

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, December 12, 1995

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.20 a.m. o'clock on Tuesday, December 12, 1995.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, B.A., Dip. Ed. (Speaker)
His Honour R. D. MARSHALL, (Deputy Speaker)
Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.),

J.P.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.

Mr. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.
(Hons.)

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.), (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs and Minister for the Civil Service)

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M. (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.(Hons.) (Leader of the Opposition)

Hon. Sir HAROLD St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B.

Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc.
(Econ.)

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tourism and International Transport) (Leader of the House)

Mr. J. O. TUDOR, J.P.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE, (Minister of Public Works, Transport and Housing)

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P. (Edin.)

Mr. D. CARTER

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of Labour, Community Development and Sports)

Mr. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed. (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing)

Mr. J. M. EDGHILL

Mr. F. J. STUART, B.A., LL.M.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER, J.P., B.A., Dip. Ed., B.Sc. (Chairman of Committees)

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tourism and International Transport)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Minister of Health and the Environment)

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, LL.B. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture)

Prayers were led by Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, December 5, 1995.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Honourable the House of Assembly of its meeting of December 5, 1995 which Minutes have been circulated be taken as read.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay:

The Report of the operations of the Severance Payments Scheme for the period January 1 - December 31, 1994.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay:

The Annual Report of the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation for the year 1993.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the rest of this day's sitting.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that, Mr. Speaker.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now the Order of the Day. Order No. 5.

RESOLUTION TO MOVE THAT THE HOUSE DO
NOW RESOLVE ITSELF INTO COMMITTEE
OF SUPPLY TO CONSIDER THE GRANT
OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE
SERVICE OF BARBADOS

Order No. 5 was called - To move that the House do now resolve itself into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of Barbados.

On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded by Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable Chamber is now in Committee of Supply.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1995-96

Item (a) was called - To move the passing of a resolution to grant an additional sum of \$5 849 648 from

the Consolidated Fund to supplement the Estimates 1995-96 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates, No. 7 of 1995-96.

HEAD 34 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH
AFFAIRS AND CULTURE - \$825 000

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the matter that is now before this Committee of Supply relates to the moving of the sum of \$825 000 to supplement the vote of the National Cultural Foundation.

I may just briefly state that the amount which was voted, \$1 147 000, relates not only to the National Cultural Foundation, but, indeed, to sundry other cultural and religious groups that the Government of Barbados has traditionally supported throughout the years. The apportionment of that was \$1 000 000 to the National Cultural Foundation and \$147 000 to sundry other groups.

When the Estimates were prepared this year, it was understood that the NCF would be voted \$1 million to cover, initially, the first half of the year or just thereafter on the understanding that the National Cultural Foundation would produce a business plan to ensure that we would put this organization on a sound and secure footing to develop cultural activity and cultural industries in this country.

The tale of the National Cultural Foundation, in recent years, has not been a pleasant one and for at least 3 years that organization received nothing more than amounts to cover personal emoluments because there was an inability to decide the future of that organization. Many decisions put forward by previous Ministers were never fully accepted and we saw the National Cultural Foundation spinning like a top in mud for a number of years. In fact, the workshops virtually came to a halt. Training at the community level virtually came to a halt and the programming that did take place in the form primarily of Crop Over and NIFCA activities largely became possible because of private sponsorship.

This year we have tried to restructure the National Cultural Foundation and to put it on a sound and firm footing to meet the challenges of cultural development and the development of cultural industries as we move into the Twenty-first century.

We felt, Sir, that the institution itself had to be strengthened in order to meet these challenges. We would remember that earlier this year we took the decision to hire a Chief Executive Officer who would have a greater capacity to manage the general affairs of that organization, particularly given the fact that its budget was a large

one, given the fact that it was not only to be charged with the mandate by this Government to resume training at the level of the community, but also that it had to meet the challenges of removing the blockages to the development of cultural industries.

We in the Caribbean - and it is not a problem peculiar to Barbados by any stretch of the imagination - have had a situation where the product which we produce is of excellent quality but we have had major difficulties in the distribution, promotion and marketing of that product. These are areas which the National Cultural Foundation, I believe, can render a level of developmental assistance to make it easier for artists, be they performing artistes, fine artists or literary persons, to be able to access markets so that they can make a total and complete living from the cultural industries. 11.30 a.m.

One of the significant reasons for this, as well, is that the employment, particularly with the performing arts, in music in particular, is largely youth employment and we believe that these persons deserve the support that would ensure their accommodation as part of the formal economy of this country.

As a result, Sir, a business plan was prepared and we believe that that business plan would set the tone for the further development of the National Cultural Foundation, in the short-term, over the next three years, mindful of our long-term goals as articulated by me just now.

One of the things that we would wish to do and in fact, would be doing from January, is to resume training at the community level all across this country for youngsters, particularly under the age of 30 years old, in conjunction with the youth development programme. Sir, this has been an aspect of our life in culture that has been missing for a considerable period of time. I believe, Sir, that this kind of training would lead to the type of explosion that we saw post-1981 after there were many community workshops and considerable training in preparation for the hosting of CARIFESTA and indeed in ensuring that Barbadians were able to present quality acts at that CARIFESTA of 1991.

Training is an essential component, Sir, of the cultural industries. Yes, we have practitioners who are excellent in the art forms. Yes, we have persons who have attained excellence. Indeed, Sir, we are happy to have with us, Kamau Brathwaite who is the most distinguished Barbadian writer and poet, I believe, that this country has ever produced. Indeed our contribution to CARIFESTA this year was entitled "A Tribute to Kamau" and we were able to put on a production largely with numbers of young people with limited exposure in theatre arts and dance and we got the acclaim of all of the other Caribbean Governments as well

as all of the Trinidadian press in that production, "Barabajun". Those of you who had the fortune to see it here two weeks ago would understand what I mean because it really reveals the essence of what it is to be Barbadian. If I do say so, the dance in that production was of such an excellent quality that indeed it was felt that the dance alone could be taken out and it could stand on its own as a season of dance - so high is the choreographic talent of Mr. John Hunte, who did the choreography for that production.

But we have had other persons who have attained excellence and it is true that we, as a Government, have perhaps not supported them in the past as we should have in terms of the institutional framework to ensure the maximum returns for the cultural industries. However, Sir, while seeking to do that with the development of the new business development section which opened at the Foundation only last month, we are adamant that we must ensure that youngsters coming up must have the opportunity to be exposed to the art form, for two reasons, Sir. The first reason is to ensure that those who have an aptitude for a particular type of the arts, whether it be performing or fine arts or literary arts, are given the opportunity to expand their talents at programmes that are now available at the Barbados Community College.

I am happy to say that this Government instituted, from September of this year, an Associate Degree in the performing arts to ensure that those who have gone beyond the basic level can receive further training in those areas of the performing arts, and if they so wish, may then move to the school of drama and performing arts in Jamaica to top off that type of exposure.

The other reason, Sir, that we are introducing training among young people - and this is outside the formal school system where much of it exists, but we are also introducing it at the community level - has to do with the fact that even if a child does not develop the aptitude to become excellent or to master those particular arts, he becomes part of the audience for the further development of that art form because very often artists also need audience in order to survive and thrive. Therefore, Sir, it is important that persons who would not otherwise know the rudiments of drumming or the rudiments of good theatre, or the rudiments of good art work or good literary work would now be exposed to basic training in these areas and, even though they may not become practitioners, they would be able to judge what is good art work and what is good craft and to that extent, Sir, we would wish to ensure that the civil society is developed to its maximum by developing that side of young people in this country.

The other major plank of the work of the Foundation, Sir, has to do with the development of cultural industries as I have spoken. As I indicated, we have excellent

talent here in the Caribbean, be it in Barbados, in Jamaica, in Trinidad or throughout the Eastern Caribbean, whether it be in music, in craft or whatever. The practitioners of this art, unless they have so far excelled and left the others, usually find it very difficult to distribute, promote and market their art beyond a limited circle. The Foundation is hoping, as its first effort, Sir, to develop two things. The first is a biographical description of all artists in this country, be it performing artists or fine artists or writers, because we believe, Sir, that a lot of these persons may not be able to do it themselves nor have access to the capital to have a proper biographical description done or indeed to have photographs and a whole dossier put together in order to be able to promote themselves or their art forms. We believe the Foundation can provide serious development assistance to a number of artists in this country in that way.

Sir, only two weeks ago, the Museum had its annual craft fair and I would venture to suggest that the craft work that was displayed on that occasion is some of the best craft work I have seen anywhere in the world, be it the Christmas decorations that were on display, done from indigenous materials, be it the acoustics and ceramic pots that were painted in such a colourful way, that proved to be excellent souvenirs of this country as well as *objet d'art* for Barbadians in their homes, be it the use of old iron which has now found its way in becoming the prime raw material for a form of high art in this country and indeed not only art for the sake of art but functional art in terms of developing as candelabra, furniture, lamps *et cetera*. These are the kinds of things that we would like to see our hotel plant and indeed Barbadian homes being furnished with because that would ensure that the markets for these artists are developed to their maximum potential.

We feel, however, Sir, that apart from the biographical data and the putting together of the dossier that we also have a responsibility to put together a data base of those points of distribution in traditional markets and we have also chosen two non-traditional markets for each of the art forms. For example, in music the traditional markets are obviously the Caribbean Region, the Eastern Seaboard of North America, the United Kingdom and Sweden which have been very good to Caribbean music. The two non-traditional markets would be Brazil and South Africa.

We feel, Sir, that if we create that data base artists could then look at and be able to pull from it, for example, all of the venues, the booking agents, the radio stations, the popular DJs, the television programmes that highlight music from the Third World particularly or what is known as new world music and would not have to incur heavy expenditure in faxes and travel in order to develop this information for themselves and with the assistance of the

Business Development Officer, would be able to gain an entrée to the distributor with the blessings of the Barbados Government.

We ourselves, Sir, are not going into the business of the private sector, but what we are doing is to seek to provide the infrastructural support that will make the cost of business cheaper to the individual artists. This is the role, Sir, I believe of a national cultural foundation, particularly in the development of cultural industries as we move into the twenty-first century. 11.40a.m.

There is no doubt, Sir, that the Caribbean has a story to tell. There is no doubt that with the replacement of the Cold War by ethnic strife throughout the world that the Caribbean remains one of the few places in the world, if not the only place, that can boast of ethnic plurality with relative political, social and economic stability. In those circumstances our story not only is our story, but it now has a market that is willing to listen, because our experiences can teach people how we have managed, in spite of the ethnic plurality, to proceed as we have proceeded over the years.

I believe that the coming together of the development and awareness of our artists on the ground, the development of possible markets, particularly throughout the world because of our experience and day-to-day lives, augurs well for the Caribbean, and if we understand that technology has made geography and size irrelevant, we understand that it becomes much easier to tell that story, because at the end of the day, Mr. Chairman, that story can only be told through music, art, books, film and through the formal education sector by the production of textbooks, all of those media reflecting how people on a day-to-day basis react to their surroundings, to the people of different races around them and how they indeed deal with conflict and managing everyday situations.

You cannot change the habits of people worldwide by political edicts or political speeches, but it relates to creating an environment where they can see that somebody else does it differently, somebody else reacts differently to the fact that while we may be of a different racial background we can still have a common national goal.

The significance of this to the Caribbean is that psychologically the Caribbean in modern history has been a region that has been the beneficiary of aid and all sorts of hand-outs. The time has come for us as a nation, a regional grouping, to reassert our independence, our ability to attain excellence and to achieve certain things that other people may not be able to achieve, and such doing and giving I believe that will strengthen us as a region psychologically and give us the kind of confidence,

not only to meet further production in the cultural industries or general cultural development in its overall tone, but it will strengthen our self-confidence in the way in which we deal with tourism, international financial services, manufacturing and agriculture. With that innate belief in ourselves we would no longer have to see efforts by the IDC to tell people to buy Bajan or to buy regional, because it is an innate part of their subconsciousness.

I believe, Sir, that is the long-term goal not only of this Government, but it is the main challenge facing the Caribbean region, in my view, in terms of how it moves on the global landscape as we move into the 21st century. We must understand that circumstances have allowed us to play a major role without our having to be subservient, or indeed to be at the whims and fancies of other major blocs in this world. I sincerely hope we can generate that kind of discussion throughout the region.

I am happy to say, Sir, that for the very first time a Government of Barbados held preparatory talks to a national consultation on culture earlier this year and we expect that that national consultation will come to a climax early in 1996, where the draft document sets out many of the things we must do as a country, not just in terms of the cultural industries, for at the end of the day culture is about the way we walk, the way we talk, the way we move, the way we eat, the way we do every sort of thing that we may not even be able to speak about in here. In fact, the speech given by Kamau at that consultation comes to mind, where he spoke of great traditions and the little traditions, because at the end of the day it is not only for us to respect those great things, our great institutions, even like Parliament, but it is for us to respect the little traditions that have made us who we are in terms of our home life, our village life, our spiritual and religious life, and these are the kinds of things that we must ensure that a National Cultural Foundation still pays attention to.

I would wish to submit, Sir, that unfortunately up to last year, 1994, for about three or four years the National Cultural Foundation had lost its way and was unable to provide that role in terms of general cultural development, far less the development of cultural industries. I am happy to say that we have appointed a Board at the National Cultural Foundation that has worked beyond the call of duty not only in the restructuring of the Foundation, because when they went in we had first to deal with getting accounts audited and reports prepared for 1987, and I am happy to say that we have already laid reports in this Chamber up to 1991 and the reports for 1992 and 1993 will be laid in this Chamber very shortly, having been approved by me only last week. They had also to deal with the anomalies of the staffing structure and the fact that that staff structure, having been put in place in the early 1980s, no longer met the challenges of their mandate for 1995.

That has also been done. I believe there are only one or two more posts that have to be advertised and filled in order to complete that process.

But, Sir, in the midst of all that restructuring, in the midst of a CEO coming in in May of this year, in the midst of trying to grapple with accounts that were not being audited properly - and indeed we are still having problems with those for 1994 - and having to change auditors because of the length of time it took to get things done, a CEO came in and along with the Board of the National Cultural Foundation and the Festivals Committee staged what is popularly regarded to be the best Crop Over since 1982.

Aside.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, that is not my judgment, it is the judgment of the people of this country. They were not afraid of innovation and they took an idea, initially advocated for Crop Over by Magistrate Carlisle Greaves, and made it work. We had over 20 000 people at the East Coast Road on that day for the Party Monarch Finals and the Semi-Finals. We also took the folk concert and reworked that. We put a youth programme in place, though we had one or two difficulties with it in the execution. Those problems will be remedied in time for next year. I would wish to suggest that the Board of the Foundation, the CEO and the staff, and indeed the Festivals Committee, deserve the applause and the congratulations of this Parliament for putting on what the people of this country have described as the best Crop Over since 1982, for ensuring that we have maintained high standards in it, and for making sure that not only for the first time this year have we brought in a new category of young persons in the performance of Crop Over, but we have also developed a new audience for Crop Over in 1995.

I therefore would wish this Parliament to register its congratulations and support for the excellent work done by the Board, the CEO and staff and the Festivals Committee, all of whom have worked beyond the call of duty.

This money is to help execute the programme I have just outlined. Some of it is for wages, some for utilities, some for staff training, because at the end of the day if we do not train the staff who are there, then we cannot ensure that they can give the best of themselves to meet the challenges of cultural development and the development of cultural industries. Some of it is for general promotion, particularly of Barbadian craft and Barbadian music. Only last week in Trinidad seven out of the top 20 songs were from Barbados. That was an unheard of thing two years ago and we simply cannot sit idly by and see we are doing so well down there without giving our artists the kind of infrastructural support they need to ensure that instead of seven, it may be 10 or 12, instead of 7 just being on

the Top 20 that in November and December we can carry that right into February and March, at the height of the Carnival season. There has been the success last year of Cassandra and John King's song at Trinidad's Carnival and Ragga Ragga which is, in fact, has been signed on a compilation by Sony. 11.50a.m.

The signs are there that Barbados is knocking. The funny thing, Sir, about calypso music in particular, and Ragga-Soca, is that it is taken from one festival and once it does well in one festival the others pick it up. Look at the chain of festivals - Trinidad, Antigua, St. Vincent, Jamaica, Barbados. Again, we are usually a year ahead because of when our Crop Over comes. Caribana, Carnival in Atlanta, Carnival in Miami, Labour Day where for the first time this year again the Barbados Government fully put its weight behind its artists on the Parkway and had what was described by the Police as the largest band on the Eastern Parkway this year and, indeed, described by the artists who participated, as the first time the truck never broke down or the generator never broke down.

Sir, that is the kind of work we have been doing in the interim while restructuring the Foundation, but we believe that we now seriously have to go into these markets that affect the carnivals and provide the kind of promotion that will allow our artists to be able to get work, live work, and to be able to sell records. As a result, Sir, some of this fund will go into the development of a general promotion tour throughout Trinidad, Guyana, St. Lucia, Bermuda and, I think, Jamaica. This will span both financial years, not only in this financial year.

Sir, I am very happy therefore to be associated with this supplementary. I should say one thing before I sit down. The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister wanted to make sure that our work at the NCF was not business as usual. I think I can safely report to this Chamber that it has not been business as usual, that there has been, a businesslike approach taken at the Foundation towards whatever work they have to do; that there has been a long-term goal, buffeted by short-term objectives which would not only raise the morale of the staff but raise the potential for more activity nationally and, indeed, regionally and internationally.

Sir, we must always be careful not to bite off more than we can chew. Therefore, it is being done in a manner that is capable of attaining far more results and in a manner that is capable of not exciting people's expectations beyond what the markets can truly deliver, and we hope, therefore, that not only through our cultural policies at the NCF but through our commitment to provide further training at the Barbados Community College with an associate degree in

Fine Arts and an associate degree in the Performing Arts. Indeed, from 1996, September, we will be starting a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts at the Community College, through our commitment for training at the community level, through our commitment to general cultural activity in the schools.

Anybody who had the fortune to see MFC A this year could not help but be impressed by the extensive display of talent shown by both primary and secondary schools. Our only hope is that we will have more community activities, which we will get, I believe, by working more closely with the community independence celebrations in NIFCA. Indeed, anybody who had the pleasure to see the visual arts exhibition would know that there is a burst of talent on the scene in this country, which needs to be supported, which needs to be harnessed and which needs to be exposed not only to our people but indeed to the wider world if we are going to meet the challenges that face the Caribbean region as we move into the 21st Century.

Sir, we have also had an economic analysis done on Crop Over - I believe this is the first time it has ever been done - and this economic analysis is only insofar as the National Cultural Foundation's input is concerned. I want to stress that, Sir. This economic analysis does not include the private sector's role, because that information was too disparate for us to be able to access in the time that we wanted the report. This report shows clearly that Crop Over, through the NCF's role, brings net foreign exchange earnings to the economy of Barbados in 1995 of \$9.6 million.

When we consider that the Government of Barbados is only supporting the National Cultural Foundation to the overall tune of \$1.8 million, which extends beyond Crop Over, to train, to market, to a whole host of activities from January to December; but that 3 weeks alone of activity produced by the NCF brings net foreign exchange earnings of at least \$9.6 million to the Barbados economy. That does not include what the private sector brings and generates in Crop-Over.

Sir, I will come back if necessary.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to add my contribution to this debate and certainly I don't intend to be too long on this particular debate before this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has 15 minutes.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: I have no objection Sir, to the Supplementary brought by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East which is seeking urgently to meet the cost of salaries, wages, utilities, staff training and programming. This is the season of giving and we, on this side, would not like to deny any category of worker in this country earning that right. My concern, however, is that the National Cultural Foundation be not seen only as a Crop Over institution. Certainly, from the utterances of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, it would seem that there is a change in policy to reconstruct and formulate policies that would enhance the masses of this country. Sir, why I say I do not want to see the National Cultural Foundation become a Crop Over institution is because over the years I have observed that the National Cultural Foundation only came alive, in my mind, during a particular period of time of the year and that is what we call traditionally in Barbados Crop Over.

I would like to see the National Cultural Foundation get into practical programmes in this country and institute them throughout the length and breadth of this country. I want to make some proposals on the Floor of this Honourable Chamber today. One of the things that I would like to see the National Cultural Foundation add to its Crop Over calendar is a junior calypso monarch competition in the Caribbean which would be known as the Caribbean Junior Monarch Competition. We can bring young calypsonians from Guyana and Trinidad where I know that they have calypso competitions at this level, from St. Vincent, even as far as Jamaica, and we can have a Caribbean Junior Monarch Calypso Competition.

I firmly believe that there is nothing that can unite the Caribbean more than sports and culture - we tried it at the political level with Federation and that failed - the interaction of people, and there has been a mass interaction of Caribbean people recently travelling from one island to the next and interacting through the media of sports and culture. I have always said I cannot understand why successive governments have paid very little attention in terms of the development of sports and culture in this country.

When we look at the Estimates every year, very little money is voted towards the development of sports and culture in this country. Therefore, I am not surprised that they have to come back here for a supplementary for this particular area. Certainly, I am hoping that this will be corrected.

When I talk about uniting Caribbean people I always like to draw the work of the Pinelands Creative Workshop into focus, because they themselves, not a governmental institution, have instituted a regional cultural fusion simply by interacting through other Caribbean islands and having

artists interact at that level. The headquarters of it is right here in Barbados. It makes it so much easier for community organisations to travel and interact at that level and I think it is far more purposeful.

What I would like to see is that the problems we get at Immigration as far as artists travelling to each other's countries be lifted, because artists cannot afford that kind of hustle and bustle.

In addition, Sir, I would like to see the National Cultural Foundation return to what I call more community activity during Crop Over. I am getting specific. There was a time when we used to organise a number of street fairs throughout this country. You know what hurts me about Crop Over? I see there was some readjustment to do something about it. But when we look at Crop Over itself and we understand that the majority of the canes are reaped in the rural areas, very little activity happens in Crop Over in the rural areas. I am talking about decentralising some of the activity and placing it in the rural areas. 12.00 noon

Not only that, Sir, but we need to have more community Crop Over fairs. There was a time when that was stopped because of the turbulence that existed in the country. I believe that has now subsided a great deal and we have to return to basics.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: I am not in this Chamber to do any political grandstanding. I am here talking about policy for the development of this country. I am saying it came out of the wholesome development of our young people because today's young people are far more creative and have a lot more energy to dispose of themselves than ever before, and we have to structure things around them.

I would also like to see, Sir, an attempt to have more plantation fairs during Crop Over.

I was very happy to see that the Honourable Member touched on training because I believe that training is very important and is paramount to the development of our young people if we are going to get them to fit into the non-traditional areas of employment and I am very happy to see that the NCF is working towards this.

I would like the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East to pay particular attention to the area of technical theatre because this is an area that could gross a lot of money. It is an area that very little attention is paid to and the highest paid people in theatre are the ones that work in the technical aspect of theatre, and let us understand that.

Now in addition to that, Sir, there are many school halls across this country that need to be upgraded in terms of providing the right kind of theatrical atmosphere for students and Barbadian audiences alike. I think we only have 2 or 3 schools in Barbados, Queen's College, Combermere and possibly the Alleyne School that is really equipped to handle theatrical productions.

When the ordinary people in this country begin to stage productions they are staged at Parkinson School and the Garrison School. These two schools in particular need to be upgraded so that we could put on proper productions. Right now Parkinson School is the most popular venue in terms of what we call the "people's theatre", or the "popular theatre". I am calling on Government to upgrade the facilities now at the school hall at Parkinson School to make it more conducive to theatre.

Sir, there was a time in Barbados when the arts used to flourish to a point that almost 90 per cent of Barbadian adults used to get involved in one form of the arts or the other.

I would like to pay particular respect on this floor today, Sir, to the work that was done overall by the former Director, Mr. Elombe Mottley and also Mr. Ralph Walker from the Community Development at the time. But, Sir, there is an urgent need, and I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East talk about it, but I would also reiterate, for us to start another drama festival in this country.

I remember when we had the ESSO Arts Drama Festival it brought out the creativity and latent talents of our script writers and directors. I remember productions like "Silver Web". There were a number of other productions but it captured the imagination of the entire Barbadian theatre-going public. These are the areas we need to redevelop.

In addition, Sir, there is an area that is dying quickly in Barbados, and I am very happy to be here in this Chamber in the presence of Mr. Kamau Brathwaite, a prolific writer, and an honourable statesman of the Caribbean. There was the Writers' Workshop. It has now gone dead. We should start developing this art throughout the schools in Barbados and I hope that the NCF would put it on their calendar. The reason is that if we do not, much of our play writing material is going to come from outside this country. We still only have a handful of good script writers remaining in Barbados beside Anthony Hinkson and, basically, you can count them on both hands.

At this point in Barbados we have to stop the foolishness of honouring people only when they die. We have to recognise people in our community who have done

outstanding and yeoman service and honour them while they are alive. Let the dead bury the dead. The point is that I am calling for the establishment, separately and distinctively, of a cultural hall of fame which would also honour the works of Mr. Kamau Brathwaite, Earle Warner, Karl Broodhagen, Anthony Hinkson, another prolific script writer, obviously one from the Pinelands Creative Workshop and the Mighty Gabby. These are just a few of the people that would go into this Cultural Hall of Fame, and it is very important that we honour our Barbadian heroes while they are alive.

You would notice, Sir, that I did not dwell very much on the financial aspect of the National Cultural Foundation because I believe that the development of this country should not always be measured in dollars and cents. Sir, let me repeat. I believe that the development, and I have said it in this Honourable Chamber before, of this country should not always be measured in dollars and cents. However, I feel that some monies from the National Cultural Foundation should be diverted into the communities for cultural development.

There is no reason whatsoever why the Pinelands Creative Workshop should not be granted a cultural subvention. There is no reason why other cultural institutions should not be granted the same. I have no problem with the supplemental but all I am saying is that it should be broad-based and well-rounded so that we as citizens in this country would all strive together under one God as one people and we go forward with a trusted purpose. If we do not plan this way the goals for the 21st Century which the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East spoke so fluently about would not be realized. We have to plan them now and it is not that the 21st Century is 2 decades off, it is just around the corner. We have to stop doing all the political grandstanding and get down to practical approaches if we are going to solve the problems that lie among our youth and our country. The NCF has an integral and a very important role to play in the development of the youth in this country.

As I sit, Sir, I would just end by saying that I want everyone to understand that the great English economist, John Stuart Mills once said, "All good fruits that exist are the seeds of originality." What I am saying, Sir, is that we cannot forget those persons who have built and started the whole process of cultural development

Thank you very much, Sir.
12.10 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, my contribution will be very brief and will not be dealing with the cultural aspects of this Resolution. I will be dealing with what

I consider to be certain elements of - What is the word the Honourable Member for St Thomas used to like to use? - fiscal malfeasance. I say this for this reason, Sir, that normally one expects that a supplementary would represent a reasonable proportion of an original vote. But here we have an original vote for \$1.147 million and a supplementary for \$825 000. What does that say?

It says to me that either an apology is owed to this Honourable House on the grounds that there was Some element of misleading in the original Estimates or, in the alternative, that there has been a substantial lack of planning and foresight at the level of the Ministry of Education and Culture or, the Honourable Minister of Finance has been guilty of severe cutbacks in relation to original Estimates sent up to the Ministry.

We do not know, Sir, but I am going to demand an explanation because I have a special problem. The problem is this. We respect the views of the Honourable Minister of Finance. We have heard him thundering, fulminating in this Honourable House against the malpractices involved in bringing recurrent huge supplementaries to this Honourable House. Am I correct, Mr. Chairman, in saying that only a few weeks ago you sat in that Chair for the passing of a resolution for over \$32 million and today another for \$5 849 648?

I believe that we have a responsibility, as an Opposition, to demand an explanation which is beyond considerations of fiscal malfeasance or incompetence. Bring in the Rt. Hon. Minister of Finance and Prime Minister in this Honourable House to explain this matter. He cannot hide today. Bring him in here. Because remember, we are dealing with issues that touch on the Constitution, issues that relate to accountability, issues that relate to the Constitutional position of the Appropriation Bill of which the Estimates is only a Schedule. These are fundamental issues. And when we see deviations of over 75% in a supplementary, it must raise a matter of grave concern. Indeed, Mr. Chairman - and this will be no repetition - unless there is an appropriate explanation forthcoming, an appropriate apology to this Honourable House, I feel very constrained to move a reduction of this vote in due course by one dollar, as a mark of protest against what has been happening.

Asides.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this is a very reasonable position because we have a duty as 2 Opposition parties in this House to make sure that this kind of thing does not happen. We are asking for an explanation, on the fiscal side. Do not come and tell me you did this programme, did that programme, did the other programme and all those things. That is possible. I have not got any problem with

that. But what I am saying is, explain to me why the original vote, in this House, was just over \$1 million and now you are coming for another \$825 000.

On this basis, Mr. Chairman, you know that if we approve \$1.2 billion in expenditure that the Government could come for another seven hundred and eighty something million, on this basis, and that would be considered to be proper? But this is the reality. The reality is that if we do not consider this to have some kind of fiscal significance, in terms of the planning of the fiscal management of the country, then I think that that would be the kind of thing that I think this House would be endorsing. It is wrong. If there were a hurricane, if there were some unforeseen disaster, an earthquake or something like this, we could understand these things. But what was the earthquake in the Ministry of Education? What was the hurricane? Could you tell us?

No matter what has happened, Mr. Chairman, I will be demanding, as I say, either an apology, a satisfactory explanation or, in the alternative, I will make an effort to highlight this matter by moving a reduction of this vote by one dollar.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It does not matter who supports it The point is the amendment will be made and it will be part of the record of Hansard because you forget one thing, that, in the long run, it is the record that matters. Because even if you had a seconder, you could still defeat it It really does not matter as far as the voting on the matter is concerned or even the seconding of the matter.

Could you imagine when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was in full bloom in this Honourable House and if anybody had come in here asking for a \$825 000 on an original vote of \$1 147 000 you would hear him from the bottom of Broad Street I cannot shout as loud as he can shout but that is where you would hear from him. Sir, I do not want to take too much time. I want to speak for only 5 minutes because I know the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister wants to speak.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Am I speaking well? Are you quite happy? Do not spoil it. I will take the advice of the Honourable Member for the City, for the first time in my life, and I will take my seat, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the festive season clearly is upon us.

I am happy to support this resolution and would like to make just a few comments on the linkages which the National Cultural Foundation has and must continue to have with tourism. Barbados is billing itself, in recent times, as the island of 7 festivals. The figure 7 is not fixed. We hope, in the future, to be able to say that we are the island of more than 7 festivals. At this time, we are the island of 7 festivals and several of these festivals are organized by the National Cultural Foundation. There are several festivals. We have a Jazz Festival. We have a Holetown Festival. We have an Oistin Fish Festival. We have Crop Over which is the largest of all the Festivals. There is a Holder's Festival as well in the early part of the year. Only on Saturday evening in the ...

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes. NIFCA, of course, is the oldest of the festivals. The Festival of Lights which was launched on Saturday evening here within the court yard of the Honourable the House of Assembly, His Honour the Speaker, and the Clerk of Parliament and many others gathered, Sir, because the Ministry of Tourism has requested of the National Cultural Foundation that it should do everything at the earliest opportunity to revive the old community choirs so that next Christmas we will bring an even greater sense of community back to the festival of Christmas. 12.20 p.m.

Christmas, people keep forgetting is a festival in its own right as well. We were very pleased to have many of the NIFCA gold and other winners on Saturday evening here performing and I hope at this time next year we will then have maybe the six finalists.

Many, many years ago we used to have the community choirs. It was very competitive. Chapman Lane used to have an excellent choir. Halls Road used to have a good choir. Belleplaine. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew may not know it, Belleplaine had an excellent choir which used to win. They did their final performance, Sir, on New Year's Day down at Kensington Oval. I can remember the late Captain Raison, my late father and the late Mitchie Hewitt, they were all involved in this fantastic community effort. A former Member of this Honourable Chamber and a former Member for the Constituency of St. Andrew, Mr. Joy Edwards, became much involved as well. I am looking to hotels, to glee clubs, to youth groups, to cultural groups, to just ordinary community choral groups to become involved in this. I am quite willing to sing in the Chapman Larte Choir, Sir, if they would have me. Speightstown used to have a good choir as well and we hope to bring all of this back next Christmas. It is critical that the National Cultural Foundation should start as of now to plan and begin to husband all of the resources they need to make this community effort come true.

In respect of tourism, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am also deeply concerned that the National Cultural Foundation should have this supplementary because there is a developmental role, specifically related to tourism, which the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation would wish to be working in collaboration with, and in cooperation with, the National Cultural Foundation.

The rehabilitation of Bridgetown will be a massive urban renewal project. I can speak of that, Mr. Chairman, Sir, in respect of almost any issue which is going to be debated in this Parliament but particularly the urban renewal of Bridgetown has within it a number of heritage tourism and cultural tourism aspects which have to be addressed by the National Cultural Foundation. We have the old Town Hall which is urgently in need of restoration and which it is proposed to restore to a refurbished and a re-greened Lower Green.

There is the Empire Theatre. There are only two of that kind in the Caribbean. There is the Ward Theatre in Jamaica and there is the Empire Theatre in Barbados, designed and built as theatres. We grew up, in our childhood, attending the Empire as a cinema but it needs to be returned to its status as a theatre. There is a desperate need. There are enough dramatic groupings, there are enough theatre type productions that we could have the Empire Theatre in Bridgetown, Barbados, hosting performances three hundred and sixty five nights of the year, not including matinees.

The Honourable Minister of Education and the Honourable Minister for Housing and Lands and I, earlier this year, went to have a look at the Empire Theatre. It is a wonderful building. Two-foot thick soft stone walls. The seats are in excellent condition. I was amazed. I believe with a little WD40 and some re-upholstering, it would seat 1500, Sir. It needs to have a new roof and a new stage and dressing rooms and all the other accoutrements of dramatic production. I am hoping that the Empire Theatre can again become a focal point in Lower Bay Street, that will help to bring Bridgetown alive in the evenings as it used to do many, many years ago.

So there is that developmental role. The development of cultural tourism, the development of heritage tourism, require significant input from the National Cultural Foundation.

I would also like to support this Resolution, Mr. Chairman, speaking from the perspective of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At this time I am pleased to say that the wife of the Deputy High Commissioner for Barbados at London has mounted quite a number of art exhibitions so that a few Barbadian artists have had a significant

number of works purchased during this year 1995. She is doing this as a labour of love. We have now prepared a similar room in New York which is a multi-purpose room where you can have seminars, where you can have receptions, and where already, during October, when the General Assembly was at its busiest and when there was a special commemorative 50th Anniversary of the United Nations, again another Barbadian artist, and more than one, mounted an exhibition at the New York offices of the Consulate and Mission to the U.N. This is a function that I would wish to see at every Mission that Barbados has abroad because it really is quite an outlet for artists in the graphic arts, for painters, for sculptors. You name it, there is a market there for it That word is already on the way.

I think it is important too that our residences and our Missions abroad should have their own decoration which would speak to Barbados. I have said this in here before, Sir, in my years in Opposition in an earlier administration and I will say it again. You go into the Chinese Mission and it is furnished with furniture in the style of Chinese tradition. It is the same if you go into the Indian High Commission. It is the same if you go into the Malaysia Embassy. And you go into the Barbados Mission and it is furnished with New York's best, which approximates to Court's best here in Barbados. You do not see a Morris chair. You do not see the odd tub chair, you do not even see a nice Barbados rocking chair somewhere, nothing.

In the residences it is the same thing. It is entirely possible, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that furniture manufacturers in Barbados can now produce furniture which will not disintegrate in a temperate climate and which will have the Barbadian cultural feel to it and which will speak Barbados, when you walk into a residence, when you walk into a Mission abroad.

I have instructed all of the Heads of the Barbados Missions, last December, Sir, when we had a meeting, a small summit. It was the first time that we had all the diplomatic heads in 10 years and I was giving them the political remit and among the things I said to them is that I would hope that they would entertain more in the residences than in restaurants and hotels. It says something quite different to a person when you invite that person home to a meal and a meal that would again make a Barbadian statement in terms of its menu.

We underestimate, Mr. Chairman, how much people appreciate those differences. Only yesterday a number of us were having lunch at the Caribbean Development Bank with the Inter-American Development Bank Executive Directors who were here and among the beverages served was sorrel.

The Director who sat next to me was Honduran and it turned out that they too have sorrel, as they do in Mexico and many Central American countries. Of course, they prepare theirs quite differently from ours, but he was pleased to have that, he chose to have that as opposed to any other soft drink he could have had. I made the point that this was part of the Barbadian Christmas tradition and so on and so forth. This makes a big difference if you are having a luncheon or having dinner in the home of the Permanent Representative of Barbados to the UN, or an Ambassador of Barbados to the United States or any other country in the world, or a High Commissioner to any of the countries where we have High Commissioners. It does make a difference. 12.30 p.m.

The NCF, Mr. Chairman, has an important role to play in that. The NCF must be represented on the Barbados Tourism Advisory Council. The NCF's opinion, the NCF's guidance must be sought by the Barbados Tourism Authority from time to time and by the Ministry of Tourism. I am speaking now to product development. There are certain aspects of our product, and particularly, as I have said, the cultural tourism and the heritage tourism product, for which we would have to lean very heavily on the advice of the National Cultural Foundation. This does not just come out of the top of somebody's head. Research has to be done, some of it has to be documented, sometimes even a consultancy may have to be offered to an entity like the National Cultural Foundation to allow us to do what we want to do. A lot of the restoration work that has to be done in Bridgetown, a lot of the properties that the Government owns in the Bridgetown and Speightstown areas are heritage properties and the National Cultural Foundation is expected to collaborate very closely with the Ministry of Tourism and the other tourism entities in Barbados, both public and private sector, for the promotion of this aspect of our tourism, which is very much appreciated by visitors who come here. Even this Honourable Chamber, Sir, falls into that category.

So I have no hesitation and the greatest delight in supporting this Resolution.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I was not going to participate in this debate, but I think the direction in which the debate is going suggests that it is necessary to say a few things if for no other reason than to get it on the record.

First of all, I have to agree, notwithstanding the opening remarks by the Honourable Member, the Minister, as to why this \$825 000.1 believe that the general thrust of the statement by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is something which the Government needs to take cognisance of. The Honourable Member said that when the Estimates were done they were done, as

I understood her, with the understanding that a sum for the National Cultural Foundation would follow. The only trouble with that, Sir, is that that was information to which only the Honourable Member and perhaps the Minister of Finance and her colleagues would have been privy. We in this Honourable House...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Finance and her colleagues?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: And her colleagues.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Education and her colleagues?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes. I have not heard that of the Minister of Finance, Sir. The "her" refers to the Honourable Member. I have never heard that of the Minister of Finance. The Honourable Member will be in a position to say what has happened in due course, but I am saying that these are not matters to which this House would have been privy, certainly not to which I have been privy, and it is a well documented fact that the Minister of Finance, both in his capacity as shadow Minister of Finance and as Minister of Finance, has made no bones of his abhorrence of any Government bringing supplementaries which are in excess of what is reasonable, given the planning process that ought to have occurred in the initial Estimates. The present Minister of Finance, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, the Prime Minister, has from this side of the House railed against the existing Government week after week, month after month, year after year, as long as there was a supplementary, indicating that these supplementaries were subterfuge and therefore I think the Member for St. Michael South Central's call for an explanation is valid.

I also wish to take issue over something which I observed leading up to the Independence celebrations and, so far as I can tell, during and after the Independence celebrations. I got the impression that there was going to be a new approach to the celebration of Independence, a Daniel had come to judgment and for the first time in 29 years the people in the communities were going to be celebrating Independence. Apparently for the previous 29 years they had celebrated something else, but for the first time they were going to have the opportunity to celebrate Independence as a community. When I first heard it I said to myself how lucky we are that the Barbados Labour Party, after 29 years, had finally recognised Independence as something worthwhile celebrating, but I figured that in due course all of us come to that point, and I was happy.

I looked forward to this cultural penetration internally in Barbados. Somehow in the geographical distribution of

this cultural largesse the area comprising St. Michael West managed to escape the eagle eye of the planners. Somehow they were not able to identify anyone in St. Michael West worthy of consideration.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Well, it must be poor people in general. I do not know, I can only speak with authority about St. Michael West. Somehow this great community activity missed out Alkins, Hindsbury Road and Passage Road. I will not worry to call all the rest, Sir. I read in the newspapers about this massive community input and I want to say this. If you seek to make a divide between one kind of person and another, you are going to create chaos. I go further and say this. Culture cannot be dealt with in political terms.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is seeking to implicate the National Cultural Foundation in something with which it had nothing to do. I have not mentioned the National Cultural Foundation. 12.40 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the \$825 000, is it not to bring the National Cultural Foundation to a realisation of how it is to function in Barbados?

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I repeat my point, Sir, that you cannot politicise culture. That is not an accusation against the National Cultural Foundation. I have not got to them yet. I am saying to the Government, because I heard the Honourable Member, in the presentation of this very item under this Head, explaining at large what the programme and plans for culture in this country is under her able administration. That is why I am saying that culture cannot be politicised. She wants me not to flounder to find out what I am talking about, but the Honourable Member for the City, I understand, has had to make some representation for some people who live on one side of a road. Mr. Chairman, you understand the road I am going down. I am saying that we cannot politicise culture.

The Minister of Education should send out a decree that raising the fees for use of the schools for cultural activities is unacceptable. The Minister of Education should tell the Ministry that they cannot raise the fees willy-nilly for the use of the schools for cultural activity.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Sir, I am asking the Honourable Member not to mislead this Chamber. I have stated clearly in this Honourable Chamber that schools are made available free of cost as a policy sent down to the schools in respect of community activity and cultural training. It is only in the event of a major revenue earning cultural show, like a calypso tent, that a rental will be charged. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South made the point that he had a difficulty. We saw into the point and, in fact, we even met with the Chairman and the Principal and sorted it out for the Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West really has not been here for a very long time and therefore would not know.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I haven't been in here for a very long time, but my constituency did not go with me where I went. It was still here and I was still attached to what is going on, as I always am, and they have raised the cost of having the children's party at St. Leonard's school. If the Honourable Member has told the House, she now has to go and tell her Ministry. They raised the fee. That is not an idle statement. It is a statement of fact.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is hearing things. I am making statements about factual information. I said she should instruct the Ministry of Education. You will get the Ministry of Education not to charge fees for cultural activities in the schools and where such fees are charged not to increase them as they have done.

I go further. I know that the schools have their own boards, but I have always - in taking the point made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East that the school halls ought to remain available for cultural activities on an ongoing basis - made the point before that if the...

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is looking after my interest, Sir, and I know that some of the things that are coming to him a little bit will drop off for me.

Sir, I have made the point that if the community has access to the schools the vandalism will disappear. My colleagues on this side would tell you that when I was in the Cabinet I used to make the point all the time that if you put the people of the community to sit on the Boards of the schools, if you allow the people to use the schools, that the schools will not suffer from vandalism as at one time, the

Honourable Member would remember, they started to suffer a kind of psychological war between people in the communities and the schools.

I am saying all of that to endorse the point made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East that we ought to seek to raise the school halls, especially now when we build a new school. It is costly to go back to some of the old schools and upgrade them, but I think that as a matter of policy when we are building a school we should get away from the concept that the school hall is something for benches and for the children to gather. You will recall, I think it was at the St. James Secondary School, they attempted to build an auditorium into the school as part of the design and there were many people in Barbados who had a lot to say about that. The fact is that especially as a country that has limited resources we ought to design new schools in such a way that the young children, the little children, have access to moving platforms and turning various props at the schools. If we allow cultural activities to become a normal part of the school activity the vandalism will not happen because they would have a vested interest in maintaining that stage.

Mr. Chairman, you think of the fact that St. Winifred's School and the Ursuline Convent are 2 schools that for as long as all of us were little children have been putting on plays and shows at certain times of the year. St. Winifred's School puts on a pantomime and it is still going on as far as I know and the Ursuline Convent did the same thing. All of the children that go to those schools take it for granted from age 8 that the stage has things that they pull and open and shut back, but in our elementary schools we were interested only in "learning" and we did not include culture as part of our "learning".

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It has changed in the minds of the policy makers and it has changed in many of the schools; but we are now discussing not the policy but the facilities. We still do not give to the schools - I am not criticising. I am saying "we" not "they" - the kind of auditorium the Honourable Member is talking about. I am suggesting, Sir, that the time has come, and the Honourable Member talked about going into the 21st century, for us now to perceive culture as a real part of our education of young people in the total sense of giving them the tools, the facilities, the environment in which to work.

In the last minute, Sir, I just want to touch on something the Honourable Member for the City raised in her capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs. When the first office for Barbados was opened in the United States, even before we became independent, the principle which the Honourable Member just adumbrated was in fact

practised in New York City. For the first few years of our life as an independent country all the Missions and certainly the Consulate General at New York spent a lot of time doing exactly what the Honourable Member says she has instructed her Missions overseas to do. The very first show given for Barbadian artists outside of Barbados was given at the Consulate General in New York in 1967.

Hobbs and Moore were the first Barbadian artists to put on an exhibition in one of the Barbados offices overseas. As a matter of fact, I have a painting at home which the 2 artists painted together. This is the only piece that they have ever done together which they gave to me in appreciation for our having put them in the marketplace. As a matter of fact, one of them has now taken up residence in the United States and has made a significant living from his talents. 12.50 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, on another occasion I would like to speak to the whole issue of what the missions overseas can do to make art and culture part of the economic development of this country. I share the views, and shared them back in 1966 and 1967, and throughout all the time I have been involved in the foreign affairs of Barbados that art and culture constitute a substantial part of the value which we have in this country and on which we should be earning vital foreign exchange.

There is one person who became a friend of Barbados at that time who has been working with Barbados ever since then, and who has been responsible in large measure for helping a number of the artists in Barbados to conquer the international community. I will not put the name in the record, but many people know of this Professor from Drexel University who has made a significant contribution to the spurring of art as a cultural and economic activity for the people of Barbados.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, in dealing with this supplementary, I would first like to point out that the Government of Barbados and this House of Assembly are in breach of a principle which we call the principle of conservatism and that is that we have done estimates and produced an estimate for \$1.47 million and now we are back to this House for an amount of \$825 000. All those who know about budgets are taught that one always looks at the worst side and not the best side. We have an example today where we have looked at the best side and not the worst side so we have broken an accounting principle.

I would also like to say, Sir, that listening to the debate so far I am under the impression that something has gone wrong at the National Cultural Foundation. It appears

to me that there is a commercial side of the NCF that we are not hearing anything about today. There is a clear picture in my mind that the NCF should have made more money than they actually received and that is why we are here today for this supplementary of \$825 000. I will tell you why, Sir. If you listened to what was said by the Minister and you listened to what was said by the Honourable Member for the City, the 2 stories are not gelling. On one hand the Minister is saying that there was a plan to come back later to get more finances. On the other hand, the Honourable Member for the City is saying that the city lights *et cetera* are included.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You did not say that? You said the city lights. Are you saying that the budgeting for the city lights were included already? I have a problem then, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. What I said was that we want to include in the 7 festivals the Festival of Lights but we raised the money for the one that we launched last Saturday night from public subscription.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for the City said that they are being assisted by the NCF so is there no financial assistance then? Am I to believe then, seeing there is no more expenditure coming out of the NCF for the Festival of Lights, which I have an objection to because 2 years ago the Festival of Lights was in rural Barbados and today the Festival of Lights is in urban Barbados... I want to know what is happening to the Festival of Lights that was previously in rural Barbados? I want to know if it is still continuing. That is all I want to hear.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Yes, I want one for St. Lucy right by St. Lucy's Parish Church too. I do not have a problem with that, but I hope I get some of the funding too.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that we were hoping to have a Festival of Lights at St. Lucy's Parish Church and we were hoping to get some of the money from the best ever Crop Over we had in Barbados. We were hoping we would have been able to ask the NCF for some of the profits they made at the best ever Crop Over Festival we had. I want to know how much of the money from the profits of the Crop Over we in the north of Barbados would be able to get. I want to know the true financial position of that.

Mr. Chairman, I want to know if we had the best ever Crop Over and we made so much money, how come we are here today asking for \$825 000? We in the north want some of that money from the best Crop Over we ever had.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: We will identify the project but I hope the money will be forthcoming because what I am seeing is a supplementary for \$825 000. I want to know if we will be able to get some of that money because you would agree, Mr. Chairman, that it is out of the youth groups that you get the actors and players, so if we can channel some of these funds to help develop the youth groups then we are sure that in Barbados some 2 or 3 years from now we will have not only the best ever but we will also have to find another term to describe Crop Over.

Mr. Chairman, we are in a situation now where we are having city lights and I am told it has nothing to do with \$825 000 but yet still we are in Parliament asking for \$825 000. I would like to know what has happened to the surplus from Crop Over because I would hate to believe that the Ministry of Finance has put this money into the Consolidated Fund. If it has gone into the Consolidated Fund I am saying that is money that should go straight to the NCF to help develop the youngsters in Barbados. People believe street liming is a crime. That is not true. It is a culture, Sir. That is where we have to start tackling the youth, right at the street corner.

Thank you very much, Sir.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, before the Honourable Minister of Education, the mover of this Resolution, winds up, permit me to make a few comments relating to community activities recently planned and executed in relation to our Independence. There are many reasons why in the past our Independence has not been adequately celebrated at the community level. Many people argue that it has to do with the very circumstances that led to our Independence at which point Independence was there for the asking. We did not have to fight for it. None of our leaders had to spend time in prison, as indeed happened in many countries in Africa and elsewhere at a much earlier period.

Others argue that it is has fallen too close to Christmas and that all the energy, focus, concentration and attention is on Christmas. I do not buy that because in America every third Thursday in November there is a very big event, Thanksgiving, sometimes more richly celebrated than Christmas itself but it does not take away from Christmas coming 4 weeks after; so there is no reason why Independence, which is a significant watershed in our

political history, ought not to be adequately celebrated. To that extent, I welcome the initiative taken this year to bring meaning and significance to our Independence by rooting it in the communities. 1.00 p.m.

But I believe that we have only made a very modest beginning. One of the errors, on this occasion, has to do with the fact that the initiative came from the Prime Minister's Office and that it was, nevertheless, the National Cultural Foundation that had to do the work without a budget.

In future the whole responsibility and initiative should be grounded in the NCF and a budget should be provided for the activities. Let me illustrate, Mr. Chairman. On this occasion, there was much reliance on corporate Barbados to contribute the resources, financial and otherwise to support the community effort. That is all good for St. Michael and Christ Church where corporate Barbados is concentrated and in St. James and St. Peter where the hotel belt exists and many of the hotels took great pride in sponsoring certain events.

When you come to St. Lucy, St. John, St. Joseph and St. Andrew where there is no hotel belt and where corporate Barbados is not at all represented, in some instances, the responsibility of financing the events fell back on the MPs. I would not like to say the size of the bill that I was confronted with. That ought not to happen. It is not fair. In many instances, we are not talking about large resources. Five thousand dollars planned and earmarked for each parish will do the job. Because, in this respect, we are talking about 2 Barbadoses; a Barbados where corporate Barbados and the hotels are concentrated which only embraces a few parishes and the other Barbados where there is no representation of corporate Barbados, no hotels exist and the MPs themselves have got to finance the community effort.

My point, Mr. Chairman, has got to do with the festival of Independence itself, the event which I think should be celebrated at the community level. I fully support the initiatives that have been taken this year but we need to go further and 2 things are needed. First of all, there needs to be much earlier planning. Secondly, it needs to fall under the rubric of the National Cultural Foundation. And, thirdly, a budget perhaps \$75 000 or \$100 000 needs to be provided for that purpose.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would wish to thank Members who have participated in this debate. I would wish, however, to correct the implication obviously left by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central who sought to describe the

supplementary as fiscal malfeasance, Sir. If the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central had come early to this Chamber at the time of the start of the debate, he would clearly have heard that it was agreed, at the beginning of the year, that we would only receive \$1 million until a business plan was completed to ensure that the work of the Foundation would not be business as usual. That business plan and economic analysis for Crop Over having been completed, we are now receiving the rest of what would probably have been our vote for the year and therefore does not represent any form of fiscal malfeasance.

Certain remarks made by Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY were ordered, by Mr. CHAIRMAN, to be expunged from the Record.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: With those comments, I beg to move that Head 34 do now stand part.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that, Sir.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am speaking on the motion for the vote. There is a motion before the House that this Head stand part.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Continue.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I should like to move, Mr. Chairman, that the supplementary provision under Head 34, Programme 08 Culture, Subprogramme 01 Promotion and Development of Cultural Awareness, Object No. 315, Grants to Non-Prof it Agencies, Code Number 34801, so defined, be reduced from \$8 225 000 to \$8 224 999.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I see no seconder and, in any case, the Member should have given notice of such. Could you please proceed.

The question that Head 34 do now stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 2.15 p.m.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 1.10 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply, to that it will now revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable Chamber now reverts to Committee of Supply.

HEAD 35 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOREIGN TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS - \$524 648

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, additional sums are required under this Head to cover the cost of payments in respect of Foreign Affairs non-established staff, salaries, representation allowances, acting allowances and payment of substitutes. Also too, Sir, to cover the cost of health insurance payable on behalf of overseas Missions. It will cover also the payment of utilities, electricity, telephone, water and gas, and the cost of leasing vehicles in Washington and New York.

We have found, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that it is far more economical in the United States of America, I am happy not so in other countries, for the Barbados Government to lease motor cars for the use of the Mission with an arrangement that all matters of heavy maintenance would fall to the lessor and that every two or three years these cars would be renewed. We have made that kind of arrangement in Washington and in New York and we need the moneys now to cover the cost of the leasing arrangements.

We also need to supplement funds at Washington, United Kingdom, New York and Toronto to meet increased costs, an expanded Miami Consulate from November and a supplementary provision for Washington. Just a week or two ago, Mr. Chairman, I was invited, as sometimes I suppose Foreign Ministers are, to celebrate the Independence celebrations with the Barbadian community in Florida, particularly those who are in and around Miami. A very successful event was planned and went off exceedingly well.

We have now opened a new Consulate General at Miami in the Coral Gables area in the business district. Some Honourable Members would have had the

opportunity to visit while we had to do some minor building out. While it was undergoing this building out some people saw it and have spoken well of it. It is generally felt that this is a far superior location. It is my understanding that other Caribbean countries are actively considering relocating their consulates in and around the same Coral Gables area. That has called for some expansion, Sir.

The country team approach, Mr. Chairman, Sir, of which I have spoken several times, has gone into effect and we have set up what I hope is the model or the pilot at Miami. So that we do not now have an office of the Barbados Tourism Authority or an office of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation, what we have is a representative or officer of those two entities now each styled Vice Consul, who is under the team leader, the Consul General there. We hope and believe that this will work well because we are starting it from scratch in Miami and that has occasioned additional funds as well.

There is also some preparatory work which had to be done for the sale at Pelham and there were promotional activities in Canada. There is increased cost as I said at the expanded offices in Miami. This is also expected to provide moneys for the furnishing of residences of the Permanent Representative to the U.N., the Consul General at Miami and the Consul General at New York. As Honourable Members know, we have sold the property at Pelham. We are now in process of making an offer for a very suitable property which I have seen myself in Forest Hills, much closer into town, much better suited for the kind of business and entertainment that we would expect the P.R.U.N. and the Consul General at New York to do. We are still looking for a suitable property for the Consul General at New York.

The property at New Rochelle has not been easy to sell. It has been allowed to run down to the point where we cannot get what we are asking and it looks as though we may have to cut back a little bit on the price that we have asked, through our agents, and hope that we can make a sale. As with Pelham, if we were prepared to spend US\$V₄ million on it then we could get a better price. In the circumstances that just does not make economic sense. We hope we can close purchases in respect of a property for the PRUN to reside in and the Consul General at New York to reside in. Those premises are going to have to be furnished.

We have made a down payment in respect of the residence in Miami and a final payment is due on the 15th December. That is an excellent property. I hope that Honourable Members will take the opportunity when they are in Miami, when they are in New York, always to go in and look and see for themselves. It is Barbados, wherever you are, and you are entitled, as Honourable Members, to go and see.

The property in Forest Hills is newly redecorated - new floors, new air conditioning, new heating and so on. We are making an offer now and hoping that it can be accepted. We are still looking for a suitable property to house the Consul General at New York. There are moneys already voted in this connection but no moneys were voted for furnishings. In the event that we can do this before the end of the financial year then we will be able to furnish.

With those few words, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that Head 35, now stand part.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I do not think I am going to delay the House unnecessarily on this. It would be very difficult for me, on the principal things that the Honourable Member has spoken, to take issue with her because I think it is fair to say, the policies encumbered in what she has said were initiated when I was Minister of Foreign Affairs and it would be very strange for me to take an opposite position simply because I am in the opposition.

I said very early that I would not make our Foreign Affairs a political football and I still feel the same way. We will differ in the implementation of policy but I think the position of Barbados in foreign affairs has been maintained and I have no particular quarrel with that. I think it is desirable to have the leasing of our transportation and it is unfortunate that they have not yet reached the point in Florida where it is possible to lease the cars because we attempted to lease and discovered

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes. I know. We had to go through a particular process but we initiated it in Brussels as well when the tourism officer was there and so we are going to allow this to go without any comment. We hope that it will demonstrate that we do not have to go through what we went through in the past where a certain kind of mentality prevailed which allowed the officers to function with vehicles that were really spending money unnecessarily.

The advantage of having the leasing arrangement is that every year, or as soon as the parties wish, you can get the new vehicle but in any event I take it they are going to have the usual arrangements. So, as I said, the Minister is implementing policies which we initiated and therefore we have no quarrel with that. 2.30 p.m.

I do not agree with the Minister in the relocation. I accept the expansion of the Consulate General at Miami, but I have some concern about the relocation in Coral

Gables. I take the point that Coral Gables is an up market exclusive neighbourhood, but my own view is that Consulates General have as their first priority the nationals of the country which is represented there, and one of the difficulties of Coral Gables is that it is not in the mainstream in terms of how the Barbadians get there. That may be a question of interpretation. When I was last in Miami, which was last month, I got the impression from those nationals with whom I made contact that those who were coming from outside of Miami would have to have two sets of transportation to go into Coral Gables where the new Consulate is going to be located.

I do not wish to engage in a big row over where you locate the Consulate. It seems to me that on her watch the Minister makes the judgment as she perceives it to be a correct judgment. I hope she is right, but it just seems to me that Coral Gables, as compared with the present location, is not your best location from the point of view of the nationals. From the point of view of business, again this is a matter to be discovered by experience. How much business we will get by virtue of our location has always been an issue open to discussion.

I would like to ask the Minister though, since we are going to be looking at residences again, I think that Barbados did well in some respects and I like the idea of our having our house in New York in the Forest Hills area as opposed to Pelham. I was involved in the purchase of Pelham over 20 years ago. We bought it for U.S. \$110 000 at the time and I think we sold it for some U.S.\$800 000. Inflation over the period may have accounted for that, but the fact is that the sale was at a reasonable price. I trust that we are as fortunate in the new transactions, but the relocation to Forest Hills is acceptable in principle. It has to be, because it is extremely difficult and was extremely difficult from the point of view of where the parties had to go from one point to the other.

Even so, I am concerned that Barbados has tended to shift the residences too often. I am concerned that we have had about five houses or housing locations as between the Permanent Representative and the Consul General. The Permanent Representative remained at Pelham for most of the 20 years, and that was fine, but one of the problems we must guard against is that new persons who are appointed to positions have a tendency to personalise the properties. I am not now saying that that is the case, I am saying it is something which has happened in the past and it has resulted in our having to spend unnecessary money to make the things right. I know, for example, that at one time we were paying rent for offices both at the U.N. Circle and at 800 Second Avenue because of what I call unnecessary tampering by the people who were involved, and there was an overlap, because the leases were running out at different

times. I hope that we have now settled in. The movement from the 17th floor to the 2nd floor I presume has been" completed in New York. I presume that all of these things are in place and that we are there, because there was a call that the Israelis were there and the Arabs were going to bomb us and we should look for somewhere. There is nowhere to go in the United States where you are safe from being bombed. If somebody is going to bomb you, they are going to bomb you wherever you are, but what I think we need to do is to establish the culture of permanence for our Missions and Consulates overseas.

I hope also that the difficulties which resulted in, it seems from what I hear, our having people remain living in hotels after they have been posted for very long periods are over. I hope that some co-ordination in the decision making would become more evident. It seems to me, from what I have heard, that we spent an unreasonably long time in hotels, both the Deputy in London and the Deputies in New York - I do not know exactly where - but I am very sorry to hear, that the house where Frank Worrell lived in London is about to fall apart. I have believed that that is a house which we ought not to have got rid of.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The house at Donnington Road, with the other two houses near, was a good arrangement. From what the Honourable Members are saying *sotto voce*, it is now uninhabitable. But it is a terrible thing about properties that what is uninhabitable for A turns out to be a palace for B, and again I believe that some measure of stability in the housing arrangements ought to be sought to avoid this business of every time there is a change of Government, or every time there is a change of officer, somebody wants a new and different kind of arrangement. I do not believe that this country can afford to have this constant changing and chopping and shifting to suit the whims and fancies of particular people. I am not accusing the Minister of pandering to or catering to whims and fancies, I am saying that as a Government, as a country we ought to establish once and for all...

I think we should sell the property on the River in London. We had initiated that while I was Minister. We had said as a matter of policy that that is what we ought to do. We should look for a suitable location for the High Commissioner in London that is nearer to London but is still within what is required for a High Commission, because there is a school of thought that we should give them a two-bedroom place somewhere, and that is utter rubbish. You cannot pretend that you are a developing country that is making progress, that you are a High Commissioner and an Ambassador and you aspire to a certain quality of behaviour as a country and then put your people to live in substandard conditions. It is necessary to have the appropriate accoutrement if you are going to

have these things. Once you join the band of independent people, you have to behave like an independent country. Even so, the house at Iverta is in these circumstances too far, not in terms of distance, but in terms of time. Any High Commissioner for Barbados must spend four hours on the road every day, and that is unproductive. If you have to spend four hours on the road every day, that is unproductive. I hope the Minister will soon come with an indication of proper accommodation.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Well, you know, when we bought the place at 1 Great Russell, as the Honourable Member who was then Prime Minister knows, the idea was that the attic was supposed to become a flat to be used from time to time, but these esoteric concepts which look very good on paper, when you come to apply them they present great difficulty, because one of the problems with 1 Great Russell Street is the whole question of heating and cooling. In the summer it is impossibly hot and they have not been able to find a way to cool the building without a substantial amount of money, and I believe that any Government will have difficulty with that particular issue. Even so, 1 Great Russell was a good buy. I am told that they have now made some further adjustments and it is going to be all right.

Mr. Chairman, I think the Government of the day owes it to the population - some Government - once and for all to put all of these issues up front and let the people know that there is a cost to being independent, so that we do not have this continuing back and forth. We had a problem in Brussels, and I wonder whether the Minister can confirm whether we have been able to recover in Brussels which after we ran into economic difficulties, we had been in the process of purchasing a property, on that property we lost the deposit Just before I left the Ministry, there was a clear indication that the parties concerned were willing and able to restore the equity in the property if we could come up with a certain sum of money. I wonder if the Minister can confirm, when she speaks again, whether we have been able to effect that change which in essence would be a savings because we had made a substantial deposit on this property in Brussels and I have always been concerned that we are ... 2.40 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As I remember it we were to move to this new property and when the economic crisis came they got an instruction to stay where they were and to let the deposit go in abeyance. Subsequently, we received communication from Brussels that an attempt should be made to resuscitate the transaction and I wonder if the Minister is able to tell us what has happened.

The long and short of this, Mr. Chairman, is that one recognises that there has to be some spending of funds in the overseas offices and it has to be recognised that what appears as a large sum of money in Barbados dollars is usually not a huge sum when it is applied across 4 or 5 Missions. What I would say to the Honourable Members from the other side is that I hope that now they have a second chance at this business they come to understand that political haranguing about the expenditure in the overseas missions when you are in opposition is not necessarily the best thing in the world.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West who I understand is an intermittent intervener in this Honourable House...

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You are not here. You can't tell if I am here. You are never here. The Honourable Member is absolved of any responsibility. He has tried to be responsible, but certain other Honourable Members, like the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, who on occasion has been known from the Opposition Bench - he is now responsible. When he is sitting in the Government Benches, he speaks in measured terms, but from Opposition Benches... Strident would be a fairer definition, depending on the circumstances. He has been known to pull a little left hook.

Quite seriously, Sir, I really believe that the sides cannot do Barbados well if we seek to pull down each other on the issue of foreign affairs. As I said before, I don't intend to do it. When they step out of line I will do so.

I have a beef with the Minister but this is not the appropriate time to take it up. The Minister has very carefully worked out her public relations capacity and every now and again there are things which I notice in the newspapers which seem to be of a certain nature; but we will leave that for the next round.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I don't think that this Head would allow me to raise the question of untimely utterance about the Trinidad Government. The Chairman would not allow me to say how intemperate that statement was, and I don't intend to push it now. I would hope she would answer me on Brussels, if she is able to give the information. I would then want to say another word.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I just want to make a few brief comments on one aspect of the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that relates to the

question of the overseas representation done through Honorary Consulates. Both sides agree that the cost of overseas representation is very exorbitant and, although it would be a good thing if Barbados were represented in many key areas of the world, the cost is prohibitive.

I remember some years ago we gave some thought to the question of joint representation in South East Asia with other CARICOM states, because we believed that with the developments in South Eastern Asia and the pace of economic development that there were certain gains that could be had by representation in the area.

We were conscious that by 1997 the Government of the People's Republic of China was having Hong Kong returned to its sovereignty and that it caused a lot of agitation for a number of major investment houses in Hong Kong to find domiciles in other parts of the world. We thought at the time that representation from the Caribbean, jointly or separately, could attract vast amounts of investment and major companies from that part of the world to the Caribbean. But these things cost a lot of money and I believe that the idea, though a good one, foundered on the fact that the cost was too much for us.

I understand that, after 1986, odd and unusual arrangements were made for that kind of representation. However, I believe that the widening of the system of Honorary Consulates can be a useful and not expensive way of having our interests looked after worldwide. We have had a few persons that have done outstanding work for Barbados as Honorary Consuls. There is one in Germany who has been Honorary Consul for at least 12 years. We had a good Honorary Consul in Jamaica, a Barbadian, who has been very useful to both governments of the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party. We have had a good Honorary Consul in Israel and I could think about 3 or 4 more. I believe that if the Government looks at widening this network of Honorary Consulates in key and critical areas of the world that we would derive a lot of benefits from trade and investment and tourism at minimal cost.

I would wish the Minister, the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, to reply to address that. I do not know, having left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a long time ago, what really is happening in that area. Maybe what I am saying is being effected. I really don't know, but I would like the Minister to react in whatever way she considers best to the questions I have raised. 2.50 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I will not be long. There are 2 things. In recent times, I came back to find in the newspapers some indication that the West Indies Cricket Board...

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, there is a motion that this Head do now stand part.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The motion has to be appropriately made.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I will not be long but I think it is important Foreign Affairs does not come up very often. I came back to find something in the newspapers and in the talk shows about the West Indies Cricket Board of Control seeking to have immunity and saying that if they do not get - I am just telling you what I read, Sir - their agreement very soon that they will move to Jamaica or somewhere.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I think it is appropriate to put on the record...

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Because it is Foreign Affairs. It is a money Resolution.

The point I want to make is first of all it is true that Trinidad and Tobago, I have spoken on this before, and other Caribbean countries are seeking, as they should, to lure as many international and regional headquarters as possible to their shores. During our watch we set in place a programme to lure and keep such headquarters, whether they were international, intergovernmental or simply regional, in Barbados.

The impression put out, however, is that some kind of dilly-dallying occurred or occurs to prevent these people from getting their due and that would allow them to stay where they are. The fact is that there is no due. And if the West Indies Cricket Board of Control is now located in Barbados, I think the Government has a responsibility to try to make their living and existence in Barbados as palatable as possible, but the West Indies Cricket Board of Control is not an agency that falls in the same category as the United Nations Development Programme, or one of these agencies. It is wrong to give the public the impression that some Government has been sitting down on some agreement to prevent them from getting something and they are going to move, and that Jamaica is beckoning them, and Trinidad is beckoning.

I want to say to the Government, if Trinidad is beckoning them, if Jamaica is beckoning them, let them beckon and if they wish to go, let them go. The fact is that while we should do everything we should do, there is a difference between the West Indies Cricket Board of Control and the agencies that get diplomatic immunity. I hope it is not true that diplomatic immunity from a

civil suit - I have never heard such rubbish in my life - that they want diplomatic immunity! The newspapers must be wrong, Mr. Chairman. How can they expect to come into a sovereign country and, because cricket is something we all love and revere, request immunity from civil suit?

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member seems to be misleading the House by giving the impression that the same West Indies Cricket Board of Control that stopped Desmond Haynes from playing cricket would want diplomatic immunity.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. The Honourable Member may have misheard me, but we are on the same wave length. I am not, in fact, misleading the House.

I am very serious though, Mr. Chairman, we may have a little levity but I want to hear the Government on this because I want to believe that we are *ad idem*. I wish to believe that all the parties are *ad idem* on this issue. I do not believe that we should be blackmailed into any position. Even the diplomats in international law are not immuned from civil suit so that the newspapers must be wrong.

I remember we went out of our way to ensure that UNICEF got their headquarters agreement. I saw the Honourable Member sign the headquarters' agreement which we had negotiated. I went out of my way when I was Minister of Foreign Affairs to entice some other regional agencies to remain here and I believe it is the duty of the Government to see that they get as clear and as palatable an opportunity and conditions as possible. But I think the Government has a duty, a responsibility to make clear to the citizens of Barbados the differences between what diplomatic communities can argue for and get by virtue of what they give to the Government and people of Barbados, and what agencies such as the intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations are entitled to.

One of the problems we also need to identify is this. I think the Minister needs to make it very clear that we are not a banana republic looking for hand-outs left, right and centre, and I will not subscribe to it. There is no basis on which anybody functioning in any one of those agencies is to have some position that is superior and above, especially if the person is a Barbadian citizen.

We made a tactical error some time ago and allowed Barbadian citizens to have immunity in Barbados. I do not understand how the West Indies Cricket Board of Control

could expect to have conditions and services that are higher than the University of the West Indies. It is impossible. I think the Press needs to educate itself in these matters. I believe the Government has a duty to help the citizens understand what they are asking for and what it is in their power to give.

I felt constrained to put it on the record because I do not feel that the West Indies Cricket Board of Control has to be in Barbados for this country to live. The West Indies Cricket Board of Control does not have to be in Barbados for Barbadians to get on the team. The West Indies Cricket Board of Control does not have to be in Barbados, especially in light of some of the attitudinal arrangements which I have seen. I was the Minister, I believe, when they came and we welcomed them. We fought and sought to have them come here, but it was not on the conditions which I read in the newspapers. I think it is misleading our ordinary citizens, especially our young people, to make them feel that somehow they are entitled to something and that the Government either (a) did not give them; or (b) would not give them.

What was worse, there was an article carried in the following issue of the newspaper for the Attorney General who was in Florida whose words were very clear. I understood the Attorney General to be saying that he and the Government would do all that was possible to get some kind of headquarters agreement, but the impression of the article in its headline was that the Attorney General was going to do something that the last Government did not do, and I think that is misleading. It is foolish, and it really does not do us well for us to appear, and I am not saying that the Government did, for anybody to seek to put us against each other on the question of whether the West Indies Cricket Board of Control should be here and what they should have. I think we are *ad idem*.

So, Mr. Chairman, I will wait to hear from the Government on this, but I thought I should put my position. 3.00p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am glad for this opportunity to respond on the point raised by the Honourable Member. I regret that I did not anticipate that it would have been introduced in the debate, otherwise I would have brought the file. But I have a clear recollection of the facts and the history of this matter. What the NATION newspaper quoted me as saying to their New York Correspondent last Monday morning at 11.00 o'clock in Miami is accurate. For the benefit of Barbados, let me just reiterate and enumerate a number of points:

- (1) The previous Government in 1994 signed, with the West Indies Cricket Board of Control, a

Memorandum of Understanding in relation to certain privileges including duty free this and duty free that.

- (2) The West Indies Cricket Board of Control had, for some time going back to 1991, been desirous of having a full headquarters agreement but that had never materialized. They wrote the Government in May this year with a view to having a headquarters agreement put in place.
- (3) The Prime Minister wrote on the Minuted file and sent the matter for comment by relevant Ministries. The comments came back in August. In the meantime the Government had indicated, to the Board at its Tobago Meeting in May, that we were actively going to deal with the matter and try and get a speedy resolution by way of agreement.
- (4) The matter came to me on September 29 and I put certain action in train with the Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office to have a final position for Barbados determined with the help of relevant Ministries but, in particular, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The officers in Foreign Affairs wrote their comments.
- (5) I, perhaps, ought to interject that this is the most important point. After May, we received a letter in which the Board claimed privileges and immunities of the identical kind that appear in the Schedule to the Caribbean Development Bank Act. In other words, they sought to be put in the same position as the Caribbean Development Bank. We had a list of claims sought from 1 to 10. We had to evaluate each one and it was my judgement which I communicated to the Board orally - this is prior to our sending any draft - that the privilege sought from immunity from action was not one that Barbados would accede to.

It makes no sense. I am going to tell you why I say this. For 8 years I was Legal Adviser to the West Indies Cricket team and I saw all of the contracts. At the time when the ICC Code of Conduct came into being in 1990, the ICC Code of Conduct makes specific provisions for the *audi alterant partem* view of administrative law,...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...the International Cricket Conference, and for judicial review. That is why when a player has a disciplinary matter, it is not dealt with just so by the match referee. You have to set up a hearing in the

presence of the captain, the Manager and, if he has a lawyer and he wants the lawyer present you have to hear both sides and so on as you would, in a mini trial. All of that is written into the ICC Code. Barbados would never agree to a situation where a player's rights to go to the court would be ousted.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I understand that Jamaica is willing to give them that. Antigua. Let me tell you what happened before I come to that.

The Board had a meeting here in October at the Hilton and I had conversation with members of the Board and told them that we were working on an agreement. Do not forget that we have a Memorandum of Understanding. What we are trying to put in place now is a formal agreement.

We treated the matter so urgently that I did not ask anybody in the Department to draft it for me. I stayed behind one evening until 9.00 o'clock in my Chambers at the Frank Walcott Building and drafted the Agreement. I took the Agreement to Cabinet and explained to Cabinet the contents of the Agreement and the Cabinet authorized me to send it to the West Indies Cricket Board. So as not to waste any time through the post, I personally went, in my car, and handed it to the President. I could have sent it by a messenger but I wanted the people to see that Barbados was not delaying on this matter.

Having given the Board the draft Agreement for them to look at it and accept or reject it, the Board sent the Agreement around to its constituent members. Since the constituent members saw the Agreement, I was told last week Wednesday, that 2 countries -1 can only say, having seen our draft Agreement - have now put on the table an agreement seeking to backraise Barbados. One is offering them land to build a building. One is offering them some 5-year exemption from this or that. All kinds of strategies are being used. I have not seen the actual thing but I have had some information.

The matter comes up on Friday pursuant to a resolution that was moved by the representative of St. Lucia for the matter of the Headquarters of the Board to be revisited. They are looking back at the conditions that applied in 1991 and so on.

All I want to say is that, in this matter, I do not believe that any delay that there has been has been unreasonable. I believe that Barbados acted as expeditiously as it could have acted in the matter. Barbados has put to the Board an agreement that is in consonance with the

broad parameters of the Memorandum of Understanding, signed by the Honourable Member for St Michael South when he was Prime Minister. But it is a Memorandum of Understanding. The Agreement therefore amplifies aspects of that and it is an agreement that I think recognizes the importance, the contribution and the role of the West Indies Cricket Board as a regional institution without, at the same time, doing no violence to principles of public international law. We cannot stop anybody else from making a bid for it I just want to say that it would be the worst thing for the players in the West Indies team if the Board were to conclude an agreement that ousted the right of that player to go to the court even for judicial review of something. Any country that is playing this game in such a way as to deny the players' rights to go to the court, stands condemned. 3.10 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, if I may make one very brief comment I do not want to prolong this debate because I want to get involved in the Health debate.

Listening very carefully I think it is really an extremely arrogant position for the West Indies Cricket Board of Control to be taking and I believe that the message that should go forth from this House to the West Indies Cricket Board of Control is that they cannot treat the Parliament and Government of Barbados in the same way as they have treated many cricketers down the years, including people like Sir Garfield Sobers, Desmond Haynes, the whole lot of them. Let them clearly understand that they are dealing with a sovereign government and we are not prepared to reduce this Parliament or this Government to the status of a banana republic to accommodate them. That is what they should be told in no uncertain terms.

These people have to be brought to Christian understanding. They have to understand that they cannot walk around the place and treat people in the same way they have treated them for the past 50 years. They have to understand they cannot attempt to treat either the Government or the Parliament of this country with contempt That is what they are doing. There is no way that I would be party to this House or to this Government granting anybody, whether it be the WICBC or its employees, any exemption or immunity from civil proceedings in Barbados or anything like that. How could they have the gall even to consider asking for it? I honestly think that this is utter contempt for an entire state that you are talking about here.

It goes beyond that. It is an attitudinal problem and they must be told precisely to know their places, that they are dealing with a sovereign state and that Barbados will

not put up with being dealt with in that manner. It is incredible, unbelievable, that they could be asking for immunity from civil and criminal proceedings in Barbados. Are they going to go elsewhere? If that is their position, do not hesitate to tell them, go elsewhere and you have the support of this party. Do not hesitate to do it because these people have to be exposed at some time. There is something that stinks in the West Indies Cricket Board of Control. All those cricketers down the years can't be wrong. There is something wrong about it. When I see them reach the point of trying virtually to blackmail the people of Barbados through its Government and through its Parliament to demand rights that they could never be entitled to under any law in any civilized democratic community then it is entirely wrong.

We will have our differences but when it comes to people making demands and behaving in this manner that really impugns the integrity of the state of this country, then something has to be done and they have to be told to know their places and clearly understand where they stand in the scheme of things in this country. I have no difficulty in making those statements because I believe in the integrity of the state of Barbados. I believe in the integrity of the concept of a sovereign government I believe in the integrity of law and order. I believe in the integrity of the concept of independence for this country and there is no organisation of that nature that it should ever enter their heads that they can make those kinds of outrageous demands on any Government of Barbados. That is my position on the matter.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few comments on one of the points raised by the Honourable Member for St. George South and it relates principally to the significant role which the consular corps play in promoting Barbados' foreign relations. I would wish the Minister, perhaps, to advert to the fact that there has not been a meeting of the consular corps from North America since, I believe, the Honourable Member for St. George South handled the question of foreign relations.

Whilst I am conscious of the fact that there have been meetings with the consular corps in the Caribbean, I believe that it should be to the advantage of the promotion of our foreign relations that we have regular meetings of the consular corps. They can be a real and effective method of communication and information, not only in helping in those areas where we have on the ground diplomatic personnel, but in those countries and parts of countries where we are lacking in diplomatic personnel.

Since we are taking an approach of trying wherever possible to make trade promotion and the promotion of international services part of our foreign thrust, it becomes even more important that we should use honorary consuls

in areas where we do not have the financial resources to carry people from our offices at home.

Likewise I believe, Mr. Chairman, that as the economy improves I would wish to ask the Government to give early consideration to re-establishing, within the Caribbean, a physical presence, certainly in Trinidad and Tobago, if not also in Jamaica. I make the point, because it is obvious to me that Barbados is having an adverse trade balance with Trinidad and Tobago and with Jamaica. There is therefore, need for more heavy and more consistent promotion. We cannot just leave it to the people who are making goods and selling services in -these areas. It is in my view extremely important that we have in the new thrust in foreign relations, ambassadors and trade commissions who are out there undertaking that task on our behalf.

We also have to be deeply conscious that as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has said, we are in a competitive bid within our own Caribbean for the location of international and other institutions and how we behave can make the difference in our international trade figures and other ways. I am therefore asking that at the earliest opportunity the Government re-examine the feasibility of having a presence that operates within the Caribbean.

We must anticipate the competition that is coming more and more, from the Spanish speaking Caribbean and the Spanish speaking Latin American field of trade. Not only the competition but the opportunities are important. Until we can afford the cost of having our own personnel on the ground then we should use the consular system more and more. 3.20 p.m.

I also believe, Sir, that our foreign thrust obligates the Caribbean countries to share diplomatic relations in key areas of foreign trade, and I take it we should be expanding some of our Missions into Europe, outside of Brussels. I am not sure that Brussels itself can handle everything that is to be done. In my view Brussels is now perhaps our most important posting, outside of Washington, because of the economic significance which both places have for the future of Barbados' trade relations, but I would like to see us share, where we cannot afford to do it on our own, other points into Europe as well as points into South America. The Embassy in Venezuela has a very important role to play in the ACS and otherwise, but I equally believe that we should not neglect our most important market for us, outside of the United States, and that is the market of CARICOM itself.

Mr. Chairman, I will just make a few remarks on the issue of immunity, because Honourable Members have

spoken of the question of State immunity, particularly in the context of the applications that have been confronting Governments for some time by governmental and non-governmental bodies, such as the West Indies Cricket Board of Control, for immunity or exemption, whether it is from prosecution, from civil process or from taxation and that sort of thing. The concept of State immunity is being seriously eroded more and more as the State and the State entities have become involved in day-to-day trading. Most countries are now not recognising that these institutions are immune from civil process, and if you examine the State immunity laws in the Commonwealth Countries, in the United Kingdom, in Canada, or if you look at the State immunity laws in the United States or France or elsewhere, you will see that the State bodies themselves as institutions, are losing immunity, not claiming immunity. So it really is a contradiction if our other Caribbean neighbours do not understand that trend. In fact, the media itself, those people who practise international relations in the media, should become conscious of this rather than just reporting the matter. I think we need analyses of what is happening, not just making it as though it is a matter of a fight State immunity is becoming an aged and old concept; it is not one now that people should be running towards, and I am very pleased that the Attorney General has made it clear that Barbados will not be lifting any immunity because you play for a governmental organisation or non-governmental body, like the West Indies Cricket Board, or even if you belong to the regional body of a Church. If you offend the laws of the host state you must be subjected to the laws of the host state and elsewhere. In fact, if the other two countries mentioned have any idea of what is happening in the realm of State immunity, they will not be condoning any such request. Further, I will say that such a provision is liable to be upset because of the constitutional provisions in the Constitutions of both Jamaica and Antigua. It certainly would be contrary to the Constitution of Barbados, unless we came in here and passed it by setting aside the fundamental rights provisions, and the Antiguan and Jamaican fundamental rights provisions are very similar to ours. So it is nonsense and it is misleading the West Indies Cricket Board of Control for them to believe that they are going to get a host of things to which they are not entitled. Furthermore, it offends my sense as a citizen to believe that merely because you are a regional institution, of some importance I agree, that you are entitled to be treated so completely differently from the average citizen. And then you are going to deny the people who are the lifeblood of West Indies cricket, the players, the right to take action against the Board if that is agreed? That will not pass here, Sir. I would counsel the Government, it would find it difficult to keep its back bench in order if it brought any such provision before this House. I would not give any such support.

The West Indies Cricket Board of Control needs now to be subjected more to judicial review so that it cannot act as any Ayatollah and that its actions are more open

and transparent and subject to proper legal procedures. They are playing with people's livelihood. When a person becomes a cricketer, that is now not only a gentleman's game, this is his livelihood, and it is over a short period of time that our entertainers and our cricketers give the major part of their working lives in this respect, and they cannot be treated like little boys who are one day told they are in and the next told they are out. More and more the judicial arm is going to reach into the meetings that are held by Boards like these, some of which are not properly constituted, to tell them they must behave themselves and preserve people's livelihood. I am pleased to see that recently in England the British court has not shunned reviewing the action of these non-governmental bodies.

What I have said about Boards like the West Indies Cricket Board of Control also applies to what are called the non-governmental bodies within our midst. The non-governmental bodies must of necessity have a good relationship with their host countries and with their Ministries of Foreign Affairs, but it is a mistake again for them to believe that because they are non-governmental bodies and they sit in on some of these things, that they too must have all sorts of immunity. We want to encourage them, but more and more they must not isolate themselves from the normal citizens.

This debate has been a good opportunity to clarify for the public of Barbados the position of international law as it relates to regional non-governmental bodies and I am sure some of us would take the opportunity to come and give them any of such bodies a lecture so that they will understand what they are asking for and how they must put proper protection for their own players in place. I am saying to the Attorney General that while we want to encourage Barbados as a headquarters for a lot of these bodies, they must also be mindful that we cannot breach certain fundamental principles in giving them the opportunity to live in our country.

There was a time not many years ago when they were running to Barbados because currencies in other countries were going through the eddoes, being devalued, and what was \$1 million somewhere was probably about Bds. \$300. That was the reason a lot of them were coming here before, so all of a sudden now I cannot understand that they are pressuring the Government, through the Press or otherwise, by saying that somebody has offered them land. If Antigua wants to offer them land, let Antigua offer them land, but I think we have to bring a little balance and common sense into this and I am glad that all three parties in the House have a concerted and common stance on a matter such as this one. It is important that that should go forth and that we should say to our counterparts in Jamaica and Antigua that this idea of these entities playing one

country against the other is beyond the question, Sir. That is the worst aspect of it and I am surprised that the leadership of these two countries would in any way allow that statement to go unchallenged in the Press. We must not do that in the Caribbean. If we are to be serious about our relations, then I expect Antigua and Jamaica and any other Caribbean country to say to the West Indies Cricket Board of Control that while we are willing to facilitate the growth of West Indian cricket and West Indian sport, it must not be at the disadvantage of the citizens of our own countries.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Chamber is asked to note that this debate in Committee of Supply winds up at a quarter to four. 3.30 p.m.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, when I rose to introduce the Resolution, I had, of course, absolutely no idea that the debate might have taken the turn which it has. I think that that has occurred for the better. It is not a bad thing that all sides, all political nuances on this Floor today, should have passed comment on the issue of the West Indies Cricket Board of Control. Barbados will now speak with one voice on this issue.

If I may very briefly go back to other matters raised by Honourable Members, the siting of the Consulate at Coral Gables, much advice was taken and a great deal of consultation. It is near to a metro spot. It is a good distance to the airport as well, and that is a consulate which will have to do a lot of airport runs. In that building, we have good neighbours: we have Texaco; we have Merrill Lynch. In fact, Merrill Lynch has offered gratis and for nothing the use of its really very commodious conference room if our little conference room should overflow and which we expect it to do, because this is a Consulate General where we expect the economic thrust, as we have conceived it in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to take off; and in fact that is already the case.

People need to remember, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that the Consulate General at Miami is not only the Consulate General for Miami or even for Florida. His jurisdiction runs into Texas and into Kentucky, Atlanta and Tennessee and other places as well. So he has quite a large turf to cover. I am grateful to Honourable Members for their comments made in respect to the appointment of Honorary Consuls, and it is the Government's intention that we would appoint many more Honorary Consuls. There is nothing which says that in a particular state or province or country that we cannot have several Honorary Consuls. It depends on what their disciplines are and the specific ways in which they can help Barbados. This process is underway.

The Honorary Consuls are also meant to be drawn into the country team and it is planned that very early next year all of the Missions in the United States of America will come together and so will the Honorary Consuls in the United States of America for a small conference.

In respect of Forest Hills, when I spoke on an earlier occasion when we were selling the house at Pelham in New York, I pointed out then that the valuation put on the house at Pelham was \$1.2 million. We would have had to have spent in the order of \$200 000 to put it in a condition to get the \$1.2 million. It did not make economic sense and we accepted the \$870 000 odd for it.

What we are looking at now is to try to replace Pelham - I forget how many years down the line, many years down the line - virtually at the same value. In other words, we are hoping to get something in the \$1.2 million ball park because that was the value of Pelham. Some people say it would be impossible to achieve that. I know that at the time the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said that it would not be an easy thing to do, but we are trying to do that. We are trying not to go beyond what was the value of Pelham at the time. That, too, is very well located for nationals because it is hoped that the P.R.U.N. will entertain Barbadian nationals there, especially at Independence time and Christmas and so on. When Honourable Members go up to New York on business, they must make it their business to call on these Heads of Missions and they are expected to entertain.

There is a train stop within walking distance as well of this property. So it is adequately located for the kind of use to which we would like to put it.

In respect of 800 2nd Avenue, it is a 20-minute ride at the shortest, 30 at best, to the Mission.

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: We are looking for the Consul General's residence somewhere in the Queens' area. I like the idea that the Consul General should be living in a place where lots of Barbadians live. At 800 2nd Avenue, we have billed it out at tremendous cost. It is still my own personal opinion that it was not good advice that was given to the Government to move from the floor to the second one. We are still in a building that is under constant threat and the Consul General at New York, who is also our Manager of Properties, has been instructed to quietly chase the market to see what can be done. It is possible that we may be able to work an exchange. Other Israeli interests may be interested in coming into that building. Ideally, what we need in New York is a building which will give us ground floor access so that like in London, the Barbados

Tourism Authority can project the image of Barbados visually and then it would house all of the other offices amply and comfortably. But that is something that will take some time. The fact is that everyone is well installed at 800 2nd Avenue very comfortably and in much improved surroundings and like so often happens just because it is a nicer situation now more and more people are coming there to do business of one kind or another.

The building in London. I need to say that one of the first things I did when appointed to the Foreign Ministry and once I had seen the one at Great Brussels Street was to give instructions to refurbish and properly furnish the apartment there and the Deputy High Commissioner lives there. At no cost to us, he is living there. It cost us \$12 000. It is no cost to us for him to be living there, because we would have had to be putting him up.

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: He has been living there for months and would happily go on living there too. It would have cost us money, because we would have had to put him up either in an apartment or an hotel, because Darlington was unfit for human habitation, and we have to sell Darlington.

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: As the Honourable Member for St. Michael West rightly said, these matters cannot be decided *ad hominem*. That may suit him, but it is proper and right that we should find a suitable residence, suitably located for the Deputy High Commissioner. Darlington Road is - I'm sorry - unfit for human habitation. The whole area has changed, and we just have to hope. We were advised by our real estate advisors that it is in our interest to try to unload it as soon as we can. In the meanwhile, it doesn't cost us anything.

The second property at Brussels to which the Honourable Member for St. Michael West alluded was to have been a new Chancery. It turns out that it became quite impossible to conclude a satisfactory arrangement with the owners and it has not been pursued. So we continue to inhabit the Chancery we inherited there and it is exceedingly well kept, in good condition. It is small, not cramped. It could not bear any expansion, but it is exceedingly well kept, as is the residence at Brussels. But properties, Mr. Chairman, Sir, if you don't maintain them on an ongoing basis, they run into disrepair. There are repairs needed to the roof at Brussels and we cannot put that off. Brussels is a place where it rains almost every day. 3.40 p.m.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, in the circumstances, I beg to move that Head 35 stand part.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - \$4 200 000

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 36 stand part.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head 36 stand part.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, we have to be fair to the Minister of Health.

Aside.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman I understand that there are two minutes and since it is my Head I am entitled to speak.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I believe that we have to be fair to the Minister of Health and she should be given an opportunity to talk about this Head.

I would like to move that the relevant Standing Order be suspended for the time being.

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

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I would wish to thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central for his generosity and assure him that the only reason I cannot take anymore time is because the law does not allow it. It is a 3-hour debate as he well knows and therefore we are out of time. I would simply wish to observe that the supplementary for \$4.2 million is sought against the background of rising costs in the Drug Service. If I may just briefly indicate that in 1993 to 1994....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This debate, as I said earlier, was supposed to be wound up at 3.45 p.m. The Honourable Member has 2 minutes more.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I think I detect an attempt on the other side to sabotage the Minister of Health because we are offering her the opportunity to speak and the Resolution is getting no support from the Government side.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think this Honourable House needs to take advice from the Clerks at the table in respect of the time.

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: It is their job. They are the timekeepers. I think the Clerks must tell us if there is time left in the debate or not. The Chair may inquire of the Clerks at the table.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time has now expired. I asked that Head 36 stand part. We have had a seconder.

The question that Head 36 do stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: My ears tended to hear the "Ayes" had it but if Members want to call for a division we can have that

On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Resolution in Committee. Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported to the House accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, each seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 3 - THE EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1995

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, this amendment of the Education Act is intended essentially to do 2 things. One, it is intended to allow children to sit the Common Entrance Examination and enter school between the ages of 9 and 13 at secondary school.

Secondly, it provides for an enabling section to allow the Minister of Education by order to divide Barbados into zones for the purpose of admission and transfer of pupils to public schools and assisted private schools.

Sir, the rationale for these amendments before the House today can quite simply be stated from understanding that we have had a system in this country where the Legislature, through the provisions of the Education Act, has provided that children, regardless of their ability to move through the primary system, must sit an examination at 11 years old or what used to be known as the 11+ examination. What this did was to bring a level of iniquity to the schools in that they could not, as Principals, hold back children until they acquired basic foundational skills and therefore let their educational development at the primary level be far more ordered so that when they eventually came to sit any transfer exams to secondary schools, they would be more adequately prepared. 3.50 p.m.

The truth is that these amendments will have their full benefit for those children not yet in class 3 or class 4 and who will have the opportunity, if they are under performing or have not mastered or even understood basic skills, to be kept at that stage and to be given the opportunity to master those skills. Because to put it another way, Sir, a child who cannot recognize numbers, cannot add, divide or subtract, if you cannot multiply or divide you cannot do HCF or LCM in class 4 either. It is clearly seen that the foundational skills are critical to the development of the child at the primary level and it is felt that we would be continuing to hinder the development of children in this system mainly because the law says that they must sit an exam for no other reason other than practise our custom at the age of 10+ to 11 while, at the same time, ensuring that they would be moving into a secondary system without having obtained the basic skills.

Sir, for the first time this year, the Government of Barbados, through the Ministry, did a profile on the majority of children scoring under 30% in that exam. There were 1 050 children out of over 4 000 overall who scored under 30%. That profile showed that the majority of that 1 050 children were at the level of class 1 and class 2 skills although in class 4 because the law required them to sit an exam at a specific age.

I do not think that this Parliament could want any greater proof that we can no longer continue with a system that requires children to sit an exam at a specific age without reference to the basic human fact that children, more or less, develop at different rates and therefore one year's time span is too small a range to keep that criterion for the sitting of the exam available to them.

In other words, Sir, we believe that the span that we are giving now will more adequately allow for the development of children given their development over the years.

I want to say this, Sir, earlier in this year, I met with virtually all 3 000 teachers in the country and if there were 2 things that the teachers of this country spoke out adamantly in support of was the need for flexible transfer. In other words, a child should sit the exam when he or she is ready within a certain time frame and partial zoning, because of the critical difficulties that we were facing with children from St. Philip going to Grantley Adams, children from Christ Church going to St. Lucy, children from St. Peter coming all the way to Princess Margaret and that kind of nonsense which not only has a cost to our bus system, but has the effect of also contributing to the breakdown of communities because by the time the child gets back home there is no time in the evening left for the child to participate in the community life.

It also results in unpunctuality and the loss of teaching time because, very often, a lot of these children get to school late because they have to take 2 and 3 buses. And, indeed, it results in tiredness on the part of the children themselves and their being not able to concentrate, having had to leave home, in some instances, from as early as a quarter to six in the morning, therefore getting up before 5.00 o'clock in the morning and getting home at 5.00 o'clock and 6.00 o'clock in the evening.

We also found that there was a difficulty as well with those same children being able to take part in extra curricula activities and hence, being deprived of the total development of themselves as a person because they had to hussle to catch a bus or two to get back home.

Finally, Sir, there is a difficulty in the distribution of pupils on a highly unequal basis which led to certain schools particularly those at the bottom of the range getting persons who all fell within the lowest marks and those at the top of the range all getting persons who fell within the same mark range and not allowing for the mixing of abilities. Because, very often, that failure to allow for the mixing of abilities does not only have a result in terms of ensuring that they do not get to play and move around together and, therefore, develop an understanding that people have different competencies, but it also means that we would not be able to allow those who are slightly below to benefit from those who performed better. As teachers have been telling me children who are slightly weaker perform much better when they have children of a higher skill range in the same class as them rather than the children of the higher skill range performing less competently because of children who are weaker in the class. Those are the reasons that some of the teachers in this country advanced, very eloquently, when we met with them, through a number of meetings, across this country.

The Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party also stated, very clearly, that we would be supporting flexible transfer, even before we became the Government, our

Manifesto was firm on that point. When I first met with the unions, the principals' organizations and the other sectoral interests in education, we stated that point.

What I should like to say, however - because this policy was included in the White Paper only to ensure that the White Paper presented an accurate, historical document in terms of what was going on in education in 1995 and onwards - is that it was agreed from earlier on that this debate would take place without prejudice to the debate on the White Paper since this was a stated policy of this Government from the outset as I indicated, in the Manifesto and indeed right through our negotiations over the last 15 months.

In fact I met with the unions, the BSTU, the BUT, the Conference of Primary School Heads and BAPPSS, the Barbados Association of Principals of Public Secondary Schools and they have all agreed - as I said this debate will go on without prejudice to the White Paper - and asked for more time to submit their views on other issues in the White Paper. But we have also agreed to establish a co-ordinating committee which has in fact met already to ensure that the changes which we will be bringing about to the secondary school entrance exam, in other words, the Common Entrance Exam, from 1996 and in 1997 will be implemented smoothly and with regard to all their concerns as constituent bodies in the educational sector.

This Committee has met already along with the representatives of the Ministry responsible for this area and, with the exception of one thing, they have agreed that flexible transfer should take place from May, 1996, and partial zoning would be enforced from that exam taking place effectively from September, 1996, the new school year.

In other words, it is felt that those children - and I want to outline the criteria very clearly. But may I say at this stage that every single teacher and principal, as well as every single parent in this country in January will be getting brochures clearly outlining these new measures. There is no doubt as to what is the new policy of the Government. There is no doubt as to what might affect their children. We are not only handing these brochures to parents of class 4 children who would be the children normally sitting the exam but we recognize that any parent of a child in primary school would be concerned as to new changes in the system and, therefore, in addition to whatever publicity we do on radio, television and the newspapers, each parent will receive a separate brochure outlining the steps, the criteria and the changes.

In respect of flexible transfer, if I can go a little slower now and get into the details, may I say that the changes in this legislation come largely under the

Regulations and not the principal Act. However, there has to be some consequential amendment to the Act because those children entering school at an age later than 11 require still a basic right to 5 years' secondary school education unless they receive a double promotion and can finish earlier. Hence we have introduced a new section 41 (a) into the legislation which clearly states that after attaining the age of 12 a child shall not be required to leave school before he is 17 years old so long as he enters school after the age of 12. It goes further on to clearly state that this is a right of the child and it also allows the principal however to reduce that 5-year period in the event that the child may have had a double promotion or circumstances to that effect, if you read the Act in its total state. 4.00 p.m.

In respect of what the Regulations will spell out, although we are debating the principal Act now, the Regulations will spell out that a child may be allowed to sit the exam early, that is, between the ages of what would be known as 8+ and 10+ because normally you would sit the exam between 10+ and 11+. A child may sit the exam therefore two years earlier or one year earlier, provided that the principal of the school, in consultation obviously with the class teacher, determines that the child is ready and the principal obtains the consent of the parents to allow the child to so sit the exam.

Now, Sir, this section is aimed only at children who are consistently scoring above 90%, having covered the curriculum and syllabi necessary for the sitting of the Common Entrance Exam. We would not expect, Sir, that any child who has just gone in and is performing at 75% or 80%, having covered that syllabus that they would be sitting the exam because parents and schools will have foremost in their minds that the child will only be allowed one chance to sit the exam.

Some people ask, Sir, why one chance. We believe, Sir, that if we increase the number of chances we would only be seeking to entrench the differences between the schools in this country again because what people must understand is that this is simply a transfer exam and that the Government of Barbados, largely through public places and the use of some 400-odd private places can accommodate every single child at secondary level.

We would expect, Sir, that while we are giving the opportunity for children to sit early, that a principal and a parent will be extremely careful in making that decision and this section really is only for extremely gifted persons in our view - children who have covered the syllabus, but who not only have covered it but are scoring consistently in excess of 90%.

Now, I will deal with the appellate mechanism after I deal with the right to defer. As I said, Sir, children would normally sit the exam at the ages between 10+ and 11+, or as the Regulations state, in the academic year before they become 12. Now, Sir, that would continue and we expect that the majority of children in this country will still sit at that age between 10 and 11+ because the majority do in fact develop, as Your Honour knows from your previous experience, at that rate and therefore that would still be the bench mark for the majority.

However, Sir, there is a category of persons who clearly, upon reaching the age of 10 or 11, are not ready to sit the exam and I keep referring to 10 or 11 because the law is very complicated in terms of how it is defined and therefore a child may sit it at 10+ or 11+ now.

There is a category of children, Sir, who consistently score below 20%. In fact when we look at the examination results over the last 5 years we see that on an average 400 to 500 children, every year, score below 20% in the Common Entrance Examination. Now, Sir, we feel that if a child gets 30% or 40% it can be argued that it picked up something along the way but did not master it. When a child gets under 20% that child really had no right ever entering the exam room and that child clearly needed further assistance in order to bring his skills to a certain level.

With the introduction of any new programmes, Sir, there will be a period from September 1996 or even from now, where as I said, the changes really should have come in class 1 and class 2 for those children, but we already have children in class 3 and class 4 and therefore we have to put in a supplemental programme to deal with those children in class 3 and class 4 who would not otherwise be corrected by the normal functioning of the school in class 1 and class 2. Therefore, Sir, the criteria that we are laying down for persons who would wish to be first sitting the exam for one year is that the principal, once again, must ensure that the child, in her view, is not ready and should therefore defer the exam and that this can only be done, once again, with the consent of the parent of the child.

The reality is, Sir, that that criteria for deferral of sitting the exam will only be used for children who are consistently scoring below 20%. This does not mean, Sir, that no child will ever get below 20% in sitting the common entrance again. What it will mean is that those 400 to 500 children, who every year, even before they go into the Common Entrance Exam, the teachers know within their hearts that they are not ready, then these children will be given the opportunity for a further 16 months of supplemental tuition and testing to ensure, Sir, that they are given the best that this country can give them.

We cannot guarantee that they will be scoring high when they eventually sit the exam. What we can guarantee is that we would have better discharged our responsibility to those children. From January of this year, when the names are sent in and the principals determine whom they want to be deferred in terms of pupils, in terms of numbers scoring consistently below 20%, those children will immediately be tested and a programme will be worked out between the Ministry and the schools to ensure that they receive a greater level of individualised treatment in terms of trying to bring them up-to-date. We will also be hosting for those children an intensive summer school session, because we believe that we can make a difference to them if we give them more direct individualised assistance ensuring that what we have found out from the testing is relevant to the child. 4.10 p.m.

In respect of the early sitting of the exam or the deferral, I should state that the parent has a right of appeal to a Review Committee chaired by the Chief Education Officer, or his nominee, which will have four other persons, which will be representative of the teachers' organisations and the Heads who will sit on that, and it is a purely technical committee that would review all of the evidence before it. The parent will have the right to appeal within 14 days of the notice going to him that the Principal has made a recommendation that he or she does not agree with. This is also in respect of the fact that we recognise that parents themselves may also disagree as to what is the right future for their children, and therefore this technical committee will have the right to review it.

Partial zoning, Sir. Under a previous Barbados Labour Party administration there was a system of partial zoning and we have always been committed to it for the reasons advanced earlier by me - unpunctuality, breakdown of communities, *et cetera*. There is one single difference in this system of partial zoning that we are introducing. The child will have the right to choose any two schools in Barbados irrespective of zones. Having made those two choices, the child must then choose a school within his or her zone, and that zone is defined by where the child lives. May I say that this legislation here only enables me to make the order, which I will shortly be making, but I did not want to leave this debate without explaining to you how that system will work. Having made those other choices within his or her zone, then the determination will be as usual in terms of the marks. There is one major difference though, Sir, that each school can only choose from his or her free competition - for want of a better phrase - 70% of its places, so that 30% of the places for each school is reserved for that zone outside of the normal marks that school would normally get, and I will tell you why. If we did not make that provision, it would mean that schools at the top range of marks would never be subject

to any rule of partial zoning, because if there is increased demand beyond the number of places that school has, it means then that they would never be subject to anybody coming in from partial zoning. We felt that we needed to have a better mix in the school system and also to work towards the preservation of communities and the building of extra curricular activities. As a result, we are ensuring that 30% of each school's intake is reserved for persons from the zone in which that school falls outside of their normal range of marks.

I believe, Sir, that this will lead to a more equitable development of our school system. I believe we will not see the days of schools like St. George Secondary or Grantley Adams or St. Lucy Secondary or Princess Margaret complaining that they have had to take only people who score at the bottom end of the scale. I believe, as the teachers of this country expressed to me when I met with them, that they will have a fair opportunity to teach children of varying abilities in schools of this country and they will be able to reinforce that every school is a place of learning and that there are no schools that are "holier-than-thou" or that merit special treatment in this country in 1995.

Sir, that very briefly sets out the details of the policy of this Government in respect of flexible transfer and partial zoning. As I indicated, the Co-ordinating Committee comprising of members of the BUT, BSTU, BAPSS and Conference of Primary School Heads, along with Ministry officials, is generally overseeing these changes. They are overseeing the changes also in respect of the change of content in the Common Entrance Examination to allow 30% of the marks to come from free response questions, because we generally believe that there is a problem of expression of persons in this country;

A lot of children coming out of schools cannot express themselves properly. We recently did a test of all the intake of a certain institution in this country and roughly 67% of those children had serious problems of expression. It is clear that we require more free response questions therefore. We also felt that the comprehension and the free responses should be on the same paper and therefore to ensure that when that marking is done it can be done protecting the integrity of those papers, because you would simply remove one paper rather than removing two papers. As we indicated, more primary teachers will be involved in the process of marking. They will, however, be specifically trained to be involved in that process.

Sir, we had hoped to be able to allow children to sit the examination in the primary schools from 1996, but the Co-ordinating Committee has made a properly argued plea that that measure not take place until 1997 and we have agreed therefore to defer the requirement that children sit the examination in primary schools until 1997.

Sir, with those brief remarks, I beg to move that the Education (Amendment) Bill, 1995 be read a second time.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

Mr. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, there is no need to detain the House on this issue, the Opposition is not opposing the amendments. We accept the Minister's assurance that this debate takes place without prejudice to the debate which will take place on the White Paper on Education. I am privy to quite a bit of what the Minister said in respect of the agreement reached with Principals of secondary and primary schools and Teachers' Unions, so that there is really no need for the Opposition to detain the House on this issue. The issue that had worried us when we discussed flexible transfer was whether there was going to be a role for parents. I am now satisfied with the mechanisms that will be put in place for parents to have their views represented in any decision taken by the schools. 4.20 p.m.

We all disagree in principle with flexible transfer or with partial zoning and the amendments as I see them are innocuous within the content of what government policy is and it has the support of the Opposition on this occasion. When the debate on the White Paper comes along the opportunity will then be presented to discuss more fully the issues in education and to flesh out most of the issues relating to flexible transfer and partial zoning.

As of now, Mr. Speaker, the Opposition does not have any objection to the amendment proposed by the Government. I am obliged to you.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issues before the House as the Spokesman for the Opposition says, has the agreement of the Opposition. The matter of flexible transfer has been the subject for consideration for quite a while and I believe perhaps it has gained the attention of the House at this stage, because we had a number of children being denied access to secondary schools and having to wait around in a primary school even though they were outstanding scholars. So the issue of flexible transfer is one which merits great consideration at this time.

I particularly like the idea of children being able to transfer at an earlier stage, for example, at 9 years old, but in the case of those being transferred at a later stage the provision for approval of the parent is also one to be appreciated. Where I perhaps would like some attention to be focused on would be the school leaving age of the child. For example, in section 41 (a) I notice it says that those who entered "before attaining the age of 12 years may

be required to leave school after he has attained the age of 16 years". So what is being said here is that the *status quo* would remain for those children who enter before 12 years old, but those who gain access to secondary schools after 12 years should not be required to leave school before they reach the age of 17 years old.

I believe that in time we will have to look at the school leaving age again. We have to revisit this in view of the fact that we are trying to train students now for greater job opportunities and with the scarcity of job opportunities. We will need to look at the actual school leaving age as to whether we could not put it to 18 years instead of leaving it at the old age limit of 16 years. As indicated here, an extra year is being given because children are being allowed to enter a year later which allows the child the right to have at least 5 years secondary education.

Sir, I am saying that perhaps we need to look at the length of secondary education being made available to students. If we do not address it in this Bill perhaps at a time coming soon we will need to revisit that.

The second thing I want to look at Sir, is the issue dealing with the zoning with regards to private assisted schools. I am not clear in my mind as to how this will work when you are looking at zoning with respect to private assisted schools and perhaps we need to have that clarified by the Minister. I could understand the reason for partial zoning. When I was involved in the NCPTA at first there was objection to partial zoning but, after a while, we got the PTAs to agree to it. However, the crux of the matter will rest with the allocation of schools within zones.

At this point I wish to make my concern known about the position of schools in the Christ Church area. From my observation of the situation under discussion it seems as if St. Philip, St. John and Christ Church will have schools available - Lodge, Princess Margaret, Christ Church, Foundation, Deighton Griffith, Garrison Secondary, St. Michael School and Springer Memorial. I also understand too that schools will have to take at least 30% of the students from within their zones. I am not clear, Sir, as to whether the students in St. John, St. Philip and Christ Church, and I am particularly concerned about Christ Church, whether they will have the same opportunities for access to Harrison College, Queen's College and St. Michael because from my early discussions with the PTA movement the parents are concerned that all their children should have a right of access to those schools. Looking at the list of schools available in the zone in which Christ Church is represented, it doesn't appear clear to me that the equity of access in terms of Harrison College, Queen's College and so on. This is an overriding concern of all parents, because if people are supposed to get access to

those they want the same access. There is still the perception in people's minds that Harrison College and Queen's College are the schools.

Sir, we need in making any decisions to look at that, and I am particularly concerned about Christ Church because if we are placed in an equitable position, I do not want to have to wrestle with this issue when I go back to the good people of Silver Sands, Parish Land and Fairview, Baling Park and Chancery Lane. I have to be clear in my mind that there will be no inequity with regards to access for these schools which people prize so much in Barbados.

These are some of my concerns with respect to what I am seeing before me in terms of the Act. What I am saying is that while in principle I accept flexible transfer and partial zoning I believe that partial zoning will have to be given a great degree of discussion and we have to look at equity in order that no particular community or no particular group of people will feel that they have been badly done by the introduction of partial zoning as we have it here now.

I, too, am concerned about the perception of schools where we have a case where some perceive that some schools are better than others. I would think that we have to do a public relations exercise on schools in Barbados so that people can understand that schools generally in Barbados have good facilities and the average child can learn within those facilities. So we have to do a public relations exercise on those schools and at the same time where there are inadequate facilities I believe that things have to be made right before this system can be fully implemented. So I would want to suggest Sir, that we may need to look at the introduction date. I hear the Minister saying that she wants it to be introduced in May 1996 in one instance and September 1996 in another instance.

We may perhaps need to look at - I don't like the idea of deferment - deferring the introduction of this system so that everybody can be happy with it and it can go down well. I want to suggest that we look at the introduction in May 1997, because once you enter in a new school year and you introduce something new it can cause some degree of confusion. We are into the 1996 school year already so we might need to look at the 1996-97 school year.

These are my main concerns, Sir, and I am hoping that the Minister would give due consideration to these concerns and whatever is done will be done in the spirit that all people in Barbados will feel happy that changes have been made for the betterment of their children and everybody can be happy, satisfied and reassured that this Government is working in the best interests of all people in Barbados.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my colleague has spoken on the position of the Opposition and I therefore do not intend to expand discussion beyond that point. I wonder if the Minister is in a position to explain, when she responds, the concept of the 30 per cent. I am a little concerned about this concept with making a change from what exists. Each school that was available to all and sundry fell within 2 zones. This gave the arena of chance (my words) to, let us say, 70 per cent. The new dispensation changes the equation and puts it at 30 per cent. 4.30 p.m.

Now, I have been grappling with it and I would like the Minister, since they would have discussed it in the Ministry and she is probably clear on this, I have a difficulty with the 30 per cent. Let us say a person lives outside the zone of Harrison College. The 11+ examination at whatever age taken will have a certain result. There will now be X number of children who have scored above a certain level, but Harrison College now falls into a single zone. Those persons who have got those marks do not live in the zone of Harrison College. Is it not true that as perceived by those persons through their parents, or by their parents through them, that there will be a discrimination for those who are in the percentile that would ordinarily have been able to go to this school?

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am trying to think like the parents do and I am trying to get the Minister to help my constituents through me understand that because I would have to explain it, and I am trying to grasp the change that has been made. There is a change which has been made that will now deprive 30 per cent of those who before felt able to choose any of 5 schools. They are now not able to choose... or rather, they can choose any of 2 schools, but if they choose any of 2 schools and they do not fall in what I am going to say is the first 30 percentile... Are you with me?

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Let us change the school from Harrison College. Let us call it School A. If School A is required to take 30 per cent from its zone, it means that the remainder of people must compete for the 70 per cent. The competition is between the 70 per cent. If you live in the zone therefore, and let us say the range for those in the top zone was from 85 per cent to 95 per cent, if you got 84 per cent you could reasonably be satisfied that if you lived in the zone where the school exists that you have a chance of getting into that school ahead of a person who might have got 87 per cent. Am I clear now? Is that the objective? I think if it is the objective that it ought to be made clear

that what you are seeking to do now is to, in terms of that particular issue, level the playing field.

The question you must deal with, and all of us will have to deal with, is not to those who are in the higher levels, but the ones who are going to be on the borderline. They will ask the question. Are you saying that having, through no fault of my own, to live in Holder's Hill puts me at a disadvantage with somebody who lives in Government Hill? These are matters which I think the Minister needs to look at.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is saying that there is an advantage with another school like Queen's College, but in my own perception, certainly there are Honourable Members in this House who will argue vociferously, and may be even rightly, that Queen's College is not Harrison College, that Combermere is not Harrison College and that Foundation is not Harrison College.

All I am saying is that the original system allows for open competition for the first layer at all the schools. I think the same result could be obtained, and I am not saying thou shalt change. I am just saying that this is the kind of argumentation which we are going to have to grapple with when the same result could have been achieved if you said: You choose 2 schools with whom you will compete with everybody. Failure to get into either of those 2 schools then puts you into the cohoblopot for the rest of the community, and then your division would have been more equitable. But I suspect that we are going to have a difficulty, except for those people who by the sheer absolute geography live in the area which houses Harrison College as its school of choice. I think the Minister needs to address that issue, not for now, because answering it for me is not important, but answering it for the community.

Mr. Speaker, are you observing how the Leader of the House walks out of this House and as she is going out what she does? Did you notice that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: the Honourable Member for St. Philip North was feeling a little ill.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am glad, Mr. Speaker, you were able to observe, like I did, the manner in which the Leader of the House left this House.

Anyhow, Sir, I am not going to detain the House. I draw that to the attention of the Minister because that is a point which we are going to have to spend some time on, certainly in my constituency. I have not looked at

the actual designation and therefore my constituency might not fall prey to any of the problems I have identified.

I also notice that you have identified zones according to bus routes. It means that you are going to have zones that split right down a particular street, and I draw to your attention that you may need to realign one or two of those zones for purposes of understanding.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am saying this because you have to write the zones in the Order. A cursory look at them suggests that you need to re-examine the delineation because as you know from constituency delineations, when you are using the map only it looks very easy, but when you come down to the reality you sometimes send a line up through a hill and you need to examine that. For example, you should not make the distinction on say, Goodland Road because a person who lives on either side of Goodland Road would feel very strange if he or she were in 2 different zones. You need to make the division more definitive like if you could divide the division, by say, the Psychiatric Hospital. That would help. Anyhow, Sir, I think I have made the point.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, I would like to thank those Members who have spoken today for their genuine concerns. In respect of the last concern raised by the last speaker in respect of partial zoning, he is indeed correct in saying that only 70 per cent of the places will be open to that initial free competition and the other 30 per cent would come from within the zone outside of that range of marks. There is a deliberate policy reason for that, Sir. If we did not do that what would tend to happen is that those schools for whom there was greater demand than the number of places, in other words, if the same Harrison College the Honourable Member just spoke about has 120 places, it is likely that more than 120 children throughout the island will choose Harrison College. It means that Harrison College will never have any mixing of ability nor never have...

Aside.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Not from the very bottom because you would not expect to put children with zero per cent in a school with children with 100 per cent because invariably those children with zero per cent have peculiar learning disabilities that need to be addressed, but it would come from the middle of the stream.

Aside.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: It would be determined on the basis of competition once again. Also remember the Heads have a general say at the placement meeting and that say will not be taken away from them by the Ministry.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, if the Honourable Member would give way.

Sir, the point is that the law still gives a headmaster or headmistress the final right to admit someone to his or her school in the older secondary schools. Unless you are going to amend the law...

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You check it because we went through this in another dispensation. In the older secondary schools the Principals still have the right to determine finally who is going to come in. In a toss up, I believe they are going to choose from the top and come down. 4.40 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: There is a custom that is generally adhered to, Sir, in the allocation of places in respect of the Common Entrance Exam and that allocation practice usually accords the head some say but limited because it is done according to the demand for places which then determines the range of marks.

All we are saying is that we want to see a greater mixing in terms of ability while ensuring that children get the opportunity to go to schools nearer to where they live, rather than having to travel 2 and 3 bus routes in order to get there. We recognize that this is something that requires detailed explanation to the public which is why I said that we will be doing the brochures which each parent will receive. We will be doing the promotional explanation on television and radio as well as in the newspaper and this would be buttressed by the brochures.

Let me also just answer the last concern raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and, that is, that when the orders for the zoning are eventually issued that they try not to cut across roads that divide districts.

We are more than willing to ensure that this does not occur. In fact, the initial suggestion that I received I have told the officers in the Ministry to try as much as possible to ensure that we can preserve whole districts in the zone. But we would expect that that order would be out within 4 to 5 weeks and everyone would have a clear idea as to what those zones will be.

Zones, as I said, have been largely done with reference to bus routes as well because at the end of the day in Barbados, we have a bus system that you may be living near to somewhere but you have to catch 2 buses to get there. That brings increased cost plus the increased time in being able to get to school. We have done them with reference to bus routes.

What we have tried to do is that we have ensured that there is at least one sixth form institution in each of the 3 zones to ensure that some of the concerns that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West seemed to have been referring to are covered. In fact, one zone does have 2 sixth form schools. That is why I did not want to bring out the order for the zoning now because we want to make sure that we can preserve districts so that you do not get families living on 2 sides of the road being subject to different sets of rules.

Rest assured, Sir, that members of the Ministry will be communicating fully with the public. We have already started speaking extensively at Parent Teachers' Associations and we are available to continue to do so. I am sure there are other Members on this side who will volunteer to assist in that effort. We will buttress it by a strong public education programme.

There is one other concern raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central and that is, why this year and not next year. Sir, if we do not implement this at this stage, there are some 500 children who will be forced to sit the Common Entrance Exam this year who are not ready. If those 500 children are forced to do so, they may go the route that a lot of them have gone before where they enter schools, where they are not prepared, where we have to spend more money in the secondary schools trying to develop programming specialized for them because they simply are not at the level to enter a secondary school.

We believe that while it is not ideal in terms of the amendment coming now, that when we balance that against the injustice that will be done to those 500 children that the interest of the 500 children must be supreme. It, in fact, runs consistently at one point in the regulations, section 3 (j) of what is to be the amendment to the regulations which clearly says that the interest of the child shall be paramount in any review. That really is what has motivated this Ministry in bringing this amendment, at this stage, rather than waiting any longer, Sir. We would have loved to have brought it last year but there were certain things that we had to work out. We did not jump on it. We held consultations with over 3 000 teachers. We held consultations with the unions, with the heads. This is not something that has taken anybody like a thief in the middle of the night. People knew it was coming. People have agreed to its introduction without prejudice to the White Paper which has other reforms some of which may be contentious.

We believe that this amendment will stand to serve the people of this country and, in particular, the young children of this country for the better. We also believe that while we cannot guarantee that they will always succeed,

because that is beyond our control, what we can guarantee is that this Ministry and this Government will provide all that we can provide to ensure that those difficulties experienced by children in learning are minimized by:

- (1) determining what the difficulties are; and
- (2) seeking to put a programme in place to accommodate and to remedy the difficulties experienced by that child.

That is why we have a supplemental programme for 16 months for those children who will be deferred from sitting the exam next month January and given the opportunity for them to buttress their talents.

With those words, Sir, I beg to move that this amendment to the Education Act be read a second time.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 4.50 p.m.

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Education (Amendment) Act, 1995.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection from the House we will now go back to the Item of Papers on the Order Paper.

PAPERS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay the Education (Amendment) Regulations, 1995.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would beg to move that this House do now adjourn to Friday the 15th day of December at 2.00 o'clock in the afternoon. It is proposed that lunch should be available from 12.30 p.m. and that the House should sit at 2.00 o'clock in the afternoon. On that occasion the Government proposes to deal with only one matter and we have had discussion with the Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central who are agreeable that we

would debate the Exempt Insurance (Amendment) Act on that occasion. We would hope to do it in all of its stages. It is important that this matter pass this Honourable House before December 31, this year and all sides are cognizant and agreeable.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 4.55 p.m.

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SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER..... 2057**

Suspension of Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of the Sitting.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1995-96 NO. 7****HEAD 34 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND CULTURE - \$825,000 ____ 2057**

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Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, 2091.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

ARTHUR, Rt. Hon. O. S. (St. Peter) CALLENDER, Mr. W. C. C. (Christ Church East) CHELTENHAM, Dr. R. L. (St. Joseph) FORDE, Mr. H. deB. (Christ Church West) HAYNES, Dr. R. C. (St. Michael South Central) KELLMAN, Mr. D. St. E. (St. Lucy) LASHLEY, Mr. H. F. (St. Michael South East) MILLER, Hon. Miss B. A. (City of Bridgetown) MOTTLEY, Hon. Miss M. A. (St. Michael North East) SIMMONS, Hon. D. A. C. (St. Thomas) STUART, Mr. F. J. (St. Philip South) TAITT, Mr. B. M. (St. Michael West) THOMPSON, Hon. Miss H. E. (St. James South) TULL, Mr. L. R. (St. George South)