of GDP. Our population grew by a mere 0.1 per cent. This record, when taken in conjunction with progress in the social and cultural field represent a very creditable performance. The institution of Parliament has played a most vital role in these developments.

From very early in its history, Barbados has opted for a form of representative parliamentary government. Parliament as the centre of the political system has therefore been one of the major instruments for dealing with important issues and concerns.

It was Parliament that fought for its own rights - the ancient rights and privileges - such as freedom of speech, freedom from arrest and prosecution and such like under certain conditions.

It was Parliament that fought for the principle of no taxation without representation. It was Parliament that passed and enforced laws which kept slavery in place for over two hundred years. It was also Parliament that eventually acceded to the end of slavery.

It was Parliament that first restricted the franchise to a small minority of freeholders, and eventually extended the franchise to free coloureds, blacks, women and persons between the ages of 18 and 21.

It was Parliament that put in place an elitist form of education, but Parliament also made free education to secondary and tertiary level available to all.

The point which I am making is that Parliament as an institution can be used as an instrument of repression,

suppression and promoting reactionary policies. It can also be used as an instrument for liberation, upliftment and social progress.

The role Parliament plays will depend upon the prevailing parallelism of forces and it will also depend above all, upon the intelligence and capabilities of the Parliamentarians themselves. That is why it is crucial that adequate resources should be made available to Members of Parliament.

These resources include:

- appropriate working conditions
- access to information on a wide range of domestic and international issues
- regular opportunities for contacts with fellow Parliamentarians and other decision makers.

The world in which we live is becoming smaller. It is also becoming more complex and there are tough problems to be resolved: The

- debt crisis
- protectionism
- environmental degradation
- low commodity prices
- the growing disparity between industrialised and developing countries
- the continuing existence of apartheid
- centripetal and centrifugal forces of integration movements

Population imbalances, and

- new health problems such as AIDS.

These are but some of the problems that this Parliament of Barbados and the Parliaments of other countries will have to confront as the century draws to a close.

How relevant Parliament will be, will depend upon the relevance of the solution it propounds in relation to these and other problems. Already there is growing evidence that in many countries the powers and authority of Parliament have diminished while those of the executive have been augmented. This is not a healthy sign in a parliamentary democracy and steps must be taken to correct that trend.

The role of Parliament involves many components. It includes

- Information gathering
- Educative function
- Scrutinising
- Deliberative function
- Legislative function
- Appropriation of supplies; and
- Control of expenditures.

Through its leadership, Parliament embodies the dignity and integrity of the nation. It generally embodies also, within its bosom, government and opposition, thereby making for the possibility of continuity as well as change.

In Barbados, successive governments have been taking steps to strengthen the role of Parliament. Our Parliament Buildings are being renovated to provide enhanced facilities for the leadership of Parliament, and for officers, Members and support staff. The Library facilities are being upgraded. Constituency assistants have been provided to help Members carry out their representational functions. Payment towards the rental of constituency office accommodation is being put in place, and new legislation for the restructuring of the administration and organisation of Parliament is being prepared.

We also recognise, that to make our democracy work, we must work closely with other governments within the region and beyond and also with regional and international institutions. 11.30a.m.

Ladies and gentlemen, these celebrations are of deep significance and meaning for us. From our vantage point in the present, we have, indeed, looked back 350 years. The lesson we draw from our long experience of parliamentary Government is that it has worked for us. We must not, however, be complacent.

As we look to the future we must rededicate and recommit ourselves to the principles of democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, improvement of the quality of life for our people and respect for parliamentary government itself. We look forward to that future with confidence and with hope.

I thank you.

Applause.

CLERK OF PARLIAMENT: The Honourable the Leader of the Opposition.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Your Excellency, Mr. President, and Members of the Senate, Mr. Speaker, and Honourable Members of our Honourable House, Distinguished Guests.

Just a few decades ago, the democratic ideal appeared to be under seige in many and varied parts of the world.

More recently, there has been an upsurge in the spirit of democracy in countries not normally considered protagonists in the joint human endeavour to promote the full equality and freedom that are the evolutionary requisites of the good society and the hallmarks of democracy.

Today, more than at any other time in modern history, the indomitable will of the world's people urges itself onward towards a future of freedom, justice and equality within the framework of democratic institutions.

Within the context of international fluctuations in the fortunes of the democratic ideal, we in Barbados may be forgiven an over-indulgence in feeling justifiably proud of our experience of an unbroken 350 year history of Parliamentary Democracy.

Perhaps we may be allowed the self satisfaction in managing our small Island to preserve those institutions respected world-wide as a necessary bases of political liberty, and in keeping the light shining, when in countries much larger than ours, with far vaster resources, the torch has at times been dimmed when the flame has not been snuffed out completely.

This moment in our historical development affords an opportune time for stock-taking, a true appraisal of our present situation that entails us not only looking back with self-congratulatory admiration on the achievements of the past; but an assessment of the probable contingencies of an uncertain future.

We must be mindful at all times that while we shape our institutions, we are being shaped by them as well. Though born in the days of limited enfranchisement and existing in the days of our slavery, our Parliament has become the mother of our liberty. Schooled in its traditions, inculcated with its values, we have become convinced that pluralistic democracy is the form of Government that can best guarantee freedom and equal rights to all citizens while promoting economic and social development.

Those who came before us have laid the cornerstone of our present political stability; but a politically stable Barbados cannot afford to neglect the aspirations of its citizens especially its youth.

It is not sufficient for those of us fortunate enough to be members of this august Chamber to rest upon the laurels of our predecessors. We too must add to the common stock of tradition, and by our efforts to build an even more just and equitable society, repay the debt we owe our forefathers for the struggles they undertook on our behalf.

Let us never forget the nature of their struggle; but let us be enriched and be ennobled by their victory. Let their scars be the sinews of our strength and determination.

As we approach the twenty-first century, the way forward for us in Barbados appears not as difficult as for some others; yet we cannot afford complacency, for eternal vigilance is the price of freedom, vigilance to prevent our freedoms from becoming licence and our justice from being corrupted.

Today, the causes that demand our concern no longer include the dream of full political enfranchisement; but there are disturbing social and economic ills if left unattended, will undermine the stability of our democratic structure.

As long as there are those in our midst who go to bed hungry; as long as there are those who are homeless and helpless; as long as the ranks of the unemployed continue to be swelled by our able and healthy youth; and as long as our communities are affected by the scourge of drug abuse, we must remain temperate in our self-congratulations. While looking back with some measure of satisfaction, we must look forward with a full appreciation of the need to find solutions to these problems.

We who carry on the traditions of this great and venerable institution are but trustees of the national good for the benefit of our children and our children's children.

The constitution of our nation makes Government and Opposition not mere rivals for Office but partners for progress.

We should be ever mindful that we have not developed our political institutions for their own sakes, but as vehicles by which to expand opportunities for our people.

This day, aware of the inherent meaning of this commemorative event, we must begin anew our joint and separate efforts to build the Barbadian future. Our institutions are for our enhancement and our development.

Standing firmly upon the foundation laid by those who preceded us, let us resolve to build a future of hope and self-realisation for our people; let us resolve to so use our institutions for the common good that those who succeed us would be at least as proud of our efforts as we are of our predecessors' stewardship; it is a difficult task, given the

realities of the modern age, but we owe it to posterity to attempt the re-shaping of the future.

Let us therefore deepen the democratic process by ensuring the full social and economic enfranchisement of the women and the youth in our society.

Let us commit ourselves to the goal of attaining full employment and participation by all in the benefits of our country.

Let us dedicate ourselves to the elimination of poverty in our midst and to the enrichment of the lives of the aged and the disadvantaged.

Let us today reaffirm our belief in the importance of integrity in public life, in the ideological perspectives of mutualism, altruism, social cohesiveness, freedom and democracy.

Let us today, in the maturity of 350 years, declare to all Barbadians our belief in their right to join political institutions of their choice, without fear of any abridgement of their social or economic condition.

Our forefathers have bequeathed to us firm notions of pride and industry, which will ensure not only our survival but the attainment of excellence as a nation..With inspiring leadership and participation by all in our democratic institutions, we shall succeed as we respond to their clear command to advance.

Applause.

11.40a.m.

CLERK OF PARLIAMENT: The Honourable the Leader of the minority Opposition.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Your Excellencies, Right Honourable and Honourable Prime Ministers, Mr. President and Members of the Senate, Mr. Speaker, and Members of the House of Assembly, Distinguished present and former Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have assembled today to give thanks for and to celebrate the existence, the work and the worth of the leading Institution in our land. And as we survey the long history of this Parliament, those of us to whom the honour and privilege of representation have been entrusted cannot help but be humbled when we reflect on the tradition of which we are a part and on the uniqueness of the service to which we have been called.

Our Parliament stands out in the history of all Nations as that which has the longest unbroken service of all Institutions set up to govern the affairs of any country. This is no mean achievement. However we can yet properly debate the motives for its establishment. We can and should

also properly acknowledge that for almost three hundred years of its existence, it was operated in accordance with precepts which were obnoxious to every good principle of democracy. Indeed for many years, it was neither a Parliament of the people nor a Parliament for the people.

That is why, of course, some argue that today's celebrations have little to do with the ordinary citizen. But to hold this view is to be lacking in historical perspective. We must look beyond the fact that our Parliament was created in 1639 for the exclusive use of the plantocracy against monarchical power. We must look beyond the fact too, that for most of the 350 years of its existence, the institution of Parliament was manipulated as an instrument for the oppression of the other 98% of our population, the vast majority of whom were black.

I believe that we can only reasonably take credit for the achievements of the last fifty years when Parliament became a force for democracy and progress if we understand that we cannot accept one part of our history and reject another part.

Let me illustrate. The human image on our twenty dollar bill is that of Samuel Jackman Prescod. The image on the ten dollar bill is that of Charles Duncan O'Neal. These were outstanding Barbadian Parliamentarians and men of colour. We hail and salute them. Yet their contributions to the liberation of our people were made in the context of an undemocratic and unrepresentative Parliament. Are we to reject and discount their contributions on the grounds that they were members of an undemocratic Parliament? No, we cannot for they are part of our history. And so indeed is the undemocratic Parliament in which they served.

In this continuum, what has been an instrument of oppression of the masses ultimately became an instrument for their upliftment. Universal adult suffrage won thirty-eight years ago was the fuel which drove the vehicle for political, social and economic change from the 1950s to the present. When the full portrait has been painted, warts and all, what is left to be observed is the picture of an institution which has, in its own peculiar way, shaped the Barbadian way of life, held the society together, and has crafted in this land a tradition of Government founded on the primacy of the rule of law, respect for the rights of man and the pursuits of the goals of social and economic betterment for our people at large.

Legend has it that the first proceedings of this Assembly took place in a tavern. Legend also has it that the prime movers for the establishment of this Assembly were men, not far removed from the status of rogues who were driven by the desire to secure and entrench their position of privilege in this country.

We however remind ourselves today that sometimes out of the darkest evil comes the greatest good. This

Assembly has shown itself amenable to change, whether such change has been forced upon us by the sheer weight of circumstance or deliberately engineered as part of the great adventure of nation-building.

Today I stand where Samuel Jackman Prescod stood. I occupy a place made possible for me and all Barbadians by men whose commitment to this country stand out as profiles in courage and examples of selfless dedication in the cause of the common good. And it must therefore be said that the history of this Parliament has been enriched by the example of O'Neal, the Adamses, Barrow and those who came out of the great tribulation of the 1930s to create in this our land a better life for our people.

It is therefore for those of us who inherit this legacy to dedicate ourselves to the ideals which inspired the efforts of our nation-builders of the last fifty years. As I speak, I recall the words of the then senior member for St. Joseph, the redoubtable Sir Grantley Adams, delivered on Monday, June 26, 1939, exactly fifty years ago, on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of this Parliament. I quote from page 321 of the official report of that debate.

"As we have been reminded, we should not live unless we are prepared to have ideals, even though in our time and generation we may not ourselves attain to them. If there is any word that we, as members of this House, should send out to the public, it should be a reiteration of our faith that we as a representative Assembly of public men, will endeavour to extend the principles of representative Government, and will face up to the fact that at the present moment, however proud we may be of our system of Government, many of our people are disenfranchised.

Today should be the end of an era, the beginning of a new era. There are problems before us which need courage and we should affirm our intention to work together for the good of the people, to bring within the fold of persons who are proud of our representative system those many thousands who are without it."

I end my quotation.

Today I have the great honour to address this Chamber not only as an Honourable Member but also as the leader of the oldest political Party in our country, indeed in the Commonwealth Caribbean. My Party has never been without an agenda, nor a vision, nor the method to translate that vision into actions for the benefits of the people. Our Party working together through this democratic Parliament has helped to set a grand stage for contemporary Barbados. Barbados Labour Party Governments from the 1940s to 1986 provided progressive constitutional development and political stability. They were great social and economic engineers and legislative activists. The new breed of the

people's representatives legislated to improve education, housing, health services, industrial development, agriculture, tourism and a thriving service sector. A whole charter of women's rights was enacted and the innate worth of the human being was acknowledged by the abolition of the anachronistic concept of illegitimacy.

We were in the vanguard of the movement to bring political enfranchisement to the country and established cabinet government, paving the way for eventual Independence.

True to the original tenets of our founding fathers, the association of the Barbados Labour Party and the Barbados Workers' Union ameliorated the hardships of the working class to the extent that today Barbados is the only Caribbean country which can boast of a scheme for unemployment benefits. It is a matter of profound regret for us in the Barbados Labour Party that there came to be severance of the former close relationship but we take great pride in the fact that the Almighty has spared the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union to be with us today in the exalted position of President of the Senate.

Laughter.

Applause.

11.50a.m.

In the finest possible sense, Your Excellencies, the fifty years of the Barbados Labour Party have coincided with the flowering of genuine parliamentary democracy in our country. Today, I seek simply to recommit those in the movement I have the honour to lead to the renaissance of a new political spirit in the service of an old political cause.

As true democrats, we have known the thrill of political victory as well as the agony of electoral defeat. In every instance, and most especially in the case of the latter, we have faithfully abided by the will of the people. As the oldest political party in the Caribbean, we accept with deep humility the eulogistic commendation of the Right Honourable Prime Minister, my friend the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, that the Barbados Labour Party is one of the great political parties of this State.

Applause.

It is within this tradition that we will seek to build for the future and will make our contribution to parliamentary affairs in Barbados. Ahead of us lies the task of assisting in making Barbados a genuine property owning democracy, bringing the masses of our people directly and unapologetically into the main stream of economic life, securing for our young people every opportunity in every sphere of national affairs and maintaining this country as a progressive and dynamic society amenable to constructive

change, comfortable with its values and capable of providing a better life for all of our people.

The trail on which we are embarked has been blazed by the likes of M.E. Cox, Frank Walcott, J.T.C. Ramsay, Ronald Mapp, Hugh Springer - Your Excellency - Freddie Miller, Tom Adams, Bernard St. John, Lionel Craig, Lloyd Brathwaite, Ernie Bourne, Lloyd Smith, Burton Hinds and other Lieutenants whose names time will not allow me to mention. Their contributions would in turn not have been possible without the tremendous assistance and support of the thousands of ordinary citizens who gave them the glorious opportunity to serve.

The opportunity to have served in this Parliament is an experience that neither my colleagues nor I would for the world have missed.

And as for me, if I may use the words of the famous poet, Robert Frost, I remind:

"I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep."

With full acknowledgement to the late Sir Grantley Adams, I say, "Let the new era begin".

Applause

CLERK OF PARLIAMENT: Senator the Honourable Sir James Tudor.

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE SIR JAMES TUDOR: May it please Your Excellency, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking.....

Applause

.....The Senate has chosen to indulge my scruple by asking me to speak for it on this great occasion.

It is an exceptional honour, Sir, to see you among us, not only as the distinguished Representative of Her Majesty, but also as a former Member for the constituency of St. George and a former Deputy Speaker. Your Excellency was, within that period, a member of the Governor-in-Executive Committee, and in that capacity helped to administer this Island in the colonial period.

Nor is this the full measure of your connection with those days. Sitting next to you, on your left, is the distinguished President of the Senate, who succeeded Your Excellency as the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, a post which he holds today. His being here with you at this ceremony helps us to thank each of you for the great contribution you have made to the development of Barbados as Trade Unionists and Members of the House of Assembly at the same time. Naturally, Sir,

neither you nor he suspected in those days that it was not quite "cricket" for Trade Unionists to be members of the House of Assembly or, indeed, of political parties.

Sir, I would not undertake to say that history does not repeat itself. I am quite positive that historians repeat each other, and so to confront history in books is a great pleasure, but it is an ineluctable delight to meet it in the flesh.

There was, as we have been reminded, a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament on 26th June, 1939 to observe the tercentenary of Parliament. Twenty-three of the 24 members of the then Assembly have been gathered unto their fathers. Only Sir Theodore Brancker, former Speaker, former President of the Senate and Member of the House for 34 consecutive years, only he is left from that occasion to lend his venerable presence to this momentous sitting.

Applause.

Mr. Speaker, it may well be his privilege to escort Your Honour in your declining years to a similar function on 26th June, 2039.

Senators greatly appreciate the invitation to come into this Chamber to congratulate the House of Assembly on this landmark of our constitutional history and we note with gratitude that Her Majesty's Opposition have surrendered very graciously their seats to us today and have chosen to sit with the Government. Were this a political occasion, I would have an appropriate comment. We have, however, the opportunity on our side to have an experience this morning of being in the company of former Barbados Scholars, headed by Your Excellency, of course, in association with the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South, the distinguished and Very Honourable Member for Christ Church West, very learned as well, and the distinguished Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, the Member for St. Michael South Central, and of course the distinguished Clerk of the House, Mr. George Brancker. I believe, Sir, that there has not been such a reservoir of intellectual grace and distinction gathered in one place, except perhaps when Aristotle was turning over something in his mind.

We are also greatly honoured to have, as guests of this Parliament, the Prime Minister of St. Lucia, the Right Honourable John Compton, M.P., and the Prime Minister of Guyana, the Honourable Hamilton Green, M.P., each of who is a firm friend of our country and of our people, and we similarly extend a warm welcome to other Ministers whom are representing their Parliaments today. 12.00 noon

I had the great honour and privilege of teaching Prime Minister Green at Queen's College in Guyana about forty years ago.

Applause.

I take it that that is for me. I had no idea that he was going to be a Prime Minister, but if it is in respect of *this* that I am sometimes called the "Kingmaker".

Applause.

It would be quite ungracious of me to disavow my connection with him, and I am very happy to see him in Barbados.

Laughter.

It is really a rare joy to receive distinguished Speakers, Deputy Speakers, Presidents of Senates, and other Presiding Officers on this sort of occasion. We therefore welcome very warmly all of them today and thank them most kindly for the colour and the pageantry they are giving to this ceremony. Your Honours will not, I venture to assert, feel out of place listening to speeches. This, I fear, is the hazard of your calling. It is your business and occasionally your pleasure to listen to speeches with polite attention and occasional-^ with evenhanded exhaustion. You enter debate only to dampen the fires of contention, especially when Honourable Members forget where they are or, more ominously still, what they are talking about.

Laughter.

But your distinguished presence here today, Your Honours, does great joy to this Parliament by contributing individually and severally no small portion of the lustre and renown of this great Parliamentary occasion. And Your Honours, I hope, may find it convenient during this visit to exchange ideas on the way in which an informal Assembly of regional Parliamentarians may be brought into existence without the problems attendant upon the creation of a Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I fear that a declining and quite feeble memory prevents me from recollecting how I voted in the recent general election, but as one of your constituents I am delighted to see you presiding over the House of Assembly at this time. By a most fortunate coincidence, the Speaker of the Barbados House of Assembly is also the World President of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which holds its General Conference in Barbados later this year, under the wise and patient guidance of Your Honour.

Applause.

We are also greatly distinguished by the presence of representatives of the United Nations in the person of Mr. G. Arthur Brown; of the Organisation of American States in the person of its distinguished Secretary General whose visit is welcome as he embarks upon his second term, and the Commonwealth Secretariat represented as always by its

distinguished Secretary General, whose vast wisdom and phenomenal memory recalls Oliver Goldsmith's description of the Village Schoolmaster -

"They gazed and gazed and still the wonder grew
that one small head could carry all he knew ..."

I am also heartened by the presence of all our neighbourly regional bodies particularly headed by the distinguished Secretary General of CARICOM. Their presence and the presence of others brings a delightful encouragement and a welcome solidarity to the Parliament and People of Barbados at this time.

No one supposed that we could treat this day without the guiding hand of a Wise Providence, by whose inspiration leaders of our country came forth in each decade of the three and a half centuries to nudge us towards our goals. Most of them are gone into history unknown but not I think without our gratitude, and Your Excellency and Honourable Members who have spoken after you have drawn some of them to our attention. But to come nearer to our own day, we remember with pride and affection some of the great heroes of this Parliament now no longer with us. It is to Grantley Herbert Adams, Hugh Gordon Cummins, James Barry more Springer, Errol Walton Barrow, John Michael Adams, Ernest Deighton Mottley, Edward Keith Walcott, Herbert Greaves, Charles Duncan O'Neal, Hilton Augustus Vaughan, Athol Edwin Seymour Lewis, Louis Lynch, Lloyd Ethelbert Smith - to name only a few of our precious ones - it is to these and others still living that we should direct our gratitude for the high privilege we enjoy today of observing this important event under the illustrious Chairmanship of Your Excellency. 12.10p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour and pleasure to announce messages sent to this Chamber for best regards and best wishes on the occasion of this our celebration. I shall not read the entire messages but I will indicate which country or persons would have sent these messages:

1. The House of Assembly of Roseau, Dominica, the West Indies.
2. The House of Assembly, Trinidad and Tobago.
3. The Republic of Argentina
4. The Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development; and

5. The Bahamas.

That ends the number of messages of best wishes sent to this Chamber on this occasion.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the texts of those messages be taken as read and form part of the reco/d of the proceedings.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure there will be no objections and so shall it be.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I would like to move, Mr. Speaker, that the proceedings of the Joint Commemorative Session of our Parliament which took place today, Monday, June 26, 1989, in the Chamber of The Honourable the House of Assembly and also the proceedings at the ceremony for the unveiling of the monument commemorating the site of our first Parliament be ordered to be printed and recorded as a document of this House and be published with the proceedings of this day's sitting of the House.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in rising to second heartily that proposal, I wish merely to add for myself that after hearing the speeches of the Honourable Members of this House and those that went before, I am extremely proud as an individual to be a part of this Honourable House and I would like to put on record my own sincerest thanks to all those who have made it possible for me to be a part of these celebrations today.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure of the nature of the Resolution. It was my understanding that the speeches would form part of Hansard.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Well the Resolution as worded does not say that. It says "document to be circulated".

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I just wish to add that what is now being called the minority Opposition will lend support to this.

I wonder if the Government would consider having the proceedings in a separate bound volume for distribution in addition to being part of Hansard.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am grateful to you, Sir.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I move that the House be now adjourned until Tuesday, July 11, 1989 at 12 o'clock noon.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that, Sir.

ADJOURNMENT

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, July 11, 1989 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 12.50p.m.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, I do not know if lunch has been provided.

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