

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, April 14, 1998

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.25 a.m. on Tuesday, April 14, 1998.

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.),

IP.

Hon. Sir HENRY FORDE, K.A., Q.C., M.A., LL.B.
Mr. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A.,
LL.B.(Hons.)

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)

Sir HAROLD St. JOHN, K.A., Q.C., LL.B.

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., M.A., M.Sc.(Econ.)

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

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 (Chairman of Committees)

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)

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

Prayers were led by Rev. Canon Ivan Harewood. Mr.

SPEAKER: This House is now in session.

MINUTES Mr. SPEAKER:

Minutes of Tuesday, March 16, 1998.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes
have been circulated and I move that the Minutes be taken as
read.

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

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

PAPERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am
commanded to lay the following:

1. The International Business Companies PRT
(Barbados) Ltd., (Rate of Tax) Order, 1997.

2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 5) Order, 1998.

3. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 6) Order, 1998.

On behalf of the Ministry of Labour, Community Development and Sports, I am commanded to lay:

1. Annual Report of the Child Care Board for the period April 1991 to March 1992.
2. Annual Report of the Child Care Board for the period April 1992 to March 1993.
3. Annual Report of the Child Care Board for the period April 1993 to March 1994.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS the following Bills were read a first time.

1. Bill to provide for the conferment of the honour of National Hero and for related matters.
2. Bill to amend the Public Holidays Act, Cap. 352.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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. 7 - A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE CONFERMENT OF THE HONOUR OF NATIONAL HERO AND FOR RELATED MATTERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Right Honourable Prime Minister is out of Barbados on urgent

Government business which takes him to Jamaica, Nassau and Chile in preparation for the Summit of America's Meeting. In the absence of the Prime Minister, Sir, it gives me the greatest pleasure to move the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a deep sense of humility and a grave sense of responsibility entrusted to those of us who represent the people and seek to continue the great legacy of the many who have taken Barbados from the large field of plantations to a modern society, from slavery to democracy, from serfdom to suffrage that I move the second reading of this Bill to provide for the recognition of national heroes and to celebrate a day in their honour namely April 28th this year and every year hereafter. *

Our illustrious history, Mr. Speaker, Sir, has been forged by the sacrifices of many whose heroic deeds, we as a society are only now becoming aware of and beginning to appreciate. In a sense a part of Barbados' soul has been missing, because as a nation we have not paid due regard and tribute to those who braved, as it were the raging fires to advance the cause of their fellow men. ?

Your Honour, as we pay due regard and tribute to those who dedicated their lives to put Barbados on what have so far been unshakeable foundations, those who literally paid the ultimate sacrifice and who in doing so, brought glory, unity, hope and inspiration to our nation, the celebration of National Heroes Day will correct a long existing wrong and fill a gaping vacuum in the lives of all Barbadians by finally as a nation, paying appropriate tribute to those men and women who engendered profound change in Barbados.

Each generation has produced its hero. Each generation has produced its defining personality but on the eve of the 21st Century, apart from the naming of roundabouts, roads and buildings and I had better say, the imprint of images on the currency of the realm, only one Barbadian has been singled out for special treatment, the late Prime Minister Enrol Walton Barrow.

Since 1989, as a result of a Resolution of this House of Assembly, debated on the 13th of December 1988, the 21st of January, the birthday of Mr. Barrow has been designated as Errol Walton Barrow Day and as such, a National Holiday. But, I think all of us will agree, Mr. Speaker, that there are* several others who set themselves apart and Errol Walton Barrow Day notwithstanding, there have been repeated calls for the fitting recognition of those who have forever, changed Barbados. Those calls have been for recognition of those outstanding Barbadians as National Heroes. There have been calls too for national recognition of significant dates and events in the development of our country.

This Government has always been committed to the appropriate recognition of watershed events in our history and for recognition of those who, through the

importance of their ideas and the value of their deeds have made our country a better place.

On March 28, 1995 to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery, the Emancipation Statue, commonly known as the Bussa Statue, was unveiled by the then Prime Minister, now the Right Honourable Member for Christ Church South at the St. Barnabas' roundabout.

Only last year this Parliament on the 24th of June approved the designation of August 1st as Emancipation Day and its celebration as a public holiday. We also agreed in this Parliament that July 26th should be recognised as a day of National Significance and be so celebrated every year. 11.35a.m.

In addition, this Parliament also agreed that a public commemoration should be erected to those involved in the 1937 disturbances, specifically listing the names of those who lost their lives and those who were convicted during the disturbances of 1937, and we agreed that they should be pardoned under section 78 of the Constitution of Barbados.

These several decisions were taken to etch indelibly in the minds of this generation and for all those to come that the freedoms which we cherish and enjoy today were won by the blood, sweat and tears of many and that the horrors of slavery should never be forgotten. In speaking on this matter, the Right Honourable Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, noted and I quote:

"I strongly believe that these decisions are as critical to our future development as a sovereign country as the implementation of the correct economic policies or the reduction of unemployment. Barbados must not only be proud of its economic and social achievements but it must do right by its people. We must record their pride, the sacrifice of life and dignity of a people who fought because they believed that there was a better life for their children and grandchildren."

I think it was with this conviction that in our manifesto, the Barbados Labour Party manifesto at page 18 we said and I quote again.

"We know that our country was built by persons whom we commonly refer to as our heroes. As a people, we need to know who these people are. When we set aside a single day^N to celebrate them we seek to inculcate in our young people respect for important values and for the achievements that have helped to shape the lives of us'all.

We will establish a non-partisan committee to identify our national heroes and will set aside a day in the annual calendar to be a public holiday in celebration of all our national heroes."

Mr. Speaker, we have now come to that time and not a moment too soon. Attempts have been made in this direction before. In February 1992, the then Minister of Community Development and Culture, the now Leader of the Opposition, established a small commission to advise him on the subject of national heroes. That commission comprised Dr. Elliott Parris, Director of the NCF, Dr. Bradley Niles, Tutor, UWI School of Continuing Studies, Miss Alissandra Cummins, Director of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, Professor Henry Fraser, President of the Barbados National Trust, Dr. Hilary Beckles, Head of the Department of History, UWI, Miss Celia Toppin as Secretary.

At least 1 public meeting was held and a Cabinet Paper on "The establishment of a system for the identification of honouring of national heroes" was sent to Cabinet March 19, 1993.

The approach at that time suggested that it should be left to historians to examine various periods in our history and to make recommendations. On assuming office, the Barbados Labour Party Government sought, through the Commission on Social Justice, to make a determination not on whether there would be a National Heroes Day because that has never been in doubt for us but rather when it should be, the criteria for selection and who should constitute our first set of heroes.

The first meeting of the Commission was held on June 20, 1995. The Commission considered its mandate and made several recommendations. I ought to point out at this stage that all political parties as well as organisations and individuals were invited to be a part of what we all agreed should be a national endeavour.

Government also received submissions from various interested parties and considered the framework for honorary systems, particularly the report on National Symbols and National Observances in Jamaica and, in February when I returned from an Attorneys General Meeting in Jamaica I brought back from the Cabinet Office of Jamaica all of the literature pertaining to the recognition of national heroes for use as guides and precedents in Barbados. Indeed, the Bill before this House today follows the Jamaica precedent.

Mr. Speaker, there has been some argument from the Other Side about the extent of consultation on this matter of identification of national heroes. I wish to set the record straight from this side. I have already indicated that the Social Justice Commission was the body which was

initially charged with the responsibility to assist Government in this process and that Commission met several times, discussed the criteria and even some personalities and submitted a paper to the Prime Minister.

I want also to emphasise that in coming to a decision all of the political parties were invited to send representatives to meet with the Social Justice Commission so that there could be as wide a view as possible represented in submissions to the Commission. 11.45a.m.

I also wish to point out that the Social Justice Commission itself is a body of eminent, respected and indeed respectable Barbadians who were able, in our view, to give this matter mature thought. Before the Prime Minister made any recommendations to His Excellency, Cabinet discussed this matter for a whole day, one Friday, and we told the Prime Minister our views.

I am advised that three weeks ago the Prime Minister himself communicated to the Leader of the Opposition who the heroes are. There was also another committee that members forget, the committee headed by Mr. Nigel Barrow and on which is Mr. Robert "Bobby" Morris, Mr. Ricky Parris and others, a committee for the celebration of important national events. That committee also consulted on this matter.

Finally, Government itself consulted a large number of persons who we believed could make sincere and objective recommendations, and Government consulted some, I have to say, not all Barbadians, historians and persons interested in this area. We did not consult the Honourable Member for St. Michael East because we recognise that on his latest visit to the Hospital he was the subject of great opprobrium and abuse and therefore those who treated him in that way obviously had no respect for him.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Honourable Member is speaking from his feet and misleading the House and seeking to put on the record a false impression of a public matter that occurred. I was in defence of all politicians and in particular the present Honourable Minister of Health. I was taking the abuse that should have been properly directed to her.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Suffice it to say, Sir, that I did recognise a photograph in Saturday's newspaper of two ladies laying their hands on his head trying to uplift him and inspire him to greater things.

Mr. Speaker, Government sincerely believes that this matter of the identification and recognition of National Heroes, a matter which goes to the heart and soul of

Barbados and Barbadians, should not be approached in a partisan manner. I say it is to the eternal credit of the media in Barbados and to the credit of Barbadians and testimony to our inherent commonsense and serious approach to matters of national interest that the issue of a National Heroes Day has, by and large, I think, not been a subject of contention or emotionalism.

Much debate has centred on whether or not Errol Barrow Day should be abolished. This Government has not tampered with that holiday and we give the assurance that we will not tamper with it. But in any event, Sir, the Prime Minister announced on October 18 last year that April 28 would be designated National Heroes Day and from that day be a public holiday.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have come to this Parliament today to write another chapter in the memorable history of our nation. Our history is one filled with the sacrifice and exploits of many who have significantly contributed to the advancement of Barbados in every sphere.

Our system of Imperial Honours and National Honours has recognised some of those contributors. But it is an escapable fact, Mr. Speaker, that the contributions of some who have fought the hardest battles, sacrificed life and limb, and who have been associated with great leaps forward in our history have themselves been lost to history. Just as each of us has our own heroes, there are those who significantly through their contribution, cannot be said to be national heroes but that does not diminish their effort, nor does it diminish our indebtedness to them.

We feel that those who constitute the Honour Roll of our first set of National Heroes are persons who defined their times, who mirrored the hopes, dreams and aspirations of a generation, who brought about radical change and who forever, and this is important in our view, reordered or caused the reordering of Barbados and how Barbadians see themselves.

These persons, Mr. Speaker, seized the moment and put themselves on the line with no thought of their own welfare. They inspired and imbued all with the belief that we could do better as a people. By their very illustrious deeds these heroes brought everlasting pride, dignity, respect, honour and glory to Barbados. They have enriched our lives and uplifted our spirits. It would appear that they were indefatigable and ferocious in their exploits but yet retained a unique quality of humanity that made them special. People who had the privilege to be in their aura and many who admired from afar felt that they themselves could be inspired, could go further, could be better just because of the existence, the conduct and the example of these men and women.

These patriots, Mr. Speaker, have elevated Barbados to another plane by the eloquence of their lives and their living. These were the men and a woman of their time, for their time, for these times and for all times.

Who is a hero, Mr. Speaker? As I conceive a hero, I am reminded of my readings of the Classics. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central will recall, that in the mythology of the Greeks, Hero, the woman, was a priestess of Aphrodite. Her lover was Leander and, of course, the story goes that Leander swam the Hellespont from Abydos every night to be with her and when he drowned one night Hero threw herself into the sea. The power of the man or the woman? I leave that to Honourable Members.

But similarly in mythology, Sir, a hero has been long associated with great strength and courage favoured by the Gods, even as part of the Gods, descended from them and worshipped after his death. 11.55a.m.

In truth, Sir, a hero may be characterised as a person to be admired, that is the essential content of this. A person to be admired for courage, nobility or his or her exploits. In the old days the exploits were often in war. Most certainly, Mr. Speaker, a hero is one admired for his qualities or achievements and regarded objectively as an ideal or a model.

The Barbadians whom we honour today, have, we believe, in every sense surpassed the criteria for selection as National Heroes. Those criteria are set out in the Bill, in the Schedule. It says in the Schedule:

"Citizen of Barbados or person entitled to citizenship, is eligible for appointment to the order - which is the order of national hero. If he (a) has given outstanding service to Barbados and his contribution has altered the course of the history of Barbados or (b) has given service to Barbados which has been exemplified by visionary and pioneering leadership, extraordinary achievement and the attainment of the highest excellence which has redounded to the honour of Barbados or (c) has through his heroic exploits and sacrifice contributed to the improvement of the economic and social conditions of Barbados and Barbadians generally."

Mr. Speaker, in the 22 years that I have served Parliament, it has been my privilege to participate in many important events in and outside of this Parliament in the furtherance of a better Barbados but I cannot conceive of many which would be as memorable, as definitive and as far

reaching as the celebration of National Heroes Day in forging the spirit of nationhood which all Barbadians desire.

It is my pleasant yet humble duty to announce to this house, Mr. Speaker, that the following Barbadians, may I say noble Barbadians have been named as our first national heroes for their singularly great contribution to our country. I am going to take them chronologically.

Bussa is the first one. Bussa is the most fascinating freedom fighter in Barbadian history. Born a free man in Africa but was captured and brought to Barbados in the late eighteenth century as a slave. He is celebrated in the folk memory of Barbadians as the man who courageously struck a resounding blow for freedom by leading Barbados' longest slave revolt appropriately in the month of April 1816. That revolt, of course, was against the racist and oppressive white Barbadian plantocracy. That rebellion has been known to succeeding generations in Barbados as Bussa's Rebellion, a testimony to the perceived transcendent importance of Bussa himself as the major militant leader of the rebel slaves in the actual fighting and as one of the major planners and organisers of the slave revolt.

Mystery, however, still surrounds Bussa. There is no reference of him in the records of Barbados' plantation and until 1816, we did not know that he existed. Then suddenly there is this rebellion in 1816 and he become real and a threat to white powers in Barbados. They say Bussoe, Busso or Bussa.

That rebellion which began today's date, April 14, 1816, was the first slave uprising in this island. The last attempt took place in 1692. Professor Hilary Beckles, said that rebellion represented an attempt by the slaves to assert some influence on the general abolitionist politics of the time. What distinguished the Bussa rebellion from many of the others was that it was not a spontaneous exercise but rather a calculated blow for freedom, planned, organised and executed by elite slaves on the several Barbadian estates.

Evidence gathered by the slaves who were captured revealed that this rebellion was an attempt at the total reconstruction of the society in the image of the blacks. It was an island wide conspiracy to obtain their freedom through the overthrow of the oppressive planter class.

The rebellion was sudden and unexpected. It took the whites by surprise and they generally believed that their slaves not having attempted any insurrections since 1692 would rather run away than undertake armed insurrection. It seems that the careful planning of the rebellion was Bussa's organising mind at work. The planning was undertaken at a number of sugar estates including

Bayleys where Bussa had some position of eminence amongst the slaves. But it is now accepted by historians that Bussa was, as they said, the principal conspirator. Other revolutionaries included, Nanny Brigg who was a senior domestic slave on an estate belonging to somebody called "Simmons." 12.05p.m.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, planning for the rebellion began soon after the House of Assembly discussed and rejected the Imperial Registry Bill of 1815 and by February of 1816, they had decided that the revolt should take place at Easter. That much seems definite and well established in history.

I said at the beginning that Bussa was born in Africa. Historians claim that he was not a young man, since the slave trade was abolished in 1807 and, in general, it takes at least ten years for Africans to acquire the language and managerial skills, in addition to their master's confidence in order to become a member of the elite slave personnel on estates.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South will probably know quite a lot about this, Sir, being a historian himself. But Bussa enjoyed confidence and respect. He led the slaves into battle at Bayley's on Tuesday, April 16. As I said, he commanded approximately 400 freedom fighters against troops of the First West India Regiment, but like Jose Marti in Cuba, he died in battle. His troops continued to fight until they were defeated by the superior fire power. It is reported that the Barbadian slaves continued their resistance even after he was killed and continued in battle shouting the name of Bussa. That rebellion may have failed, but the name of Bussa lived on and must live on.

The second national hero is Sarah Ann Gill, 1795 to 1866. The Head Stone on her grave is located in the cemetery at the back of James Street Church, Sir, and reads as follows:

"Sarah Ann Gill Born
February 16, 1795 Died
February 25, 1866"

This is what is on the stone there in James Street Methodist Church. I am reminded.

"HEROINE
OF METHODISM IN BARBADOS
THE DEFENDER OF METHODISM
WHEN ITS EXISTENCE WAS
THREATENED IN 1823-1825
WAS PERSECUTED AND PROSECUTED"

Now the significance of Sarah Ann Gill's contribution must be measured, Sir, in terms of the context of the role that was being played by Methodists at the time.

Methodism came to Barbados in 1788 by Dr. Thomas Coke, a driving force behind early Methodist missionary activities. By 1793, Methodists were often viewed by the Barbadian upper classes as anti-slavery agitators and Methodist missionaries were regarded as agents of the Anti-Slavery Society based in England.

Sarah Ann Gill was a free coloured and a member of this controversial Methodist Church in Barbados. In his book, "Methodism: 200 Years in Barbados," the author Mr. Woodie Blackman wrote that the first record of her association with Methodism was in 1819 when she made a donation of £10 sterling towards the building of the first Methodist chapel in Bridgetown which was to be constructed of stone. Records show that she became a full member in 1820 and in October 1823, the Chapel building was destroyed by a gang of white rioters and the Methodist missionary the Rev. Shrewsbury and his wife were forced to flee to St. Vincent. But, Sarah Ann Gill and her sister-in-law Christiana Gill were among the Leaders of the Church and they opened up their homes as meeting places for the Church members.

She held regular worship services in the face of continued and active persecution. She lost her husband at 28 and that persecution included threats to burn down her house and two prosecutions in the courts for holding illegal meetings. Those prosecutions came about as a result of an old Act of 1664 called the Conventicle Act, which forbade assembly of more than five persons for divine worship unless a licence had been in place and led by a licenced preacher. That was the law at the time.

For more than one year she was constantly persecuted with threats of physical harm, questioned by magistrates about having guns and ammunition in her home and finally prosecuted in the then House of Assembly, Sir. On each occasion, but at her own expense she not only defended herself and defied the authorities, but she continued to hold services in her home.

Governor Warde, was censured by the Secretary of State at the time for inaction and he was forced to use soldiers to ensure Sarah Ann Gill's safety, that of her household and property. They had a thing called the Secret Committee of Public Safety and that Secret Committee of Public Safety declared that on October 19, 1824, they would destroy her home. Fortunately they were frustrated by the Governor and all they could burn was an effigy of her.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: April was a significant month apparently in the history of Barbados.

In April 1825, the Reverend Moses Rayner was reappointed to Barbados and he sought Sarah Ann Gill's advice about his safety. She replied and I quote.

"I don't advise you to come, but if it was me, I should come."

He returned and built the Chapel which is now the site of the present James Street Methodist Church, Sir, on land provided by Sarah Ann Gill at a minimal cost with payment spread over an eight-year period. 12.15p.m.

Sir, the outrages, if you like, of the times, reached the House of Commons in England and on June 25, 1825 the members of the House of Commons I quote:

"... deemed it their duty to declare that they view(ed) with utmost indignation (the) scandalous and daring violation of the law ... securing ample protection and religious toleration to all ... of His Majesty's dominions."

In Eagle Hall - I am being advised that it is Fairfield. It was in Eagle Hall but now in Fairfield, the Gill Memorial Church is named under Sarah Ann Gill. The large wooden structure that was built in 1893 was replaced by a new Gill Memorial Church which was built in the 80s and I think that is the one which is now at Fairfield.

Our third hero, Sir, is Samuel Jackman Prescod, 1806 to 1871. He has been variously described as the greatest Barbadian of all time, the saviour of the country. Samuel Jackman Prescod's mission in life was to improve the conditions of the free coloured as well as to fight for the freedom of slaves. I think one can say that Samuel Jackman Prescod was an enemy of injustice who abhorred the treatment which was meted out to coloureds and blacks by the planter class and that he fought tirelessly against the dehumanising and debilitating institution of slavery.

From an early age he set about trying to unite the masses, the coloureds, the blacks and poor whites into a kind of coalition of the oppressed against the white oppressors and to agitate for their enfranchisement. One historian has said that he fought for all the things he believed in and people's love for him grew when they realised that he was prepared to denounce abuses and support reforms that affected all segments and classes of this community.

As a result, he won the faith and the affection of the masses and he was able skilfully to use his abilities to establish the Liberal Party which fought for social justice over 25 years. It could probably be said that Prescod made a significant mark and had his greatest impact on people through the printed word. He recognised the power of the pen and used the newspapers of which he was editor to write scathing articles in which he accused the planters of pursuing policies which suppressed the blacks and contributed to their hardship.

Through his writings he provided free discussion on all topics related to the labouring population and one of his first successes was the admission of the free coloured people to vote in 1831.

From as early as 1839 he recommended that there be universal adult suffrage. That in itself was remarkable. It never came until 1951 but he was recommending it in 1839. That proposal of course was ridiculed in the then oligarchic parliament.

In a period of limited franchise he was elected on June 6, 1843 as one of two members for the newest constituency at the time, the City of Bridgetown. The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister follows therefore in very large shoes and it is a history of great significance.

He became the first non-white to sit in the Parliament of Barbados, that is, the House of Assembly. Later he became leader of a small group of white members in the House who agreed with his policies. He functioned as a kind of unofficial opposition for over 20 years.

Prescod was born, as was then under the then law, an illegitimate child of a free coloured woman, Lydia Smith, and his father was William Prescod, a wealthy landowner, but he was named after Samuel Jackman who was a rich white planter that lived in St. Peter. He attended St. Mary's School and he was later apprenticed as a joiner.

It has been said, Sir, that Barbados in Jackman's time was heaven for the elite white, hell for blacks and purgatory for the free coloureds. Men of Prescod's complexion suffered humiliation and were relegated to menial positions in almost every aspect of life. Prescod was determined not to spend his life as a second class citizen and so "he retired to a life of study and contemplation", preparing himself for the struggle against injustice.

Sir, I said he had his greatest results perhaps from his writings. He was editor of the *Liberal* Newspaper which was founded by the poor whites and he spent 25 years educating the masses through that newspaper. The *Liberal* as so many papers prior to the *Nation* and the *Advocate* have found to their cost, got into financial problems and he and Thomas Harris bought into it. He was given a

free hand by Harris to continue defending the rights of blacks. So it is not surprising for all his writings and having regard to the nature and content of his writings that he was prosecuted in 1840 for criminal libel and, in fact, jailed for 8 days.

Prescod's newspaper gained for him a reputation of being a "counsellor", "advisor", "poisonous revolutionary", "trouble-maker" and "enemy of the established order". It is still argued among historians that perhaps he was more effective as a journalist than as a Member of the House of Assembly.

During the days of the apprenticeship system, Prescod was interested in developing blacks and his educational programmes focussed on helping them to know their rights so that they could in his words "challenge the plantocracy". Because of his genuine interest in slaves and ex-slaves he received their support and respect. He also left his mark in education.

He was a tireless fighter for the development of primary, secondary and tertiary educational facilities for the children of ex-slaves. He remained a member of the House for nearly 20 years. In 1860 he retired and later accepted a position of Judge of the Assistant Court of Appeal. At age 65 he died September 26, 1871 and was buried in St. Mary's Church yard. When he died the *Barbados Times* newspaper described Prescod as "the great tribune of the people". It said he had not been induced to "swerve one jot or tittle from his allegiance to the cause of right and justice". 12.25p.m.

The Editor of the *Agricultural Reporter*, the newspaper that was produced by Prescod's adversaries, the white planter society, I quote:

"Such a man is scarcely likely ever to appear upon the scene of life here or anywhere in the West Indies for the simple reason that the same circumstances can never exist again. His class can never again produce so strong a man in the sense in which he was strong because no one of them will ever be required to fight such a battle as that which he fought and won."

Sir, we are familiar with the fact that the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic is named after him and he also appears on the currency.

The fourth hero, Charles Duncan O'Neal, 1879-1936, has been described as the Barbadian John the Baptist who paved the way for social transformation of Barbados in the early 20th century. Charles Duncan O'Neal was a medical doctor and a member of the privileged class but he dedicated most of his working life to the poor and agitated against

deep-seated racism which was rampant in Barbados in the 1920s and the 1930s, racism perpetrated by the planter class against the blacks in every sphere, education, religion, housing, at the workplace.

O'Neal was the first politician in this country to campaign for the improvement of conditions for women in the workplace and in his organisation, the Democratic League, women held leadership positions.

Sir Alexander Hoyos, our own historian, has said that Adams' purpose" - this is Grantley Adams - "after 1934 was to revive the political movement among the masses which O'Neal had started." It is arguable that O'Neal laid the early foundation which Adams built upon after 1938.

O'Neal had a vision for Barbados. His achievements included the creation of a network of grass-root organisations - the Democratic League, the Working Men's Association, and the launching of a Cooperative in Bridgetown. He was an investor in the *Herald* which sounded a message of reform, enfranchisement and social change.

Sir, it was the first time in the island's history that one of O'Neal's class who had a university education and was an independent professional, put his reputation on the line, as it were, by aligning himself with the oppressed class.

Charles Duncan O'Neal was born in 1879 to Joseph and Catherine O'Neal in St. Lucy. He attended the Trent's Primary School, the Parry School and then went to Harrison College. He came second in the examination for the Barbados Scholarship in 1899. In those days there was only one. His father sent him to Edinburgh to study medicine and he gained distinctions in almost all of the academic areas and a Blue Ribbon in Surgery. That was really eminent, academic and professional.

Apparently while he was pursuing studies in Scotland, as happened to many of us who had the fortune to study in England or, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central will attest, in Scotland, he came under the influence of the thinking that was in vogue at the time. Some of us came under the influence of Lasky, for example, at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Not me, some who preceded me. I came under the influence of people like Ralph Milliband, and Bill Weatherburn and Jim Dower, those types and John Griffith. But those of us who were exposed from my generation in the 1960s to study and learning in England, could not help but be influenced...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: England and Scotland in those days was a great melting pot for intellectual ideas and O'Neal came under the influence of Keir Hardie of the Independent Labour Party. That fired his interest in politics. He took the decision to run for a local Government seat and O'Neal actually won a seat in Sunderland County Council. At that time he was practising in Newcastle, but he had the desire to return home and spread the socialist doctrine to all Barbadians who were prepared to hear him. He came back to Barbados, in fact, in 1910, met extremely depressing conditions and left again to go to Trinidad and Dominica to live and work. But again after 14 years there was a compulsion to return to the land of his birth and he took the decision to come home and light a fire under the authorities here forcing them to pay attention to the social ills of the day.

Sir, in October 1924 he founded the Democratic League and that party won its first significant victory two months later when "Chrissie" Brathwaite was elected as one of the representatives for St. Michael in the House of Assembly.

The programme of the Democratic League was based on socialism as it then was, and it attracted members of the coloured and black middle classes to its ranks. O'Neal tried to educate the ordinary man about politics and when he did he got tremendous response from the masses.

He was the first black activist in this century to agitate for free education and free dental care for children, for improved housing and the abolition of the Located Labourers Act, although I believe it was Hugh Gordon Hilvester Cummins that actually piloted the legislation to abolish the Located Labourers Act, I believe it was 1935. And in the spirit of the times, O'Neal tried his best, as Prescod had done before, to have universal adult suffrage introduced in Parliament. He was unsuccessful, of course, as the historical record shows.

He finally won a seat in the House of Assembly in 1932, again like Prescod a Member for the City of Bridgetown. As I keep saying, the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister is in really good company here. He defeated the prominent merchant H.B.G. Austin by one vote and he fought his causes in the House. There is no doubt that Charles Duncan O'Neal was feared and even hated by his adversaries. He died in 1936. He did not live all that long but all have been forced by the power of his efforts to conceive that Charles Duncan O'Neal played a great role in arousing the political consciousness of the masses in the period leading up to the disturbances of 1937. 12.35p.m.

Sir, I end on O'Neal with a quotation from the present principal of the University of the West Indies. He summed up Charles Duncan O'Neal's life when he said that he advocated a political creed based on "the simple, plain direct principles laid down by Christ which emphasised the honouring of social obligations among members of the human society while recognising that everyone was equal".

We have the Charles Duncan O'Neal Bridge and the \$10 note as mementos of this great Barbadian.

This next hero, Sir, could be controversial but I trust that he will not be.

Clement Osbourne Payne - 1904 - 1941. A very short life.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let me just get this issue out of the way about who he was. Clement Osbourne Payne was born to two Barbadian parents. George Payne was his father and his mother was Adrianna Payne. Both of them were Barbadians so he was automatically a Barbadian by descent. He went to school at Wesley Hall Boys School, like myself and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and he worked at Percy Roach and Stuart & Sampson. He left Barbados and went to Trinidad as a full grown man for about four to five years and then he came back to Barbados. There is no doubt that Clement Payne was a Barbadian. If you want to check, his brother Howard is still alive. He used to work at Carrington & Sealy, is married to Lorene and lives in St. Matthias.

Payne is associated with the great slogan 'Educate, agitate, but do not violate!' He pushed tirelessly advocating the needs and the cause and the wants of the working people of the Caribbean. Whether he was in Trinidad, where he was born or in Barbados where his parents lived, Payne worked assiduously to educate the masses about their lot in life and encouraged the workers to transform themselves into militant community workers.

For four months in 1937, Clement Payne struggled to help the working population of Barbados see the importance of organising themselves to fight off the elite white planter class. He held several public meetings in the City and around and used every opportunity to denounce the very terrible conditions that existed at the time. He was expelled from Barbados before his dream was realised but he had so mobilised the people that his work as it were, bore fruit on July 26, 1937, the night when he was forced out of this country, never to come back again.

Payne's history is pretty well documented. He was an intensely politically conscious young man and no job was too low for Clement Payne. When he went to Trinidad he was 23 years old and he started working as a cleaner and dyer but even in his work place he was always looking to see how he could organise and mobilise the workers. He became one the first organisers of Trade Unions in Trinidad. He became one of the organisers of the first trade unions established there - the Trinidad and Tobago National Trade Union Centre and was a founding member of the Trinidad branch of the "African National Congress", and also a member of the militant working class organisation at the time called "the Negro Welfare Cultural and Social Association". There is also evidence that he was very closely allied to Uriah "Buzz" Butler, the famous Trinidad trade unionist of the 1940s and early 1950s.

When he came back to Barbados from Trinidad, he launched a campaign to educate and stimulate the masses and he was, to all reports, a very eloquent, fiery, powerful speaker and the police in Barbados at the time saw him as a threat and kept him under surveillance all day and night. Undaunted and undeterred he kept advocating the themes which had to be brought into the public domain during his meetings and when the disturbances started in Trinidad in June 1937, he held a meeting in Golden Square to talk to Barbadians about what was happening in Trinidad. By that time, the Barbadian workers were becoming motivated towards organisation and I say capitalise not in an unkind way, but capitalised on the fact that Barbadians were then getting ripe to agitate.

He was charged on July 22 for willfully making a false statement to the Harbour Authorities as to his place of birth and we know that out of that came his trial and appeal where he was represented by Grantley Adams. His last meeting in Barbados was on July 22 which he described as a "historical one from many angles". His book was called "My Political Memoirs of Barbados".

Sir, on the morning of July 22, Payne had about 300 workers mobilised who were singing hymns and popular songs and they marched to the Governor's residence. He and the 13 supporters were arrested and charged for refusing to disperse as an assembled mob when ordered to do so by the police. All pleaded not guilty, some got bail but Payne got no bail. That charge was subsequently withdrawn and he was served with the expulsion order.

While Payne was in prison, his lieutenants held meetings to sensitise the workers of the situation. Though he won his appeal on July 26, that appeal against making a false declaration about his place of birth, the expulsion order remained and he was deported the same night.

When the news of deportation spread then, the supporters exploded in quite violent upheaval in the City streets. There were four days of island wide rebellion. At the end of it 14 people were dead, 47 were wounded, 500 arrested and hundreds of thousands of dollars in property damaged. 12.45 p.m.

Now it seems to me, Sir, that Payne's importance is that he was, even though he never campaigned for years, was the essential figure among whom people rallied and 1937 is always significant in terms of Payne's pivotal role, obviously there were others who supported him. But in the consciousness of Barbadians, Payne and the 1937 riots are synonymous and the Government therefore sees it as important to give recognition to this man who was a rallying point for what happened in 1937 and paved the way for the subsequent change that has been wrought in this society.

Sir, no one will quarrel with the recognition of Sir Hugh Worrell Springer, June 22, 1913-1994 as worthy of national hero status. He was an educator, politician, leader and let me say, an organiser of organised labour, a parliamentarian, member of the Government, the first Registrar of the University of the West Indies and finally Head of State of Barbados. He achieved all. Some would say his rise was meteoric. He was Barbados' third native Governor-General, for six years up to 1990 he held the post following the death of his predecessor Sir Deighton Ward.

Sir Hugh Springer is complimented by the historian, Hoyos and I quote, Sir,

"For his good work for Barbados in general and for the Barbados Progressive League in particular."

Sir Alexander said,

"Sir Hugh made impressive contributions to the common stock of policy and counsel."

Of course he was a Barbados Scholar in the Classics, Sir, of Harrison College and has been in the vanguard of public education and policy-making through the Commonwealth most of his life.

That Barbados Scholarship that he won never let us forget in the days when there was only one, took him to Hertford College, Oxford where he gained both the B.A. and M.A. degree. He also studied law at the Inner Temple and was called to the Bar in England in 1938.

He was the first General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union (BWU) from 1940 to 1947 and in that period, Sir, the strides made by the Barbados

Workers Union and the Barbados Labour Party, originally the Barbados Progressive League, those strides were credited largely to Sir Grantley Adams and more particularly to the organising skill and ability of Sir Hugh Springer.

Sir, he left Barbados to take up the post of Registrar when the then University College of the West Indies was opened at Mona in 1947. But he was in here as a representative for the parish of St. George. He was General Secretary of the Barbados Labour Party and distinguished himself through the Commonwealth particularly in the field of education.

Sir, of the Union's first General Secretary, Hoyos says that:

"Hugh Springer's organising genius at this stage was of the first importance to the labour movement".

He was one of those select few, Sir, who became a member of the Executive Committee in 1944 and in 1946 there was a coalition between the Barbados Labour Party and the Congress Party and Sir Hugh held responsibility for education, legal affairs, agriculture and fisheries.

While he was General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union Sir, the Union bought properties including the first headquarters at the corner of Fairchild and Nelson Streets and also he made sure the Labour Party bought the building, "Unity House".

Along with Frank Walcott, Sir, Hugh Springer organised and mobilised particularly the agricultural workers in the 1940s and consolidated divisions, it was not then the Port as we know it, Sir, in the docks and attracted workers from utilities, government, clerical officers and white collar workers to join the Union.

Sir Hugh, has published and his works have appeared in regional publications such as *Caribbean Quarterly*, *Pelican Annual* and *The Torch* and international journals and the *Universities Quarterly* and so on.

Errol Walton Barrow, January 21, 1920 to June 1, 1987. I have to restrain myself now for the next person because I know so much about him that I could go on and on. So I am going to stick to the notes that I have prepared for the debate.

I am particularly pleased, Sir, to be able today, April 14 to say that this Government is pleased and indeed proud to honour Errol Walton Barrow as a national hero.

He was born in St. Lucy, January 21, 1920 and lived for 67 years, Sir. He died June 1, 1987. He was the Premier

of Barbados from 1961 to 1966 and he was the first Prime Minister from 1966 to 1976 and then again from 1986 to 1987.

If he is proclaimed as the father of Barbados' Independence there can be no quarrel with that because it was he who took Barbados to Marlborough House in 1966 to hammer out the Constitution, along with others, of course, that we now have but which is being revised. He liked to think that he came from an aristocratic and distinguished black Barbadian family including the late Rev. Reginald Grant Barrow and the late Ruth O'Neal. This family must have been destined by the Gods to play a central role in the development of Barbados, because Errol Walton Barrow was a nephew of Charles Duncan O'Neal. It would seem to me that during his life in Barbados before he went overseas to study, Errol Barrow must have of necessity come under the influence and inspiration of Charles Duncan O'Neal so it should surprise no one that from time to time he espoused socialist dogma and principles. 12.55p.m.

Barrow won a scholarship for Classics to Codrington College in 1939. He did not pursue those studies but instead he joined the Royal Airforce at the time - we were still a colony - as a World War II airman. He studied industrial relations in his third year for his B.Sc. (Econ.) at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

After that, he did the Bar and I think he was a Keynesian man. Shortly thereafter he came back to Barbados. When his war service ended like so many other Caribbean people who were in England at the time he turned to academic pursuits, did his B.Sc. (Econ.) at L.S.E. as it was at the time and then did the Bar and returned to Barbados.

Lionel Jeffries, a Guyanese who was very active in London in those days told me at the Student Centre at One Collingham Gardens some years after during the 60s that he used to dress in a brown suit and baroque shoes and he would come to the West Indian Student Centre and he used to say with Laurie Williams and others that he was going back to Barbados to help Grantley Adams in his fight against the oligarchy. He did come back to Barbados and he joined the Barbados Labour Party and in 1951 won a seat in St. George, he and the father of the Deputy Prime Minister, the late Freddie Miller, won seats in St. George for the Barbados Labour Party which gave that party a clear majority for the first time. I think it got 16 seats.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Today is not a day for recrimination. He fell out with the Barbados Labour

Party. Various are the reasons that have been advanced. He and Cameron Tudor and Sir Frederick Smith left with others to form the Democratic Labour Party in 1955.

There is a lesson for some of us in politics. He won a seat with the Barbados Labour Party in 1951, left and went somewhere else and in 1956 lost that seat and was in the political wilderness for some time until 1958 when we had the federal elections and he campaigned for the Federal Parliament and lost. Barbados then lost Grantley Adams to the Federation.

Grantley Adams is alleged to have said that he saw in Barrow the future leader of Barbados. By 1961, in the absence of Adams and internal wrangling in the Barbados Labour Party the way was clear for Barrow to become Premier and so he did in 1961 and led Barbados successfully for 15 years.

During those 15 years, again it is undoubted and a fact of history - we talk of this man but you cannot honour everybody in the Party. He is the symbol. That Party led by Barrow did such wide-ranging works of an economic, social and political nature in Barbados as to transform Barbadian society in those 15 years. That is the importance of Barrow and why he fits the criteria. You could not think of leaving him out at all but he fits the criteria because he had the pioneering and visionary qualities and he made an extraordinary contribution sustained over a long time.

He has gone from us now 11 years and we are now able with the passage of time to look dispassionately and objectively at his contribution and not one of us in here will object to the award of National Hero for Errol Walton Barrow.

We have spoken on several occasions in here about him on the occasion of the Bill to create a public holiday and in our obituary speeches and we know him and I suppose most of us in here do, almost like the back of our hands. He could be a very charming man when he wanted to be and also he could be very ruthless, churlish. He had all the facets of ordinary, average human personality.

Most of us who were politically aware in 1961 - even though I was not in Barbados, I was aware and used to keep in touch - will recall perhaps the way he announced the victory of the Democratic Labour Party in 1961 with this great crash programme to give work to people who were not working, breaking rocks and filling in holes all about the place. That was the symbolism of his dynamism.

During his time, the Democratic Labour Party implemented the system of free school meals and extended free secondary education, matters which were in the

Barbados Labour Party manifesto as recently as 1944. The Democratic Labour Party got the programmes going and up to a few years ago it was still the greatest claim of the Democratic Labour Party and its adherents the contribution of that party to free secondary education and free school meals.

Errol Barrow had a regional vision which marked him as an important Caribbean personality. We all know that he joined with Bird, Burnham and Williams to form CARIFTA and out of that CARICOM and so on. It is indeed a pity that he died only one year after he had won the election for the second time. I sat through that period from the benches of the Opposition and watched the deterioration of the man. You could almost have told that the pressure of office and the pressure of work were taking their toll on him physically. 1.05p.m.

I will never forget, Sir, the day sitting in the Senate Chamber when I saw him. He was sleeping and all of a sudden he put his right hand to his chest and he winched. I turned to Erskine Simmons and said to him: "Some thing is wrong with him. He is not well" and within a week he had died, tragic, but that was the sacrifice.

In the Criteria for Eligibility in the Schedule to the Bill we talk about the sacrifice that our National Heroes have made. Errol Barrow and many of us have made great personal sacrifices in the interest of the people of this country and he paid the ultimate sacrifice by a death at a comparatively young age, 67. He should have been expected to go on to the late 80s.

Sir, I think I will deal with one more and leave the last two until after lunch, one more because all of us are a little tired now, Sir. On this note I think this would be a good one to end on, Sir Frank Leslie Walcott, September 16, 1916 and still with us. Sir, again I said at the beginning that we have not approached these awards in a partisan way.

Sir Frank Leslie Walcott used to describe himself when I was a boy and used to read *The Truth*, the *Torch*, the *Beacon* and the *Observer* on weekends, as the boy from obscurity. But he is perhaps the embodiment of the international trade union hero, a man who rose from very humble origins, who they say was taken by Grantley Adams out of Lashley's Store in Swan Street and brought into the union to work with Springer in mobilising the workers in the early 1940s.

This man had such native qualities that he rose from those humble origins to the pinnacle of international trade unions and was respected throughout the world and is fondly remembered, now that he does not go to ILO meetings, in many countries around the world for

the contribution he has made to trade unionism. Again one would say that he was a visionary, certainly a man of great principle, a tough negotiator, a man with a tremendous sense of humour, native intelligence that allowed him to sit in the most difficult negotiations, particularly with the planter class and negotiate successfully on behalf of the workers.

He spent 50 years as an active member of the first trade union in Barbados, the Barbados Workers' Union and retired in 1991. He was born in St. Peter, the son of a policeman who died when he was very young but he was brought up in Bridgetown and, again, he is an old Wesley Hall boy. He came under the influence of Rawle Parkinson when he was Headmaster at Wesley Hall. At school he had a good reputation in arithmetic and was a skilled craft worker.

In the 1930s he, like so many other politicians of his day, found his roots for politics in debating societies. It does not happen nowadays. Alder used to tell you how he had belonged to a debating club, and Frank Walcott was a member of the Weymouth and Riverside Clubs. They do not do these things now. But he had very firm, fixed and fearless views which he expressed and which caused people to take notice.

As I said, Sir, around 1938 when they were forming the Progressive League, Grantley Adams and Hugh Springer invited him to join what was then the very recent labour movement and he became assistant to Hugh Springer. Then subsequently he became fully employed by the union from March 10, 1946 until his retirement.

He used to deal with the grievance dispute matters and administrative matters. When, of course, Springer left in 1947 to go to university, Frank Walcott was appointed as General-Secretary. So that appointment which was confirmed at the Annual Conference of July 25, 1948 set Frank Walcott on a course in which he distinguished himself at all levels.

In the early days the union and the Barbados Labour Party were twins. Then again like the Democratic Labour Party there was a separation and the union went its way and formed alliances over time with the Democratic Labour Party. But Walcott made very important contributions. He extricated the union from a subsidiary position with the political party, whichever it was and gave the union its own identity and developed its own strength as an organisation. He developed proper accounting systems for the union and certainly made the union into a militant, yet responsible and respected body.

He used to say, Sir, that he is "Frank by name and frank by nature" and I could not speak about Frank Walcott in this debate without saying that he gave to politics in

Barbados that description that characterises the most sincere loyalty in any political person, that of "yardfowl." Yardfowl, that nomenclature was Frank Walcott's own, and it has survived. I say it is a term of endearment in many respects.

Sir, Frank Walcott was truly a self-made man who educated himself not only by reading but by learning from life's experiences. He did study tours, seminars, he took courses, he went to the University of Miami Centre for Advanced International Studies, and all of that he superimposed on a basic primary school education and shone. 1.15p.m.

Sir, he has represented Barbados at the United Nations as our Ambassador there. Dr. Francis Marks in his book, *The History of the Barbados Workers' Union*, said this:

"Frank Walcott came to the post of General Secretary with none of the social or educational advantages or mystique of the founder fathers Adams and Springer. And with none of the externals which were linked in the Barbadian consciousness with traditional leadership. After five years in the post he was clearly the union's most forceful personality".

Sir, finally, Sir Frank established the administrative authority of the General Secretary and gained the full confidence of the union's governing council. He was an executive board member of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and recognised on several regional bodies.

When C. L. R. James wrote in 1958 a paper entitled "An Analysis of the Political Situation in Barbados", members of the Democratic Labour Party should read that. It says:

"Walcott impressed me as one of the ablest and most modern minded labour and political organisers that I have met in the West Indies".

In reply to my question as to what he wanted, say for the next five years he replied unequivocally that "he saw himself as devoting his energies to the union movement". That was a typical Walcott response. Absolutely focused and single-minded about his contribution to the union.

Sir, he was a politician of note. I had the pleasure to sit in here with him during the period February 1976 to September and he was a fiery speaker who had the technique of picking out one person on the Other

Side and speaking to that person. You could always throw him off by taking up a newspaper and putting it in front of your face but he used to speak with a conviction and a vehemence that was not matched in here by anyone else.

As I said, he served on all kinds of boards and committees. He was a Privy Councillor and between 1970 and 1976 he was President of the Senate. A Barbadian of undoubted eminence and I commend him to Honourable Members as one well worthy of the highest commendation and the highest order that this country can award.

He, in his own right, made a sterling contribution in the struggle for social justice in Barbados and contributed handsomely to the development of modern Barbados.

Sir, I now ask that further consideration be deferred until later.

SUSPENSION

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

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

The question that the House be suspended until 2:15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION Mr. SPEAKER: This

House is now in session.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the next hero is a legend in his lifetime. Sir Garfield Sobers was born in 1936. He is a man noted or admired for nobility, courage, outstanding achievements. He is a man of superhuman qualities, "favoured by the gods". For 20 years he bestrode the cricketing world like a colossus, leaving many a lesser mortal gaping in amazement and admiration.

Like Sir Frank Walcott, Sir Garfield Sobers did not have any secondary education. My first vision of Garfield Sobers was playing a game at Dodds. He came to that game on the back of a motor cycle of Garnet Ashby. In those days known as a very strong man. He masqueraded under the name Romeldo. Garnet who still live in Farm Road, St. Philip used to take Sir Garfield to cricket on Saturdays.

Then, of course, we know that he played for Barbados against England at age 16. It took him 16 test matches before he scored his first century, but when he scored that first century it was three in one, 365 not out at Kensington in 1958, Sir, against Pakistan. 2.25 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, from there Sir Garfield broke all records that were known in cricket, except he did not score five consecutive Test centuries like Sir Everton Weekes.

At 17 years old, he made his international cricket debut when he was called to join the West Indies Team for the fifth and final Test against the English Team, in Jamaica in 1954. I brought my copy of Michael Manley's book entitled "A History of West Indies Cricket" and Michael Manley describes Sir Garfield in that book as, "the first complete Caribbean folk hero after George Headley."

Keith Miller, an Australian all-rounder describes him as "a batting wizard" and "the complete cricketer" and E. W. Swanson in another book I have called "Sort of a Cricket Person" also referred to him in terms of his contribution of West Indies cricket by saying "There is a tradition of good sportsmanship in West Indies' cricket, long established, which has never weakened, Gary Sobers is its perfect expression."

England's Trevor Bailey, who became a lasting friend of Sir Garfield and who wrote a biography entitled "Sir Gary" said: "he could miss hit and still score a six." C. L. R. James, a Caribbean writer describes him "this superb product of the modern age."

All who have written on cricket, I think except Neville Carlos will have written in the most glowing and laudatory terms of Sir Garfield. Sir Garfield's records, some of which still stands, include scoring an incredible 365 runs in 1958 at the age of 21 years old. This stood for 36 years as the highest individual score ever made, until it was erased by current West Indies captain Brian Lara in 1994 when he scored 375 runs in Antigua.

Another record includes his sixth wicket stand at Lord's in 1966 against England. He and David Holford responded to the attack by establishing a record-breaking partnership of 163 and 105 not out. He was also the first batsman to score six sixes in a six-ball over in a first class match.

Sir Garfield also captained the West Indies' Cricket Team for 39 matches between 1965 and 1972, the Barbados Cricket Team in 1966 and 1967, Nottinghamshire from 1968-1971 and the Rest of the World for two tours - one of England and the other of Australia.

Sir Garfield set another precedent when in 1975 Queen Elizabeth II overturned tradition and knighted him in an open-air ceremony at the Garrison Savannah instead of at Buckingham Palace.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South has found the precise word to describe such an aberration. It is sacrilege. They have never seen 132 at Kensington in 1960/1961. The 254 at Melbourne, which Bradford described as the best cricket he has seen anywhere. They have never seen the 163 not out in his final test match in 1973 at Lord's.

I told the boy's father that I have all of these on tape in my house and he is welcome to come and spend a Friday evening with me or Friday night because I do not like going out on Friday nights. He can come and watch them.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation seems not to have the will or the focus to ensure that these great exploits should be seen and enjoyed by all Barbadians. Buy the rights from BBC Enterprises and arrange to pay for them over time and show them at night. If they put it on pay per view, they will make millions. Anyhow, do not let me get down that road.

I just wish to say that Sobers was a classic batsman. I said, the best left hander I ever saw and for all his greatness of a bowler and a fielder I think, Sir, that what endears him to all Barbadians is his humanity, his humility and his generosity.

Now, I have come across some generous people in my time, Sir, people who were generous with their time to me when I was at school, for example, Bob Hoyos, Arthur Newsam, Percy Crichtlow. I have never met anyone who has been as generous a person as Garfield Sobers. Jack Dear was a very generous man. He did a lot for lawyers, but no one could quite match Sobers in his generosity, to the point where I do not think he has too many of his rudiments of the game anymore. He used to give away bats and boots at the end of the season. He loved to entertain people whether they were from the lowliest rung of the social ladder or the highest. A human being if ever there was one, Sir, is Sir Garfield Sobers.

He inspired many of us, Sir, of my generation, either to play the game or to watch it and admire it for the art that it is. I hope that Barbadian cricketers of the future will recognise that here has been the role model for millions of youngsters beyond the shores of Barbados. It is not by accident that Sri Lankan cricket improved so dramatically after he spent some time there coaching.

I think he is the single most popular of all Barbadians. His name is known internationally and

nothing that we could do by way of television advertising could compete with a minute of Sir Garfield Sobers on British television.

By his own personality and his character he has himself attracted thousands of visitors to Barbados and done his share, long before he was involved with the Barbados Tourism Authority. He has done his share in attracting people of considerable wealth and esteem to Barbados.

Sir, I think the name of Sir Garfield Sobers will live forever in the memory of Barbadians and cricketers everywhere. 2.35 p.m.

As Sandiford and Hughes say:

"He is the embodiment of cricket excellence, and, as such, is one of the truly great national symbols. As a representative of the BCL, Police, Barbados, Radcliffe in the Central Lancashire League, South Australia, the West Indies and the Rest of the World, Sobers made enormous contributions to the growth and popularity of cricket. He richly deserved the engraving of his picture on a Barbados Independence Postage Stamp in 1966, the knighthood which Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II saw fit to bestow upon him in 1975 and the placing of his name on the Players' Pavilion at Kensington Oval."

Sir, one of the criteria recommended by the Social Justice Commission was that sporting heroes should be elevated to this order of national heroes where such elevation was merited. The Jamaican experience has been that in addition to the Right Excellent Norman Washington Manley stands as a national hero Robert Nesta Bob Marley. To have Sir Garfield in this group of eminent and most worthy and distinguished Barbadians in his lifetime is indeed a pleasure for me and for the Government.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the last of the national heroes. I left it for the last because I suppose that I am allowed a certain liberality in presenting these heroes to Honourable Members. This has been my hero and I wanted to bring it at the end.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have already dealt with Barrow, Honourable Member for the airport in St. Lucy.

Like the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister, I joined the Barbados Labour Party 41 years ago in 1957. The Honourable Member for St. George South and the former representative for St. Michael East, John Blackman-

we were then young socialists of the Barbados Labour Party.

As boys at school, Sir, we were fired, our imaginations were stirred by the exploits of Grantley Herbert Adams. I have very personal vivid memories of the election of 1951. I seem to remember it was an evening when the votes were being counted and you were hearing these things on what was then called Radio Distribution. There was a lot of merriment in my house, Sir, as the Labour Party candidates were returned. I remember him in 1956 at South District at a meeting. I remember him in Queen's Park on the occasion of a visit by Bustamante. I remember him in the Lower Green speaking about the history of the hospital with Dr. Humby and saying either Humby must go or I will go.

I got to know Sir Grantley closely when I was studying in London. As an expert to the ILO he used to come every Spring and pass through London and invariably every year I used to see him. There are two things that I recall of him. He spoke at the West Indies Student Centre on a few occasions. Whenever he came he used to stay at the Charing Cross Hotel and he would call and ask me to get a few of the fellows together and come over and see him.

He introduced me to lager and lime - a lager and lime cordial. I used to go with him to Collets, the bookshop on Charing Cross Road. We used to go and buy books and we used to get the latest Fabian pamphlets. I think if you visit Tyrol Cot I have not been for years - they used to have downstairs the collection of the Fabian pamphlets. He never travelled other than on the tubes, the underground. Again like Sir Garfield I found him the most humble of persons for all that he had achieved. Of course as a school boy I first saw him in the precincts here one Saturday morning. M 820 used to park under the tree and I saw him. He used to walk with his head down but I have seen him stand up and talk to people on his way. Where others would brush you aside, he stood up and talked.

Sir Grantley was the first Premier of Barbados and the only Prime Minister of the defunct West Indies Federation. He was a social reformer, a constitutional reformer who was bent on ensuring the promotion of the human rights of the majority of people of Barbados.

Adams has never been properly credited for his role in destroying the white planter class of Barbados. But he fought those oligarchs from the 30s when he first got involved in politics. He had a rough time at first in politics. He was of liberal thought and caught up in the liberal politics of H.A. Asquith and when he came back to Barbados from Oxford there is no doubt that Adams was an Asquithian. 2.45 p.m.

He found himself philosophically opposed to Charles Duncan O'Neal who I have said earlier was an avowed socialist. Adams was not in his early days. Subsequently, Adams changed and embraced the principles of democratic socialism, along the Fabian model which called for gradual socialist reform rather than radical and doctrinaire reform.

As an outstanding lawyer, they tell me he was the best criminal lawyer of his time, Adams was well placed to be at the centre of events in 1937. He and Clennell Wickham, the journalist, had a falling out but they repaired that. He represented Payne in his appeal and when the people rose up in July in the disturbances of 1937, Adams was around to champion their cause. It was not easy because Adams was at first removed from the island to lobby the colonial office and bring to their attention the terrible, social and economic conditions of Barbados. He left Barbados at great personal and family sacrifice to lobby in London people like (Criche Jones) and people of that ilk at the time to try to get a hearing on behalf of the people of Barbados, and it was not easy. When eventually he came back to Barbados from that sojourn in London, he was accredited as the leader of the masses and thereafter Adams never looked back.

We know the history, Sir, that the Barbados Labour Party was formed as the Progressive League on March 31, 1938. He became its leader. Then the Progressive League changed its name to the Barbados Labour Party. There was the formation of the Barbados Workers' Union in 1941 and, as they say, Sir, the rest is history.

In the mid 40s together with Sir Hugh Springer, Adams wielded considerable power when they were members of the Governing Executive Committee and when the Bush experiment was tried he was again the leader. When we got full internal self Government in 1954, he was the Premier in a small Cabinet of M. E. Cox, Ronald Mapp, Freddie Miller, Edwy Talma and Dr. Cummins.

It is true that Sir Grantley found himself having to grapple with constitutional issues earlier on and he did not shrink from grappling with them. But at the same time as he was securing the constitutional base of Barbados, the Barbados Labour Party under his leadership brought many social and economic benefits to Barbadians. I will not enumerate them now, Sir.

We celebrate this year the centenary of his birth, born in 1898 on April 28. Had he lived, he would have been 100. We also celebrate this year the 60th Anniversary, the Diamond Jubilee of the Barbados Labour Party as a political organism. These events of great moment are not to be diminished but must be accorded the prominence which they deserve.

Sir, in the political life of Barbados, Grantley Adams combined the talents of a brilliant lawyer with those of a politician in helping to change Barbados into a new country. In the early days, Sir, in bringing about social change the Barbados Labour Party worked side by side with the Barbados Workers' Union and it is to the Barbados Labour Party that all of us owe a debt of gratitude for the right to vote. Unlike our brothers and sisters in South Africa, we did not shed much blood for the right to vote. The Labour Party won that right for us in 1951. It had been a struggle - I said earlier today that Samuel Jackman Prescod started it in 1839 - right through but it was finally achieved and won in 1951.

Sir, others, I am sure, will speak of the contribution of the early Barbados Labour Party Government to our country. I merely recite for the record that Sir Grantley, of course, was a Caribbean man like Mr. Errol Barrow became. He sacrificed his position as Premier of Barbados when neither Eric Williams nor Norman Manley would lead their countries to go to the Federal Centre.

Adams went to the Federal Government and left Barbados. He put greater interest in the larger entity of the Federation. Many believe to this day that his going caused the Barbados Labour Party to lose the election of 1961. Now is not the time to debate that, Sir. The fact is we lost when he was in Trinidad. He was President of the Caribbean Labour Congress in 1947. He led the Movement to several Caribbean Trade Unions from the World Federation of Trade Unions and was instrumental in the founding of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and was elected one of its Vice Chairmen.

Sir, the breakup of the Federation in 1962 brought on great depression on Sir Grantley but he rallied and it was only in 1970, eight years later when his health declined that he resigned from public life. He died at age 73. He and his wife produced Tom Adams, the Prime Minister between 1976 and 1985. The Adams name, like the O'Neal and Barrow names, will forever be part of the history of Barbados and cannot be erased. The contributions of those families to public life have been monumental.

Sir Grantley, Sir, just to wind up, was Leader of the House, member of the Executive Committee, 1946-54, Chief Minister 1948-58, Premier 1954-58. 2.55 p.m.

He was educated at Harrison's College and Oxford and of course at Gray's Inn. On a previous occasion recently in dealing with the BCA I had occasion to mention his contribution to cricket and his vision in founding the Barbados Cricket Association and the Barbados Cricket team.

Here was a well-rounded personality who gave his life to the service of his people. I am sure that all members will be pleased that Sir Grantley has been fittingly honoured as a national hero.

Let me just wind up by saying, Mr. Speaker, that though this matter has been discussed for many months now there will be arguments that some have been omitted who might otherwise have been in if the choice rested with certain people but there are bound to be omissions. We chose ten to start with and in time others will qualify.

I cannot help but note the writings of correspondents who were making the case for Codrington and Sir John Gay Alleyne. What is the public record of those. Codrington's cousin bred slaves in Barbuda. There is a man called Joshua Steele. Joshua was the owner of Kendal Plantation in St. John and incurred the wrath and hatred of his white colleagues in Barbados because he refused to have slaves on his plantation.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Joshua Steele. When he was civilising the position of black people in Barbados where was John Gay Alleyne who lived at the same time. John Gay Alleyne died in 1801. Joshua Steele died about 1796. There is no public record.

For those who may yet wish to convince me, I wish personally to say that in a predominately black country how are you going to present to the people as worthy of hero status those who enslaved them?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have spoken long. These men and this woman have attained the highest level of excellence in their time and in their various corners. Their contributions directly led to the reorganisation and the reordering of Barbadian society, often at great personal sacrifice and deprivation. But they all inspired successive generations to higher levels of achievements and contributed to making us what we are today.

After the Constitution Review Commission has reported, Mr. Speaker, there will be an occasion for us to look again at the National Honours legislation and the National Heroes legislation. Until that time when there will be an amalgamation of the two into one composite piece of legislation, I present to the House today, the Order of National Heroes Bill 1998 dealing separately with national heroes.

The Bill speaks for itself. I do not think I need to go through it because it is a very simple Bill and I ask Honourable Members to pay attention to the criteria for eligibility in the Schedule and to remember that

these national heroes from the time this Bill is assented to shall be referred to as the Right Excellent.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, the Right Excellent.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill has had full discussion. As indicated by the Cabinet, we spent a day on it and it was refined and amended. In the spirit of the time, I humbly move that this Bill be read a second time.

Let me indicate, Mr. Speaker that the legislation providing for the declaration of April 28th as a holiday is also before the House to be debated today. Even though I am humbly presenting this Bill, there is something which I cannot find the words to express because April 28th the day on which we recognise and honour national heroes is also my birthday.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It was the birthday of Sir Grantley Adams but it also happens to be my birthday and I am very pleased.

Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that we revert to Private Members' Notices.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: If this be the will of the House, so be it. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Under this item Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to give notice of the following Resolution:

WHEREAS the 28th day of April, 1998 is the centenary of the birth of the late Grantley Herbert Adams, Knight Bachelor, one of Her Majesty's Counsel, and a Member of this Honourable House for the constituency of Saint Joseph from 1934 until 1958 and again from 1966 until 1970:

WHEREAS Sir Grantley served as Leader of Government Business in the House of Assembly from 1946 to 1954, as the first Premier of Barbados from 1954 until

1958, as the Prime Minister of the Federation of the West Indies throughout its existence during 1958 to 1962 and as the first Leader of the Opposition in Independent Barbados from 1966 until his retirement from Parliament on 23rd October, 1970, whereafter he passed this life on the 28th of November, 1971:

AND WHEREAS the late Sir Grantley committed his life and work with total dedication and selflessness to the aspirations and emancipation of the people of Barbados and of the Caribbean, to their progress and advancement in democratic politics, in economic enfranchisement and in the quest for social justice:

AND WHEREAS as a trade unionist, as a parliamentarian, as a political leader and as a statesman Sir Grantley ennobled the struggle for liberty with his dauntless advocacy and continuous support of just measures for the upliftment of the masses and the development of our country:

AND WHEREAS Sir Grantley has a secure place in the history of our country, of the Caribbean Region and in the wider Commonwealth as a nation builder of heroic stature:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the House take note of the centennial of the birth of the late Sir Grantley Herbert Adams and celebrate the occasion as an anniversary of national significance.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that we revert to Government business.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, we will now revert to Government business. The Honourable Member for St. John.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, perhaps I should begin by saying that I listened intently to the acting Prime Minister and I want to point out for the record regard to the fact that this is viewed in the Barbados Labour Party as its most significant act ever, that is the introduction of National Heroes legislation that such an honour fell on the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is not entirely surprising.

I congratulate him for his presentation today as acting Prime Minister. I would be more comfortable if he would assume his rightful position as that I can speak directly to him as did one of those great heroes of whom he spoke today. So I address my remarks to the maximum leader of the Barbados Labour Party and the person who had the honour of presenting this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Democratic Labour Party's position on this matter was set out in its Manifesto in 1994 and at that time we committed ourselves on page 40, as follows:

"A nation needs to draw strength from its history. Successive generations of Barbadians should be made aware of those persons whose lives have significantly influenced the course of national development. The next Democratic Labour Party Government will within the first six months of office establish a national broad-based commission to recommend criteria for determining those persons on whom the status of National Hero will be conferred.

A DLP government proposes to establish a National Heroes Square where the busts of national heroes/heroines will be displayed permanently."

Then, we went on to make some other pledges, the renaming of the Farley Hill Park and a range of other matters. So that was the basis on which we went to the people of Barbados in 1994. I think the Honourable Member for St. Thomas should not fear that the Party's position on the issue of National Heroes is at a variance with the Government's. I believe it is well known that this was one of the very firm pledges that we made and we have no problem either with the ten persons who have been selected.

I would like to refute what I read in today's Advocate that this issue is a divisive one. It is not one on which there is any significant divide. We have some significant reservations about the legislation and I want to begin by saying that I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas of all people, should be reluctant to come to this Chamber with legislation as significant as this without first engaging in some kind of consultation or discussion. Because, many of the potential pitfalls that could arise from this process could have been very easily avoided.

The position which the Democratic Labour Party has taken on the issues arises out of concern. Not about the selection of the ten persons as National Heroes, not about the concept of National Heroes, but that the National Heroes Bill confers power in the hands of one person who is not required to consult with anybody else or do anything else to recommend to the Governor General who should be a national hero. In that regard, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas should have pointed out in dealing with this Bill why it is that a country like Barbados which is probably going to be unique in the Commonwealth, in fact, since the fall of the Berlin wall, it will now be probably unique in the world where the determination of who should be a national hero falls within the discretion of one individual.

There is nowhere I believe in the world today, Sir, with the revised Constitutions, even in the former communist countries where those things could have been determined previously by some kind of decree, a fiat or whatever. All of that has changed. But in our country in which we have formal institutions for consultation, in which we have a National Honours Committee in which the Opposition and Government have representatives, that the question of determining those persons who stand out as icons of various periods in the history of the people of Barbados should be determined by one individual.

If there is one request I make of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, it is that if he wants our unequivocal support in relation to the legislation, well follow the full Jamaican model. You said this legislation is based on the Jamaica precedent, but that is not entirely correct. Because the Jamaica precedent requires, by law, the establishment of an Advisory Commission with two Members from each Chamber as well as others and it requires that the Prime Minister consults that Committee before making a recommendation to His Excellency the Governor General of Jamaica and it requires that Committee to undertake a process of investigation and discussion before making a recommendation. This is important as the Honourable Member for St. Thomas would know. 3.15p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I did explain in detail and made reference when I was winding up that all of these matters are going to be dealt with and full provision made for consultation after the Constitutional Review Commission has reported. You cannot have a National Honours Committee and a National Heroes Committee. Because we are not sure of the details of the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Commission we had these two pieces of legislation running side by side but we are assured that they will be amalgamated and provision was made for all of these awards to be on the recommendation of some broad-based committee and full consultation would be provided for.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not moved by that. I wish I was as moved as the Honourable Member was moved today in his speech, but I am not moved by that. This exercise we are engaging in has been built up as an exercise of major significance, that the naming of these heroes will take place and that there will be a bank holiday and that there will be legislation. We are in here acting on the people's behalf. These temporary arrangements, if that is what this legislation is, then the process of consultation should already have taken place. I, nor members on this side, should not be taken by surprise that this is only temporary legislation. If that was the case, we could simply have done a Resolution in here,

declared the 10 persons national heroes by Resolution of Parliament which is part of the process we have tried to undertake since 1989 when I moved the Resolution for the celebration of Errol Barrow Day and then, based on that Resolution, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas could start the process of drafting legislation.

This is shoddy and it is shoddy in an area of national life that we believe is very significant and an area on which, as I say, there would have been no need for us to have any procedural divide because it is important that the process of determining who is a national hero be very clear. The criteria which is going to be used, the persons who are going to be selected to undertake the analysis and the consultations and so on and then the process of the exercise of the discretion of advising the relevant authority who should be the national heroes.

We are not comfortable with it and we think that there was enough time for consultation because, as the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said, this goes back to 1992. I compliment him for his courage in saying that the issue of identification of national heroes went right back to 1992 when in February, as Minister of Culture, I set up a committee which would have included the Director of Culture, Dr. Hilary Beckles, Miss Cummins from the Museum, Dr. Bradley Niles, Professor Henry Fraser and that Committee reported subsequently, as the Honourable Member said today. This matter came to the Cabinet in 1993 and at that time the Committee had recommended - this is way back in 1992 - Bussa, Sarah Gill, Samuel Jackman Prescod, Rawle Parkinson, Charles Duncan O'Neal, Clement Payne, Grantley Adams and Errol Barrow. That was their recommendation.

I always take the point that this is not an objective exercise. Let us face it. This is about Barbadian history and each Barbadian has a subjective view. That is why a committee is desirable to draw, not objectivity, but the subjective views of all Barbadians. I have always been of this opinion. When I introduced the Resolution in 1989 for the establishment of Errol Barrow Day the position was taken that the role of a committee was not for the purposes of lending objectivity to the exercise. Quite the contrary. It was to draw on the subjective views of Barbadians.

When we are talking about our history as distinct from British history which we can be objective about because we do not write it. Other people write it. You can read about it and come to your own objective assessment, but when it comes to our history, different Barbadians, different social classes, different races have different views and therefore there has to be a process in place to sift and draw those views and the ultimate entity of the State which should determine who is a national hero in my view is the Parliament of Barbados.

Let Parliament make that determination and let the advice be passed on to His Excellency the Governor General for action. We have processes like that, the way in which the Electoral and Boundaries Commission functions and other entities which have to report to Parliament, the Ombudsman and so on. Based on those recommendations, this Parliament, hopefully, in unanimity, could make recommendations to His Excellency on whom should be conferred the status of a national hero.

The Jamaicans have one piece of legislation with 5 different national honours, 4 of which the Prime Minister exercises a discretion without consultation with anybody. But when it comes to national heroes, he is required by law to consult the advisory committee. In Barbados, we have it the other way around, that it is more democratic, more onerous, some would say to get a national honour like a knighthood or a Barbados Service Star or whatever than it is to be declared a national hero. That cannot be satisfactory.

The process of democracy must be such that Parliament must have a say, interest groups in the society must have a say, historians writing subjectively about people must have a say, because if we are not careful we may end up creating a problem for ourselves. The Jamaicans are now having a problem trying to determine whether Michael Manley is a hero. The public essentially said, "Give us some time. We are not ready." This is one of the problems you have about making somebody a national hero in their lifetime and the Government needs to take this on board and consider whether there should not be a certain waiting time from the point at which a person withdraws from public life before their name can be considered for the status of national hero.

The Jamaicans have said that it is not time for us to consider Manley, they are not ready for him yet and the advisory committee will have therefore to hold on. It is not every year that we are going to declare national heroes in Barbados. This may never come up again in my lifetime. I do not want to guess whether it will come up in anybody else's lifetime on this side or that side.

The point is that therefore my view is and I urge the Honourable Acting Prime Minister to take on board our recommendation. Let us do it right the first time.

What the Constitutional Committee says about national honours as a whole is a different matter because that is a yearly exercise. The local honours are once yearly. I do not know what happens with the others. You are now in the club at which you can discuss what process takes place. I am not a member of that therefore I do not know. You are an acting member of that club so you can find out how it is done. 3.25 p.m.

When it comes to national honours, the award of Knighthoods and so on, these things are done every year. Therefore, the legislation which you have can be amended to accommodate that yearly exercise but when it comes to the issue of National Heroes, let us get it right the first time. Let us say that this is important to our country, that there must be a clear - if you want to use the word "transparent" since that has great currency now, even with me - process steeped in integrity, full participatory democracy and a national debate.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Objectivity is not critical. Do not let people sidetrack you with that. That word is used by some people to obfuscate issues. It must be subjective because your view on who a national hero should be and mine may be very different, but that committee can see if there is sufficient consensus in the society.

Now these 10 names should have been put up by a committee to the country as a whole for a debate. We must not shy away from giving the public of Barbados the opportunity to debate it. It does not mean that because it is debated and discussed that the person's stature is devalued. Some people seem to believe that there is some sanitized way in which you pick national heroes and thereafter nobody must throw any barbs at them.

The whole process of selecting them means that their selection must withstand, it must be able to transcend the criticisms and even the petty praise of the detractors or the supporters of that individual as the case may be. And that is what I am saying to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that between now and next Tuesday there would have been some debate but the National Heroes are already named.

In fact, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is acting as if the legislation is already in place because he uses the language of selection even though there is no legislation yet in place. I do not mind that. I understand the euphoria of the moment, but I am saying to you that in that euphoria let us not go about this process in the wrong way, or in a cavalier way such as to provide the opportunity for others to be critical, and justifiably so, that the processes of governance which we are putting in place in Barbados are not sufficiently democratic and representative of all the interests of the society.

Now we are fortunate that we are not going to be disputing these 10 names. There were some names which the Honourable Member conceded that the Prime Minister spoke to me about but he spoke to me to inform me who the 10 were. He did not call me to ask me which 101 have in a list. He called and said the Cabinet met yesterday and these

are the 10 persons. I have kept it close to my chest, as requested, since then. But again, that to me is not the way it should be done. I should be able to say to my colleagues, this is what is being proposed, let us have views, let us be able to go out to our Branch Meetings and talk about it and discuss it. Let us be able to respond on the call-in programmes, let us have an opportunity, as did the sociologists, the historians, the retired politicians and journalists to have some say. We were constrained by those circumstances which I have mentioned to you. That is the first concern I have.

I do not know if the Honourable Attorney General could give us an undertaking that he can move in those basic amendments and give us and the country as a whole the satisfaction of knowing that true democracy in Barbados will reign in relation to this question of the selection of National Heroes because we have had many undertakings from the Government before about amendments to legislation and those amendments which we have passed and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has said: "Well, I am going to further amend it to accommodate the Opposition" and sometimes it does not happen.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I do not remember them now but it may be an oversight. I am not saying you do it with intent. I know how busy you are, especially with your new responsibilities of acting Prime Minister added to the old ones.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But not when the Deputy is here, not when the person who should be the Acting Prime Minister is here. But I am not getting into that at all, Mr. Speaker.

Let me go back, Mr. Speaker, to the point which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas made that in 1992 we went through the rigorous analysis. There were three reports prepared for the Government at that time. One was by the same historians whose names I have mentioned, Dr. Beckles, Karl Watson, Anthony Phillips and Mr. David Brown. That Paper was on the identification of National Heroes and Heroines, Historical Periodisation and Methodology.

Then there were two other Papers, one from the Advisory Committee itself, and one on the Establishment of a System for the Identification and Honouring of National Heroes. I will make these documents of the House because I think the House should have the benefit of those documents. On further analysis we will have the benefit of this.

The Democratic Labour Party itself put out a position paper which the Social Justice Commission would have had the benefit of and the essence of it is - Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from it:

"Our approach to this issue is two-dimensional. First from a philosophical point of view we believe that the process in seeking to honour men and women from our country's history who have made significant and telling contributions to the process of development in Barbados is absolutely important and certainly merits consideration.

Second, from a practical point of view, we believe that there exists a need for such a process to be transparent and to be undertaken with such a level that erases any question of either the appropriateness or impartiality of the exercise.

We believe that this must now be handled at the highest possible levels, for example, a Parliamentary Sub Committee involving both Houses of Parliament and that it be given the widest possible scope for public involvement, interaction and debate, that clear and unmistakable methodologies and criteria be established by impartial and skilled individuals from our laymen and academic communities, that specific Resolutions and/or Bills be brought to Parliament for debate and passage so as to institutionalise the system of National Heroes or Heroines' identification and that specific modes of honouring the individuals be also established and given sanction by Parliament."

That was the position we took then and, as I say, prior to that in 1989, this House agreed to set up a committee to determine how other persons may accordingly be declared National Heroes of Barbados. That was part of the Resolution establishing Errol Barrow Day. That Committee set up in 1992 was set up in pursuance of this Resolution and the matter did not go any further for review by the Cabinet. 3.35 p.m.

The Democratic Labour Party has singled out Errol Barrow Day as an event in our national calendar for which we should reflect on the life and contribution of the late Errol Barrow and as part of that continuing process the Government has now indicated that April 28th should be the day on which we consider the life and contribution of the late Sir Grantley Adams.

At the time when we brought the Resolution to establish Errol Barrow Day we received the support of the then Opposition and it was at that point that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West pointed out that there was

legislation in Jamaica, the precedent which should be used by Barbados and followed for the process of determining national heroes.

I think that needed to be said, Mr. Speaker, because at the point at which the Resolution was moved in 1989 to establish Errol Barrow Day we also agreed to set up a committee and it was proposed in the Resolution that Errol Barrow be declared the country's first national hero. That was not done but as with the other nine persons who have been selected, I am extremely pleased that Errol Barrow's name will be included among the list of persons who will be honoured and declared as national heroes of Barbados.

The Barbados Labour Party's position has been slightly different. A Social Justice Commission was set up some time in 1994. This House has never been informed of the terms of reference of that Social Justice Commission. This House has never been informed of the composition of the Committee. We have never been informed of any of the work which the Social Justice Committee has done. Its members have not defended their positions or their ideas to the public, they operated in complete secrecy and have made their recommendation directly to the Honourable Member for St. Peter.

We extended the courtesy of asking Dr. Hilary Beckles to go and make some representations to the Social Justice Committee based on the report which historians had written in 1992. Three years later, Mr. Speaker, the process of identification of national heroes has come to what we are doing here today which is that we are being told almost at the eleventh hour that "these are the persons" and this Parliament is being asked to sanction the legislation. As I have said, that process does not lend to the level of democracy which I think would be desirable in a situation such as this especially where it is unlikely that it is going to be a great or significant divide between the political parties.

What we need to ask, Mr. Speaker, is for the Government to identify that clear methodology because the methodology is not clear as it stands under this legislation or under the national honours legislation. If you look at the criteria for eligibility to be a national hero, this is what the Schedule to the Bill says:

"In determining the eligibility of a person referred to in Section A, the Prime Minister shall have regard to whether that person (a) has given outstanding service to Barbados and his contribution has altered the course of the history of Barbados".

On (a) there are many in this room here today who would qualify as national heroes. Or (b):

"Has given service to Barbados which has been exemplified by visionary and pioneering leadership, extraordinary achievement and the attainment of the highest excellence which has redounded to the honour of Barbados". Or (c)

"Has through his heroic exploits and sacrifice contributed to the improvement of the economic and social conditions of Barbados and Barbadians generally".

I say that on that criteria there are people in this Chamber who qualify.

What needs to be done is that we need to have a clear distinction made between the present national honours, a knighthood, the Barbados service star, the gold crown of merit, the silver crown of merit, etc. and the status of national hero. I do not think this legislation or anything that I have heard today in the course of the debate tells me what is the difference between the award of a knighthood to a living Barbadian and according the status of national hero.

At the time when the committee was looking at this issue, they made a very significant observation. Their view at that time was as follows. That to be accorded the status of national hero, these persons who they identified, informed and shaped the content and parameters of the movement during their time. The times that they identified were: Stage 1 which was the slavery period, 1627 to 1838; stage 2 Emancipation without liberty and justice 1838 to 1937 and Stage 3, 1937 to present. They are saying that you need to identify the persons who informed and shaped the content and parameters of the movement during their time and established the conditions for a quantum leap of societal norms. Such persons, builders and shapers of distinct democratizing stages within the movement for progress, are the heroes and heroines of the nation and should be officially recognised as such.

There is a difference between that and what is established as the criteria under this legislation. I am saying that based on this criteria the Government has been generous in the identification of national heroes because Jamaica which has been going about this thing since 1969 has identified seven people. These were the first five. Bogel, Gordon, Garvey, Manley and Bustamante. Subsequent to that, the Commission, Lucille Mair and others did work on Nanny of the Maroons and Sam Sharpe and in 1982 they added those two names. As I have said, they started to talk about Michael Manley in recent times and that debate was withdrawn because Jamaicans said they were not yet ready for that stage.

The process of identifying national heroes is not the same as that of national honours. That is the difference that

needs to be very clearly understood. This legislation borders too closely in my view on the kind of liberality in relation to the required attainments of the individual to become a national hero which is essentially consistent with the existing national honours order in Barbados. I cannot go through the whole process but it is set out in the *Official Gazette*.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the Government again is going to have to look at this legislation and even though we might not be looking at the question of identifying national heroes for a long time it needs from the outset to make it clear what are the criteria which are going to be applied. What heavy and onerous responsibilities and achievements should be placed on the shoulders of those persons to attain the status of a national hero. 3.45 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas also spoke about the values that the persons have to have for national heroes. What are those values? He was not able to identify them. This is why I say that one has to be concerned that you do not border too closely on being accused, this Chamber, not just the government, of a public relations exercise. Because, they must be clear in the minds of Barbadians what values as a nation, we attach significance to, so as to determine those persons who should be national heroes.

In an opinion poll done recently among men in Barbados between the ages of 18 and 36, the persons whom they identified as heroes are as follows: Castro, Gaddafi, Che Guevara and Farrakhan. Some said Martin Luther King and some mentioned one or two Barbadians, but that was isolated.

Now, we have to tell them, or they should understand in my view what values we place on our National Heroes. So that they understand what a hero is for Barbados. This debate has not really said, and in the historical synopsis which is by and large factual, but not as empathetic or even as sympathetic in their treatment of the persons who have been selected, they tried to be objective. What I am trying to say is that there should be some core values which shine through in each individual and that we can say that it is that act, it is that work, it is that sacrifice that has contributed as this person's name being put forward as a national hero.

Then when you put that person's name forward to the public as well as the values that you think are desirable, you give Barbadians the opportunity to discuss and debate whether that person attained those values which would entitle them to fall in the list of national heroes in Barbados. Again the question arises what methodology has been used here? This is a social justice commission,

hand picked by the Prime Minister, advising the Prime Minister and then under this legislation the Prime Minister advises the Governor General. As I said, I think there is a better way.

We need to establish the difference between National Honours and the status of a National Hero and we also need to explain in this process why it is that Barbados would go the route of declaring persons National Heroes in their lifetime because that is something that has always been a point of debate and discussion and in many cases, departure, because it can be a very difficult, or tricky process to include persons in their lifetime.

I do not have much more to say on this. I think, as I said that the Government should look at the Jamaican lot. My parents returned to Barbados in 1970, so I spent the first eight years of my life being educated somewhere else. I came to Barbados and stumbled upon a journal in the Combermere School library called "The New World Journal" published in 1966. I did not take this copy out of the library without permission. Let me just make that clear.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I read this journal, probably about age 11. This journal focuses substantially on all of the persons, even Sir Gary, Frank Walcott, articles by Gordon Lewis, John Hearn, George Lamming, Austin "Tom" Clarke.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: There was something about not having had the experience of reading about these persons that would propel me, because when I was in junior school or private school we were reading about Bodecia, Joan of Arc, the Vikings, the Danes. So coming to Barbados as a youngster, my first instinct was to read about these persons.

But I also found that there was not, until I got to about fourth or fifth Form a great knowledge or interest in the school system in Barbadian heroes. There was a lot of information about it. If you stuck to Hoyos, your knowledge would certainly be incomplete, even though at least it would be a start.

Now, that brings me to the issue therefore of Black studies. I support it, very strongly.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, if it is African studies, you have my support, but if you talk about Black studies, what you produce in the mind of a child is that everything else they are learning about is white, and when I

was doing European history, my teacher was a black teacher who taught it from a black perspective.

He sought to link the wealth of Europe to the plundering of Africa and other parts of the world. So as a black man he saw it necessary to explain it from that perspective. One of the problems that we have now is that this discussion about Black studies needs to be a bit more focussed. I urge the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East...

Aside.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: I am glad for that clarification because that makes a lot of sense. But if you say Black studies, it, as I say, produces in the mind of a child that learning about Spanish is not part of the black experience, and learning Geography is not part of the black experience, but that there is a compartmentalised body of knowledge for black people called "Black Studies." Everything else they learn is Indian, White or whatever, but predominantly white.

But let us clarify that, if what the Honourable Member is saying from her seat is so, then it means that we may not be as sharply divided as it appears. Because the study of the achievements of black men and women in the world is not "Black Studies." It is the study of human achievement and black people need to understand that it is the study of human achievement.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the programme which is being proposed and in fact to be done within the national curriculum is about African studies. It is not limited to the study of men and women alone but ranges across to aspects of history and geography and it has at its core the study of Africa and the African diaspora and it is clearly about African studies as opposed to black studies simply. 3.55 p.m.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, again just as the national heroes I think this is a matter on which we need to have more discussion. I do not want to get into a long debate on it today but we need to understand as a nation what direction we want to take and what should be the nature of the syllabus being taught to our children and more importantly what should be the perspective of the teachers because this was not on my syllabus. It is not part of my history class and there are a lot of children reading outside of the syllabus. It is a question of perspective. Let us get that point very clear.

What we are trying to do is to broaden the knowledge of our children to include the experiences with which

they should be in closest contact, the experiences of Africa, the experiences of the Caribbean and the achievements from, as you say, the diaspora.

We are not opposed if that is the direction it is taking but it is relevant to this because this is the point I am making that constantly you will hear drilled in your ears that there is some objective basis on which you select national heroes. That is not the argument that is being advanced here.

What is being said is that a committee or a group has to distill all of the subjective view of individual Barbadians because we are talking about people we knew, lived with, experienced, whose language we understand to assess whether they are worthy of selection as national heroes. That is why I feel strongly about Errol Barrow. You cannot quarrel with me for feeling strongly about him. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas feels strongly about Grantley Adams and others may feel strongly today about O'Neal or the contribution of Gary Sobers to cricket and they express strong subjective views but then beyond that there are points at which our views coincide and we can say that is a fair assessment of Errol Barrow or a fair assessment of Grantley Adams. I think that on that basis he has achieved that level that would make him a candidate on whom the status of national hero should be conferred.

These are the kinds of concerns that we have and these are things we could have discussed much earlier, gotten out of the way so that today when we came here the way forward in determining who should be national heroes would be clear because this may not come before any of us again in our lifetime. That is why I think it is important that we put our positions.

Criticisms of the individual are not to be interpreted as unhealthy. That criticism should be part of the process of the discussion. There may be people with strong views against some of the ten or one or two of the ten. There may be people who have strong views in favour of some of them but let us discuss it and have a chance to go through that process. I think that is very important.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not really have a lot more to say except that I view this as a culmination. Before I end, I should point out that the Government itself did say that it would "establish a non-partisan committee to identify our national heroes and will set aside a day in the annual calendar to be a public holiday in celebration of all our national heroes." That was on page 18 of the manifesto.

Now I always have problems with a designation of the Social Justice Commission as a non-partisan committee. The Democratic Labour Party never selected anybody for a committee. Non-partisan either means that all the parties are

involved. That is one interpretation or it means that no selection has been based on consultation with a party. It can mean one of the two.

I much prefer a process in which all of the parties where it is feasible are involved so that when the discussion takes place all of us are able to make our input. That is not to say that I would not bestow on the committee the highest praise for the work which it has done and for the selection of the 10 national heroes. Except for the concerns I have raised and the caveats about honouring people in their lifetime etc. I am happy with the choices. I said so at the outset and I am not going to question them.

I believe that in an exercise such as this we need to get it right the first time and people should be looking at Barbados and saying that is a model just as we are looking at Jamaica and saying that is a model in the process of national honours and the determination of national heroes that Barbados also constitutes one of those countries that is part of the model.

We believe that this legislation should be a progressive piece of legislation which in its spirit and its intent should make the issue of the choice of national heroes a matter for Parliament and not just the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

I know the Government is seeking to meet a deadline and may be forgiven for trying to meet that deadline but in circumstances such as this, we are going to hold the Honourable Member for St. Thomas to his pledge that the new legislation brought on stream after the consultations with the Constitution Commission and its report will, in fact, provide for greater democracy and for a process of selection which permits debate and discussion throughout the whole of the Barbadian society before the selection of those national heroes is made.

With those few words, Sir, I urge Barbadians to give their full support to honouring appropriately the memory of those great Barbadians who have sacrificed and who have been part of the process of building this great country of ours. And the concept of identifying these 10 is but the first step in what will be an exercise throughout the entire history of our country in which we look at those persons who have made that contribution and proudly associate them with the achievements and the success of this country. Thank you.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure and a sense of honour to be in the position to associate myself with the proceedings of this day. As a committed Barbadian nationalist, it has always been somewhat painful to me from childhood until today

to note that our people seem to vary between having a distinct sense of shame and often in the best circumstances lack of concern in relation to the history of this nation and a lack of emotional feeling towards those who have made this country what it is today. 4.05 p.m.

I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that heroes are very much a product of the times in which they live. For example, when there are major issues confronting a nation, issues that would determine the future direction for the good of that nation, those who associate themselves on the side of the issues which would lead to lasting improvement of the nation and give leadership to that movement, such people become national heroes.

Also, implicit in the title "National Hero" is that element of sacrifice which often is associated with the endeavours of people who were propelled forward by the circumstances of their time in the context of Barbados. The major movements over the past centuries have been the movement from slavery to freedom and from freedom to full democracy and independence of this country.

It will be seen, therefore, that those selected as National Heroes would, by and large, have been associated with those major movements in our history. Not that that is all that has taken place because at the same time there are many people who would have, by sacrifices, by their skills and by their dedication would have contributed to major developments, particularly in the social area of this country. Therefore, it is important, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, to have a very clear view as to the distinctions between national heroes and those who have made significant contributions in other areas.

It is unlikely, Sir, when there is peace, tranquility, the enjoyment of democracy, the enjoyment of freedom, that a national hero would emerge under those circumstances. What we will see, perhaps in the future, would be persons who have made significant contributions in particular areas and such persons would qualify for national honours.

What is equally important to me, Sir, is that over the past few years this Parliament seems to be on an appropriate course of addressing a certain imbalance in relation to the direction in which it has been moving, that is, that the Parliamentary process has been brought to bear to some extent on the whole issue of the recognition of the contributions of great individuals of the past.

I believe, Sir, and I think for the record since I do not think that this will be debated, that I should place in the record once again that it was on October 24, 1995 that I gave notice in this House to move the passing of a Resolution urging Government to establish a public memorial to

Clement Payne, erect a monument to commemorate the sacrifices of Barbadians in 1937, take steps to secure a pardon for those patriots who were convicted of offences relating to the Riots, commission an official record of the events of 1937 and allocate to the events of 1937 a preeminent place in the curriculum of our educational institutions.

I believe that apart from the debate on Errol Barrow Day, that may well have been the first time that by way of a Resolution before this House a particular individual was mentioned as someone worthy of honour and that should be done...

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am being reminded that there was one before this in the case of Charles Duncan O'Neal where Parliament itself was called upon to take that decision at this level in our society. I think it is a sign of distinct progress because I do not believe that any country can make progress unless each generation can make contact with those who have contributed in the past.

It is, Sir, an emotional commitment. It is something we feel and I am not surprised at the result of the poll among young Barbadians who can identify persons outside Barbados as National Heroes and significantly not mention anybody within our own country. This is an expression, I think, of the failure on our part over the years to instill in our people that they have something to be proud of, that they have a history which is deserving of honour, that they have people whose lives would be a credit to them if they should get to know about it, that there is enough in our history, short though it has been as Barbadians to inspire confidence and contribute substantially to that great spiritual national stock which is essential if we are to achieve that higher level of nationalism and nationhood which is required to propel this country into a satisfactory future among the nations of the world.

So, Sir, I do not have any problems whatsoever with any of the names that have been mentioned. I am very fortunate in a sense to have been extremely close to three of the heroes, two who are alive. Sir Garfield Sobers and myself have been very close friends now for over four decades or thereabouts. We shared the same house from time to time and we have had an enduring friendship over many years.

Much has been said about Sir Garfield Sobers by another very close friend of his, make no mistake about it. The Honourable Attorney General is also an extremely close friend of Sir Garfield Sobers and he would understand the very kind of person he is, so beyond skills, beyond achievements, the personality of the man is

essentially a very unique one. I think it all came together, his skills, his performance and his personality, and the totality of it is what allowed him to achieve those great heights.

There are those, of course, who would reflect on why an outstanding cricketer but I would say this. I have heard one or two programmes on radio recently and I think people do not quite understand what this is all about. The justification, in my view, lies in the fact that cricket is very integratedly related with the national consciousness of Barbados in a very fundamental way. Anyone who has been able to lift that consciousness in that chosen area in which he had a specific gift, fortified with hard work, and in an age when it was by no means easy for a poor man from the Bay Land to make that kind of progress and also to remain structured in his emotional life, the way in which he has remained structured while he reached those great heights of achievement, I think that it is something that has been inspirational to his generation and will be inspirational to generations to come. 4.15 p.m.

This is important to remember, as the world changes, the sport and music and all these areas becoming major sectors of the world economy, then we will begin to understand better why such a choice is appropriate. I am quite happy and I am satisfied that the case can be made out and made out very satisfactorily for the elevation of Sir Garfield to that exalted status.

I have also known Sir Frank Walcott, who is still with us, for a very long time. I have worked with him on numerous projects over the years and whereas I do not want to go through his contribution as a trade unionist, I will tell you this, that in my view that gentlemen had a remarkable vision.

For example, 25 years ago, he was able to see and take decisions in relation to the health of the workers of the membership of the Workers' Union which was something that was not on the agenda in those days. At that time I recalled that he had come back two years earlier from an ILO conference and he was trying to find someone who would establish a health scheme for the workers. At that time the Barbados Workers' Union had little or no resources to deal with the establishment of a health scheme.

He sat down and spoke to me about two hours on that subject. He had a vision of what a health scheme within the Workers Union could do to the workers particularly the workers at the Port. Today, I started that scheme with the Barbados Workers' Union some time in 1971 or thereabout and today, in retrospect, one has to ask oneself how could this man, in a field completely unrelated to what was his main role in the union have this kind of vision of the role of

the union in relation to the health of its membership? These were things not considered at the time. Not only was he an outstanding trade unionist but also the vision of the man.

I have known Errol Barrow for many years. We have been very good friends since 1953. One of the most fascinating things that one could think about is when one thinks back on the encounters between two of these national heroes. The encounters between Errol Barrow and Frank Walcott. I think they were fascinating experiences. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South can probably think of the way when these clashes took place between these two men, the way in which they reacted.

For me in my own humble way, I feel good to have been close over the years to have known at least three of these national heroes.

I believe that during this week and before April 28th it is also essential that this Parliament should do something that is very practical. Whilst we honour these great men and woman of the past that some important step should be taken by this Parliament to signal that we clearly understand what they fought for, what they were all about and we wish to find some piece of legislation which would signal to all Barbadians that this Parliament in 1998 recognise the commonality of all their efforts. I believe that the best way in which we can do this is for all parties in this Honourable House before April 28th to give support to my Resolution for minimum wages legislation in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am very serious about this. The battle for end to slavery, the battle for adult suffrage, the battle for the Establishment of Trade Union Rights in Barbados, the battle for Independence; in the long run, one important component of this was to raise the standard of living of the broad masses of Barbadians. I could think of no simpler, no more comprehensive piece of legislation, nothing that will touch most of those who would have fallen through the net over the years than the passage of appropriate minimum wages legislation for Barbados. Sir, that would put the cap on this debate.

It would put the cap and say look, we recognise the importance of the recognition of our national heroes. We also recognise that their work must never ever be in vain and that among all the things that we can do before April 28th, we have an opportunity here to do one thing. It is already on the Order Paper so let us get this passed and signal to all those people out there who have not yet benefitted from their sacrifices that we in this generation, in this House, in this session have taken this important step to put that piece of legislation on the statute books.

I do not think, Sir, that there is a single member in here who would be opposed to that. I think that it is of fundamental importance and I hope that next Tuesday when the House meets that this matter will be debated and passed expeditiously so that we can go to the country on April 28th with the full knowledge and the better feeling that we have dealt with this particular area which I am quite sure would have been so dear to the hearts of people like Samuel Jackman Prescod, Duncan O'Neal, Grantley Adams, Errol Barrow, all those who have fought for a better social and economic existence for the broad masses of our people.

Sir, I have said earlier that times create heroes. It is important for those who are making major sacrifices for Barbados now and who will make major sacrifices in Barbados in the future not to feel that their work is in any way less valuable because they did not live in those times, the times which lend themselves to the creation of heroes. 4.25 p.m.

We will never again have a fight for the abolition of slavery. We will never have a fight for emancipation. We will never have a fight for independence, at least I may say, "God forbid" but in order to ensure that we will never have those struggles again, we must all, our children, our grandchildren, our great grandchildren should have grounded into them the history of our people, the struggles of the past and this tremendous component has been missing in my education. It is still missing in our education and the Americans drill it in their children from day to day.

You know, the British have grounded us as children, for example, "Rule Britannia" and "Britains never, never shall be slaves."

Aside.

Dr. R. C HAYNES: You had a situation where slaves were singing that another group of people should never be slaves whilst they were slaves. So I think that coming out of this should be a major effort in our education system to make sure that the lives and work of all these national heroes should be on the list of all of the children of Barbados for evermore.

When you listen to political debates in the United States today, across parties, almost every day, you can hear a reference to Abraham Lincoln and to Roosevelt. It is interesting to note that no matter whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, Sir, depending on the issue the Republicans would quote a Democrat as the inspiration of that particular piece of legislation.

Sir, it is very important that we set these National Heroes above the partisan political process and that we be

free in our minds and spirits when we appeal to the national psyche, and to the national aspirations of our people to be able to refer to Grantley Adams and Errol Barrow in the same breath.

Mr. Speaker, this is going to make a major impact on Barbadians so that young people can understand what keeps us together, so that when we divide, they can better understand why we divide on a particular issue. In other words what I am saying is that when we take the decision to establish the Order of National Hero that these people be elevated on a spiritual plane in relation to the rest of the nation to which each and every Barbadian and find reference and spiritual succour as they think about them beyond the realms of partisan division.

In that way, Sir, we will then be in a position free from any inhibitions to ensure that the grave exploits of these great people whom we have chosen would be taught in our schools and our children would form that intellectual and emotional bond with the past that is so essential for development of true nationhood.

This, Sir, has been a missing link as I said at the beginning in the national consciousness of Barbados and I would hope that the true significance of this debate is not primarily to honour these individuals but to embrace them within the national psyche at a level which will be a source of spiritual sustenance for this nation for generations to come. That is my concept, Mr. Speaker, and that is my hope.

I sincerely trust that what will go forth from this Honourable House today is that we have all been in search on all sides of the House - as the debate has certainly recognised so far - on all sides of the House there is a consensus that this status of National Hero is desirable, and also, the true reasons for this debate. So that tomorrow if this debate is properly and comprehensively reported, if the concepts which have informed the words spoken here today should reach the wider society, that not only in this House, but throughout the far corners of Barbados there should be a new sense of fulfillment, a new sense of bonding with our past, a new sense of spiritual enrichment, a new opportunity for the youth of this country to hold on to something that is almost as solid and almost as sacred as their faith in God, which Mr. Speaker, in my judgment, and I speak on the perspective of a nationalist, is the only superior faith to that which we should have in ourselves bolstered and engendered, cultured by the experiences of history and that history, Mr. Speaker, is in capsule and capture in the names we select and appoint as national heroes.

What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a dimension to this exercise that goes far beyond names. If this is what we all understand that we are doing and we

could get that message across, then we would have achieved much today. When we think of those things, Sir, we will all understand why it is so important to ensure that that minimum wages legislation is passed.

Asides.

Dr. R. C HAYNES: I want to be very clear. I am very serious about this because there is nothing that we could do in the short term. I want April 28th National Heroes Day not only to be a day in which we deal with these important conceptualisations that I speak about, but I would like some very practical gift from this Parliament to those persons whom those Heroes have fought for. We have the opportunity to give them that gift. Let us think about it. I know, Sir, that I must always speak to you but occasionally through you and I hope the Honourable Leader of the House will harken to my words and recognise that this is not a partisan call that I am making. It is a practical thing that we should do so that people can make the linkage between what we are doing in the designation of national heroes and at the same time doing something to help them in the short term along with all the other things that we are trying to do. I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. 4.35 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise as well to speak in this debate and I feel a sense of honour while at the same time feeling humbled by the opportunity to participate in this debate in Parliament at a time in the life of our nation when I believe the forging of rights gained through economic, social and political advancement has brought us to a stage where we were to enter the 21 st century without ensuring that the national psyche could also reflect a sense of understanding and a sense of need to praise those who have gone before us and who may even be with us in their efforts to build a nation not only in those social, economic and political rights to which I referred but indeed in building the spirit and the soul of a nation and the legacy which that spirit and soul will leave behind as we move forward.

In those circumstances, Sir, I believe it is critically important for us to be able to debate in this Honourable Chamber today the passage of legislation which would see us being in a position to hold up to the world and to ourselves persons whom we believe by their living, by their sacrifices and by the very characteristics which helped them to take the decisions to do the things which they did that they showed they were prepared to build this nation.

Our history as a country is a relatively modern one compared to a number of other countries in the world but it is one that has been epic in the sense of the trials and tribulations which our people have been forced to face.

Whether it was in terms of the large scale movement of people which was brought here in order to populate the country or in terms of the systems of law which saw to it that there was inequity and injustice in terms of how the law viewed human beings by committing itself to perpetuating a system of slavery or indeed, worst still, some may argue, by committing itself to perpetuating a system of colonialism which robbed from the nation the very capacity to think for itself, to plan for itself and to move forward on its own steam.

We who are fortunate to be Members of this Parliament today, some 30 odd years after independence, have the benefit of being able to speak from a perspective that does not cause us to have to fight the battles of whether each man is equal or does not cause us to have to fight the battles as to whether persons should be allowed to practice their religion or does not cause us to have to fight the battles even of being able to enter this very institution to change the laws which this institution for a large part of its history represented as an instrument of oppression against the majority of the population.

Ours also has not been the battle that saw to it that persons should have the basic right to vote or ours has not been the battle which has seen to it that there should be something tangible and intangible in the concepts of becoming a nation, a country that is sovereign in its own right and has the capacity to take care of itself, to plan and provide for itself. Those have not been the battles which we who now occupy this Parliament have been called to fight.

What is clear is that there must be a recognition of the responsibility on our shoulders to realise that the process of development and the process of nation building cannot be complete unless we are capable of dealing with the intangible aspects of nationhood, those things which cause us to be inspired, those things which cause us to feel a sense of pride and jubilation as to who we are as individuals and who we are as a people and who we are as a nation, those things which propel people to want to be able to work harder, to reach higher, to increase their levels of commitment and productivity in the interest of making what we do here better and providing better lives for our people.

I would wish to suggest to this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that a large part of our capacity as a nation to be able to achieve those things lies in our ability to stand aside and to raise high the banners which seek to praise those whose attributes and whose sacrifices have helped us in the process of reaching a stage where we can be satisfied that this perhaps is the one major aspect of nation building that has remained absent in our works to date.

It was for that reason, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that I was entirely pleased last year when the Right Honourable Prime Minister in a ministerial statement addressed this Honourable Chamber and declared that this country would be celebrating for the first time Emancipation Day as a public holiday and that it would be recognising July 26th as a day of national significance in commemoration of those persons who lost their lives and who fought during the course of the riots of July, 1937.

That in itself as an incident or an event does not represent the only thing that has been brought to bear in the forging of our national identity or in the forging of our understanding of where we are as a people.

There have been a number of things, whether the fight against slavery so richly exemplified by the efforts of Bussa and others who fought along with him or the fight for basic rights, particularly the right to worship one's own God which perhaps is the right most Barbadians cherish more than a lot of many other rights and which we take for granted today without realising that there was a time in our history not so long ago in the context of our nation when persons were not allowed to enjoy that luxury. 4.45 p.m.

It is particularly significant for me that one of the persons whom we have included is, in fact, a woman by the name of Sarah Ann Gill who in the face of all racism, criticism, persecution and prosecution dared to fight, not for a cause that was her responsibility but for a cause which she believed was so dear, basic and decent that for her not to have done so would have undermined the right to enjoy life and to be able to express one's faith in a manner in which one had chosen.

I believe, Sir, that these types of battles, because to a large extent many of the battles can be seen essentially as battles fought against iniquity, injustice, racism have, to a large extent over a period of time, forged our destiny and allowed us to be proud of the fact today that the state of our democracy, the state of our governance of the country, the level of rights and quality of life enjoyed by the people who live in this country can be looked upon and remarks can be made to the fact that we enjoy a level of position that may well be the envy throughout the developing world and some may even want to argue throughout parts of the developed world.

I believe, Sir, that there may well be differences of opinion as to who should, in fact, constitute these groups of people for National Heroes but that will always be our lot regardless of who chooses it, or when it is chosen because if there is one true thing the Leader of the Opposition has said,

it is the fact that people's perceptions essentially influence who they believe should be worthy of such a status.

I am heartened that he has agreed with the choice of the Government. I take note of the fact that he disagrees with the mechanism by which the Government has gone about its business, but I would wish to say at this point that not only did the Social Justice Commission have an opportunity to be consulted on this matter, but the committee which is also being shared which was a non partisan committee, non partisan in the sense that no party was asked to nominate anyone, but it reflected a wide variety of views on its composition, that committee chaired by Ambassador Barrow and the Deputy Chairman, Professor Henry Fraser, Would also have submitted views to the Prime Minister's Office in respect of who should be chosen, and more importantly, the criteria that should be used to choose it. Equally, we were also aware of the work of the last committee that they had formed when they were in Government and the work done by Professor Beckles and his committee in respect of the National Heroes.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it would be fair of me to describe this effort as an accumulative effort, one that has, in fact, reflected that level of consultation to which the Leader of the Opposition has spoken. I suspect that his difficulty may more be with the wording of the legislation itself which is before Parliament which does not place a higher duty on the Prime Minister and, in fact, does not reflect the fact that that level of consultation took place within these committees in Government.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas, the acting Prime Minister, stated clearly in his introduction of the Bill, that the Government would be seeking at some future date to merge the legislation of National Heroes and National Honours into a single piece of legislation and that at that stage, perhaps, greater consultation may be had as to the mechanism. But it is a sobering and humbling fact that in spite of the disagreement perhaps on the mechanism, that there is general agreement as to the choice of persons by both persons who have spoken on the other side of the House today.

I think, Sir, that is because the choice as reflected in today's debate represents a commitment not to be partisan, represents a commitment to recognise that the purpose of nation building must be paramount, and that whatever our respective political views, our capacity to stand off and to be objective in the judgment of the activities, decisions and deeds of persons who have gone before, must be above any consideration that it is at all partisan or that it is at all influenced by any other form of considerations that are not entirely wholesome or nationalistic in nature.

I therefore, Sir, am proud to be part of this Parliament at a stage when there is a general recognition that in

spite of the battles that have been fought between us in this Chamber, and in spite of the battles that have been fought even among those who have been honoured today, that this country and this Parliament have the capacity to rise above it and to stand proud and say we are prepared to honour these persons whom we believe have, by their living, improved the quality of life and altered the course of events in this country.

One may say, as I have heard being expressed within the media, how do we include persons who are sportsmen? Like the last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, I really do believe that in today's world especially, sportsmen and entertainers perhaps have a greater influence on the shaping of the mores and the values of a society and of a people than sometimes even us who are politicians, or sometimes the preachers, or even the teachers. And it has been a consequence in some measure of technological developments that allows their message whether wholesome or otherwise to be accorded a level of popular expression, that very often influences those people whether thinking or unthinking, in a way that sometimes we do not always want it to, but the reality is that they have the capacity to shape and influence the mores and values of society generally.

In the case of Sir Garfield Sobers, it is perhaps even slightly different because his is not only about influencing the sportsmanship or the values that were brought to bear in terms of how persons dealt with one another in the field of cricket. But his attainment of excellence at the level of the world in its recognition and adulation for him raised a level of pride in us as a people that would have been very difficult for any other person to achieve, and acted as a catalyst in the forging of a strong Barbadian cultural identity and one which, to a large extent, influences how we behave as a people, what goals we set ourselves as a people and what values we are prepared to emulate as a people. 4.55 p.m.

I would want to suggest that his role is not simply that of someone who has attained a level of excellence in his stroke playing or in his bowling but perhaps is greater in his contribution to the forging of a strong Barbadian cultural identity that is capable of allowing us to feel that we can take on anybody at anything any where in the world. That level of confidence, I would dare say goes in large measure to contribute to our capacity to be successful in most endeavours which we set ourselves and to be resilient at times of hardship and difficulties recognising that we have what it takes within us in terms of our ability and character to move forward.

In terms of some of the other persons who have been chosen, Sir, I think that it is significant that persons such as

Sir Hugh Springer could have been chosen among the national heroes. They may be some who may question this but I think that the most telling point about the inclusion of Sir Hugh Worrell Springer is the fact that this was a man who was at the formation of three institutions that have become three of the most critical institutions in shaping the life of this country over the course of the last 60 years at a time when there has been a massive gain in the level of rights which we have allowed persons to benefit from over the last 60 years.

In addition the fact that these three institutions could not only have shaped in a large measure the future of this country but that they could still be enduring today is a testimony to the administrative genius that would have been required to ensure that they are capable of being relevant and by their construction capable of moving through different eras with different demands on them.

The Barbados Workers' Union, the Barbados Labour Party and the University of the West Indies continue to be three institutions influencing the life of this country. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is significant that Sir Hugh Springer was at the formation, the Organising Secretary of all three of those institutions.

Equally, I also believe, Mr. Speaker, that a large part of the reason for Barbados' relative success in the world today has come from its capacity to maintain that level of stability which has become a hallmark of our governance. One of the significant factors contributing to that stability was the manner in which the labour movement played its role in advancing the causes of expansion of access of rights and improvement of conditions to the workers while at the same time exercising a level of responsible and matured leadership that allowed those rights to be won on behalf of the workers without ever so undermining the fabric of this society that would have caused its institutions to come under serious attack or its economy to falter in a major way as has been the plight of other Caribbean countries.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the contribution of Sir Frank Leslie Walcott was integral in the expression of that level of maturity that was brought to bear in the advancement of the rights of workers in this country but also in the process of building this country as a strong and independent nation.

There are those who will argue, perhaps, that Sir Hugh Springer and Sir Frank Walcott were lieutenants of Sir Grantley Adams and that to have honoured Sir Grantley Adams would have been sufficient. Mr. Speaker, I believe, as I have said, that the contribution by Sir Hugh Springer, in his own right reflected his role in those three organisations and then later on within the Commonwealth and then later on as our Governor General, begs to

be saluted as one which we should honour. And equally the critical role which the trade union movement has played, not only in Barbados but indeed throughout the entire Caribbean not just in the formation of the unions but in the capacity to advance workers rights while at the same time not undermining the economy, is so critical, particularly when we look at other countries across the world who today still have not managed to get that basic equation right, where workers rights are taken for granted and where the level of advancement that we have seen over the last 60 years cannot even be contemplated over the course of a century far less in 60 short years. I believe, Sir, that these are persons who are worthy of our support and persons to be saluted as national heroes.

Sir, Government's programme over the course of this month, if I can address it very briefly would see us having for the first time an Inaugural National Heroes Lecture on April 27th under the patronage of His Excellency the Governor General of Barbados. This will be held at the Frank Collymore Hall at 8.00 p.m. and the lecture will be delivered by Professor Hilary Beckles.

Equally, on April 28th itself there will be a number of community celebrations and there are advising persons who would wish to be able to join those celebrations or to have celebrations of their own at the community level to contact the Community Independence Secretariat within the Prime Minister's office. We will be providing technical and logistic support wherever possible. Those celebrations will run from 10 o'clock in the morning as a rule until 4 o'clock in the evening. At 6 o'clock on that evening we will have the official National Heroes Day ceremony and the unveiling of the statue of Sir Grantley Adams at Bay Street, Government Headquarters. 5.05p.m.

We expect that during the course of that ceremony we will be honouring each of the ten National Heroes. We will have also the opportunity to unveil and light the statue of Sir Grantley Adams and there will be a cultural show thereafter for the benefit of all Barbadians.

Equally, it is Government's intention through the National Cultural Foundation to release, before the 28th of April a compact disk/album as a commemorative addition to the first National Heroes Day on 28th April 1998. That album, if I do say so myself, Mr. Speaker, is one worthy of having and every Barbadian household should make sure that it has one with music generally in salute of the National Heroes. Recordings were done by Gabby, one by Red Plastic Bag, one by Edwin, two by John King, one by Nicholas Brancker and Arturo Tappin really reflecting some of the best of our artists coming forward to give their praise and thanks for the lives of those persons who are being honoured

by their selection on National Heroes Day. Equally, we are hoping that over the course of next year we will release a programme and a series of hard cover books in salute of each of the heroes. I believe, Sir, that once again we have made a lot of statements in here today about journals and books that we should all have copies of and one of the weaknesses that we have as a nation is that we have not done sufficient printing and recording of the contributions of those persons who have improved the stock of this country.

We believe, Sir, that it is our duty to be able to do so and we will therefore be releasing these hard cover books as collector's items while at the same time ensuring that that same information is produced in the form of a text book for school children who will in fact be required to look at this as part and parcel of the curriculum.

Equally, in the short term between now and the 28th April we will be releasing a booklet which has brief biographical data on each of the heroes and this will be available to all Barbadians who would wish to have those things done. Equally, portraits of each of the National Heroes will also be done to ensure that they can be hung for public display.

We had a difficulty in respect of Sarah Ann Gill, as most people would appreciate and in those circumstances, we commissioned an artist impression of her based primarily on the research which is available. A lot of it was done by Woodie Blackman in his book, "The History of Methodism in Barbados" and other materials which were available to us through the archives in respect of what she was supposed to have looked like.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the programme which is being outlined by the Government is extensive in support of and in ensuring that these persons can truly be honoured not just by a few of us, but indeed honoured and revered by the entire population and with a sense of understanding as to whom and what it is we as a country must praise and who and what it is we must ensure are capable of enduring as those persons whose contributions have stood out by leaps and bounds to ensure that they be honoured by us.

It does not mean that they have not been hundreds of other persons who have contributed to the building of this country and in many ways significantly, but we believe that these persons, as set out in the criteria and schedules of the Bill are those types of persons whose contributions so stand out that it merits our singling them out as National Heroes of this country.

I therefore, Mr. Speaker, give support with pleasure and continue to feel, Sir, that the true potential of this country can be realised only when we as a people

recognise that it is not only in terms of the tangible economic, political and social rights that must be the advancement of our people but also in building and providing for the soul and the culture of a nation.

I thank you.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should first apologise to you and Honourable Members if the quality of my voice is such that it is not up to normal standard but I have some bug which is going around.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is good for a country especially one that seeks to get its place in the world, one that was deemed to be too small to be a real country. It is good for countries like ours and the Caribbean to have days like today where we seek to honour those persons who have shared this space with us over time, where we seek to distinguish between one small set of our people and the rest of us, where that small set gives the rest of us inspiration to move onto greater things and higher heights.

So, Sir, it is unlikely that there will be any serious division among the political parties or indeed the citizens of the country as we look at those who have been chosen to be our first National Heroes. The political party that has the honour to be the Government at a time when something like this happens must necessarily have the final capacity to make the determination of who shall be regarded as National Heroes. What they must hope for is that when they have so delivered themselves that we on this side, or whoever is on the Opposition and the rest of the community will be able to fall in and say, "yes, we agree."

In any analysis there will be those who will have their personal preferences. When these ten have been examined there are some, including some of us over here, maybe even some of them over there who would have made a difference here or a difference there, but overall we all share the view that these represent ten persons who can be called National Heroes.

Sir, for example, my personal preferences would have included a person whom I consider to be, and who will always be my greatest hero, at least one of them, Sir Frank Worrell. Because I believe when the criteria which have been established for determining National Heroes are examined either broadly or specifically, it is difficult to find a modern Barbadian who has influenced the course of Barbadian history or indeed West Indian history in the field of Sports, more than this distinguished man from Bank Hall. He was able to show black people who play from countries like ours that the determination to be excellent knows no bounds and has no horizons.

Sir Frank Worrell has been a hero for not only the Caribbean but for black people everywhere. So if I had a personal preference, if I could have participated in the selection, without casting any aspersions on anyone who has been selected, I would have been pushing very hard to see that he was included in the original national heroes. 5.15p.m.

It is unfortunate that many young people will not know and f-till do not know about Sir Frank Worrell but, suffice it to say, he has been recognised in not only one country but in two countries of the Caribbean and is well loved and will always be well loved throughout the entire region. As I said, Sir, that would have been my personal preference. I believe that the opportunity would have been missed to enhance, to restate the very clear principles which motivated Sir Frank Worrell and which moved West Indian cricket to a new paradigm which caused West Indian cricket...

I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East alluding to the standards which Sir Garfield has set but I think in seeking to give Sir Garfield the proper accolade in that regard that the Honourable Member perhaps because of her youth would not have recognised that Sir Garfield Sobers would have taken his cue from and got his inspiration from the master himself. The master himself would have been Sir Frank Worrell.

That is a small point in the broader context of national heroes. I also feel and I understand that the Barbados Labour Party would try to make the most of the fact that they are using the day of Sir Grantley Adams as a strong springboard for manifestations of their own Party's achievements and that is as it should be, I suppose, but I hope that they will recognise and especially the more youthful members of the Barbados Labour Party would come to recognise that any attempt to make the occasion of National Heroes' Day or the national heroes' concept into a specialisation of reflection of their political party might work contrary to expectations because the people of Barbados are a very keen set of people, especially on the question of political analysis and observation.

My advice to the Barbados Labour Party would be not to seek to behave in such a manner as to allow people to say of them that they have a glorious opportunity which they sought to put into a public relations game which at the end came to nothing or, as one of my form masters used to say, reduced itself to nothingness.

I draw to your attention, for example, that the opportunity might have been missed to make this debate an occasion of great national significance. Mr. Speaker, if one takes the environment in which we are discussing this matter which we say is of great significance, when we

look at the environment in which we are discussing it, surely we who are here must be bitterly disappointed. Mr. Speaker, we are a sparse House of Assembly. The Rules do not allow me to address matters regarding the Gallery but if I had done that there would be no one to send out. If I had drawn to Your Honour's attention that there were strangers you would have nothing to do because in truth there are no strangers.

It is not something of which we can honestly be proud that here we are discussing this lofty subject matter about our first 10 national heroes and we are not able to muster a bus load of people in our respective political parties. We were not even motivated to bring in a rent-a- crowd so that they could discuss these matters and cause a confusion by the noise which was coming from those quarters where noise should come from.

It is not even considered desirable to make this a national broadcast or even to record it for national broadcast. I listened to the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East as she sought to give the impression that there is going to be a massive celebration during April but it is like Guy Fawkes Day without "carbon¹". It is like Guy Fawkes Day without bombs. If we think that the unveiling of a statue and having Professor Hilary Deckles and Gabby would be sufficient to inspire the young people to recognise the significance of what we are doing, then you have fallen short of the mark again which should have been a debate that is recorded for posterity so that 100 years from now those who are sitting in this Chamber would be able to say to the school children who would come that this is what the debate was about when we discussed national heroes and they would have been able to gaze on the very sedate physiognomy of Mr. Speaker, and they would realise what the Speaker looked like, what the Speaker is and they would understand that we who now make up this House of Assembly could not possibly have been discussing this matter a mere 30 years ago.

I am not saying that, Sir, to cast any aspersions on the Government's arrangements. I am merely exercising my own judgment in this matter as all of us will that if we seek to make it an important occasion that we must make it an important occasion and we must not allow it to pass as just another time when the people said the politicians had a lot of rhetoric and then resumed like they say on the television "normal services will shortly be resumed."

After we have had this debate, services will be resumed as usual. The journalists will write. Some columnists will have some views. The children will go back to whatever it is they were doing before and we will be a people who have national heroes at last.

Why do we need national heroes? I wish to submit, Mr. Speaker, that the reason why people like us need national heroes is to help us to stop the inferiorisation which occurs on a daily basis. More particularly, those of us who come from countries like ours are inferiorised on a daily basis. We are taught how not to regard ourselves as equal with other people in the world who are not even nearly as endowed as we are.

I have seen in my 35 years of public life situations and circumstances when people from Barbados and other Caribbean countries have allowed themselves to be reduced merely in the presence of others who were not in a position to tie the latchet of the boots of those from the Caribbean. I see the inferiorisation in the kind of programmes which are on our televisions. I see the inferiorisation in the inability of our young people to articulate. It is still a mass of confusion in the minds of people when they seek to listen to a programme that is put on by some of our professionals. They still cannot speak clearly. They cannot describe. They cannot discuss and it is not because they do not know, it is not because they have not been trained, it is because they have been inferiorised. They run for scraps and they make those scraps into massive mountains. 5.25 p.m.

They believe that if they can utter a few phrases which have been borrowed from somewhere else that somehow they are being intellectual, and they do not realise that the key to being intellectual is to recognise that they have so much more to learn. I am always mortified, Mr. Speaker, when I look at some of the things that pass in this country for serious debate, serious discussion.

I am trying, Mr. Speaker, not to go too far in the other direction, but let us take the simple word to describe progeny. You know how many people cannot say the word "children?" You know how many teachers I hear on television and radio talking about "trildren?" You think we can talk about National Heroes and we have people who are heroes in the classroom every day. A teacher is a national hero every day for the children, little children looking up to teachers who talk about "trildren." And people on television who know how to speak will bring them to a programme that has to talk about children and will not say anything to them because everybody says: "But that is how Bajans speak." But when Bajans leave Barbados, as many of them are travelling, they cannot speak like Bajans anymore. They must speak so they must be understood.

They are some who feel that we few who are offended by that sort of thing are too prissy. They believe that we have some kind of affectation but the truth is that it is embarrassing to have little inky-dinky people coming from Florida, Georgia, from wherever - they are tourists, they come here and look at people like us who are

speaking in terms that are just barely literate, when those people are better trained, but they are inferiorised because the system tells them that they are nobody.

They go to the Hospital and they are attended by doctors and you say to them: "What was the name of the doctor?" They say: "He was a curly haired Indian." And you say: "But what was his name?" "Well, I did not ask him his name." We are to teach our people that when they go to the Hospital, when they go into a store, when they go to a doctor, they have rights. They are to ask: "What is your name?" If they did not hear it right the first time they can ask again and again until they get it right. These are the things which I feel having national heroes will help us to understand. You cannot go to the Hospital and get an operation and the doctor has not told you what the operation was. He has not told you what it was for.

We have so many people in this country who are brutalised psychologically because they have been inferiorised and they do not understand that they are people. It is our duty we who are in here. We are duty bound to help to bring our people out of wherever they are to a new pasture, to a new role, to a new plateau. Psychologically, we have to help them to emerge. We have to take the time. We have to teach our children that they have to take the time.

It is no point telling me that you have the CGA and you cannot speak. It is no point telling me you are a lawyer, and you cannot speak. Do not say to me that you went to Erdiston College and you have a Diploma, and you cannot speak. And do not tell me that you speak Bajan and therefore you do not have to learn English because English is the language which is used on the so-called cutting edge, Mr. Speaker, of the globalisation, and all of the phrases that are thrown around these days. You notice I said "these days," Sir, because "th" has been eliminated from the language, so you hear somebody talking about "tanks" and we have broadcasters talking about "authority" and we laugh and not realize that we are condemning our prodigy to an inferior existence as compared with ours. And what did we have?

This Honourable Member behind me, Sir, from St. Michael South Central went to school and he is described as a classical scholar. This Honourable Member next to me from St. Michael South went to a school and he is described as a modern scholar. They both had Barbados Scholarships. Not one of them has any difficulty understanding any concept about anything, and when they say they do not understand it is because that is part of how they were trained to behave. But they went to a school where they had Englishmen and others teaching them to mimic the Englishmen because they were taught at that school that it

was the best school in the world; and then some of us went to another school where we had to prove that that was the best school in the world. But it was a friendly rivalry and we were proud of the fact that we could learn and recite 400 lines of poetry. Now, we are teaching our children that if you are creative you must be able to do dub but not learn poetry. But each one of us can do dub too. There is no dub that I do not understand.

When I went to Antigua it took me a little while but I learnt the language so I understand Jamaican very well. But I also know that you learn French, Spanish, German and Dutch. You get a little Bajan, because that is what you were born into so you should learn English too. But we are not allowing our people to learn that you cannot make progress in the world unless you are able to compete with the rest of the world, and the rest of the world does not have a subject called "Bajan Culture." The Bajan Culture is ours. We have to learn how to go in the rest of the world. That is the difference between these heroes. Each one of these heroes that we honour today was able, willing and did make a difference by swimming out into the deep yonder. Each one of these, including Bussa, was able to articulate, communicate and lead.

Grantley Adams went to Geneva and spoke on behalf of the downtrodden masses. He was not speaking for them, but the British wanted him to speak on behalf of the British and they chose him because he was articulate enough to do it. Now, in retrospect I am sure that if Grantley Adams could come here today and speak he would say that he would have preferred not to have gone to Geneva to give credence to the belief that colonialism was good for the black people. I am sure that even the best known apologist or promoter of the Barbados Labour Party will agree that had Sir Grantley the opportunity which we now have, that Sir Grantley would have told the British to know their place, but at that time he considered it desirable to go and be a model.

Now the Honourable Member for the City would not be anybody's model in that forum today. The Honourable Member for the City, whatever else might be said of her, is capable and has demonstrated that she is capable of speaking anywhere at any time in a language that they understand.

We are to get our young people to aspire. The young women in Barbados must aspire to come in this House of Assembly. They must aspire to come here and not let people give them a lot of claptrap in the newspaper and on the call-in programmes. They are to come in here and represent themselves. They do not have necessarily to be rambunctious or cantankerous. 5.35p.m.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I recommend that they bring an articulate young woman. Quite seriously we have to let our people understand the quest for excellence is not merely a phrase. Errol Barrow, Sarah Ann Gill, Sir Grantley Adams* Sir Frank Walcott. Let anyone read Sir Frank Walcott's speech on South West Africa when he was Ambassador of Barbados to the United Nations. Get the speech by Sir Frank Walcott and let the people read what Sir Frank Walcott said.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is asking whether I had a hand in writing it. The Honourable Member knows that it does not matter who writes the speech, it matters who delivers it and how it is delivered. Nelson Mandela was in prison for 27 years. Does that make going to prison fashionable? I hope not. I hope that no one else will have to go to prison for 27 years in order to strike a blow for freedom. I do not look forward to and I hope that nobody else that I know looks forward to it. Certainly young people growing up now should not be looking forward to going to prison merely to make their point. Prison is not a place that anybody should be going. Nelson Mandela had no choice.

Some of these distinguished Barbadians whom we are honouring were in danger of going to prison at some time or other. They did not shrink from their responsibility. There was a time when there was a plot to lock up Errol Barrow and the Communist. Barbadians might not be familiar with that but it has to be said if we are discussing this that they put policemen under the cellar to listen to meetings of Errol Barrow and some of his colleagues. They intended to lock him up. Now, I would not like to think that today

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Well, they would not have to put any policemen now under the cellar because things are so sophisticated nowadays that they would only need to put something a little ways across the street and you can hear anything that anybody says in any room. Now if you have anything to say it does not matter where you are.

If the Americans wish to know what we are doing at any given time they can find out. They do not have to go through any elaborate process. If the British want to know what we are doing, they find out. The point is that these people were prepared to make the sacrifices necessary, they did what they had to do, they knew that they had to do what they had to do and they just simply did it.

In this modern day, therefore; Mr. Speaker, I believe that we are doing what we have do. I hope, however, that we will be focused now that we have identified the heroes. There is going to be a debate tomorrow about how come there are no white heroes. Let there be a debate about it. Unless Prescod is considered to be white.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Nobody should get upset because white people in Barbados ask if there were no white heroes. What we should get upset about is if nobody answers them. Tell them to produce their heroes.

Mr. Speaker, I do not come in here and tell anybody a number of things which I know but I want to say for the records now since we are discussing heroes.!

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The only place that there are problems about who is white is in Barbados. When they leave here and go outside there are no questions,

Mr. Speaker, my godfather, his name is mentioned regularly in the Barbados Labour Party publications. My godfather was a man called Chrissy Brathwaite. He told me a lot of things when I was seven, eight, nine, ten years old.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He was not a Bee. Chrissy Brathwaite did not know anything about being a Bee. Chrissy Brathwaite was a brown skinned man with beautiful white hair.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is how it was described. Chrissy Brathwaite is well-known in Barbados and there is another distinguished Barbadian who had a similar relationship because my mother was a working woman from early and my mother worked for Chrissy Brathwaite in Roebuck Street. My mother worked with the Honourable Member's father and the Honourable Member's uncle because my mother was a tamarind expert and Chrissy Brathwaite had a tamarind house. He also had an auctioneer house.

Asides.

Mr. B. M* TAITT: It was called a tamarind house. Seriously, they used to have a tamarind house and the point I am making is that Mr. Brathwaite told me a lot of things about what goes on in Barbados and arising out of that I have no difficulty understanding why the committee

could not find a national hero that was white. It would be very difficult to find one. I have no doubt that the committee searched hard and long.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please conclude.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I just want to finish on this question which will also be debated tomorrow about whether we should have living heroes or not. It is a very serious issue and one which must have caused some discussion.

I have no quarrel with the decision but it is one which has to be carefully nurtured. If you are going to have living heroes I do not think that you could have chosen better than to choose Sir Frank Walcott as one of our living heroes.

Sir Garfield Sobers I spoke about before and like the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, I have had the privilege of a close personal relationship with Sir Garfield Sobers so I do not wish to get involved in discussion except to say that I know what would make him become a national hero because he has always been a national hero, declared or undeclared.

Sir Frank Walcott is the special kind of human being and I think that Barbadians generally should feel a sense of gratitude that we are able during his lifetime to say to him from this House of Assembly that we thank him for what he has done to make us what we are. I want to repeat that. I think that Barbadians should have a sense of gratitude that we are able from this House of Assembly while he is alive to say to him that we thank him for helping to make us what we are. Whether we are Members of the House of Assembly, members of the teaching profession, members of the nursing profession or lowly labour in the construction industry or hoteliers or new Barbadian hotel managers, all of us can look with pride and say, were it not for the courage of that man Sir Frank Walcott we might not have arrived where we are. We can only finish like Mr. Bunyan's Valiant for Truth.

I am going to paraphrase it:

"Though with much difficulty we have come hither, yet do we not repent at where we are at".

Mr. Speaker, that is how Errol Barrow ended the great speech he made to the United Nations in 1966. When Barbadians made that step that paradigm moved from being a village to become a country. For that person who wrote disparately some time ago about, we now have a country, let that person whomever he or she is, reexamine his or her head because it is true, we now have a country.

Thank you.

5.45 p.m.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, I want to make a brief contribution to this debate on the National Heroes Bill and I want to begin, Sir, by saying that Barbados has evolved from being a very primitive slave society to become one of the leading developing countries of this world.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that our society has taken a different shape, is due in large measure to the contribution of certain outstanding Barbadians. Our progress is therefore a clear manifestation of the contribution of these National Heroes. I want to say that as a Barbadian my hero has never been Napoleon Bonaparte, Lord Nelson, William Shakespeare. Or my hero has never been Abraham Lincoln or even Martin Luther King. I believe that my heroes are all Barbadians and as small as we are we have our own heroes. These heroes represent various aspects of the Barbadian psyche and what Barbadians stand for.

We have resistance in the form of Bussa. We have, Mr. Speaker, religion in the form of Sarah Ann Gill. We have the labour movement in the form of persons like Sir Grantley Adams, Sir Hugh Springer and Sir Frank Walcott and we have cricket in the form of Sir Garfield Sobers. The labour movement, cricket, resistance, religion, these are things which are in truth and in fact the badge of Barbadians.

These are persons, Mr. Speaker, who made Barbadians understand that they are not inferior. These persons, Mr. Speaker, made a very clear statement as to our identity and unless we do what we are doing now, there will always be a missing link and a void and some notable absence of something substantial in our national identity.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we should not water down the concept of national heroes and the concept of a National Heroes Day. If we do this it is going to cheapen the debate and it is going to reduce it to nothing more than sheer politics. I am happy to see that in many instances there is a consensus about the persons chosen and there is a consensus as to the fact that we should have a National Heroes Day.

I am happy to see that the debate has not really got into the realm of partisanship because we are in this whole process together. We are in this as one. As I keep saying, Sir, we should not politicise it. In order for the process to work and to act as a catalyst we have to make it as palatable and as realistic as possible and I think that is exactly what we have set out to do.

It is not, Mr. Speaker, any easy job arriving at these names. I believe that if you ask persons throughout

Barbados you will get maybe another 20 names that people will be suggesting that should have been here on this list, because people have their own perception of who their heroes are.

I believe that we can close ranks together on this one and we can all accept the fact that we have now named for the first time, the first ten National Heroes and we can move on from here. It is not just a day, it is not just a list of names which we are dealing with, it is not just a naming process. The whole question here is, who we are and where we have come from and indeed who are the persons who have brought us here. I think too, Sir, it is a way of entertaining ourselves because we have to know who are these people who contributed so significantly to the development of Barbados.

This should not spur our young people in particular, Mr. Speaker, to try to find out who these people are. I believe, Sir, that knowing who your heroes are is something which you should have to do to research them and to know them in the same way that you would know your ten commandments and your national anthem. I would hope and pray that a lot of the young people in Barbados, having heard who the National Heroes are will now try to find out the kind of contribution which these persons have made.

Jamaica has already named its heroes and we are now undertaking the same exercise. I think that things come to a country at a time when they are supposed to happen. This is not the first time that Jamaica would be doing something and we would be following. I believe that we do it when the time is right and this is the right time. 5.55p.m.

I do not think that we should be worried that Jamaica did theirs before we did ours. As Minister of Labour, Community Development and Sports, Sir, I am particularly heartened by the significant recognition which would have been accorded to the labour movement as we name our national heroes. The names of Grantley Adams, Hugh Springer and Frank Walcott, I think that they are already indelibly inscribed in the annals of our history.

These are the persons who made workers aware of their rights, who made workers aware of their strengths, and I think that this is a clear manifestation that labour drives development in this society; that labour is the backbone of the country. A lot of what we can see today, a lot of the fruits which the labour movement is now reaping, the persons I have named would have been responsible for those achievements.

The recognition, too, of Sarah Ann Gill, her contribution to religion and to social services generally is

also heartening to me because she represented what I would describe as the conscience of the society at that period of time.

I know the Honourable Member for St. Michael West when he was speaking a few minutes ago had said that his real hero was Sir Frank Worrell and he is a bit disappointed that he was not named. I do not want to get into any comparisons between Sir Frank Worrell and Sir Garfield Sobers or anything of the sort because the moment we begin to do this, to say why this person and not that person, we are going to be defeating the purpose and perhaps will also be giving the wrong impression as to why somebody was chosen and why not the other person.

I do not think anyone can disagree with the only cricketer we have named, the only sports person, Sir Garfield Sobers, the greatest cricketer the world has ever seen and it would obviously please any Minister of Sports that Sir Garfield Sobers is now accorded his rightful place as a national hero. Every young boy when I was at school wanted to be Sir Garfield Sobers. I remember a time when the young school boys would all turn their collars up and try to walk and emulate Sir Garfield Sobers.

I believe too, Sir, that the name Barbados and the name Sir Garfield Sobers are synonymous especially in parts of England when you say Garfield Sobers they immediately think of Barbados. The only time they have ever heard the name Barbados is with the actual mention of this great man's name. He has done a lot for this country.

The thing about it is, here is a man from very humble beginnings, no doctor, no lawyer, no Prime Minister, no economist, a humble Barbadian, who has attained a level of excellence that we would want all Barbadians to emulate. I hope to be able to make an announcement very shortly because we are hoping that in the not too distant future we will be able to have a life-sized statue of Sir Garfield Sobers erected at the Wildey Complex. We have named that complex after Sir Garfield and we have never had an official opening or anything of the sort yet we use his name. I do believe that the time has come when we should put wrong things right.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have been part of this whole process and also to have been able to make my small contribution to this debate.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am extremely grateful to be allowed to speak this evening. This morning when I came in here with the great expectations of hearing who are the heroes I was concerned because I felt as a member elected to serve in this House of Assembly that I should not come and sit down like

a student waiting to hear what is the next programme to be announced.

I felt Sir, that if I were to make a meaningful contribution to a debate like this that first I should have known the names of those people so that I could have gone out and done my research. I must admit I am happy that at least 9 out of 10, I had a good idea of these people. When I heard the name Sarah Ann Gill I was a bit puzzled even though I knew the church and I knew that once it was connected to anything dealing with Jesus Christ I would have no problem with that. It meant that she had to have contributed something worthy to the upliftment of the poor for her name to be associated with a church.

Mr. Speaker, I want to let you know that I have attended many funerals and weddings at the church, that the Griffiths' mother, who happened to be the mother of the Auditor General, was serviced at that particular church and if the parliamentary representative was a good parliamentary representative he would have seen me at that church.

I want to say, Sir, that parliamentarians in this country cannot be treated any longer as rubber stamps where they come to Parliament to rubber stamp decisions made by other people. I will not be party to this because I am not coming to this Assembly and rubber stamping decisions made by other people and sometimes recommended by people who are not elected by people and then I must come and rubber stamp things and say I agree.

I have no intention, Sir, of saying anything bad about these people because I believe they deserve their rewards and their honours but at the same time parliamentarians going into the 21st century must be treated in a particular way. If we are going to be dealing with national heroes and treating people the way we are treating them then we can forget about national heroes.

No wonder sometimes the young people do not know the national heroes because the examples that we set as parliamentarians are such that young people cannot say that this is a good example. The examples are bad. We need to change that, Sir. Do you expect any young man or young lady to be interested in who are the 10 people given honours today? They know nothing of them. They did not see on their television programmes a profile of these people but yet they have to go and pick up a newspaper tomorrow and hear that 10 people have been given the honour of national heroes. I am saying that is bad.

We need to promote people that we need to make national heroes and sometimes no wonder that Michael Jordan is more important than Sir Garfield Sobers because every night they turn on their televisions they can see

Michael Jordan or somebody else on their televisions but they cannot hear one word about Sir Garfield Sobers. I am saying that that is disgraceful and we as parliamentarians in Government must take the blame for it.

What is secret about someone being a national hero? If somebody has contributed to this country then we should be proud to talk about it. 6.05 p.m.

I have no problem, Sir, of saying the name Sir Garfield Sobers as a National Hero neither do I have a problem with Sir Frank Walcott being a National Hero. I have no problems because everybody in Barbados should be able to, at least, identify with those two people. I will point out only those two at this particular time for the simple reason that they were not politicians, they were not doctors, and they were not the type of people one would normally clamour to be National Heroes. They are people who worked hard and contributed to this country and I believe they have a right to be National Heroes. I believe, Sir, not only do they have a right but it is also significant that both of them are still alive, and that is very important. Two National Heroes, persons that people would not normally look at are now today National Heroes, and we must bear that in mind.

As you know, Sir, I was sent here by the beautiful and nice people of St. Lucy and when I look at the list today, Sir, I was able to draw up two tables, one I put in a section those from St. Lucy and those from the clan. On one side from St. Lucy I was able to put Duncan O'Neal and on the other side I was able to put Errol Barrow. On the other side there is a clan. I saw the same equation being developed. I saw Errol Barrow and I saw Duncan O'Neal. That equation must be completed some time.

I was studying the history and I am still studying the history but there is only one problem that there is another missing link, but the only thing the link came from St. James and not St. Lucy but it was part of the O'Neal clan too. The missing link cannot be the gentleman from St. James. It will have to be the gentleman from St. Lucy.

All I am saying, Sir, is that the people of St. Lucy have contributed a lot to this country and if anyone wants to question me on it, out of 27 constituencies, Sir, they have been able to get 20% of the National Heroes that have been dished out and I want to know why we cannot get 20% of the rest. We were looking for an equation all the time how we could divide the revenue with the country and I am demanding 20% for my people of St. Lucy for the simple reason that they got 20% of the National Heroes. So that is the equation which we will use from today to find out how many roads we will get in St. Lucy and how much street lights and other things that should be in

St. Lucy. Everyone talked about whether we should get Local Government. This equation is simple now, Sir. Twenty per cent for St. Lucy and you can divide the rest between the rest of the country, a simple equation.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: If you continue treating us the way you are treating us we will have to do that. We the people of St. Lucy are not begging anybody for anything. If we are going to be contributing to the Treasury of this country and you are not going to build any roads for us we could as well saw off St. Lucy then. There is nothing wrong with that. You already told me I had plans to build an airport. Every time you open your mouth you tell me about an airport, and on top of that to make sure that what I am saying makes sense, you already agree that you are going to give me a seaport, so why not saw it off?

So, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe in this thing today where we had this long eulogy because when we are discussing National Heroes we should be happy. I sat down here and saw Members in here sleeping. I cannot talk about strangers but I am saying that when we are discussing National Heroes I have no problem with any of the people selected today. But I would say that this is what you call luck and chance.

Then I went back and did some research, Sir, and realised that the reason why the 10 National Heroes were named the way they were named was because they had a good plan set in place by the Honourable Member for St. John because most of this groundwork was done by the Honourable Member for St. John and I agree that of the 10 selected we cannot find fault with that 10.

We must continue to make sure that a system is put in place that we cannot have situations that just because somebody likes somebody that they put them up as a national hero and just because they have power and authority that person automatically becomes a national hero. We have to be careful of that because then certain people who represent 5% of Barbados could easily get to be one of my national heroes when they would have suppressed me.

Another thing that worries me, Sir, I have heard that because of having the National Heroes and a day for the National Heroes that we are going to take away a bank holiday, and I ponder on that. It is now United Nations Day. I ask myself if there was any significance in having United Nations Day because if there was any significance in having it I want to know why it has been changed because the same way it was changed another bank holiday could easily have been changed.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure the Honourable Member is aware of the rule of anticipation.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am not saying it has been changed. I am only drawing an example that I am hoping they do not change Good Friday to accommodate...

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: If I cannot talk about United Nations Day I have to draw a relevant example.

I am saying, Sir, that all bank holidays are important and we cannot change them just because somebody wants one changed. It worries me, Sir, because a couple weeks ago in the Press when we first talked about another bank holiday, we never talked about replacing any one and all of a sudden I saw a discussion in the Press and I wonder how the Honourable Member for St. Thomas could make such a good speech and a good representation of the 10 people that were selected as National Heroes today and the 5% were able to dictate whether we are going to get an additional bank holiday or whether it was going to be reduced by one.

The problem is, Sir, that agitation came from that sector and it seems to me that they have been able to reduce our bank holidays. It seems to me that political power is not in the 95% but it is in the 5% and that is significant. We have to make sure that the significance of what is going on today that it does not go back to where we were years ago. We have fought in this country to come where we are today and we must be careful that we do not hand it over as we seem to be doing right now because on one hand we are naming National Heroes and on the other hand we are giving away the power we have fought so hard for.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You will never understand the point because you are part of the Cabinet that is giving away Barbados and putting it back to the colonial days.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a stage where we are fighting to name our own people as National Heroes and at the same time we are giving the land that they worked hard on and worked for back into the hands of the people who once ruled us. We have to be careful. We have to find out whether the equation we are building, whether it is a balancing equation where the assets equal the liabilities because it looks like the liabilities equal the assets coming from that side.

I am saying, Sir, that a debate on National Heroes must be looked at in the total perspective and we must

ask ourselves one serious question. If after we are able to name 10 black people as National Heroes, if tomorrow we can go into Barbados and ask ourselves whether the 100% representation of National Heroes for black people whether we can truly see it out there in real Barbados? I am saying that we cannot truly see it out there in real Barbados because on one hand we have 100% of the honours going to black Barbadians but the power is not in the hands of those Barbadians, and we must be serious about it. We must ask ourselves where we are going because we seem to be going on the right course but when you look at the other side we are not going on the right course. 6.15 p.m.

On one hand we are developing policies that are encouraging the rich and famous who happen not to be like us to come and take over all the land in Barbados and on the other hand we are coming here pomposetting honours all to black people. It seems to be a major conflict. We have to decide where we are going. Is this a country where we are going to be fair and where we are not going to paint a beautiful picture for the poor people? Tomorrow when poor people see all the honours going to black people they will feel proud because everything has gone to them but when they get in the real world they realise that the power is still not in their hand.

One significant point of this is that the people who still control this country have been able to put up a case why we should not have a bank holiday and they have been able to win what they fought for. They did not even have to bring a Resolution to this Parliament it was brought to this Parliament for them.

We have to ask ourselves who brought it. Who brought the Resolution for them, Sir. It was not me or it was not you.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir, since last year October a recommendation was made by the committee set up to make recommendation about national events of significance. That committee recommended, I will read it:

"The committee recommends that April 28th be declared a public holiday in celebration of the life of Sir Grantley Adams and the first such holiday should be taken in 1998, the 100th anniversary of his birth."

Then they looked at rationalisation of public holidays and pointed out that Barbados still celebrates United Nations Day and that Barbados is the only country in this region that was celebrating United Nations Day. Therefore they recommended two things. That both Whit Monday and United Nations Day be abolished.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, when I read my newspaper I did not see any article written by the names mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. I saw articles coming from the same sector that I am speaking of. If they made these recommendations you should have published it when it was spoken by the other people. I am now hearing it for the first time and I am not even accepting that. I am accepting what I heard before.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am not interested in that. I am interested that a group of people got in Barbados and complained and they managed to get it done.

Mr. Speaker, people recommended that Errol Barrow Day be changed too but it is only because of political pressure that it was not implemented. When it was tested the people of Barbados said, in no way should you touch Errol Barrow Day. If the people did not add their voices, there would be no more Errol Barrow Day. I am not going to buy any suggestion from the other side that because of a recommendation by another committee that that is why we are here today.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I speak to please myself. I am no rubber stamp politician and nobody is going to come here and make their selection and then come and ask me to put a rubber stamp to it. If we are going to be selecting national heroes we have to canvas those names or not people that you do not feel that they deserve to be national heroes some of them will be on the list and we cannot do anything about it when it comes before us.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I support Sir Frank Walcott and Sir Garfield Sobers for national heroes honours. I will support those two.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Let me set the record straight. Nobody could come to this Assembly today without bringing Errol Barrow or Duncan O'Neal or it would have been trouble in here.

The legislation must be amended. I thank you very much, Sir.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I just want to add a few words to the debate.

This is an historic occasion and I think that we are privileged to be a part of this. I think that many of us

in this Chamber are privileged in that we would have walked and talked and known some of those who today are national heroes. This is not an every day occurrence, this is a rare privilege and I feel very honoured that I can be part and parcel of this.

Mr. Speaker, these men and this woman are clearly people, according to the criteria, of extraordinary strength of character and purpose. People who influenced the history and the quality of life that so many of us take for granted in this Barbados today. These people, I believe, Mr. Speaker, are the role models. These were people who knew that the struggles that they had embarked upon that they were not necessarily going to be expected to complete the battle. What they knew beyond any contradiction, deep inside, was that they were not at liberty to abstain from it.

Many put their hands to the plough and take it back, but not these. These were people no matter how hard the task, no matter what danger to life and limb, indeed some of them gave their lives to the task at hand. These are men and women, whichever way you cut it, who put Barbados first.

In my opinion, Sir, these too must be role models for the future. You have to have a very fine appreciation of where you have come from in order to have a good sense of direction and to where you are going to. So far in this debate, I would have to say, Mr. Speaker, Sir, most Honourable Members have been very reflective in their contributions.

I want to make another very simple point. I take my queue from something which fell from the mouth of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central when he said that we are never going to have to fight for the abolition of slavery again, we are never going to have to fight for religious freedom again and so forth.

That may be perfectly true, Sir. We may not have to fight those battles already fought. We may not have to fight those battles already fought and hard fought and won by these National Heroes and this National Heroine, but I want to be forward looking and I wish to suggest, Sir, that what is happening today and what is going to happen on the 28th of April when the day itself occurs and I hope that Barbadians would just pause for a moment to reflect on the great historic importance of this first National Heroes Day. 6.25 p.m.

I would like to say, Sir, that I have had the privilege already to look upon the great statue and to touch the bronze. It was a very good feeling, because like all Honourable Members, I have grown up in a Barbados with statues very

few of them, we are not given to that in Barbados, almost a pity, but statues which have no relevance for me in my time and which do not serve to inspire me in any way in my time. So it is very important what we are attempting to do at this time. It is important that we are doing it as we approach a new millennium and a new era.

I think that what is happening now needs to be a continuing source of inspiration, Sir, to future generations, because let us be in no doubt there are going to be new and different battles and challenges in the new century and millennium from which this Barbados will forge new and different National Heroes. We only have to look at the national and regional and particularly the global trends as this new century is opening up to understand to some extent where perhaps the new heroes of Barbados will play their role and will make their contribution.

If I may just, Sir, advert to some of those trends, the whole trend of globalisation, the trend of trade liberalisation on which we speak so much within these walls and outside of it, the impact the new World Trade Organisation will have particularly on small economies such as ours. We need foot soldiers out there making the case for Barbados and small island states like Barbados. Maybe a further National Hero may come out of that trend. We see what is happening in respect of another global trend. We see what is happening in respect of climate change the way in which the smallest environmental movement can make a tremendous difference to a little 14x21 island like Barbados. We know that we have scientists out there, men and women of technology, perhaps a national hero in a new century and in a new millennium will somehow find a way that would change our history and change the quality and course of life in this little Barbados.

We look again out there, Mr. Speaker, Sir, at the global trend of the new technology. We do not know, Sir. We cannot forecast. We cannot see into the future. We can only be vigilant and prepare ourselves. We like to say in Barbados that our most precious resource or our most precious asset is our people and I believe that to be so. Over the whole period through which these National Heroes lived in this Barbados, earlier Barbadians and now later Barbadians and now ourselves, we have made a tremendous investment in the development of our people. We do not apologise to the world for it. When others were not making as large an investment and looking out of the corner of their eyes and over their shoulders at the tremendous investment we are making, when we were spending 25% of the national budget on education and other people were spending 7%, today we are reaping the dividends of that.

Barbadians through the centuries and these Heroes too were disposed to pulling their belts not one, but

two notches so that we could be the beneficiaries of the stable parliamentary democracy which we have today, so that we could be the beneficiaries of the good governance that we have in this country today. All of that have had its cumulative effect and everything that these Heroes and other heroes who are unfounded, and some of them even unknown to us, all of the contributions that they have made have gone to pool what we enjoy today.

Too often we have take for granted, not always understanding that we are stewards and that the responsibility, especially upon ourselves, Mr. Speaker, Sir, as parliamentarians and those who have been chosen by others to lead, to guide and to give direction, we have that larger responsibility and it is very important that we do not take it for granted. It has taken perhaps too long for us to have come to this day where we have enough self confidence in ourselves as a people, a predominantly black people, a people who have laboured and struggled.

It has taken perhaps longer than it might have done, but as I said, I end as I began, I am greatly moved today that I am one of those privileged to have been a participator rather than an observer. Somebody who is a living part of this history that we are making today rather than one who may be some historian to read the work of a historian in an era or another age to come. I am glad that I can be part of this.

It really is a very moving thing that some of these men are known to us. I remember as a little child in my father's house some of these who are named as Heroes today came in and out. These were people who were familiar to me. I remember Sir Frank Walcott, Clyde Walcott as he was known then and he travelled a great deal it seemed to us when we were children.

I remember him coming to my father's house and my eldest brother used to wet the bed, Mr. Speaker, Sir, and he told him that he was going to bring back a special green doggie from Africa that would stop him from wetting the bed. You would be amazed how this child waited for the return of Frank Walcott to bring this special object back from Africa. 6.35 p.m.

Of course he did not bring it, but I am only telling that story to make you understand, Mr. Speaker, Sir. He would tell stories of lions and tigers and so on. He was a great rapporteur and he was like a hero in our house before he became a hero today. I do not know Frank Walcott as a hero now in 1998 but when I was a little child he was a hero in our eyes.

I am just giving you that little glimpse into a moment in my childhood. I remember again as a child in my father's

house, was the first time I ever saw Errol Walton Barrow. It was a Sunday morning. He had gone to the beach and he was wearing one of those old time swim suits that either came in maroon or navy blue, of a heavy material. I do not know what you would have called it, but all men had one, either a red or a blue one.

My father was eating his breakfast and I remember as a little child I was so small then that my chin just came over the top of the table and I was standing there gaping at this man and I remember distinctly his saying to my father, "I have to run, Freddie. I have to run." I think that was my first understanding that run did not only mean what we used to do in the yard and out in Carlton's pasture.

I can remember those things. I can remember the first time I saw him. This was a man...

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: The Honourable Attorney General is delighting people with a story. Errol Barrow ran for the first time in St. George in the days of double member constituencies and he ran on the same ticket with my father. I distinctly remember when I was a little child places like Ellerton and Workmans and so on. It is a true story. In those days people would cook a lot outside, the coal pot in the yard and so on and my father would say to Errol, "Now, when you are canvassing and you go in the yard and you are talking to the people and so on, help." I do it today instinctively. If I go in and somebody is cooking or putting in curlers, whatever it is that is going on in the house I put my hand to it. All the years I have done that and I think that that was again the role model that was set before me. So my father said to him, "When you go in and you see the old lady with the coal pot, take up a piece of card and help fan the thing." Apparently, Errol Barrow was doing this and Freddie told him, "No man, you got to get down and blow the so and the so forth."

I remember as a little child spending the odd day at Tyrol Cot with Sir Grantley and Lady Grace Adams. I could remember those things, Sir, so that I should be living at a time when we find ourselves having the self-confidence, and we have as clear an understanding as to who we are now, that we can do what we are doing is remarkable and is something that I will remember for the rest of my life. It is something that will not only be the life that I have lived already in the way that has been brought by some of these people but the life that is to come.

Sarah Ann Gill may be not one that is much known to people. I am a devout Methodist. I may not be a church-going Methodist but whenever they call upon me they know that I will do what has to be done.

I remember as a child in James Street Church, Missionary Sunday, Easter Sunday you would have a little dramatic thing, a little play. A lot of those plays used to be written by the mother of Senator Pat Symmonds, the late Olga Symmonds, who was one of my several Sunday school teachers. I remember that there were times when we acted out the story of Sarah Ann Gill and on one occasion I had to play the part of Sarah Ann Gill.

So I have always had a very clear connection and understanding of who my heroes and heroines are. As I say, there are some still unknown to us and some who are unsung but it is really perhaps the most significant thing that we can be doing at this stage in our development and I value the privilege to be part of this, Sir. I thank you.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that it is also a pleasure of mine to join with members on the side of Government to pay tribute to the distinguished group of Barbadians who today we honour in the most appropriate form by giving them the recognition of national heroes. It is a distinct pleasure of mine to have known 5 or 6 of them personally and I certainly find it a privilege to be part of a Government, a Parliament that places...

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: The Government is the Government and the Opposition is the Opposition.

This day is significant in the sense that the common thread that runs through all these selections is that these are all people who fought a system that sought to deprive the development of the masses of people in this region and particularly in Barbados.

When you examine the individual contribution of people and every member, I think that all Barbadians will agree that they all can be held with some degree of awe for their various contributions. Sir Garfield Sobers and I am not speaking in any particular order, because I recognise the contribution of all of them individually. For many years Sir Garfield Sobers at a time when we were in the heat of the colonial battle was able to bring eloquent pride to all West Indians and black people throughout the world by doing what was considered impossible: that was to concentrate and demonstrate an ability that you could concentrate for a long time because the system as we knew it was a system that put down people from humble backgrounds, black people. It was felt that you could not achieve anything and for his great style and contribution to Barbados, every Barbadian will agree that Sir Garfield Sobers, now the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers, will be in our memory for ever and ever.

Errol Barrow was a man whom I believe had a very special place for the development of people in this entire region. He was not an ordinary man. 6.45 p.m.

He was a man way ahead of his years. His contribution to the development of Barbados as the first Prime Minister of an Independent Barbados will be a part of history that no other Barbadian will ever enjoy. He will always, as history will record, be the first Prime Minister of an Independent Barbados and that single honour is testimony to the kind of contribution that this man made for moulding people together in a movement that progress the work of his colleague, Sir Grantley Adams, and took it to another level in a short space of time. And it is probably appropriate that the two of them today are rewarded on the same day and in the same manner for their various contributions.

Sir Frank Walcott had a tremendous influence on my life. I believe that my involvement in politics was as a result of watching a simple man fight for the upliftment of people using his mouth and his courage to defend the rights of people to have a share of the economic pie.

We have fought many battles. We have fought the colonial battle. We have fought slavery. We have an economic battle to fight that is still with us and still to come and clearly Sir Frank Walcott would have laid the ground work in preparing us for economic equality. We all are aware of the progress that many people made under his stewardship as General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union. I certainly join with colleagues in saying that he is probably one of the greatest Barbadians ever. It is sad that he is not fully able to be mobile enough to really enjoy this tremendous honour that has been bestowed on him, but he will always be an outstanding hero in my eyes.

Sir Hugh Springer has had a long association with my family. The Adams family worked with the Tudors in Roebuck Street. The Springers, Tudors, Adams and that entire group - a few of them were members of the Barbados Labour Party, including my father. The family always held Sir Hugh Springer in awe because he was always what was right. We were always told that we had to try to be like him. He was bright. He was well dressed. He was almost a perfect person and I never heard him through all the years I knew him raise his voice.

I think it is important when we have these kinds of role models to follow because given the standards that are set today we have to wonder where have all the good men gone because the standards have dropped. Sir Hugh was eloquent and really set very high standards. This is something we are going to have to try to instill in the new generations and try to promote.

I am saying all of this, Sir, to make a second point which I will come to. I respect the struggle of Clement Payne. I have read many journals about his contribution to the development of Barbados but even if I might not place him in the same location as I do to the others that I knew, he is still a symbol of a movement and a very deep struggle. I respect that a careful decision was made in naming him among the heroes of Barbados.

Samuel Jackman Prescod is obviously a very special individual. Many of us would recall the historical account when he was first elected to the House of Assembly. What is significant about those readings is the excitement that he brought to the entire mass base of people in Barbados when he was first elected to the House of Assembly. An uproar went up around Bridgetown, a voice louder than any other probably heard in Bridgetown ever when Samuel Jackman Prescod was elected as the first black man to sit in the House of Assembly.

It is really a tribute to us today that he would have paved the way that we today on April 14, 1998 could now be controllers of our society and we can determine and dictate that we are now in charge of the destiny of a new dispensation that will lead the people out of this century. So today one of the persons who will feel best is Samuel Jackman Prescod because he started the movement that has allowed all of us to be here. He started the trend and today must be the greatest day for him when he sees a culmination to this extent.

Now, I am half Methodist and half Anglican so I am glad to learn of the history of Sarah Ann Gill. I really never studied Sarah Ann Gill before today. I am glad it was highlighted because for persons of my generation and certainly beyond me, I think it is important for us to understand the development of the Church because we were frowned upon, and over the last 30 or 40 years so many denominations have now sprung out of the Anglican Church which would have represented 90% of the population. You were literally forced to be an Anglican and in those early days when people like Sarah Ann Gill had to fight for the democracy of religious expression and she fought the colonial system again, I think that is a tremendous tribute that anyone could pay to her.

Finally, Bussa sits at the head of my constituency. I do not know what his full name is. I tried to find out what his full name was but nobody could tell me exactly what was his full name. He is just referred to as Bussa. Bussa, to me, is a tremendous inspiration because he stands as a symbol where our rights must not be tread upon. He was a very courageous man and I view him in the light of many other great West Indians who had the strength and courage to rise up in unison to fight that system in a revolutionary manner.

Mr. Speaker, I pay respect to all of them. I believe that rather than just have National Heroes where we name them and leave it just like that, I believe we should have an area designated for them and if we have fought the system a good example we could take would be Queen's Park. We could change the name of Queen's Park to Barbados' National Heroes Park. It would send the message that these people have fought the colonial system, they have effectively placed the Government in the hands of the masses of people in this country and that people on every National Heroes Day should gravitate to the Park and pay respect to those persons whom we have today honoured. We cannot just leave it like that because it would drift away. It must mean something to our children and our children's children. I hope that history will record and congratulate this Parliament for having today finally paid tremendous tribute to our own black Barbadian greats.

Thank you very much.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, we have come to that time when we would normally suspend for dinner. If Honourable Members would indicate how many others are likely to speak in this debate, because we have the Public Holidays Bill which we have to do before this night is over but I do not imagine there will be a great deal of debate on that one. Are there likely to be three or four speeches after dinner?

Aside.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: In which case, Mr. Speaker, I think we should suspend at this time and come back at 7.45 o'clock this evening.

I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 7.45 p.m.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 7.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly. 6.55 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: The House will now revert to Papers.

PAPERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order 1998.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to thank all Honourable Members who have spoken in this debate. I have to confess to the other members of the House that the report of what I said on the 7 o'clock news was most disappointing. I told the others that I was going to leave here when we adjourned to go and see the 7.00 o'clock news and a number of us watched it and it was disastrous. The points about consultation which I gave in my opening have not been referred to by those who call themselves journalists.

Sir, firstly, the press had the statements since early this afternoon. I have explained painstakingly that this Government consulted widely before arriving at the final number often. Secondly, they consulted through the Social Justice Commission which in turn had wide ranging discussions with a variety of knowledgeable persons. The Social Justice Commission sets the criteria and even recommended persons for consideration to the Government. Thirdly, all political parties in Barbados were invited to send representatives to the Social Justice Commission on this matter. Dr. Hilary Beckles attended and I pointed out that the Prime Minister himself three weeks ago consulted the Leader of the Opposition and discussed with him the ten persons who were honoured today. In addition to all that the Committee for the Celebration of Important National Events headed by Ambassador Nigel Barrow also consulted on this matter.

To have the Government accused of a lack of consultation by the Opposition is at variance with the truth. Since this Bill has found favour with all sides and the nominees have been accepted by all sides, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 were called and passed. Clause 6 was called.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I was not in my seat when the Honourable Member for St. Thomas wound up the debate but his departure to attend a funeral

obviously left him bereft of the full understanding of the Democratic Labour Party's position in this matter. Therefore any suggestion that it is agreement on all sides on this Bill is incorrect. Any suggestion that all three parties have agreed and that there are no questions is incorrect. This Clause 6 stands at the very centre of our objections to the provision of the Bill.

In his opening remarks the Honourable Member for St. Thomas pointed out that he was following the Jamaica precedent. The Jamaica precedent is a National Honours and Award Act passed on 18th July, 1969. In Clause 6(3) the legislation makes it very clear that the power conferred upon the Governor General under subsection 2 shall be exercised by him on the advice of the Prime Minister given upon a consideration of a report of the Advisory Committee referred to in subsection 3 of that section 5.

In this legislation, the drafter here put the full stop at Prime Minister. It also deleted a whole series of very important provisions in relation to the constitution and procedure of what is called an Advisory Committee. We feel very strongly that those should be included. I think the Jamaica legislation provides a wonderful opportunity for the Government to get it right the first time. We are not objecting to the ten persons. We are saying that nobody consulted the Democratic Labour Party on the issue of this legislation.

This legislation came to me after 6.00 p.m. last Saturday morning and it was the first time in my life that I was aware that the Government was going to do this by way of Bill because it could be done another way. The House could have passed a Resolution between the ten National Heroes right here and now and you could still have your ceremony but then get the process going to ensure that the legislation that is passed has an Advisory Committee. 8.00 p.m.

I am not saying that I have any less faith in the Honourable Member for St. Peter or the acting Prime Minister but legislation is not made for personality. It is not made because X or Y is Prime Minister. It has to endure and stand the test of time. Therefore I cannot think that there is anything that the Constitution Commission is going to say except that some members of that Commission were members of the Social Justice Commission, so I hope they will declare an interest.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But that does not happen. It is what politicians do. They do not do those kinds of things. We are supposed to declare an interest, but that does not apply across the board in Barbados.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, I do not have any to declare, that is the problem. When I was consulted, it was on the basis that the first had been identified. I offered no resistance and in relation to this, had I seen the draft legislation before which would be in conformity with the promises in the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto to consult, I would have pointed out that yes, we will agree to the legislation but there are safeguards that we should have in place and I believe that an Advisory Committee is a critical element in the process of the identification of National Heroes.

If the Honourable Member for St. Thomas says that he is very happy that we all agree, those are the terms on which we can agree, but the Clause 6, as I see it that is now before this Chamber has me extremely uncomfortable. I believe that this clause should be revisited and that every effort should be made to ensure that an Advisory Committee is constituted to undertake this process.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, some four years ago the Barbados Labour Party placed before the people of Barbados a proposal that a day would be set aside in the annual calendar to be a public holiday in celebration of all of our National Heroes. In fact the exact words, Sir,

"We will establish a non-partisan committee to identify our national heroes and will set aside a day in the annual calendar to be a public holiday in celebration of all our national heroes."

That is on page 18 of the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto for the 1994 General Election in Barbados.

Some four years later the proposal is being placed before this Chamber by way of legislation inviting the commendation of this Honourable Chamber to the proposals as have been accepted by the Government following upon presumably some consultation with the Committee that they set up.

The Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Member for St. John is complaining with a great deal of justification that he has not been consulted. Or that the consultation was a *pro forma* kind of consultation, because it did not get to the substance of the issue. I am persuaded, Sir, by the arguments that he has advanced and it is clear to me that there is some kind of a rush job here in this particular matter and that the Attorney General who has introduced the matter today had done a remarkable job in meeting the timetable of other people in order to get this matter here today. I, Sir, would like to commend him. He has been able once again to come to the rescue of his Party and Government in fitting

into the timetable that really we should not be in this rush on this in as much as it was given its special box in the Manifesto and in this document, Sir, which is already one of the House.

But I would not wish to dwell too much on that. It is a matter which, in the course of time, the Leader of the Opposition will have to deal with when he becomes the Prime Minister of this country and sits over that side once again. He will ensure that when he says that there will be consultation that there will be adequate and proper consultation on this matter.

Sir, I am not going to dwell on this question of National Heroes Day because I believe that my views on this are quite well known. I am not a National Heroes person. Not that I have anything against any of the persons who have been identified, but I am skeptical and wary of this concept of national heroes and this means of identifying and honouring national heroes.

I have done a lot of reflection on this, Sir, and I cannot say that as far as my reflection goes, that naming people as national heroes add one iota to the social, economic, psychological or any other kind of development in a country. I believe that we have a system of national honours which should recognise the contribution that people make in its various categories, the contribution that people make to national development, the valour, gallantry, bravery, and actions of an extraordinary kind that may help to promote and develop social, economic, cultural, psychological impact and the contribution of people to the society in general. It all depends on your view of history. If you believe that history is something that is made by individuals or is something that is the result of people grouping together and you get movement, social, political, economic movement; or if you believe that it is a combination of the two, then I believe that we will have to find some other means other than the designation of national heroes to mark these movements and developments in history. 8.10p.m.

When we reflect, the countries that have identified national heroes are not the countries that have made, that are known and have a great reputation for great humanity or great social movement, great concern for people, for Democracy or any of the things that we hold dear.

When I was at Harrison College I remember reading a book called *Past and Present* by Thomas Carlyle and he also wrote a book on Heroes and Heroic... (Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic in History). I am sorry I cannot quote the title exactly, Sir. But he believed in the great man theory of history that history is made by the individual and identified the great individuals of history. No doubt

his heroes were Oliver Cromwell, a dictator, Frederick the Great, a dictator, Napoleon, I believe he may have written about him. You could see that particular trend. That is how you get all of this talk about heroes and so on.

The heroes that we know about or that I know about, Sir, have not been real men. They have been half-men and half-gods, no real persons called "heroes". The only people who were called real heroes were the British Grenadier guards, I believe. We speak of Hector and Alexander and such great men but of all the heroes there is none that can compare with the British Grenadiers, the "Toro-ro-ro" of the British. You do not find them and when you find them what do you do?

The Greeks had heroes and they did some strange things. I do not know if we want to imitate them. Some of them were half men and half gods. So we do not pay much credence to that. Then what do you do with them when you find them? You put a statue up to them and that can be life-size, it can be larger than life or it can be colossal. Those are the three types of statues that you put up. So you had a statue put up to the Colossus at Rhodes bestriding the harbour. I do not know what he did for those Greeks. Life-size we had... That may be called smaller than life. In front of Government's headquarters we had a bust.

Now I have no problem with the Barbados Labour Party recognising that the first effort at recognising Sir Grantley Adams was a puny one. I mean literally puny.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: On a point of order. It is unfortunate that the Honourable Member would choose this word. I was the Secretary-Treasurer of that fund and it was public subscription, little old ladies and old gentlemen putting in those days, in the early 1970s, cents and pennies in a tin to go towards that life-size bust of Sir Grantley. Please, not puny!

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am sorry. I did not mean to offend the guardian of the halo of Sir Grantley Adams. You were the Secretary Treasurer. I do not mean any offence by that. By "puny" I meant small in stature and now you are putting up something bigger. If it was not adequate, why are you changing it now?

It was puny, Sir. I can repeat the word now in that there was only a bust so we want something larger than that. As I said I have no quarrel with that.

When we go to find other persons it was clearly inadequate in terms of setting. We needed something more substantial for the substantial contribution that this distinguished politician, statesman in Barbados made in Barbados and I have no problems with the redesign. Let me make that clear.

I have also no problems as I said at the start with the persons who have been identified. I am happy to learn that the function will take place in St. Michael South and that a distinguished son who takes his origin from St. Michael South will be honoured also on that occasion. I refer to Sir Garfield Sobers, a very outstanding product of that area. I think that it was very significant that just as in the 1960s he was dubbed a knight not far from where he lived on the Garrison now he will be participating no doubt in this particular function.

Bussa is a symbol of a struggle.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: From the talk that I hear it would not be realised that it was during a state visit to Barbados by the then President of Guyana that I as Prime Minister had a function for him at that statue of Bussa in St. Michael. Yet we hear all talk about somebody not coming to a function and it was the propaganda that was put out that we do not respect our national symbols and because something was organised by the Barbados Labour Party that the Democratic Labour Party Leader and other members of the Democratic Labour Party did not attend that function. They do not remember to say that we had a national function there. I do not remember seeing anybody from the Barbados Labour Party present at the function. There was a function there at Bussa which was maximal recognition that this is a national star. 8.20p.m.

Mr. Chairman, my time is running out. I will come back again when you give me the signal. There I had a function at national level of a State Official visit with the President of Guyana and the Prime Minister of Barbados being the principal person and wreaths were laid on that occasion.

Sir Garfield, as I said, is a sterling example of persons who have made a contribution to national development and all the other persons are relevant to the development of Barbados whether they operated in the colonial period in Barbados lasting from about 1625 to 1966, or whether they are in the period of Independence 1966 and thereafter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like to inform the Honourable Member that his time is up.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I will come again, Sir.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak under this clause in this Bill. I am particularly concerned that a serious matter like this should be done in such a way that a few people would have the power

to decide who our National Heroes should be. We have been told that this is just because of the speed at which it had to be done and I am hoping that in future the necessary amendments will be made so that heroes would be thrown up by the people in the country rather than by a few people.

It is true that the heroes who have been named today are agreeable, but I believe for us to persist with this kind of Bill would be to put in place a situation that can get out of hand when you can just come into Parliament some day and find that you have a hero who is not acceptable to the majority of Barbadians, so I think we need to change this in the future.

Sir, I also note that a hero can be a person named such during his lifetime or posthumously. In this regard, I know that some people were saying that the persons should have been dead already, but I am delighted to see that there are two persons who are still living who have been honoured. There are people in our community who have been saying that people need to be honoured in their own lifetime so we have two views. Those who feel that you should be dead to be honoured and those who feel that you can appreciate an honour when you are living.

I am happy that Sir Garfield Sobers is being named a hero in his lifetime. He deserves it and he is being named as a hero, I believe, because he exemplifies our search for excellence in the post Independence era and it shows that people of humble background once they apply themselves diligently that they too can go on to great heights and can be respected right around the world.

Sir Frank Walcott himself also of humble origin also represents the fight for the masses, the fight for the working-class and he also exemplifies the kind of person who could rise from almost nothing. There is a particular quotation which somebody used today which said that he rose from obscurity to great heights without a formal secondary education and was able by his own efforts, by applying himself, by great discipline and great courage he was able to excel in his field and be a model for many to follow. His advancement of the cause of the trade union movement speaks volumes for this country.

He is well respected around the world and it shows what we can do through hard work. These two gentlemen, Sir, are fine examples for the youngsters in this community who need to have someone to look up to and they can look to somebody still living who their families can tell them about. I think it is good today that we have two persons who are still living who are being named as heroes.

I will turn, Sir, later to comment on the relevance of the designation of heroes. I think the Schedule deals with that. I

want to deal with that because I want us to look not only at the symbolism in the naming of heroes but the relevance of the naming of heroes to this generation.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I spoke about heroes a little earlier and I want, Sir, just to amplify on that particular approach. I know of countries which have set up their Heroes Square or Circle and then a measure of desecration has taken place in those Circles or Squares. We have to guard against that. I do not know how much we can guard or guarantee nowadays because what we believe to be sacred and inviolable, nowadays seem not to be sacred or inviolable so we have to guard against that.

Then again there are the changing attitudes. One Member, I do not remember which Honourable Member it was, read some statement from a recommendation speaking about setting up something in perpetuity. He did not say whether that was accepted in its entirety by the Government or not but it is clear, Sir, % that no action of a previous Parliament can bind a succeeding Parliament. Each Parliament, even the same Parliament, is free to do or to undo and what is important whether the little people put in their money or not, however it is done, that is the assessment of that generation.

Now here is the irony of it. We hear about little people putting in their dollars and cents, or whatever it would be, to set up a bust in the 1970s but that is exactly what they did with Nelson. It was the little people, meaning the little merchants those who had some wherewithal. Therefore we have to bring some kind of perspective on this and bring the history into perspective. This is what I seek to do. I have to look upon it and reflect upon it. 8.30 p.m.

What we should be really asking ourselves at a time when we are discussing this issue and it is promoted as of great national significance, we cannot muster a full house and we cannot muster a full gallery. We are saying how significant this thing is for the people of the country. Something has to be wrong.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: When I say we I am talking about Parliament. Parliament is led, of course, by the official side with its official majority.

We are not doing something right. We have to pay more attention to these things. Propaganda by itself cannot do anything. What I say here is not going to have any impact on the thinking over there because this has come as a *fait accompli*. You come with your minds made up and that the Leader of the Opposition will fall on deaf ears.

I do not know when once you have done it how you are going to amend that part of it.

There are other issues in the life of this Parliament which have to be corrected. I have to bear all of these things in mind. The time will come when there will have to be a Truth and Vindication Committee in Barbados.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: There will have to be that as well. I am just referring to it.

I want to observe very carefully this particular issue that we are dealing with. I am not saying that people who have rendered outstanding service to Barbados who would have by their action or by the symbolism for things they stand for, the values they represent, that that should not be represented. I fail to see how you are going to have a separate arrangement for a category called national heroes and then you have another arrangement for other kinds of national honours. It is clear that there has to be some kind of rationalisation for that.

I will certainly propose that. I know that is the step that should be taken. It is a valid point that there should be arrangements in place whereby these matters can be discussed and recommendations on proposals made and a proper system for dealing with matters be set up.

Sir, what Barbados has to continue to work on is the development of a system that will strive and bind the people of Barbados to a programme of excellence, something to strive for. The example of the actions, the lives, the values that people bring to the process is going to be important and we should recognise that from time to time.

I believe, therefore, Sir, that we should take this as a learning experience and we should seek wherever possible to improve our system so that if we have distinguished foreign statesmen or others coming to Barbados of the right category that they can, during that visit

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Maybe the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister may wish to confer a national honour on that person as a token of the relationships between the country. This particular honour is not going to do that. It is not easy to do it under the existing arrangements. That is something that should be considered.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I believe that I have said enough on this particular Clause to deal with this particular matter.

Thank you.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I have already dealt with the question of consultation. I take the point of the Leader of the Opposition under the second reading that it would have been better if there had been an Advisory Committee such as they have in Jamaica and a provision in this legislation for representation for both sides, Opposition and Government and so.

I believe when I was away attending the funeral that the Minister of Education and Culture also explained that Government fully intends after the Constitution Review Commission has reported, to look at the question of national honours and national heroes with a view to having some unification of the two pieces of legislation and a rationalization where we will have an Advisory Committee.

We have an Advisory Committee as I understand it for national honours although I have never been involved with that committee. To me it would make greater sense to have one committee even if we expand the membership of that committee with this question of awards rather than have two advisory committees. As a Cabinet we agreed that as soon as we are implementing the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Commission we would give high priority to the rationalisation of the two pieces of legislation that we will have shortly and all of the concerns raised by the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South will be taken care of at that time.

Honourable Members appreciate at the same time that it is important that we take this step to recognise our national heroes this year 1998. In view of all of the recommendations that have come from the various groups that we have discussed; the Social Justice Commission, the Barrow/Morris Committee and I think Honourable Members know me well enough that when I give an assurance on behalf of the Government that that assurance will be honoured, Sir. 8.40 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I will sense from the view of the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South, however, in respect of the importance of these symbols to other Barbadians, I sincerely believe that the recognition and honouring of a group of persons for their sacrifice, courage, commitment and contribution to national development can be of importance.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation. I would not wish the Honourable Member or anyone else to misunderstand me. I am talking about a designation of a hero. That is a larger than life designation. I am talking about the designation or that particular way of honouring, not that there should not be honoured, but to call them heroes and I contrasted that with the other heroes that have gone before and I did not mention the Soviet Union. There was the hero of the Soviet Union and a hero of Rumania, workers hero. They pin all kinds of things on them in the foreign countries of the Soviet Union. I am not talking about a hero.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, Sir, I understand the point made. I also disagree with the Honourable Member and I know from 1988 on the Resolution that was brought by the Honourable Member for St. John to commemorate the life and work of Errol Barrow on Errol Barrow's Day.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South then made it clear that he was skeptical about having a day called, "National Heroes Day." He said on page 2978 of the debate, probably this is a debate similar to the debate on capital punishment where one can have very personal and strong views perhaps rooted in emotionalism that do not necessarily match up on a factual basis. I ask the question, Sir. The Americans have designated January 18 as Martin Luther King Day and that is a holiday.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation. Sir. I never expressed any disagreement with the establishment of a day, but national heroes in which you are seeking to put all of the so-called heroes on a particular day and not only that, but designating them as "Heroes." I am against the principle of calling people, ordinary mortals, heroes. That is the point I am making. I hope the Honourable Member takes the point that I am making. He can disagree with that, but that is my position.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, he did say then in the debate in 1988 on page 2978,

"I myself have some reservation and I will make it quite clear. I am not a believer in any national heroes day."

"I believe that we would be sending the wrong signals if we postpone a decision on this particular matter" - meaning the Resolution for Errol Barrow Day, "simply because there may be some differences in viewpoint as to what specific day should be set aside for national significance or 4 days of importance or what is called here Heroes Day."

But, Sir, be that as it may, I have taken note of the point made by the Honourable Member and those will be dealt with, as I say, when we bring one competent piece of legislation to deal with the question of honouring Barbadians, heroes or otherwise.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Clause 6 stand part.

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

Clauses 7 to 10 inclusive, were called and passed.

Clause 11 was called.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, in relation to clause 11, clause 1 I-I(c), the word "the" is repeated. Delete one of the "the's" before the word, Honour.

Subject to that, Sir, I beg to move that clause 11 as amended stand part.

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

The Schedule to the Bill was called.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, as indicated earlier, I said I would like to make a few comments on the Schedule which deals with the criteria for eligibility. Sir, I wish to point out as alluded to earlier that heroes serve in many countries for assisting with nation building.

Hero, Sir, was a scuffle for new order within the society in order to push the society forward. In essence what we are saying, Sir, is that these heroes should be providing for us the kinds of examples that would assist in building this nation and taking it forward. 8.50p.m.

As we move into the 21 st century I think it is important that we look at where we have come from and then determine whence we are going. As we look back at those heroes we notice that many of them had great struggles in order to achieve what they wanted to achieve. Invariably, they were finding a cause for people who had come out of slavery and who were being oppressed by the powers in the country at that time.

Sir, there was also a struggle for the economic survival of poor people. There was a struggle to ensure that they had rights to vote. They struggled to ensure that they were involved in the political process. These were the kinds of things that these people were fighting for.

Sir, I just want to make the point that since these heroes should serve as our standard bearers we need to look at what is the status of the struggle we are facing because life is an ongoing struggle. We need to ask ourselves some questions. If those heroes who are dead, were to come back now to see Barbados's condition, would they be satisfied that we have made enough progress over all those years? Would they be satisfied that they struggled to give us the right to vote? Would they be satisfied that the struggle to involve the average man in the political process that they had struggled for a good purpose or would they feel that they were defeated and their lives had been a waste because as they look at Barbados on the eve of the 21st century a lot of the evils against which they fought still prevail in this country?

If they do not prevail, in an overt way, Sir, they are prevailing in a covert way and I wish to refer to the notion of political participation. Sir, would you believe that in this day after all of these heroes have fought for the franchise and all those things, that we still have a Government on both sides which has to comprise of people who are independent in some way, who have their own business or something like that?

There are people who are in the central civil service who cannot be involved in the political process unless they give up their jobs. People who work for certain business conglomerates today are being told that they cannot be involved in the political process. Do you believe that after all of those people have fought that we should still be in an era where in the civil service you cannot be seen on a political platform? They can be, but there are usually fears of that. They are taking a risk.

If you are at places like regional organisations like CDB you cannot get a job with CDB if you are involved in the parliamentary process. So this means that the parliamentary process is only for a few people. So therefore we end up with a Government, and if you look across you will find one person who is an economist, and we know what was his position before that - they did not want to give him a job - then you have all lawyers because they are independently employed. Part of the reason for this is because people who work in certain jobs cannot be involved in Government and we have to find a way and an approach in the 21st century of having people involved in the process.

Government should not be only for the few. There are certain areas that I guess for security reasons you might have qualms about, but I see no reason why a teacher, for example, cannot support whatever party he wants to support and cannot run for which party he wants to. Is he going to go to school and subvert somebody?

Sir, these people would have fought and struggled in vain if we go into the 21st century with the view that only a few people can be entitled to be parliamentarians. Sir, when you look at the issue of economic enfranchisement, we have the franchise, the right to vote; but those into business, do they always have the right to succeed so to speak or are there so many factors that get in the way of their success?

I am putting it to you, Sir, that business for the average, poor, black person without connections is difficult if he wants to move beyond simple vending of snow cones and sugar cakes and bread and bakes. If you want to move on to deal with computers and those kinds of things there is a problem because there is not the free market enterprise that there should be. There are lots of impediments to the mobility of labour within Barbados. This is because those people who had political power before have the economic power now and they use it for the advantage of their own primarily. So our challenge, Sir, as we move into the 21st century, should be to find a way to break that stranglehold so that we can assist the average, poor, black man who would enter a business providing services in this economy which is controlled primarily by the descendants of those who controlled the political power before.

I look too, Sir, at those who fought for trade unionism. They must be rolling in their graves. Frank Walcott must be crying at home when he could discover that companies could come to Barbados and in 1998 could insist that you have no right to join a union. Somebody has to stand up and be a modern hero and fight for that. Somebody has to stand up and fight and whatever it means they have to show that they are the modern day heroes otherwise those heroes would have fought in vain. It cannot be that after these people that we spoke about today have struggled and have been involved in the trade union movement so many years ago that we could still in 1998 be fighting for the freedom of a person to associate in a trade union. It cannot be fair.

The final point I want to make, Sir, is that we have a problem in Barbados where descendants of slaves, primarily, some of them do not have anywhere to put a house. They have a problem of finding land. They have a problem of finding housing. We have to find a way in which we are going to create opportunities for these people to find a home. It is a big issue.

People come to me every day asking about house spots and about houses so therefore it has to be a modern day problem. I know that in many islands in the Caribbean people over the years have squatted. I know that in Barbados in St. John a number of poor whites squatted and I know that some of them squatted in Boscobelle. My understanding is that the plantation owners gave them

a little break and they paid for the little land and they worked around the problem.

I would believe, Sir, that some modern-day hero would want to work around the problem of those people who, desperate for a home, would seek to squat near where their I parents lived, and that the modern-day heroes, instead of acting in haste would want to find a way around acting in the true spirit of humanity of these heroes so that we would have i proved that we would have learned the lessons of these heroes. These are the lessons I hope we would have learned I from the great heroes of Barbados.
9.00 p.m.

The question that the Schedule be the Schedule to the Bill was passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee, with amendment, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Order of National Heroes Act, 1998.

ORDER NO. 8 - PUBLIC HOLIDAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1998

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, this Bill to amend the Public Holidays Act by replacing the First Schedule to that Act is the result of April 28 being designated as National Heroes Day. That decision has caused us to have to amend the Schedule to reflect this change.

We also took the opportunity, Sir, to delete from the Schedule, United Nations Day, which was the October bank holiday.

The third thing which we did, Mr. Speaker, was to * ensure that when Emancipation Day falls on a Sunday or a Monday, because remember that Kadooment Day is always the first Monday in August, and when Emancipation Day which is August 1 happens to be the same Monday, then what we are saying is that the Tuesday becomes a holiday.

Those are the amendments to the Schedule which we have made in order to accommodate Heroes Day, removing the United Nations Day and giving effect to the bank holiday on Tuesday when Emancipation Day falls on the same day as Kadooment Day.

I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Public Holidays (Amendment) Act, 1998.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government Business for this day. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, April 21, 1998 at 11.00 o'clock in the morning.

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

The question that the House be now adjourned until Tuesday, April 21, 1998 at 11.00 o'clock in the morning was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 9.10p.m.

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