

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, December 5, 1995

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.15 a.m. on Tuesday, December 5, 1996.

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. L. A. WEEKES, G.C.M., J.P.

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., MA.

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

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

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, 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)

Prayers were led by Father Laurence Small.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, November 28, 1995.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the proceedings of the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of November 28, 1995, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

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

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

PAPERS

I

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

The Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Barbados Tourism Authority for the year, 1993/94.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Education Act.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the following Bill was read a first time.

The Education (Amendment) Bill, 1995.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 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.

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. 2.

ORDER NO. 2 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LEASE TO HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL, DAME NITA BARROW, OF THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS "SANDY POINT", BATH, ST. JOHN

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, this is one of a number of Resolutions which seeks parliamentary approval for certain decisions which were taken during the last administration.

Cabinet at its meeting on September 1, 1994 approved a 5-year lease of the property known as "Sandy Point", Bath, St John, to Her Excellency the Governor-General, Dame Nita Barrow, in her individual capacity for residential purposes at a rental rate of \$500 per month subject to the following terms and conditions:-

1. The lessee shall be responsible for -
 - (a) internal repairs;
 - (b) payment of utility charges; and

- (c) keeping the dwelling house and the environs in a clean and tidy condition;

The Crown as landlord will be responsible for -

- (a) structural repairs to the premises;
- (b) internal and external decoration, as necessary; and
- (c) payment of insurance premiums.

In accordance with section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225, I now seek parliamentary approval to lease the property to Her Excellency the Governor-General for residential purposes.

The Attorney General has certified this Resolution in order for introduction to Parliament.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that.

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

ORDER NO. 4 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SALE TO ORVILLE CUMBERBATCH OF LAND AT BOSCOBELLE, ST. PETER

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, this is a Resolution for the sale of a disused public convenience at Boscobelle, St. Peter, to Mr. Orville Cumberbatch comprising a parcel of land containing by admeasurement 229.8 square metres of land.

Cabinet at its meeting of February 16, 1989 agreed that a number of public conveniences should be sold to a number of applicants who had made application to purchase same, having lived in the adjoining areas subject, of course, to the permission of the Chief Town Planner for the proposed use. 11.25a.m.

Included among the public conveniences is one at Boscobelle, St. Peter. There was a Miss Marlene Agard who had applied to purchase same. She is from Boscobelle, St. Peter. The price which she had offered was \$8 300; the proposed use was a fruit and vegetable shop. Ralph Scantlebury of Gays, St. Peter, also made an offer to Government in the sum of \$10 000 and he proposed to establish a tyre repair and motor accessories shop. Mr. Cumberbatch's was the highest offer on record. Town and Country Planning permission has been granted to Mr. Cumberbatch for a change of use and reconstruction of the public bath to a mini mart. The attached Resolution pertaining to the sale of the disused public convenience situated on 229.8 square metres of land at Boscobelle,

St. Peter to Mr. Cumberbatch has been certified by the Attorney General to be in order for introduction into the House.

I would like to say that there are still a number of outstanding public conveniences which are presently being advertised and the advertisements have recently appeared in certain sections of the Press. It is all in keeping with Government's policy of disposing of certain abandoned buildings and lots as the case maybe. The House is accordingly invited to approve this Resolution in connection with the sale of the public convenience at Boscobelle, St. Peter.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will not be long on this and I certainly would not wish to delay, in anyway, the passage of this Resolution. I do not know enough about it other than what the Minister has indicated and I assume that once the tendering procedures are in accordance with the law and the arrangements which were put in place accord with what we have agreed is acceptable, I will support it

The Minister, however, did go on to speak of the attempts which are being made to dispose of other public baths and I wanted to raise, in relation to this debate, the concerns I have about 3 of them.

Let me begin, Mr. Speaker, by saying that I think it is a laudable effort by communities, wherever possible, that they take over these buildings and convert them into community centres. For example, in Kendal in St. John, the community took what is a relatively small public bath, knocked down the internal walls and it is a nice, small, workable community centre which forms the base for the activities of a nucleus of young people and sporting teams in that area which in itself is a small self-contained area. However, there were two other public baths which I know for certain the Ministry of Community Development had agreed to make available to the community, one at Rosegate in SL John and the other at Sargeant Street in St. John.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Yes, I heard that Rosegate was the first ever. Regrettably it is over grown by bush now and in quite a bad state because it has been abandoned for a while. Of course the other problem with Rosegate is that it is on the other side of the road from the residences and therefore people could be seen crossing the road to go to it, so it was never as widely used after there was running water and proper toilet facilities.

The group at Rosegate is not ready with that one but I do know that with respect to Sargeant Street in St. John

the group is ready and recently letters were written to people who had expressed an interest in purchasing it, saying to them that it would be put up for sale. But that would be in conflict with a previous decision of the Ministry of Community Development to make that bath available to the community. What the community itself decided was that, if it was forced to it, it would buy the bath and therefore a member of the community had bid for it but I do not think that that is fair and reasonable in the circumstances. I would like the assurance from the Government, particularly the Minister of Community Development that he will make every effort to ensure that that public bath at Sargeant Street, St. John - and there is a question on the Order Paper relative to that - will be made available to the community there.

That area is an area in which the youth, two years ago, won the environmental award for a community park, the Mango Park Cultural and Social Club and the facility is right next to Mango Park. Mango Park is visited by tourists as they move from the East Coast across to Sam Lord's and therefore it is a prime location for that kind of community tourism of which much has been made in recent times. I would appeal to the Government, therefore, to consider continuing the effort which was made to make that public convenience available to the community. Likewise in Rosegate, St. John but that has already been agreed to.

Inadvertently, Sir, and I know I am straying a bit far from the point but the Minister raised it, and I thought I would use this opportunity to deal with it. I should like to commend the Community Development Division for its work with the Kendal Group and especially to congratulate and commend the Kendal Group in St. John for the community work which was done in converting that public bath. The Government made \$5 000 available to the group some years ago, and the labour came from within the Kendal community and it is a very attractive facility which the new Minister of Community Development, although he did not take credit for it, in all fairness he nevertheless opened it and he was warmly welcomed in the district of Kendal when he did so. But, it really has transformed Kendal because I do not know, Mr. Speaker, Sir, if you remember that in the 1994 election campaign a shack was photographed in St. John as a pavilion and people were accusing me of neglect. That was never a pavilion, that was one of the oldest lodge meeting buildings in Barbados which had fallen into disuse and the cricketers used to lime in it. Right across the pasture from that is where the group was actually refurbishing this new community centre. It was an incongruous and untruthful advertisement but those things do not faze me when it comes to the parish which I represent and where I am used to being projected in that light, but nevertheless the community has done a great job in refurbishing and I would like to point out that that

area, together with the many others in which this has been done, should provide a catalyst for other communities to use these public conveniences as small community centres which they may maintain and operate themselves and which are not a charge on the resources of the Community Development Division. In that regard, I hope I will see the assurances regarding the Sargeant's Street public convenience and also the one at Rosegate in St. John. 11.35a.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the questions of the provision of community facilities and the proper use of those facilities are approaches to social development which will find agreement and acceptance across this Honourable Chamber. So there is really no objection to the proposals on this matter that we are discussing.

I do not believe, I am speaking subject to correction, Sir, that arrangements have been made in respect of all of the former communal baths and latrines. I know, for sure, and perhaps the Member for St. Michael South Central may recall, that there is one in Britton's Hill on Layne's Road that has been closed for quite some time. I should like to urge that perhaps the Government can revisit the policy of finding individuals to sell these premises to and consider allocating the premises to active community groups which might be able to use them for purposes of community development.

I know that in the area to which I referred and the one which I have the honour to represent, St. Michael South, I know that there is an active community council there, the St. Michael South Community Development Council and it may be that that Council may be willing - let me declare my interest here again, Sir, I am the President of that Council and that is in a different capacity - to consider an offer from the Government...

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You cannot do everything. I was trying to keep Barbados safe for you to exist in. I think this is a development that could be given consideration where arrangements have not so far been made for the disposal of facilities that maybe a council or other body of persons could be requested to take some steps, if they may, to consider the utilization of those premises for community development purposes.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. SL E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I should also like to say a few words on this Resolution.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, please.

Mr. D. SL E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I should also like to say a few words on this Resolution because it is a Resolution that I have always had a problem with since the early eighties. It is because we are at a time when we are promoting tourism, we are developing areas and, at the same time, we are asking the tourists to travel throughout rural Barbados. At the same time that we are asking the tourists to travel throughout rural Barbados, we are leasing and selling these facilities without providing alternative facilities for the tourists and Barbadians alike in rural Barbados.

For example, am I to believe that when this convenience at Boscobelle is sold that somewhere, at Cherry Hill, we are going to have some public convenience for Bajans and tourists alike to be able to utilize? Am I to believe that when the one at Pie Corner is sold the tourists going to Cove Bay will be given adequate facilities so that they would not have to inconvenience anyone in the Cove Bay area? It is okay to sell these properties but, at the same time, we must provide alternatives. I know that when you are travelling through beautiful Barbados, especially in rural Barbados that you, your friends and the tourists coming to Barbados would like to tell your friends that if they have to do the usual job you can point to somewhere that they can go.

A couple years ago, I might not have worried about this but seeing that we are living in a selfish world where tourism is not the people's business anymore, where all-inclusive tourism is depriving the citizens of Barbados of that right they had to tourism before, I am not sure that when we sell the public conveniences that we will be able to encourage people from rural Barbados to allow the tourists to use their facilities because they do not have that commitment they used to have to tourism.

I hope that when this policy is fully implemented and the public conveniences are removed from the districts there will be some place in areas like Cove Bay, Archer's Bay, Stroud Bay and even down by the former Naval Facility, Sir. Thank you very much, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I just want to make a few comments on the sale of disused baths by this Government. There was a time when baths were

situated across Barbados for the public convenience. In my own constituency, there were about 4 baths in St. George, a bath at Ellerton, Workmans, Flat Rock and, I think the only bath that may still be in operation in the country, at the Glebe. It is still functioning. I think it was recently put in good order and I believe the public who use the Post Office and the library still use that facility. But that was a time when many households did not have running water and, therefore, public baths were important. They were seen as being very important to travellers, not only to householders and people in the community, but also to tourists and persons who were travelling. But over time, with the installation of water taps, pipes and toilet facilities in homes, today public baths are not as important as they were then, despite the fact that there is still a need to install public baths at strategic points mainly tourist centres across the island. Therefore, against this background because they are now in disuse, there is a Government policy, as the Minister rightly pointed out to divest these baths and there are many individuals and community groups which are coming forward to purchase them.

I must say in response to the Honourable Member for St. John that he has been asking a number of questions about his community. He has been in the forefront, I would think, of getting his community groups to use these facilities. For example, he spoke about the one at Sargeant Street. My record shows that the Democratic Labour Party group in St. John claimed that the building at Sargeant Street was given to them by the previous Government. There is no record in the Ministry to substantiate this but investigations are going on. We do not know. 11.45a.m.

The one at Massiah Street was on the list of those that went out to tender, but as I understand it, that will be given to the community group there. In every case whenever a community group wants to use Government's facilities, they should approach the Ministry of Community Development which must sanction these things. So that if a group wants to use a bath it should first approach the Ministry of Community Development which oversees community development within the country.

Once Community Development has given the green light, it is Government's policy to facilitate the community groups. I do not recall that the community group of the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South had asked for the Layne's Road bath, but I believe he should approach the Ministry of Community Development before it is divested.

The policy of Government is quite straightforward. These baths which are not now used will be sold and put to good use, but wherever community groups approach us and ask for the buildings we will definitely accommodate them.

Thank you.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, just one brief comment. The Honourable Member for St. George North, who just sat down, indicated that it is Government's policy to get rid of these baths which served the community in one capacity or another and can now continue to serve the community in another capacity, whilst at the same time rebuilding facilities for tourists in the appropriate areas. I understand this to be the burden of the argument.

I just want to point out one or two things. There is a major shortage throughout this country of facilities for communities. For many years I have advocated, judging from my experience out there in the field, that what is required is a large number of small community centres around the country so that people in the various villages, in the various districts would be able to utilise those facilities maximally. Because of the socialisation of the country, very often you find that people are not prepared to walk a mile or two down the road to participate in a particular kind of activity, so if there is a facility two miles away they would prefer to remain under a tree in the area they are familiar with, where they could relate to their friends and so on.

I believe that the pavilion at Lower Estate is an excellent example of how a small facility can act as a magnet in a particular area and it has served that society well for some 20 years now. I am a little concerned about any rush to judgment in selling off these properties for non-community purposes, because you must bear in mind that, where those baths are located, sites were chosen strategically because they represented a centre of community activity, and I would hope that one would try in every instance to make sure that those properties are renovated and used for community groups rather than that they be sold off for other purposes.

It is not surprising that this particular property is being sold for use as a shop. Successful shops are also strategically placed throughout the country, and I suspect it is probably a wise businessman who has done his own bit of research and recognised that this particular spot would be an ideal one for a shop, so it does not surprise me in the very least that someone will be buying this particular property for a shop, particularly if he knows the habits and the history of the particular community.

Perhaps this area might be properly serviced by other facilities, but I just want to make the point that we must bear in mind that since Government already owns the property there is no point selling off these properties and then going and building other properties, or buying other land to build properties for community purposes down the road, but we should try to retain as many of

these properties as possible and try to help the groups within the communities to use them, to purchase them, to renovate them, to lease them, whatever, but I think they can be very useful sites for community purposes.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Never mind the size. You do not need to build huge, costly community centres in Barbados. You need to have a large number of small community centres. If you take my constituency, Sir, for example, I have fought for many years to try to get some kind of community centre going at the Gully Hill in Carrington's Village, but that is the Gully Hill group. That is one particular group. Although it is Carrington's Village, you will find that if you go over to Quakers Road you need a facility there. You need a facility in Halls Road, you need one in Delamere Land, Bannister Land, you need one in Brittons Hill and you desperately need one in Clapham. The problem is, Sir, that there is nothing you are going to be able to do to build one large centre and get it to function to service all of these groups. It is not going to happen. People in the community do not socialise according to the way in which we construct constituency boundaries and things like that.

I would sincerely hope that we focus on trying to retain as many as possible of these centres where they can be usefully used as community centres, that we focus on building a lot of small community centres to help the young people in particular throughout the country and recognise that there are simple, little things you can do that can make a difference to a community.

About eight years ago I installed some lights at the Gully Hill and those lights have made an enormous difference. 11.55a.m.

I personally installed them and I still pay the electricity every month. I cannot get the Government to take over the bills now after almost 10 years.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I installed them personally and I pay the electricity bill every month. The people out there have been extremely responsible, but just to have lights in the area after 6 or 7 o'clock in the evening makes a tremendous difference, so I think that the Community Development Division of Government needs to study carefully the needs of these groups. It will find that no major expense would be involved. It can be done on a systematic basis and in the long run we would get more and more people involved in these developments for the betterment of the country as a whole, I am convinced beyond the shadow of doubt.

Sir, if you take the area of Bank Hall, as you should know the area very well, you would find if you move through that area young people gathering in groups and they do not mix socially. You would need in the Bank Hall area about 4 or 5 small community centres. They would go a long way to help the people whom you look after so well in the Bank Hall area.

Mr. SPEAKER: Any size would do.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Any size would do. This is the important thing. I would like to see this kind of policy put in place and not just grandstanding. The Honourable Minister of Tourism, the Deputy Prime Minister, is trying to provoke me.

Mr. SPEAKER: You were just on a good track in Bank Hall.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, Sir, but I am not going to let her distract me from Bank Hall.

Some time, Sir, say you purchase 4 small houses in Bank Hall in a strategic area and make them available to the public, it would make a tremendous difference. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to say that the Community Development Division remains committed to this particular trend which is to take these properties, these baths, unused now, and to transform them into community centres.

Mr. Speaker, I too was very concerned about the whole idea of people acquiring the property for purposes other than community development and, in fact, I openly expressed this view. I would have no objection to this happening in cases where there is already somewhere in that particular area where the community can meet, whether it be a school, a clubhouse or something of the sort, especially when the activity for which it is acquired is something akin to what the last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has said, something like a shop.

I opened the one at Kendal and I must say, Mr. Speaker, that you could see the distinct pleasure on the faces of the people of Kendal when that particular community centre was opened. Apparently they did not have a lot to be pleased about before and therefore you could see the real pleasure on their faces when that particular centre was opened.

Mr. Speaker, I would be failing in my duty if I did not make mention of the one at Brereton,

St. Philip. Brereton is a district which virtually has nothing to assist it in terms of community development. There is no school, no clubhouse, no meeting place for the groups to go, nothing for them to have a little fair, nothing of the sort. If you compare that with somewhere like Blades Hill where you have a school, a club, almost everything, there is absolutely nothing at Brereton and this bath remains there. If I had lived in a district, Mr. Speaker, such as Brereton where, as I said, there is nothing, the last thing on earth that I would think about doing is to acquire that particular property for my personal use. Mr. Speaker, when I started to do some investigation on the bath at Brereton, I was shocked at one of the persons who had actually applied to acquire that particular property and was considered.

I want to say now on the Floor of this House that the Community Development Division will be acquiring that property for community purposes. On that matter I have nothing more to say.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I find this debate particularly interesting. One accepts that community development is an important aspect of any Government's policy, because Government policy must be relevant and germane to the interests of people and the development of the human persona. In this regard, I think it is important that there be a clear strategy for the use of such facilities as would conduce to the development of that human persona.

Over the years when running water was a scarcity in many homes in Barbados and the standpipe was a place of resort not only for cleanliness but also for small time gossip and small time slander, it was thought that in order to dignify the human personality it made more sense not to see the individual bathing naked under the standpipe but rather to create a facility of public baths. Over time successive governments have developed the series of amenities that have enabled Barbadians to have running water in their homes and so the system of public baths has virtually fallen into desuetude. We are in a position now in our history where we have a plethora of these unused buildings which are of substantial construction and which need to be put to a variety of uses.

The argument so far in this debate has focused on the dichotomy: should the bath remain as a building for public use in the sense of community development or should it be sold to the best offer for whatever purpose that particular person may wish to make of it? 12.05 p.m.

The argument of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has attracted me because of its implications for runaway spending, and its failure to address existing facilities.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that all of us will agree that there needs to be a proper distribution of community centres throughout Barbados. But, at the same time, I am not sure I accept his submission that there ought to be a series of these centres throughout a constituency or a parish. The implications of such policy portend almost financial disaster. You have to construct, repair or renovate, and then you have to put in the human personnel to run these things and man them, which is going to be a cost to Government.

I have always been of the view that it would be better in districts or parishes where none exist that a main community facility should exist, agree, but I do not believe we have made enough sensible use of existing school properties. There is no reason on earth why a school should close at 3 o'clock. You have a caretaker...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not getting into the little problems of somebody asking for pay. We can deal with that.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I think it is a matter that is easily resolved by the coordination of Government policy through an inter-ministerial meeting. It is a simple matter, in my view. I do not know why people find these things so difficult.

First of all, I am not saying that this is Government policy. I am expressing an opinion and I must not be taken to be expressing Government policy on a collective basis. I am suggesting that there needs to be a settled and clear understanding that schools will become available for public community use, let us say from 4 o'clock on evenings until 9 o'clock, that there be a procedure for the use of these properties, namely, that a group must have some kind of accreditation, executive structure or constitution, they or their MPs. This is one of the functions we can do as MPs, we write on behalf of the group certifying their integrity and asking that they be permitted to use the premises between the available hours, on whatever date. Those are details.

I do not see any problem because here you have property that is dispersed at geographical locations around the constituencies already existing and already supervised. If you need, at least, to put in an additional watchman or caretaker because of the hours, do it. We have existing properties - the buzz word is "plant" - which can be used to contribute to the provision of adequate facilities for the general population.

Without prejudice to the need in areas of sparse facilities to construct additional property or renovate - the point made by the Honourable Member - I think it can work at less cost to Government than with a series of little things all about the country. We have to maximise the use of existing property as we are not now doing. Schools close at 3 o'clock and that is the end of that.

I say that out of bitter experience. The Democratic Labour Party Government, the previous Government, with a view to punishing the people of St. Thomas closed down the only centre we had in St. Thomas early after the 1986 election at Rock Hall. For all these years the people of St. Thomas have been denied a facility.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Bagatelle Great House is private property. We do not have a centre there. We have a pavilion. We have had to have pavilions. We have a pavilion at Content, one at Redman's Village, Bagatelle, one at Welchman Hall.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Social Centre was now turned into a Magistrate's Court, but there is no main facility in St. Thomas to which the population who are culturally or artistically inclined can resort for the development of their talents. We have had to make do with the use from time to time of Sharon School which has a large hall.

I have to make the record read right and be fair. On the day when the sod was turned for the now one-quarter constructed St. Thomas Secondary School, I was invited to speak before the then Minister of Education, Mr. Cyril Walker. I made a plea in my speech for that school to be so constructed that, without having to build another community centre and burden the Government with that kind of capital cost the auditorium could double as a community centre, and that its facilities be made available, precisely as I have explained just now, by having a special caretaker or somebody to supervise, organise, keep a book, keep order - very important - in the place at night. The Minister at the time, Mr. Walker, responded very positively and favourably and assured me, and I believed, because the plans have been so drawn, that he would bear in mind the fact that we were without a community facility, and that he would have no difficulty in allowing the school to be used for community purposes once proper guidelines were put in place. That is all we need.

Some of the existing bath structures can be used as small community facilities for playing dominoes, cards and so on. I do not think you could get a table tennis board in

some of them. But if a little group feel they can make a go of it, and as has happened in some districts, for example, in Deacons, where the youth themselves contribute to the renovation of the place, all the better. I would encourage that kind of activity.

I therefore make a call, Sir, bearing in mind that I have another forum in which to deal with it, for us to look at this and settle a policy for the use of Government property. 12.15 p.m.

I think we will go some considerable distance towards alleviating the problem that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has adumbrated. I also want to say this. I think if Honourable Members who have been in this House for some time will search their memories they will recall that Governments have put down sporting facilities in districts where there was a call for these sporting facilities and after 3, 4 years, they are not used or are little used.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There is no facility at Rock Hall in St. Thomas. The playing field at Content is very much used to the point where the BRC cricket club which was an outstanding cricket club, with some little assistance from me, were able to gain admission to the BCA and came second in their first year in the BCA Second Division competition. The pavilion is used regularly. At Welchman Hall, the same thing, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no, no. The playing field at Welchman Hall is used. The hard courts at Welchman Hall have recently in December last year been repaired. We now have a lovely hard court at Welchman Hall and we have lights at Content and, in due course, there will be lights at Welchman Hall.

The point I am making, Sir, is that we have heard of places throughout Barbados where Government has provided the facility and then, subsequently, the facility has been little used. At the same time I think one has to be responsible whether in Opposition or in Government. It is not every district that you can give a facility to. I do not know what we would be encouraging, Sir. For people to argue that it is too far for them to walk or ride a mile and a half to a playing field is ridiculous and we must not encourage it. I played First Eleven cricket for four years without being dropped once, yes, 1957 to 1960. My last innings in Barbados was 90 not out. Go and check the newspaper.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Ninety. I left on September 8 and that was the Saturday before September 8, 1960. Check it out

I used to have to ride my bicycle with my boots and bat strapped on to the bar from Dodds, over Districts "C" hill to Lodge School to play there or to catch a van to come back down and play somewhere else. Three, four miles. Just to give you an example, I would hear the youngsters in Shop Hill tell me that they want a playing field there. Just down the hill there is a lovely playing field at Bridgefield. What are we talking about? We have to be careful of the extent to which we pander to all these things but we have to help the community.

The final point I wish to make is this. I think the problem that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has not addressed is this. He has made a case for a facility in as many districts as is possible within a parish. That is his position. The youngsters in Bank Hall do not want to go to Bush Hall.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is none in Bush Hall.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There is no facility in Bush Hall, Sir? But there was a big thing, not on your side of the road. I thought there was a little park in Yard Gap, Sir. That is not your constituency. I think it is time that the constituency of St Michael Central be addressed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thank you, Sir.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will use such influence as I have, Sir, to help you, but it is that, surely one of the functions of the Community Development Officers must be to get hold of these youths, organize them, guide them, channel them and say to them, "Look, why do you not co-operate with the boys at X point, form a club?" The Community Development Officers have to do it. I hope that the Youth Commissioners or Youth Development Officers will join with the Community Development Officers and help to weld these communities, point out to them that it is really not a big thing if you live in the Pine and somebody else lives in Clapham for the fellows to be able to get together and do whatever clean, wholesome pastime they want to engage in.

I think there needs to be a concerted plan at the level of community development and at the level of the Youth Commissioners and the Youth Development Commissioners to organize the youth. I think it can be done. I have no doubt that some of the favourable trends that we are seeing in the reduction of crime have to do with the fact that young people are steadily being organized and channelled into useful and productive areas.

Those are the only points I wanted to make for this debate, Sir.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would not want to detain the House for too long on this matter but I thought I had to speak on this because just yesterday, I think it was, I was passing through the area of Parish Land and I saw the bath and I almost did not recognize it. The guys have painted it and it looks very good.

They stopped me and said, "Skipper, stop here." They asked, "Could you help us to finish paint this?" I could not give a definite answer because I knew that there were plans to sell these baths because I saw an advertisement in the newspaper. I told the guys: "As far as I know these baths are for sale." Then they told me "Man you could buy it for us." I told them I would have to speak to the relevant authorities in Housing to see how much it would cost

Aside.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: I have not spoken to anyone yet. This is the first opportunity I am getting. I am hoping that any price involved would be so minuscule that I can put my hands in my pocket and pay for it immediately, whatever the cost is.

My view is that this bath should be used by the community...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please. Order, order, please.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: As I went along it came to me that if this bath had to be taken over by someone else, it could result in a bit of confrontation because these guys have taken over this bath as if it belongs to them. They have painted it and they told me, "This is the place we want to hang out and if we cannot hang out there, we are going to hang out somewhere else. So they could as well let us hang out here because they know that we are here and they can find us easily."

I believe that to move these guys is going to present some kind of social confusion. There are some people who may not want the boys to have this bath. The conservatives in the community may not want to see the boys have these baths because they might figure these are just lawless boys. My response to that is that we are going through a change in Barbados and we need to nurture

these youngsters. I think the community, in general, has to reach out to these youngsters. They told me, "They know where we are." So that once we know where they are, we can go to find them. Our duty is to find them and help to nurture them in what we might consider to be desirable ways.

As a matter of fact, I find it rather convenient to find these guys because if you want to give them a message, you only have to pass and see the guys and give them a message. You can receive a message or pass on a message. It forms a good means of communication because once you know where they are, you can find them and they can find you. It presents a good focus for community interaction. 12.25 p.m.

Sir, I believe this Resolution represents an opportunity to say that I think that this bath should be put into the hands of the community. I am therefore of the view too that we need to formalise, not in a very highly structured way, but in some kind of way, we need to tell them get together as a group for legal purposes so that we know who are in control of this bath, who will be maintaining this bath, that there is a focus, instead of it just being thrown out to we do not know whom. I am saying that we need to encourage them to form some kind of formal or semi-formal structure where leisure activities can be undertaken with these groups. I am hoping that this can be done where the group can be formed into a community group so that they can own the bath and where they can be encouraged to engage in productive exercises on this property.

I see further down the road, on the pasture, there is a little place there where they sell "ital"¹¹ food.

Aside.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: "Ital", ttfat is, they do not deal with meat. I cannot translate "ital" into English. It is part of the jargon of the youngsters of this age. They do not deal in pork and beef and those kinds of things, they deal in vegetable matter. Since they have been able to get this area put aside for "ital" food, I believe that perhaps the bath can be used for craft, can be used for items which are easily saleable. I believe that we have to encourage them in using that property for something beneficial to them economically. So, Sir, I am supportive of having the baths put to use within the community but within a structure where a group of people who normally would have frequented that area can have easy access. If it means that I can help them by putting my hands in my pocket, my pockets are not too deep, but if by putting my hands in my pocket I will help them to do that, I am prepared to do that. With those few words, I conclude my presentation. I am hoping that this could be implemented.

Hon. Sir HAROLD St JOHN: I just to want to make two short points, Sir. I support obviously the decision of the Ministry to sell baths and other bits of land for which the original purpose is no longer relevant. I also want it to be clearly understood that this money should also be earmarked to purchase property to provide amenities in areas which are at present deficient.

I will draw to the attention of Honourable Members the fact that in Barbados, in the urban areas in particular, the City of Bridgetown and other areas, there is a drastic shortage of public conveniences and people must understand that, just as we are disposing of baths in certain areas which are no longer needed that there is still a need in Barbados in these areas for new facilities.

I draw particular attention to the area that is now known as the mini bus stand. To the back of the former Queen's College there are repeated complaints in that area about the lack of facilities. I certainly know other urban areas, Oistins, St. Lawrence, Baxters Road and those areas where, unless one is able to prevail upon owners of businesses to allow one to use the facilities one could be in serious trouble. So this is a matter that must be looked at in a holistic way. We are closing some because they are no longer needed but the funds which are obtained in all probability will be needed to build in those areas where you are deficient at the present moment.

Now, Sir, on the question of the community centres, I think that we should all be realistic. It would take a very, very long period of time for any Government in Barbados to be able to satisfy all of the demands for community centres. Some indeed are unrealistic and I would like to point out that in our social planning, and I hope that the Rural Development Commission will look at this matter at a very early date, it is possible to satisfy many of the needs of contiguous communities by the mere surfacing or rebuilding of a single cart road.

I would particularly draw attention to the situation in Christ Church East where the communities of Upper Thornbury Hill and Parish Land or Providence can easily make joint use of the large playing field area and the pavilion by a simple repairing of a cart road in Gibbons, if it were properly kept in condition, which it used to be. It is less than a quarter mile long. I remember some of the communities were created by the demands of the plantation owners and if we look at that we would be able to see.

I am sure there could be a connection between Brereton and Ebenezer. I remember very clearly in a famous by-election, Sir, that I personally walked between Brereton and Ebenezer and we did it to ensure, just the night before the election, that the last minute canvass did not operate against us. We knew we had little

hope in Brereton but plenty of hope in Ebenezer and we did not want Brereton to corrupt Ebenezer. I remember that very well, Sir.

If you go there on the hillside there is a cart road you could connect Brereton and go to Ebenezer. The Honourable Member was a babe in his diapers at that time. The Honourable Member does not know, Sir, there are only a few constant constituencies in Barbados. The Honourable Member happens to represent one. The others fluctuate. So, Sir, that was before Ebenezer was in St. John. I just wanted to emphasise that as politicians, while we wish to do everything in our power to ensure that there are as many amenities as possible, we have to be realistic and let our people know that contiguous communities have to share facilities.

As far as the schools are concerned there is no greater advocate of that policy than I. I had to fight on many occasions from the sixties to be able to use schools. I honestly thought a solution had been found with respect to the schools. I honestly thought that it had been agreed by all sides that directives would be issued to the heads of the schools and the Governing Bodies at the schools that it was the policy that those schools were to be used for community development, Sir, provided certain conditions were complied with. 12.35 p.m.

The conditions were that the school body or the Head Teacher had to be sure that there was either an insurance policy in place at the Ministry, or that the users of the school had public liability or third party liability to cover any damage that was done. Also, that if overtime was involved, special arrangements were made for the payment of an extra stipend to the caretakers. Those were the only criteria, Sir.

It appears, from what I read, Sir, that both sides of the House are having difficulty with that. It is quite ironic that the school in Christ Church that has been planned with the greatest degree of precision by the Barbados Labour Party, that school on the ABC Highway which is a monument to the good taste and the vision of the Labour Party, appears to be the exclusive preserve of the other side. I think that it is publicly known now that it is the intention of all parties that the school should be used for that purpose.

I remember very clearly that when the Government of the day was borrowing money from the World Bank to build some of these new schools, one of the points made was that these schools would be fitted with appropriate areas, halls, that would be large enough to be used as community centres and hurricane shelters. If you know any of these modern secondary schools which have been built - certainly the renovations to the Alleyne School included

a hall which can hold over 800, and there are other schools - it was clearly envisaged that these areas would be sufficiently large to permit a whole variety of cultural activity to take place in these halls. I know that we have used consistently the school at Waldrons, Christ Church. It has quite a nice hall and it has been used. I am trying to remember some of the other ones, but I certainly do recall the one at the Alleyne School. I have never had the opportunity of going inside the Deighton Griffith School yet, Sir, but I am going to go inside, because I remember when it was planned and I know that should have a hall to cater to at least 1200.

Aside.

Hon. Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: That is a fact. We all have to go through that, Sir. I know the criticism we had in here when a few canes had to be cut down at the corner to build that school. I remember that, Sir, but do not mind that. Many people like to rewrite history, but you cannot rewrite history with people who have good memories, because we can point out the incidents surrounding it.

What I am trying to say, Sir, is that the communities in Barbados have to be led and they must understand that all of these amenities are very desirable, but that we must make greater use of the ones we have now, because there is a natural constraint upon the resources of the community to be able to provide more within the time span that people wish to have.

I would say that the fact that we are able to dispose of these centres at the present moment is indicative of the progress that we have made over the last 30 years. I remember one of the great ambitions of the former Member for St. Thomas was that he would live to see the day when Barbados had light and water to such an extent that the vast majority of people would have access to them. I believe that was achieved. Over 90% of the people of Barbados by 1982 had access to light and water. There are obviously some pockets of settlements where this does not obtain, but the real question now is whether it is not more economic to move those settlements nearer to where these facilities are available rather than incur the cost, because of their isolation, of taking the amenities to those areas.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have just a couple of minutes. I am indeed impressed at the route this debate is taking. I heard reference at the beginning of the debate by the Honourable Member for St. John about Rosegate. Rosegate was the very first public convenience of its kind to be built in Barbados. My father, the late Honourable Freddie Miller, was the

Minister of Social Services at that time and that was the beginning only of a huge network countrywide of these conveniences, but what was interesting was that on the day the Official Opening of Rosegate was taking place - I have told this story in here before, Sir, but it bears telling again - the speech that was made by the Minister of Social Services at the time was along the line that he would hope that at an early time there would be no more of these facilities built, and people thought it strange. Newspaper reports at the time had interesting glosses upon what was said. What he was saying was that he would hope and that the then Barbados Labour Party administration, of which he was a part, was hoping that at the earliest time everyone in Barbados would have waterborne facilities and we would be moving away from that

Then, as history took its turn, Sir, it turned out that in my term as Minister of Health in an earlier administration, I moved for the public facility at the 8th Avenue, New Orleans to be converted into a community centre. I remember at the time people said to me it could not be done, but it was done. At this time it is also housing the Police Post for the New Orleans. So I applaud every attempt to convert these to public uses.

I want to echo a little bit of the point made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. The City of Bridgetown is an inner city community. The fact is that the City of Bridgetown boasts many playing fields and facilities, but not for the people who live in the City of Bridgetown, the people whom I have the honour to represent. There is Queen's Park, the home of Spartan. There is Kensington Oval, the home of Pickwick. There is the West India Biscuit Company. Mr. Speaker, Sir, none of them will permit the young people in the City to get a play on their pasture. I have written divers letters.

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, that includes Harrison College. There was a time when I was going for the old hockey field there at Queen's College and, the next thing, you looked around and they had put minibuses on it. When we developed the harbour region and the playing field between the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the St. Michael School, Sir, I begged for a pitch then for the young people in the uptown area of the City of Bridgetown. 12.45 p.m.

I have in my hand a letter I am drafting now on behalf of Oxley United Football Group. They are now in the Barbados Football Association, Second Division. They moved from fourth to third division in 3 years. This is an up and coming team. They need a practice field. They have to wait now until everybody has finished at Q.E.H.'s pasture to run in like thieves in the night to get a little pick, a play and a practice on that field.

I am going to write the Honourable Minister of Health, and I am going to copy the letter to the Director of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and to the Head of the St. Michael School, hoping, Sir, that some slot, a couple of evenings a week, would be made available for Oxley United. The need is great, Sir. It is not like in the country where there are fields available, where there are lands available. They are in the inner City.

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: You cannot get on to Weymouth for the police. There is nobody that I have not written. They will not permit the young people from the City of Bridgetown to play. They just won't permit them, Sir.

I would want to draw this to the attention of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North who has...

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: ...Yes, Harrison College, I asked too, Queen's College, when it was there, everybody. Within the precincts of the City of Bridgetown, there is nowhere. They have to walk up to the Garrison pasture if they want to practise. I am going to write everybody and I am just using this opportunity to serve notice. I thank you, Sir.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, in listening to the speakers on that side, one would not believe that the decision on this particular purchase was made since 1989 by the last Administration. The policy of the present Government in disposing of public conveniences to individuals and community groups is one which has been in place for some time now; but we differ from Members on that side, for it is interesting to note that the Honourable Member for St. John is talking about a public convenience at Sargeant's Street, St. John which can be used for community purposes and yet he is saying there is a lot of bush around the bath. It is obvious that he is not doing his community work to ensure that the young people in the area are utilising the area. If they were utilising the area there would not be bushes growing.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the bushes are really...

Mr. SPEAKER: On what do you rise?

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The bushes are around the Rosegate public bath which is on the other side of the road in the middle of a canefield. When I was a Minister, I dealt with those things. I never went harassing people to leave property and to force

them to leave premises on behalf of people I was working for when I was a Cabinet Minister, because I only did Cabinet work.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, in this connection, one only has to look at a previous decision by that Administration in connection with the sale of the public bath at Baywoods, St. James. They are talking about one should take into consideration the needs of the community first. When one looks at a decision which was made in 1989 by that Administration, a youth group in the district offered to purchase the public convenience at Baywoods, St. James, and they were denied. The property was sold. I don't like to call people's names in here, but it is a matter of record that the land was sold to a Mr. Ernest Alleyne. I was told by somebody on that side that he is "eminently qualified". I don't know what that meant.

Mr. Speaker, that property was sold for \$17 000. There was no basis at all for that sale when one considers that a community group had made representations and had put in an offer and, what is more, someone else had put in a bid for that same property for \$18 000. It was not sold to the highest bidder. I doubt the Honourable Member for St. Michael South would know that. They didn't allow him to know what was going on.

It was not sold to the highest bidder and it was not sold to the community group. So when they come in here and make it look as though we are now implementing new policy and selling public conveniences to individuals without actually taking into consideration the needs of the community, that is nonsense.

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 12.55 p.m.

RESUMPTION Mr. SPEAKER:

This sitting is resumed. Order No. 5.

ORDER NO. 5 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LEASE TO CO-OPERATIVE HIGH SCHOOL MANAGEMENT INCORPORATED OF LAND AT GOVERNMENT HILL, ST. MICHAEL

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is for the lease of property known as "Grand View" at Government Hill, St. Michael, to the Co-operative High School Management Incorporated. The Resolution seeks to renew the lease for the said property.

The Co-operative High School formerly occupied the property at the corner of Constitution and Hall's Roads. The property itself was completely destroyed by a fire in January 1979. The school was provided with temporary accommodation at the new Roebuck Secondary School and in a wooden annex at "Grand View", Government Hill, St. Michael. The main building at "Grand View" was at that time in a state of disrepair. Repairs to the building were completed in February, 1990 and, as a result, the Co-operative High School was able to occupy the entire premises from March, 1990.

The Government of Barbados subsequently entered into an agreement with Mr. Wilbert Callender of the Co-operative High School to lease the said property to provide accommodation for the school on the terms and conditions that the lease would have been for 5 years at a rental of \$1 200 per year to be reviewed every year. The lease, however, expired in 1985 and a new lease was not negotiated.

The Ministry of Housing and Lands has decided that the Crown should enter into a new lease with the Co-operative High School. The Commissioner of Land Tax assessed the rental value of the property to be \$19 200 per annum. This was as at June, 1991. Since the school is playing a very useful role in our education system, the Ministry is of the view that conditions should not be imposed which would jeopardize the continued existence of the school.

The Ministry has therefore recommended to Cabinet a new lease for the rental of the said property for 15 years with an option to renew, the option to remain at the same level as it was, \$1 200 per year, subject to review every 5 years. The lessee shall be responsible for repairing and maintaining the premises in compliance with the Ministry of Education Regulations applicable to an educational institution. The lessee will be responsible for the payment of land taxes and other outgoings arising out of its use of the premises.

Since the Co-operative High School was not a legal entity, the lessee was requested to take the necessary steps to have the school registered as a business. In

due course this was done. The Certificate of Incorporation was obtained and the school was registered as the Co-operative High School Management Incorporated.

Parliamentary approval is now sought for the rental of the said parcel of land, together with the building thereon, situated at "Grand View", Government Hill, subject to the conditions outlined above.

His Honour R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second that.

Sir, I rise to lend support to this Resolution before this Honourable Chamber. As the Minister rightly said, this school, the Co-operative High School, over the years has been one of these institutions that has been playing a leading role in the secondary education in this country. This school, the Co-operative High School, first opened its doors to Barbadian pupils in 1959 and it was located then in Belleville, St. Michael. Then it moved to the junction of Hall's Road and Constitution Road. It was due to a fire of 1979 that this school moved to its present location at "Grand View" in Government Hill. At that time the 5th Form pupils who were preparing for their examinations were housed at the then Roebuck Secondary School, now known as the Louis Lynch Secondary School.

The Co-operative High School has been catering to parents of children of the low income bracket, and these students were offered their education at a very nominal fee. As I said, it has made its contribution to education in Barbados.

The Principal of the school, Mr. Wilbert Callender, was once a Deputy Headmaster at the Modern High School under the late Louis Lynch and Mr. Callender has played his role over the years in helping to mould the lives of many Barbadians. Our own Member of Parliament, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, was taught at the Christ Church Boys' School by Mr. Wilbert Callender.

Sir, Mr. Callender in his own right has been exposed and I can say he has played his part in the academic field in Barbados. I remember Mr. Callender playing a great role in the CARIFTA games. I remember one year we had the CARIFTA games, I think in the late 70s or the early 80s, and he played an outstanding role in those CARIFTA games.

This school, Sir, has put out many great Barbadians. It has put out great athletes. Marcia Trotman who once represented Barbados at the Olympics was a pupil at that school. We had Shirley Games who just recently won the Caribbean championship in Costa Rica in bodybuilding. She, too, was a past student of that school. If we look at people like Mortimer Clarke, attorney-at-law, he was also a past student of that school, the list goes on. Denny

Nicholls who is now employed at the Central Bank as an economist came through those doors also, so that we can see the kind of talent the school was responsible for giving to this country.

Sir, I have no hesitation in recommending that this House pass this Resolution to lease this land to the Co-operative High School so they can continue in their vein of helping in the secondary education of the public of this country.

Thank you.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, I too rise to lend my support to this Resolution. Indeed, the Co-operative High School is one of the private schools which has always impressed me for the way in which it is organised and the level of tuition which it imparts to the students. Like the last speaker, I too recall the Co-operative High School opening some time around 1959/60 at Belleville. 2.15 p.m.

It was not there for very long. Indeed, in less than a year, I think it went over to the junction of Constitution Road and Hall's Road. Then we had the fatal fire there in 1979. It is no mean achievement, Mr. Speaker, that the Co-operative High School has survived over the years where many other private schools have floundered. I can think of no less than 20 or so private schools which would have fallen by the wayside during those years, schools like Wakefield, Lynch's Secondary, Washington, Federal, Modern, Regent, Arlington, Barbados Academy and MacDonald. Those come to mind very readily, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: They are no more. But, as I said, the Co-op as we all call it has survived. This is all the more noteworthy, Mr. Speaker, when - and I think the point has been made before - we consider that a lot of the students whom the Co-operative High School caters to are students drawn from the lower socio-economic bracket. I personally know of cases, at that school, where the headmaster has allowed the parents to pay for their school fees in instalments. I think that, in itself, tells us the type of headmaster Mr. Callender is. The fees are always very reasonable and, indeed, we can say low because, where the initial school fees are concerned, that is, when the students enter first form, the system is that they are not charged above the Government bursary rate. Whatever the Government offers for the bursary, that is it in the first year.

There are schools which virtually double and sometimes treble that. But he has kept that school and clearly, it has resulted in success. I believe that

part of the reason why some of those schools failed in the first place would have been because of the high incidence of fees. When the parents were not able to meet those demands, then they had to take the children out of school. This is one of the schools which comes across as an institution which is really motivated by giving students an education rather than by financial gain.

I, like the last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central know of some of the excellent students the Co-operative High School has turned out. I do not want to go through my list. He has called some of the names which I also had in mind.

I know that the school has worked against the odds. You can think of a school like the Co-operative High School which teaches Biology and so on and they do not even have a science lab. The success of the athletes must be emphasized. We have to do that in light of the fact that the Co-operative High School never had a playing field of its own. That is no mean achievement. Mr. Callender has always taken a very avid interest in athletics. To get students who represent this country at all levels without the semblance of a playing field is again, as I said, an achievement.

It was after the fire at Hall's Road in 1979 that the school was offered accommodation by Government where it is now housed at "Grand View", Government Hill. The rent, as the Honourable Minister has said was agreed then at \$1 200 per annum, a concessionary rent. This figure has remained unchanged from then until now.

I want to say that I think it is a very magnanimous gesture of goodwill on the part of the present Administration that we have not seen it fit to increase that rent for the simple reason that we recognize that the Co-operative High School is doing an excellent job in Barbados. As I said, it is one of the few schools that was able to withstand the pressures of the eighties and the nineties too and as a school which offers education to Barbadian students.

This lease and the encouragement we are giving is to ensure that the Co-operative High School has a home. Private schools I believe, Mr. Speaker, must be encouraged. We only have to look around Barbados to see the type of students which these private schools have turned out. Government must continue to give assistance to institutions such as the Co-operative High School. Successive Administrations have already given bursaries to those schools. Books are extremely expensive and Government has extended its book scheme to those schools. To ensure standardization, Government has also assisted in streamlining the syllabuses of those private schools. Government pays some of the teachers. All of these measures are designed to help private schools. Even though

we are now referring to a specific school and a specific lease, this is yet another example of goodwill by Government where private schools are concerned.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I take this opportunity to join this debate at this time first of all to compliment the Honourable Member for St. Andrew for bringing this Resolution before Parliament today.

In my mind, there is no doubt of the yeoman service that has been done by the Co-operative High School as an educational institution in this country. Certainly, there are a number of students from my constituency who attend this school and as the Honourable Member for St Philip North has stated, it really bridges the gap especially within the lower socio-economic bracket. When we examine schools of this nature throughout Barbados over the years, we see that traditionally they have always played a very important role in the developmental process as far as education is concerned in this country.

In principle I believe that we should have a clear policy on land lease in Barbados. The reason I say that is because it brings me to a point that is concerning me very much. This has to do with the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the Pinelands - I hope I am not straying too far, Sir - who have been seeking for a particular period of time...

Mr. SPEAKER: You have gone a little far already.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: I am speaking about land lease, Sir. 2.25 p.m.

This has to do with the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the Pinelands. I hope I am not straying too far, Sir. They have been seeking for some time now, the last decade or so, to obtain a lease of land to build a church on. I think, Sir, that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew who is also responsible should pay some attention to the concern for the lease of land to the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Pinelands. Currently they are occupying the Parkinson School. They have a membership of well over 200 persons and I know that for years they have been trying to lease land to put their church on.

Sir, when we examine the Book of Exodus we see the children of Israel travelled in the wilderness for 40 years and I am hoping that we, in this Honourable

Chamber, would be able to take these children out of the wilderness and put them into a house where they can have shelter and continue their worship.

So, Sir, as I compliment the Minister for this Resolution, I also at the same time wish to address my parochial problems so that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew and this Chamber would pay some attention to the plight of the Pinelands Seventh Day Adventist Church who are currently seeking to lease land on which to build a church, not only from a spiritual and religious sense since this country needs spiritual guidance, but also, Sir, we must see the church as an educational institution.

Sir, I am hoping that my friend, the learned Member for St. Andrew, will pay some attention to my question here in this Honourable Chamber this evening and as a result grant the Pinelands Seventh Day Church this piece of land that they are asking for so that they can worship and serve God in peace. Thank you, Sir, for allowing me the opportunity to bring this matter to the attention of this Honourable Chamber.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDDFORD: Mr. Speaker, I certainly will be brief but I could not allow this opportunity to pass without making a comment on this Resolution. Before doing so, Sir, let me support the call made by my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, for consideration to be given for educational and religious activities to take place by the provision of land somewhere in his constituency and that would be a very laudable action as well.

I think, Sir, that you should note that parallel with the public educational system in Barbados there has been a private educational sector and within that private educational sector there has virtually been a bifurcation, 2 sectors within that sector, the more wealthy.... let me not use the word "wealthy" because I do not think any educational institution is really wealthy. What we have, Sir, are the schools which by and large service the children from the lower income brackets and there are others which tend to provide educational services for those in the middle income and higher brackets.

The Co-operative High School is in the first category. It tends by and large to service students from the lower socio-economic rung of our country. I think it is by dint of the vision, the effort and the hard work of the principal of that school, Sir, Mr. Wilbert Callender, that a service to the people of Barbados has been provided and that opportunity has been given to many who through our system might not have had the opportunity.

I make no apology, Sir. I believe in a democratised system of education. I believe, Sir, that educational opportunity should be available to all of the children of

school age in this country and that the economic circumstances of parents should be no deterrent, hindrance or obstacle for their children to obtain the best education that this country can afford and that they should see to it that the children make the best use of the opportunities that are available.

I am a democrat through and through. I am using a common "d" when I use that term. I believe I share this view across with my colleague the Member for St. George South and many others in this Chamber.

I believe, Sir, that the Co-operative High School has been part of our effort to bring educational opportunity to the people of Barbados and I would like to pay a tribute to Mr. Wilbert Callender, his staff and his supporters for the work that they have done, he in particular, for education in Barbados.

It is not very often, Sir, that we pay these tributes to people other than Parliamentarians themselves and I think a full meed of praise should be given. He has devoted his life to education and I believe, Sir, that he has been very successful. I have had the opportunity, Sir, of working with him, getting to know him, and down through the years I have always admired his vision for education as well as his ability to get the most out of students, sometimes, Sir, by methods which may be somewhat warm because he has not been reluctant to use the strap.

I think, Sir, we do not always appreciate, in our educational efforts, the task of those teachers who try to make sometime reluctant students grasp the basics of education. Education is nothing more and it is nothing less than the effort to get out of each student, no matter what their talent maybe, to get the best use of those talents with which a student maybe endowed. I, Sir, would like to pay a tribute to Mr. Callender and, as I said, those associated with him. We have, Sir, his son who is one of us, Sir, and quite like his father, Sir. 2.35 p.m.

I think we can truly describe Mr. Wilbert Callender - I cannot remember the words exactly nor a lot of it, I can remember certainly one line, Sir - "A man he was and stem to view". Who can finish it for me?

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: ...but that line is enough for the purpose. A man he was and stern to view, a disciplinarian, whether it is in the classroom or on the sporting fields in this country.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, that is it. "The Village Smithy." I remember on many occasions seeing the students - I do not recall whether it was Mr. Callender Senior or Junior leading the children - but they would go out into the Ivy, when they were operating from Grand View, on to the pasture at Blenheim so that they could do the sports part of the curriculum, Sir. I think it was a good decision, and the right decision, that Grand View should have been made available. I believe the Land Valuation Department which used to occupy those premises had moved out, the premises were therefore made available at what is in effect a peppercorn rent.

It helped to transform a vision which I described some time of an educational park on Government Hill, with a nursery school, the Government Hill Nursery School; a primary school, the Charles F. Brome Primary School; a secondary school, the Springer Memorial School, and not far away, Sir, the Barbados Community College.

With those few words, Sir, I lend my support to this Resolution.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, some 19 years ago I was appointed Minister of Education in some very turbulent times. In those days they used to have rotary sick-outs and we had both the Barbados Union of Teachers and the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union who were locked in battle with the then Government, the Government that we replaced in 1976 over the provisions of a new Education Act.

I discovered at that time that the Education Act was being foisted on Barbados without the agreement of the teachers of Barbados, either those teachers who were in the public service or those who were in the private service, so they were very difficult times and the Unions were far more vocal and voluble than they are today. The Barbados Union of Teachers in particular had a very dynamic, almost messianic, leader, one John Cumberbatch, who could lead the teachers of this country in the primary system almost anywhere. We went through that period where there was a question over whether teachers in the primary schools should assist children at school meals or whether they should be assisting in assembly on mornings and conducting prayers, whether they should look after the children after school or whether we should allow them to decide that as soon as the bell rings at the end of the school day they no longer had responsibility for the children in this country.

In those times, Sir, a new Minister of Education needed friends and I will not forget Mr. Wilbert Callender who was then and still is the Principal of the Co-operative High School, because people like Wilbert Callender made their experience and their knowledge about matters relating to education available to a new Minister of Education. I

have had very few opportunities in the past to speak publicly of my gratitude for the assistance of people of his ilk at that time.

I remember when the school was destroyed by fire. I was Minister at the time, Sir, and arrangements were made for them to share the facilities with the Roebuck Secondary School. The Roebuck Secondary School had just been built by this administration and we did not start with a first to fifth form, we wanted to start gradually and build up, so there was spare plant at Roebuck Secondary School and we made some of it available to the Co-operative High School, partly because we wanted to show Mr. Callender the appreciation of the Government for his efforts, but even more important, Sir, because we believe that all the children of Barbados are the responsibility of all Barbadians.

I make this point for this reason, Sir. I keep hearing about schools, this school did this and we did this for this school. It has always been the policy of the Barbados Labour Party to do things for people and we were concerned about the children. Therefore, we did not consider it as anything out of the ordinary to provide new shining secondary school plant at Roebuck Secondary for the children who had lost their own plant when the school was burned down. So they used it for a while.

I remember too, Sir, that when we got into Government in 1976 I was charged with the responsibility to repair some considerable damage that the Democratic Labour Party Government had done to young children in this country. We speak now, Sir, about children going to school to the age of 16 and more. That was not the situation in those days, children were being routinely put out of school at 14 years and left to roam around their districts and beyond during the day when their parents were at work. No provision was made for them to develop to have gainful employment or to make anything useful of their lives. The Barbados Labour Party in one of its earliest acts when it became the Government in 1976, by ministerial fiat, returned those children to the classroom and we needed space for them. We need to look at the background of what had happened. In 1976 there was still a considerable shortage of school places for children of secondary school age in this country. The Government did not provide enough schools and school places at that time for the children of secondary school age, and therefore we had to rely on the Wilbert Callenders of this island and those other unsung heroes of education in Barbados, two dozen at one point, who, through endeavour in the private area, supplemented the effort of Government and made it possible for Barbadian children of secondary school age to be able to get an education. 2.45 p.m.

When we had to put these 14-year olds back in school, we did not have enough space in the existing government schools, and I remember Mr. Callender approaching me and offering to use his school to take in a number of the children who were displaced, even if it meant that the Government was not in a position to pay him for teaching those children. There were a lot of them, like Mr. Callender, and places like the Metropolitan High School which offered to assist the Government in the effort. In assisting the Government, they were doing nothing more than showing their strong commitment to the education and development of the children of Barbados.

I have some very strong views on this business of private secondary schools *vis-a-vis* government or public schools. You go to a government school and you don't pay anything. You get free education. You get very good teachers, well-trained teachers, first-class facilities, text books for practically nothing, but if you go to a private secondary school you are treated, not as a Barbadian, you are treated as though you are a visitor to Barbados, a non-Barbadian, because you have to pay school fees.

In other words, 3 Honourable Members so far spoke about the kind of student who goes to the Co-operative High School as children who come from the lower socio-economic background. Those are the words I hear used. What they mean, Sir, is children whose parents are poor. That is all it means. These children must find school fees. Something is wrong with a system in Barbados where 90% of the children can go to school free, in the finest educational facilities you can find anywhere in the developing world, and then the 10% who are children of the poorest people in the society must pay school fees and pay for books and get sub-standard teaching, through no fault of the schools, but because the private schools cannot afford to pay a full staff of trained and qualified teachers. Something is wrong with that.

I am back on my good society. We have to look after those children. There is no reason on earth why in 1995 they should be paying school fees. They are paying school fees only because the Government has not provided the places in secondary schools for them. This is the responsibility of a Government providing education for its children, as I have heard the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Michael South state. He is an old and revered Minister of Education. I accept that.

It has been the policy of the Barbados Labour Party, as enunciated in many of its manifestos, that the education of all the children in Barbados is the responsibility of the Government, and we have a duty to make sure that they have the chance to develop to their fullest potential to take their places as useful citizens in this community. So something has to be wrong when 10% of the children of secondary schoolage who come from the humblest of

backgrounds and can ill-afford to find money for normal subsistence in their homes should be called on to pay school fees.

This business about their getting bursaries, Sir, is a taunt to them. It is hard to find the money to pay school fees; and it is hard for the Wilbert Callenders of this Island to continue to shoulder a responsibility that is clearly that of the Government. The Government must pay for all children to go to school up to the age of 16 and the Government must pay to have well-trained and qualified teachers teaching them. The Government must pay, if they are paying for the others to have books to study from, for the books of those children too. They are Barbadians.

It is against all of this background that one understands the enormous labour of love and commitment of those who operate private... You, too, Mr. Speaker, you operate a private educational institution for a long time and you know the tremendous burdens...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, I will give you what you deserve... You know the tremendous burdens that those young people who go to your educational institution have to pay their school fees and, quite often, they cannot. You know, Sir, the sacrifice that people like you and other proprietors of these schools have to give beyond the call of one man, so as not to deny these children their education. We have to deal with these things.

Although I appreciate the Government cannot spend what it has not got, the education of children, in my view, is more important than the community centres I heard about today or the playing field at Ellerton that the Minister of Labour is supposed to have not built. The education of the children in this country is more important to take a higher priority than the pavilion at Ellerton that is needed that the Minister of Sports will not build. In other words, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am quite willing to pass up the need for the pavilion at Ellerton if the money is going to be put in Mr. Callender's school at the Co-operative and all the other private educational institutions to relieve the parents, the poorest people in this country, from having to pay school fees. If they are not going to do that, Sir, they should build the pavilion at Ellerton so that Malvern can do like the others.

I want to mention quickly this question of co-education. I was Minister of Education at a time when the Government secondary schools became co-educational and in more recent times I have been hearing a lot of debates as to whether the venture was the right one or not. I recall very vividly when I brought the Education Act before Parliament in 1981 there was a debate on it, and one of the better debates I have heard on education,

I must say. Both sides of the House at that time were very supportive of the principle of co-education. There was a reservation here and there, but you know, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I mention it in this context, all of the private secondary schools over the years, apart from Mapps College and Presentation College, have been co-ed schools.

I remember when I was going to school, the Modern High School had over 1000 children crammed into a space not bigger than the top floor of this building. They studied under trees, in the sun and under the walls, on the lawn. I saw it with my own eyes, Sir. I remember it vividly. Those schools were co-educational schools and they produced. They took children who had been denied an opportunity of going to the government secondary schools a chance to get a secondary education, and because of the industry and hard work and commitment of the Wilbert Callenders and the Louis Lynches and those people, they were able to do well and in a context of co-education.

I remember one Saturday morning, many years ago, I received a phone call from an older man. From the texture and timbre of his voice, it was obviously an older man, and he was berating me in kind terms for allowing Harrison College and one or two other of the older secondary schools to become co-educational. I listened to him for quite a while and then I interjected, "But Sir, you know, more of our children traditionally have gone to co-educational schools at the secondary level than not" He thought I was crazy. Then when I raided off all these schools, Lynch's Secondary School, the Modern High School, the Federal, as co-educational, he said to me he wasn't talking about those schools. 2.55 p.m.

In other words, there was a feeling that somehow or other what happened to the children who come from the lower income group did not matter in the context of what was right for Barbados. The fact that you did not have co-ed traditionally at Harrison College, or Queen's College, was all that mattered.

I, therefore, continue to throw that out as one of the continuing reasons why I am supportive of the co-educational system. I have seen it work. I have not gone into all the theory although I believe I have read more on educational psychology as it relates to co-education than hardly anybody else in Barbados because at the time I was dealing with it and I wanted to feel that I was equipped in public or private debate to answer any argument that was raised about it.

Now, I want to mention very quickly, Sir, this question of the rent. Twelve hundred dollars a year is a lot of money, Sir. I do not know why it is not \$1.00 a year. Why is the Government on the one hand... I am not critical of the Government because they said they found it that

way, but I am suggesting that the Government not go ahead with this \$1 200 a year rent because this is a burden on Mr. Callender.

As I have been arguing in my submission, Sir, the education of our children should be free. They should not have to pay for it. The \$1 200 could be reduced to \$1.00 a year peppercorn rent, or \$10.00, or whatever figure the Cabinet may feel worthy of considering. It can be looked at against the background of sheer pragmatism.

If these schools all close down, Sir, including yours, the Government would have to find the resources to provide places for them. When the Government has to find places for them, they will have to find money for expensive educational plant. I understand the school at St Thomas will now cost \$30 million. In the old days you could build a school for \$8 million, \$10 million, \$12 million, and \$14 million but I hear it will probably be more in the region of \$30 million to house 1 000 students. If the private secondary schools collapse because of the financial weight, it means that Government will have to provide places in school for these children because you educate by law.

The Education Act requires children to remain in school to the age of 16. It is mandatory. If they do not go to school the School Attendance Officers are sent for them and they can be disciplined through the courts. Their parents can be disciplined through the courts, so the law says they must go to school until the age of 16.

If these private educational institutions collapse because of the financial weight, Government has to find the places, and it is far cheaper to waive all the rent on these leases to \$1.00 a year, give the children the school books on the same basis as those in the Government schools, end this business of bursaries and let all go to school free instead of the Government paying a percentage of the staff, because the Government at the moment only pays 2 or 3 teachers of the staff and the school must pay the others. The Government should pay the staff for all the Barbadian children who are going to school. So it is sheer pragmatism. It makes more sense to give bigger and better financial subventions to these schools and keep them going than to have them shut down through the financial burden and then the Government has to find many millions to provide the plant, resources and staffing for the children who are so displaced.

One final point, Sir. I see Mr. Callender, the headmaster of the school, is no longer an unsung hero, and I am glad about that. I see he has been given the Silver Crown of Merit in this past Independence awards, and I want to congratulate the Government for making that award to be made to Mr. Callender. It shows that this Government of the Barbados Labour Party is deeply appreciative

of the outstanding contribution to this society that the Wilbert Callenders and the Edna Scotts, again the head of another private secondary school have made. I note that Mrs. Scott has also been given a national honour this past week, so it shows the appreciation of this Government for the contribution that persons of that ilk have made to education in this country.

I am grateful to you, Sir.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution. I probably should indicate to you that this is a school that is located in the heart of my constituency, and it is a school that is located exactly opposite the house where I was born in Government Hill, so I can speak with a certain degree of emotional feeling regarding this particular area because, as I said, it is one where my roots are firmly planted.

I have, at the outset, to pay my respect to the Principal of the School, Mr. Wilbert Callender, for we as well on this side of the House recognise his contribution to the development of students, not only in the area of education but as well as in sports, *et cetera*. I am sure we endorse and congratulate him on the honour which has been so richly bestowed upon him recently.

There are a couple of concerns I need to express, Sir, and I will put them on the record. I refer to the actual facility itself which is, at present, not in the best state of repair. I believe that even though rent is being charged to the Principal and the administrators of the school, I endorse the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. George South where he suggested that some provision be made for schools which have a proven track record. Certainly, the school in Government Hill would qualify and the Principal for his efforts over the years, since you would not want to have a situation for any individual because provisions are granted for private schools to be facilitated with additional funding or whatever provisions you can make. I endorse the point. It is something we have to address seriously because they have gone beyond the call of duty in many instances.

I am personally aware where many of my constituents do not have the money to pay the fees. It is an ongoing problem and we have had to discuss with the administrators allowing children to remain in school. They have gone out of pocket themselves when they take their overall cost into consideration by allowing students to remain in school. 3.05 p.m.

Sir, I am aware also that, at your institution, a similar thing happens. The time has come. I endorse the comments of the Honourable Member for St. George South where Government will have to look at making some kind of additional provision to these schools if they are going to

survive over a longer period of time. The repairs to the building clearly will be left to the administrators because neither Government has made any provision for the institutions regarding their facilities. Year after year, you are noticing that everyone of them is falling slightly further downhill in terms of repairs because the money just is not there. Really and truly when you take a person of the calibre of Mr. Callender who is a fine example of a man, one who is very similar to me and who will not drink liquor...

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: ...he is very similar to me. I am not talking about education. He has some very strong principles. Sir, he does not drink. He refuses to drink alcohol. That is a value that I hold very dearly to my heart.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please, please.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: He is a fine example of a person who has led students on the track and field around this country. I saw him many times at auction sales going to purchase small gifts to be used as prizes for students in road running and so on. I really was struck by the emotion of this man who would go beyond the call of duty to make sure that he provided an incentive for students.

I would see him almost every day in his ground whether it is 5.00 o'clock in the morning, 6.00 o'clock in the morning or late on evenings planting, taking people and teaching them about growing food. Every week, to this day, you can see him still planting food. But that is the kind of example that has been outstanding in this country and I am glad, as I said originally, that it has not gone unrecorded.

My contribution is just basically to congratulate Mr. Wilbert Callender for his recent honour. I hope that some provision can be made in the future to address the question of the facilities. They are not in the best of condition and I think that all effort should be made to relieve those kinds of difficulties that the administrators have.

That is the contribution I should like to make. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Andrew.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I can add to the comments which have been made on this resolution and I therefore move that this resolution do now pass.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 6.

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT GRAZETTES ROAD, ST. MICHAEL FOR ROAD IMPROVEMENT

Order No. 6 was called - To move the passing of a resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Grazettes Road, St. Michael for road improvement.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Andrew.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, this is a resolution for the acquisition of 94.6 square metres of land at Grazettes, St. Michael. In 1985, Government carried out some roadworks in the area of Fairfield, Grazettes and some land belonging to Mr. Jonathan Hope was utilized for which no payment was made. By letter dated the 9th March, 1989, his son, Mr. Reginald Hope so informed the Ministry. Internal investigations did confirm that the works were carried out on this land. At that time the roadworks were done by Joe-Kim Engineering (Barbados) Ltd.

The Senior Land Surveyor in the Division of Public Works has confirmed the said area of land and the Commissioner of Valuations has valued the land at \$5 091.50. The plans to the said land are available for inspection and I am now seeking parliamentary approval for this resolution, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that, Sir.

His Honour R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend voice to this resolution now before this House for the compulsory acquisition of the land at Grazettes, St. Michael for road improvement.

Sir, Jonathan Hope, now deceased, owned 2 plots of land at Grazettes, St. Michael facing the Rogers quarry. As the Minister said in 1985 the then Government was carrying out certain works in that area for road improvement. The area, at that time, needed road improvement and if one could just picture the area coming from Black Rock and Fairfield approaching that same road or if you were coming from the Grazettes area where the factories are situated or from Tudor Bridge when you meet there, it forms a Y. There were a lot of problems in the area with the traffic. The then Government decided that they would have to do some serious work in the area. A roundabout was put in that area by the Government.

Some of the land owned by Jonathan Hope was needed for the improvement. At the corner where Mr. Hope's house stands, part of the step was taken off to help improve the road. At the same time, some of his front porch or gallery was damaged. Since Mr. Hope's death, his son Reginald Hope now occupies the said property. Nothing was heard from that Government concerning payment for the land used for road improvement.

As the Minister said, his son Reginald Hope wrote to the Ministry in early 1989 and received correspondence from the Government to say that they were looking into the payment of the land.

Mr. Reginald Hope had a visit from an official of the Ministry of Housing and they looked at the condition of the house. Again, they never had any kind of compensation. Mr. Hope spent his own money to repair his house and see after his step.

In 1990, Mr. Hope's property was surveyed by the Government and the 2 lots were incorporated into one lot. It is now one lot which is owned by Mr. Reginald Hope.

I am glad to see that the Government is about to compensate Mr. Hope for this land and I should also like to say that I believe it is a step in the direction, where other people in Barbados who have had to give up some of their property for road improvement and so on have not been compensated over the years, that what the Government is doing now would only be the start of looking at compensating those people who have, over the years, had to give up land for this kind of work. 3.15 p.m.

In that same area we have other people, who I believe have not come forward as yet, but I do believe that when they hear what is happening with Mr. Hope they too will come forward and ask for compensation for their property. I am glad to see that this matter is being dealt with and I believe that Mr. Hope will be satisfied. Thank you.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORDER NO. 7 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE SALE TO EUNICE MURRELL OF LAND AT PRITCHARD HILL, CHRIST CHURCH, FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, this is a Resolution for the disposal by sale of 581.6 square metres of land at Pritchard Hill, St. Patricks, Christ Church, to Ms. Eunice Murrell. I think, Mr. Speaker, we had

a very lengthy discussion this morning on public baths and this is another such matter. I would hope that the comments which were attributable to the earlier debate would be applied to this one. In addition to that Mr. Speaker, just to fill you in on the details, the Crown on the 28th March 1958, purchased 18 745 square feet of land from Yorkshire Plantation for the construction of the St. Patricks Girls' School. Subsequently a portion of the land was used for the said public convenience. The school has since been relocated to a new site and the vacated building is now used as a Skills Training Centre. The public convenience which is next to the said building is now derelict and Ms. Murrell had requested, since 1987, that she be allowed to purchase this land on which she also has a house. One other person had expressed an interest and the price which is being paid by Ms. Murrell is more than the offer which was made. The offer was actually \$7 500 and the price here is \$9 400. I see that the request came in from a Mr. Bobby Morris on her behalf. The public convenience, as I said, is now derelict.

The Division of Housing has requested that a subdivision of the said area be done so as to separate the Training Centre from the public convenience. The area occupied by the Training Centre was found, after a survey by the Chief Surveyor, to contain 1 232 square metres and the site of the public convenience 581.6 square metres.

The valuation of \$9 400 is supported by the Commissioner of Land Tax. Parliamentary approval is now being sought for the sale of the said 581.6 square metres of land at Pritchard Hill, St. Patricks, Christ Church, together with the dilapidated public convenience to Ms. Murrell for the sum of \$9 400.

Mr. D. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to second this Resolution. I think that the Minister of Housing, over the past few weeks, has been doing a good job in relation to the acquisition of land all over the country but on this occasion it is really the sale of land. I am happy that one of my constituents is the recipient of a really good deal by this Government.

Since 1987 I know for a fact that the lady Eunice Murrell was awaiting word from Government and certainly it is nice to see that after only 15 months in office we were able to bring this to a conclusion. It is 581.6 square metres of land which is about 5 000 square feet and it will be sold for about \$9 400. In Barbados terms that is considered to be a very good sale in relation to the person who is buying it. I am happy that this Government has seen the need for things like this and to help ordinary people, certainly in Pritchard Hill, St. Patricks.

It seems that everything is happening in St. Patricks these days. A few days ago some nice things happened

there and we will continue, certainly as a Government, to make sure that the people feel comfortable.

As I move further down the road the Christ Church Boys' School and the Christ Church Girls' School which are also known as the Water Street Boys' School and the Water Street Girls' school, over the last hundred years were the only schools in this country that did not have playing fields. We all know that certainly the Boys' School has produced an outstanding Parliamentarian in Mr. Henry Forde and I am sorry he is not here to assist me, but I believe that the time has come when we, the Government, should find it possible to provide a playing area for those two schools.

There are over 1 500 children attending those two schools and it is a shame, when we think of the things that are going on in this country. We would like to see that when they leave the classrooms the children would be able to play in an enclosed area, assisted by a teacher. The situation is that there is no playing field and the parents of these children are very worried.

Only recently I attended a Parent/Teachers meeting at Water Street Boys' School and the parents are really worried that such a facility is not there. I know for a fact that the Government acquired some land in the Wotton area and the southern side of that land is so deep, it is impossible to have decent housing there. I would urge the Minister to take heed and try his best to help the people of that area.

While I am talking about the playing field at the Water Street Boys' and Girls' Schools I would just like to inform the Minister that quite recently we had a very embarrassing time in St. Philip where a resident actually stopped a school from utilizing his land and that at the Water Street Boys School it must be noted that in order for the lunch van to get into the school it has actually got to travel on somebody's land. I believe that in the near future, should something like this arise, the Ministry would have to take steps quickly to make sure that everything is in place.

Also I would like to compliment the people in the Water Street area for the good work they are doing with the zebra crossing for the children to use when crossing the road. As I said there are 1 500 children on mornings and evenings who need some help. I wish to impress upon the Minister that the time is near when he should provide a zebra crossing for those two schools. 3.25 p.m.

As I move further down the road, quite recently the Government advertised for sale some land in the St. David's area. The notice in the newspaper was drawn to my attention. I know that we cannot willy-nilly

provide playing fields all over the place, but the people in Cox Road, St. David's find themselves in a very precarious position in that they have nothing. Right now the boys of that area have to play on church land and the car park and I believe that the land which the Government owns in the St David's area, which is situated just below the Rectory, should be used as a playing facility, even if they are not fortunate enough to get a pavilion. It is hard that the people of Edey's Village and Cox Road have to go to Boarded Hall and the people of St. David's have to use church land.

I know we spoke at length this morning about baths, but in Vauxhall where I was born there is one and in that little village there are no facilities for recreational purposes. I know the learned Attorney General suggested we could use the school, but there are times when that is not possible. There are certain Headmasters who really believe in their schools and are sometimes scared to have certain elements using the schools. In the very near future I would be happy if the old bath at Vauxhall could be turned into a recreational centre where the boys can play a little dominoes.

Sir, as I said, I would like to compliment the Minister for his hard work on all these acquisitions and sales of land, but I hope that he does not forget the Christ Church Boys' and Girls' Schools who are in dire need of a playing field.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this Resolution because it rests on an area which, although it is in Christ Church East Central, abuts and bounds territory in Christ Church East. The culture of the area is such that even through there are constituency boundaries, the people of this area sense a common feeling. There is a common mood, there is a common culture in that area, so I think I have to rise to support my friend and comrade from Christ Church East Central on this Resolution.

Speaking on this Resolution which deals with the sale of land, it brings to mind the land which lies just below, to speak in geographical terms, to the North West of the St. Patrick's Anglican Church. We were on that piece of land on Independence Day when we were giving awards to some notable sons of the soil from the Christ Church area - Collis King, Sylvester Clarke and Anderson Cummins - who played cricket for the West Indies and who also played for the Crusaders Club in the St. Patrick's area, in addition to Mr. Gordon Walters who has done a lot of work in the community. I was advised that that is Government land. During the course of preparing for that community prize giving, I was speaking to some of the gentlemen and ladies in the area about the community coming together, whether from East or East Central, to

represent the cause of the community in that area. They told me it was a good idea, but the question they asked was where were they going to meet. The only meeting place usually is a school but, as was pointed out, sometimes the school can be inaccessible and when you want to have a meeting at an unscheduled time, or even at an ungodly hour, you cannot find the guard or watchman and there needs to be somewhere they can call their own where they can meet. They said they can meet at shops, and this is the usual meeting place in these villages, and my intention was that in the interim we would meet at a number of these shops, which prove to be good meeting points, but I think there needs to be an area set aside where the community can meet. It need not be an elaborate structure costing millions of dollars, it could be a simple meeting point where you can meet and discuss ideas. You could have a boardroom where you can have discussions on matters that concern the area and perhaps can have a concert for about 200 people. It needs to be the kind of structure that could fit into the normal ambience of the area. I do not think something like that would cost more than a quarter to a half million dollars.

I am suggesting, Sir, that we look at land in that area, the allocation of that piece of land right to the North West of the St. Patrick's Anglican Church, as a suitable spot for putting a community building so that when the people in the community get together they can have a point to engage themselves in various activities. That spot will serve not only Christ Church East Central, but it can also serve the area of Christ Church East, as well as people in Woodbourne and the area just East of that, who are in the St. Philip South area, where it would be a good meeting point for the people there to engage themselves in good community spirit to help to uplift the communities to the east of Barbados.

Thank you very much.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to assure the Honourable Members who spoke from Christ Church that when the appropriate request is made by the relevant Ministry - the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Labour - the Division of Housing will take the necessary action.

Just one point on Vauxhall. I would like to say that the Division of Housing can only act in earmarking a particular public convenience for community activity if there is a request from either the Community Development Division or a community group within the area. We have actually advertised most, if not all, of the outstanding public conveniences after doing the relevant surveys and after seeking the opinion of the Community Development Division.

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until

Tuesday, the 12th day of December at 11 o'clock in the morning.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 3.35 p.m.

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