
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1999 – 2004

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 24, 2001.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.20 a.m. on Tuesday, July 24, 2001.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, B.A., Dip. Ed., G.C.M. (Speaker)

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P., (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. Sir Henry FORDE, K.A., Q.C., M.A., LL.M. (Cantab.)

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., B.A. (Hons.) Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.) L.E.C. (Minister of the Environment, Energy and Natural Resources)

Mr. D. CARTER (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, B.A., LL.B., (Minister of Labour, Sports and Public Sector Reform)

Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Minister of Housing and Lands)

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL (Minister of Public Works and Transport)

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY (Minister of Social Transformation)

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Minister of Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Business Development)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B.

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

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.

Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, B.A., B.Sc. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)

Mr. D. T. GILL, B.Sc.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH, B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Tourism and International Transport)

Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc. (Minister of Industry and International Business)

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, July 17, 2001.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, July 17, 2001, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

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

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

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, under section 14 of the Franchise Registration and Control Act, the Minister may without prejudice exercise the power conferred on him by the Act, and by order delegate any of those powers to any person specified in the Order.

Pursuant to section 14 of that Act, Sir, the Minister of Finance is delegating to a panel, to consist of persons to be announced, the powers conferred upon him in section 4 of the Act namely to require the applicant for the licence and any objectors to the grant of that licence to appear before him to be interviewed.

- (b) To require such information in writing as he considers necessary for the application of the applicant or objectors.

As referred to the Order Papers, Sir, consist of Mr. Grantley Smith BCH, Director of Finance and Economic Affairs who shall be Chairman; Mr. Darcy Boyce, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados; Mr. Samuel Chandler, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Solicitor General or her nominee.

I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Franchises (Registration and Control) (KMART Overseas Corporation) Order, 2001.
2. The Sugar Industry (Sugar Workers Provident Fund) Order, 2001.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. C. Eastmond, the following Bills were read a first time:

1. Education (Amendment) Bill, 2001.
2. University of the West Indies (Guarantee of Bonds) Bill, 2001.
3. Evidence (Amendment) Bill, 2001.
4. Special Development Areas (Amendment) Bill, 2001.
5. Bankruptcy and Insolvency Bill, 2001.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 27 asked by the Honourable Member for St. John is ready.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6,16,18,20,42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's Sitting.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 10 – EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2001

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this amendment to the Education Act but use the opportunity to be able to give this Honourable Chamber a full update on the development of many aspects of our reform programme in the Ministry of Education, particularly as it relates to the Education Sector Enhancement Programme, commonly known as EduTech, and all of its constituent elements, the civil works, the curriculum reform, the reform of the assessment, teacher training and the implementation of teacher appraisal.

Sir, generally, before I go into those areas, I wish to set this debate which deals specifically with amendment to the Barbados Scholarship but nevertheless, seeing that as the final point in which one can excel in the secondary system, to set a debate in this Honourable Chamber today on primary and secondary education in its historical context and to be able to allow this Honourable Chamber to take a macro-view of where education has come in Barbados since its general settlement in modern times and where we are today, to be able to properly position ourselves for where we need to be in the early part of the 21st century, if we are to maintain the quality of life and the goals that we have generally set ourselves since the attainment of Independence in 1966.

Mr. Speaker, I would choose, as I set that historical context, to look at the purpose and role of education as it relates to all mankind. I would choose a quotation from a gentleman who lived between the 18th and 19th centuries by the name of Charles Phillips, who was a notable advocate and Barrister in England and who, perhaps, said it better than I have seen it written anywhere else and I quote.

“No doubt you have all personally considered, no doubt you have all personally experienced but of all the blessings which it has pleased Providence to allow us to cultivate, there is not one that breathes a purer fragrance, or bears a heavenlier aspect than education!”

“It is a companion which no misfortune can depress, no clime destroy; no enemy alienate; no despotism enslave; at home a friend; abroad an introduction; in solitude, a solace; in society an ornament.”

“It chastens vice, it guides virtue, it gives at once a grace and government to genius.”

“Without it, what is man? A splendid slave...”

Mr. Speaker, I know that you in particular would appreciate the worthiness of that quotation. In a very real sense it seeks to say in very elegant language that without education, human beings, essentially, are nothing more than slaves.

Sir, that places for us this debate and the role of education in Barbados' modern history in a very special light, because ours has been a history that has been marred by the institution of legal slavery. Ours has been a history that has known what it is to deprive human beings of the right to determine their own well-being, their own movements and fate, by reason of the fact of dealing them inferior and preventing them from relating to others in an equal environment.

Sir, we were fortunate in the 19th century to abolish the legal institution of slavery. We have learnt since, that the mere abolition of the legal institution of slavery without ensuring that we create an environment within which freedom can flourish, because freedom is a very distinct state of being that is not equated to slavery. The very environment within which freedom can flourish, is one that requires the full development of one's personal and mental capacity. For those who may not wish to fantasize but would wish to reflect in a one-shop mode, you can perhaps take the quotation from Bob Marley's song which speaks to mental slavery and the need to emancipate a whole generation of persons from that bondage of mental slavery.
11.25 a.m.

Education for us, Sir, as for all other civilizations, has been a means of social and personal empowerment and indeed, Sir, to this society in particular in this country, education has been a means of upward social mobility and economic empowerment for many persons who, without it, would still be at a station in life that would not be considered desirable.

Sir, since the abolition of slavery we have seen, in particular, an effort to broaden the numbers of persons who can benefit from education, but it did not start there.

This House would be interested to note that the first school ever built in Barbados was, in fact, built around 1686, when two planters from St. George, John Elliott and Roland Buckley, donated land and £1000 toward the establishment of the school, but in those days, as was to be expected, that school was reserved for poor whites. Those other whites who had money would not be educated within the Colony, but in England, while blacks or coloureds would be denied education.

When we, therefore, placed the development of education to modern Barbados, one begins to understand that

education which was being denied to any and everyone at the beginning of the settlement of modern Barbados should become something which should perhaps be valued more than any other public good in our society. The expansion process saw us moving from the provision of education for poor whites to the provision of education for coloureds, then to the provision of education for slaves and ex-slaves.

It is of note that the first school which was built for coloureds would have been the one which is now known as the St. Mary's School. It was built in 1818 in Bridgetown with the cost having been met by public subscription and the Church Missionary Society, who provided a master at the cost of £100 per year. That school, at first, was provided for coloured boys in Bridgetown.

It is significant that less than ten years later, in 1827, a similar institution was built for coloured girls. It is, therefore, of note that while other countries across the world insisted on the denial of access to education for girls, Barbados has always had relatively, liberal access at the time for females to be able to gain access to education.

Sir, I have set this debate in this context because we need to know that education was not something to which everyone had a right, and over the course of our history, barriers have been removed to give more and more people access to education, until we have reached the point in the 1980's where, in its history, between the combination of government and private schools, Barbados was finally able to achieve the attainment of 100 per cent access for all of its children.

I want to pause here, Mr. Speaker, because we have to take this in stride. We do not refer to it anymore, but even here in the Caribbean today there is a higher degree of educational achievements as compared to other Regions in the world. Barbados stands out as one of the few countries that can provide a place for every child who falls between the ages of 5 and 16 years old.

Even in Trinidad, Mr. Speaker, those who follow the progress of the last Election would know that one of the main issues in Trinidad related to the hurried approach to the construction of secondary schools, to give children the opportunity to have a place for every child at the secondary level.

In other countries, they have not yet achieved 100 per cent access, so let us start with understanding that that achievement on the part of this country is something of particular note that has set us apart from other countries. Mr. Speaker, that desire is to be able to give a place for every child in this country which is rooted in the general commitment to the precepts of social justice that have been associated with all those who have sought to govern this

country since the 1930's. It has therefore, led to the significant development that because there were not sufficient government places in the 1950's and even when Government sought to build the West St. Joseph Secondary School, Princess Margaret Secondary School and the St. Leonard's Secondary School, at an early stage, Government put in place a programme of support for private schools to ensure that the combined efforts of Government, public and private schools could provide as many places for this population as possible. That effort continued into the 1980's, when we finally achieved a goal of 100 per cent access. But we all know, Sir, that access is not everything and while it may be the *sine quo non* of being able to provide education, it is not the determinant of a good education. Therefore, in those circumstances, Sir, it is of significance that throughout our history and, particularly since the 19th Century, there has always been a genuine level of concern with the quality of education being provided.

Now, let me state this once again in context. Barbados has developed an enviable reputation for delivering excellent education to a core of persons within this country, an elite so to speak, and that elite constituted, perhaps, no more than 40 per cent of the population.

I have now placed that before you, because we have to understand what is happening over the course of the last 30 years in terms of what our mandate as a Government is. What are the expectations of the population and what we have been able to deliver.

We had an amazing commitment to the delivery of elementary education since the 19th Century. It is of note that a country that is only 166 square miles could serve a population with the provision of over 200 schools. Mr. Speaker, more than a school per square mile in 1844 and that State continued well into the 20th Century, where every district had an elementary school.
11.35 a.m.

In the nineteenth century, Mr. Speaker, those were largely managed by the Anglican Church and, once again, the records of 1844 show that there were: fifty-eight Anglican schools alone with almost four thousand pupils, four Moravian schools, four Wesleyan schools, and indeed, Sir, Methodist schools as those were known and one hundred and forty-nine private schools. Sir, you had an approach where the church and private individuals sponsored education in this country.

In 1850, the first Education Act was passed which provided the establishment of an Education Committee for the first time, with a part-time school inspector as its executive officer. It also provided an annual grant of £3 000 to be distributed to the schools in existence, in proportion to the average attendance of pupils and indeed, Sir, for equity sake, the amount raised by school fees.

Sir, that commitment to ensure quality was pursued even more vigorously because in 1858, a second Education Act was passed. They recognised the need for the Inspector who was part-time to become a full-time Inspector and that the subjects of the curriculum be determined. Indeed, Sir, one would be interested to know, and this would be particularly of note for the Barbados Union of Teachers and the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union, that a pupil-teacher system was introduced and a system of payment by results was initiated, so that persons were paid on the basis of the results obtained. This is known in other jurisdictions today as merit pay which we had in Barbados as early as 1858.

Indeed, Sir, I would venture to suggest that we need to resume the debate, not on the basis of merit pay and how it was known in those days, but how do we reward those teachers in our system who attain and maintain excellence, over and beyond what is their normal due.

A couple years ago, Sir, we had a committee to review these matters and it is of great sadness to me that the concept of a master teacher and the concept of rewarding teachers for excellence, was one that we could not find ready agreement from the Unions, in respect of their commitment, but that is just an aside at this stage.

The first major review of the quality of education, Mr. Speaker, came in the 1870s and two significant developments happened in 1874. One was the affiliation of Codrington College with Durham University. This was an amazing thing for a colony to achieve because it meant that for the first time a colony this size could provide education for its citizens, however limited they were, by reason of the social injustices of the day, from primary school to university. So that a person, without ever leaving the shores of Barbados, could receive a degree and could have come and traversed his whole passage of education from primary to degree status.

Sir, I believe that that development, while it did not benefit thousands of people, benefitted hundreds including free coloureds and blacks, did a lot for the symbolism of the need to attain excellence in education and to set Barbados apart from many of the other colonies, with respect to the way in which we view education in this country.

The other significant event which happened in 1874, Sir, was the establishment of the Mitchinson Commission. Sir, the Mitchinson Commission, under the leadership of Bishop Mitchinson was asked to study the system of education in the country and to make recommendations for its improvement. There was, on the part of the legislature, an urgent desire to see improvement in quality. They have not yet attained full access but they did not believe that theirs was a duty to ensure full access beyond elementary

education, because there was no need for blacks in those numbers to constitute a large percentage of those receiving education at the secondary level. After all, the majority of them would be working in agriculture and it was the view of the legislature that it needed only a sound elementary education that provided the three Rs.

The Mitchinson Commission, Sir, completed its work in 1876 and it found favour with the authorities such that in 1890, a new Education Act was passed and this Chamber would note, that this was the principal Education Act since 1890 until 1983 when the modern Education Act was passed, Sir, by this Government in a previous incarnation.

I believe, Sir, that the House should note that that Act in 1890 provided substantial qualitative improvements. Indeed, it established for the first time, an Education Board which included Members of this Honourable House and Members of the Legislative Council and two others, all of whom were appointed by the Government and indeed, it increased the amount of funding that was available for elementary education.

This House, Sir, once again in the public of Barbados, would be interested to note that one of the major concerns of the Mitchinson Report was the state of school buildings in 1890: that the quality and the need to maintain elementary school buildings were something that was of concern to the society and to the Legislative Council at that time. More than one year ago, Sir, they were be-devilled by that same prospect.

Sir, the Mitchinson Report more or less governed the role and development of education in Barbados for the next forty to fifty years. While no new legislation would replace the 1980 Act until 1983, much concern and discontent were in the first twenty-five years of the 20th Century and it led to the establishment of a new commission to review education. This was the Mariotte Mayhew Commission which was appointed in 1932 because there were concerns with the state of education in Barbados at the time.

What is of significance, Sir, is that once again, this Commission went back to address the issue of quality and to see whether the content of the educational system was, in fact, meeting the needs of the society, as it existed at the time.

Sir, that Commission spoke to the need of improving the need for the facilities and for teacher training, stating that there was a need for a review of the curriculum to bring education into closer touch with the needs of the students and the times. This was an important recommendation, Sir, and we would note that it was the Mariotte Mayhew Commission that introduced, for the first time, the concept of the modern secondary school.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, the Second World War intervened and the actual result of the Mariotte Mayhew Commission would not have been implemented until 1944. 11.45 a.m.

During the course of the 1940s there were significant developments that were introduced for the first time since the 1870s and 1890s. What is of significance is that a policy, which I believe many persons who are familiar with the educational policy would deem as perhaps one of the most retrograde steps now that we have the benefit of hindsight, was introduced in the late 1940s. Persons would do well to speak to persons who went to school before that time, to learn that before that time the concept of age grouping, putting children in a class by reason of their age and not by what they knew never used to be practised.

In the late 1940s the concept of age grouping was introduced into Barbados' educational system which ensured that irrespective of whether persons were at a reading age of seven or 10 that if they were ten years old they all went into the same class. That principle of social promotion which is deeply wedded to the concept of age grouping would have seen three to four generations of Barbadians since then being herded through a school system irrespective of whether they had adequately acquired the knowledge to be able to allow them to move to the next stage.

Now, Sir, for those who were naturally brilliant or for those who were moving a pace and were not suffering from any serious learning disability, emotional difficulties or behavioural difficulties, that was fine. We have to remember that when age grouping was introduced we still had a mind-set that was prevalent in this Parliament and in the society that education was still only for an elite group of persons. So in the context of the 1940s that decision may have suited their purposes but in the context of an Independent Barbados where the aims and objectives of a Government in relation to the provision of education for its citizens is different, age grouping presents a major and fundamental problem for us, because it ensures that a large number of persons move through the system without us ever being assured that they have acquired the requisite skills to move to the next level.

As we all know, Sir, learning at that stage is essentially foundational. If you do not know how to multiply and divide you cannot do HCF and LCM. If you do not know how to read you cannot learn a whole host of other subject areas including mathematics because you do not have the basic skills by which to enhance your awareness. When you do that, Sir, you start to see that as you parallel concepts with age groupings and with the widening of access to education for the general citizenry of the country you begin to have a problem because you have not introduced your qualitative measures to be able to meet the individual needs of those children who are not benefitting.

In 1983, an Education Act was passed in this Honourable Chamber which became the next major significant development in terms of the development of legislation since 1890. That Education Act had as its core mission the democratization of education in Barbados and the restructuring of the management and operation of all secondary schools by ensuring that for the first time all teachers at the secondary level all became civil servants and that the role, duties and responsibilities of all levels from principals, head teachers, senior teachers and teachers were set out in that legislation.

What is important in that respect was that Act set as its goal the democratization of education. That goal was consistent with a modern government governing under an Independent Barbados recognising that each citizen had a right to benefit from education and recognising that we were on the verge of attaining 100 per cent access for every child in this country between the provision of places in government schools and in the private schools. This was all made possible by the systematic work to provide a number of places particularly as started in the 1950s under the Barbados Labour Party Government and the introduction of free secondary education by the Democratic Labour Party in 1962.

One could not introduce free secondary education if one did not have the places to send people to so that the work of both governments became significant in changing the mind-set that education now was no longer something to be held as a preserve for the very few or to be honoured as a gift for the elite but it was now a basic right for every child in this country.

Sir, I have taken time to go on at length to this historical discourse because I want this Honourable Chamber and those who are listening to appreciate that almost every few decades, since the provision of education in Barbados, there has been the need for a comprehensive review of the education system to determine whether it is in fact meeting the needs of the society, bearing in mind that those things which are held dearly in terms of values by a society as well as the challenges facing the society and the economy changed overtime. Therefore, one cannot assume that the provision of an educational system in respect of the core of what it provides is relevant at all stages even when those values changed or the challenges of the society and economy change.

Now, this is significant because I made the point just now that it did not matter when you restricted education to persons that you had an elitist view because in the late 19th century and well into the 20th century education was for the purpose of educating an elite group of people in this country. They did not expect black people to go beyond a sound elementary education because they were of the belief

that the majority of those persons would work in the agricultural sector and, therefore, did not need to have a strong education.

So that the eight secondary schools, the first grade and the second grade schools, that existed at the end of the 19th century were sufficient because the mind-set of the Government was that we only need to educate some people who can constitute the core of a civil service and the core of a mercantile community but even then a lot of the ones who went into the mercantile community left school in the second and third forms and did not need to have a full education because they inherited capital and a protected market.
11.55 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, in the 1940s again, when the principle of age grouping was introduced, it made sense to the Education Department in those days because their goal was not to provide full education to an entire population. It was still rooted in maintaining a system of excellence for no more than 40 per cent of the population, your white population, your coloured population and your black elite, and the majority of other people did not need education because once you gave them the three Rs so that they were governable, so that they did not constitute social unrest, so that they did not become wild boys or vagabonds, once you could maintain social cohesion by giving them enough education that they could be functional in a church, that they could be functional in taking instruction, they did not need to go beyond that stage.

In the early fifties and sixties, some things started to change and we recognised that one of the consequences of the disturbances in 1937 was that we needed to enhance the level of the quality of education being provided to the masses but there was still not a commitment to full access. That commitment has been a gradual thing, flourishing perhaps best in the post-Independence era and reaching success in the eighties.

Even then, Sir, the mind-set of this Chamber and the Governments who would have ruled, whether the Democratic Labour Party or the Barbados Labour Party, was that even though we now had a commitment to provide free education at the primary and secondary level to every child it was only to ensure that the majority of them once again could work in industrial garment factories, could work making smocking and in a whole bunch of industrial estates.

The predominant economic theory in those days was still for development by industrialisation, the Arthur Lewis concept of industrialisation by implication, governing those charged with the responsibility of setting the economic direction of the country and therefore the educational system only needed to produce students who could take instructions well on a production line.

Yes, we commit ourselves to give everybody free education but the quality of education we provide is such that they do not need to think critically. They just need to take instructions well and be governed well. Lo and behold, Sir, during the process of independence, all sorts of things started happening to us. We started to believe that we are a nation. We started to believe that we are individuals. We started to have people travelling in and out of Barbados and getting glorified concepts of themselves. We even introduced something called Crop Over which resulted in the explosion of confidence and creativity of Barbadians in a way that this society perhaps could never recognise.

There is always the quotation from John Hearne that was published in the Independence Magazine that spoke of how the creative tensions that were found in the Barbadian national psyche would express themselves after one generation of independence. What we are beginning to see, Sir, we had the black power revolution, we had a whole host of things now changing how people see themselves in this society and whether they want to be able to be satisfied working for somebody or whether they want to be satisfied with the fact that a Government still has a concept of them as somebody for whom it delivers minimal education. By "minimal education", I mean sufficient for them to take instructions well and sufficient for a percentage of them to continue to maintain excellence at the eight or so older secondary schools that exist.

Once again, Sir, you see the mind-set of the society and the mind-set of the Government changing and once the mind-set of the society and the mind-set of the Government changes in terms of what it now requires of its citizenry, you have to bring about change in the education system. If not, we will falter. The purpose of the 1983 Act was for the democratization of education along with the management changes and a shift from being civil servants to secondary school teachers.

What is significant is that while in 1983 we introduced in the context of legislation that objective of attaining the democratization of education, I am not certain that we put in place the qualitative assurances to ensure that democratization was not a reduction of quality or reducing it to the lowest common denominator. What do I mean by that, Mr. Speaker?

We have continued to have education at a high and we have always done so for that core 40 per cent, that elite of the population. They can go to any part of the world and be accepted at any university and the quality of the education that they received will be praised by all. Once you start to expand beyond that 40 per cent and we start to allow numbers to come in from the entire society, have you developed the curriculum that suits the need for that broader

range of abilities? Have you trained teachers to put them in a position to teach a wider range of competency in the system? Not to mention that since 1983 there have been general changes in the values and behaviour of the society and therefore, have you put measures in place to be able to deal with the fact now that you can only teach once you have people's attention. If they constitute a source of disruption in the class, how are you going to impart the knowledge to them?

I am saying to you, Sir, that in addition to that, the new Act in 1983 while it set out the duties and responsibilities of principals and teachers and all other categories of persons in the system, and that was necessary, there was no system of independent appraisal to see whether it was in fact doing what it was supposed to be doing.

We find ourselves in the 1990s faced with two things. How do we ensure that the democratization of education which was intended in the 1983 legislation does not mean the reduction in values or quality, given our legacy of an educational system of excellence in spite of the fact that that system of excellence was only for 40 per cent of the population.
12.05 p.m.

How do we ensure that each one matters while still providing education for all? Sir, when we in the Ministry of Education of this Government set about educational reform in 1994, the one thing we knew was that we had a duty to ensure that each child was educated to the maximum of his or her ability in the system and that those who were falling through the cracks had to be caught and an opportunity given to them to be able to reach the maximum of their ability.

Why do I say the maximum of their ability? Mr. Speaker, we all know that human beings have different levels of achievements and abilities and in many instances those different levels are determined by emotional and all kinds of reasons.

The first thing the system has to do is to determine why a child is not learning. This was what we set about to do in the Ministry of Education in 1994. There are physical reasons and we have introduced a programme of testing for speech, hearing and sight impediments and impairments and, in fact, Barbados is the first country anywhere in the Americas to have a comprehensive testing programme for every child at five and seven years old to determine whether those physical impairments were preventing children from learning.

As I have indicated in this Honourable Chamber on many occasions before, we found on average that six to eight per cent of the children have serious impediments and we

have been working with the Ministry of Health assiduously to ensure that those impediments and impairments can be corrected and the child can receive an education to the maximum of his or her ability. Once a child becomes five or seven, the school has a duty to send that child for testing for hearing, speech and sight impairment.

Sir, there are also myriad learning disabilities like dyslexia and a whole host of other things so we have been building up the capacity to be able to undertake more testing in the system. As a Government we have introduced in 1997 The Criterion Reference Testing where we take a child at seven and nine years old and test his knowledge base. This is not a test where the child studies because we want to know exactly how much knowledge the child has and through that diagnosis we are better able to provide for that child in terms of teaching.

Sir, in 1995 we started the process of reform that would eventually lead to the dismantling of age grouping. We then amended the Education Act to provide for flexible transfer recognising that to assume all children could sit the Common Entrance at the same age was folly especially in the context of the democratization of education that we have seen and in those circumstances we provided for the child to sit the examination between eight years old and twelve years old.

Sir, if you were to go back to The Hansard Debates you would see that I indicated in those days that there would be a transition period because children were already promoted without the requisite skills and we had to work with them.

I am still not satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that there is sufficient being done to keep children back at Class I or Class II to reinforce those skills rather than promoting them and deferring the examination and getting the extra time in Class IV because the earlier the child gets the extra time and reinforcement, the better for the child in the long run.

Sir, that is why in the context of curriculum reform, which is part of EduTech, you will hear us speaking to the issue of no automatic promotion. Indeed, Sir, there are other things that we have put in place to bolster the Criterion Reference Test including the Reading Level Test because we believe that if you cannot read you cannot learn.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move on to the actual programme and initiatives of this Government since 1994. We started on the premise that 'Each One Matters' because we needed to understand why children were not learning. There were the physical testing and the testing for learning disabilities but there was also another reason why children do not learn and those are behavioural and emotional problems.

Sir, when I went into the Ministry in 1994 there was one psychologist. Today we have three psychologists, two social workers and a budget from the Ministry of Finance to supplement that for the sourcing of psychological services to be able to allow us to provide more assistance in that behavioural area.

Sir, we have determined through our experience that those children who exhibit serious behavioural problems will not learn in the context of a traditional classroom. This Government has also set up the Edna Nicholls Centre which is designed specifically to take children who are suspended or expelled to test them, work with them and put a programme of counselling and support with them. This Centre has been so successful that we now require additional space largely because the Education Act gave that Centre the power to extend the period of time beyond the initial suspension, if the children needed it, to be able to work with the children to get them to a stage of readiness in terms of learning again.

Mr. Speaker, prior to the Edna Nicholls Centre, when a school suspended a child in this country the child stayed at home on the block, went under the street light and did everything that was not connected to a supervised educational environment. Instead of getting at the root of the problem that caused the child to be suspended in the first place, the problem was compounded because the child had all the time in the world to do what so ever nonsense it wanted to do. Those policies which we have sought to put in place to deal with behavioural difficulties and discipline problems in the school are essential if we want to improve the quality and rate of learning in the school system.

I would wish publicly to applaud the public servants in the Ministry of Social Transformation, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Education and we are bringing together all the social services agencies that deal with children and ensuring for the first time that there is an institutionalised system of communication for regular communication. I am not saying that it did not happen with an isolated case here and there but the absence of that system meant that you may have the Child Care Board dealing with a particular problem today, tomorrow you might have the Probation Office dealing with the brother and the day after you may have Juvenile Liaison dealing with the matter and the day after you might have the sister being referred to the Ministry of Education and none of these agencies would speak to each other so you would not know that there is a fundamental problem that needs to be solved with that family because our traditional approach to the delivery of social services is that we focus on the service and not on the family.

Sir, I am happy to say that the Ministry of Social Transformation, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Home Affairs have all determined that this traditional service-centred approach to the delivery of social services in

Barbados must be a thing of the past in the early twenty-first century and we have a Committee that is functioning at the level of the Minister who sets policy and also at the level of those persons who work in the system.

I have met every Friday for the last two weeks with Chief Operating Officer of Welfare, National Council of Substance Abuse, the Child Care Board, Poverty Alleviation Bureau, Juvenile Liaison and the Probation Department and I will meet with them next Monday again because everybody must be included in the system. The National Cultural Foundation must also be included because, contrary to popular belief, the NCF is not only concerned with festivals but with the level of cultural values that inform attitudes and feelings in this society. Sir, I am hoping that this Committee when properly institutionalised, by reason of all levels working together, that they can ensure the delivery of a people-centered approach to social services.
12.15 p.m.

I believe that Barbados is small enough that we can find solutions to the social deviance and indiscipline and the behavioral problems that are exhibited in this society. Let us not believe that we can solve those problems in the school system without solving them in the society. The school system is but a microcosm of the society and there has to be a commitment to zero tolerance and to indiscipline in this society if we are to reduce indiscipline and social deviance in the school.

Mr. Speaker, I go further. There has to be an understanding and recognition that there are crimes other than murder, burglary, robbery and rape. Sir, not stopping at a bus stop when you are designated to do so is a breach of the law; dumping garbage in gullies is a breach of the law; driving through a red light is a breach of the law and carrying home a little extra food from the business without the permission of the employer is a breach of the law. We have a society that has become too lax in respect of what it is prepared to condone from its general citizenry.

Sir, when the child sees the parent not adhering to the laws and rules as specified, then the child believes that he does not have to adhere to the rules and laws of the school or the society. Mr. Speaker, not recognising that in many instances, the parent may have the maturity to know when to pull back before danger hits but that child, not having completed his rites of passage in terms of maturity, will not necessarily have the fortune of being able to pull back before danger hits.

Sir, this society has serious questions to discuss if we are to truly fight the problem other than indiscipline in schools and social deviances. Sufficing to say that the Ministry is trying to put as many systems in place to be able

to effectively deal with it so as to ensure that we can reduce it to a minimum, we will never obliterate all, we will never get it all removed, that is the nature of mankind, but we are trying to reduce it to a minimum to ensure as many children as possible can learn without emotional difficulties preventing them from learning in a free system of education.

Mr. Speaker, I have gone into all of this because there can be no doubt by this Honourable Chamber, or those who follow these debates, as to the motivation of this Government for reform. They are those who would wish to suggest that the reforms have been too many and too mighty. They are those who would wish to suggest that there are too many things coming at them too fast. I want to tell you a little secret, Sir, that others will hear, but nevertheless it is between you and me.

Sir, we have tried to introduce technology at different times in our history. We did it in the 1940s when we tried to have the first set of visual aids, there were no audio visual aids in those days; we did it in the 1960s with Rediffusion; we did it in the 1970s with radio and limited television and in almost every instance, Mr. Speaker, it has been unsuccessful largely because the technology was never fully integrated into the teaching process. The only one that was perhaps successful was the visual aids because at early childhood and at primary level, there is still, as you know, a great reliance on visual aids in the system.

There is no doubt in the mind of the Government that the values of Barbadian society has changed. The requirement of this economy in terms of the global economy in which it will participate, where there were no preferential quotas and subsidies likely to be available to us, and in 1995 when we made this judgement we did not know that the sugar industry was going into danger but we now know. We now know that by 2008, the opening up of the European market to countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam in terms of the provision of sugar, would totally undermine our sugar industry in such a way that if there is not a substantial refocusing and restructuring, there would be no industry.

We did not know in 1995 when we designed the White Paper on education reform that there would have been an attack by the OECD on our second most powerful sector of the economy but we knew that there was an attitude within the developed world that we no longer have a responsibility to give you a leg-up in terms of the goods and services that you produce. In those circumstances, Mr. Speaker, we knew that the passage for economic survival and economic success in the early 21st century would be a rough road. We knew that providing children with an education which only guarantees success for the elite, the 40 per cent who received certification, and the 60 per cent who did not, that providing an education for them that only gave them the opportunity to work in factories and take instructions well, could not survive.

Sir, if we want to maintain an exchange rate of US\$1 to BDS\$1.98 it would mean that our labour costs would be too high to compete with the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Taiwan or China. We knew that we, already as a society and an economy, had started to shift to areas where we did not need the preferences from the former colonial masters. The Minister of Tourism likes to refer to tourism as the most WTO compliant industry in Barbados.

12.25 p.m.

International businesses and services: We did not know about the OECD, but we still feel that we have a good plan to building that and, indeed, it has become the second most important sector in the economy. We already knew that we had exhibited the confidence to shift to those areas of service delivery and that we needed now to have an educational system with the confidence and creativity which responds to being able to provide the human resources to work in the tourism and international sector and to become entrepreneurs and create wealth and benefit from the Intellectual Property rights that are guaranteed by legislation. What resources are we using to work in the sugar fields or the factories? Who was going to work in a garment factory that might be opened today and closed down within two years and therefore offers no security for your future.

All of that, Sir, for economic reasons, made reform in education absolutely necessary in 1995, and to be able to relate to the technology that was surrounding us. One can sit at home and watch the Gulf War on television or the Internet, or go to a bank at midnight when he forgets to get money during the day.

Suddenly, the only area where technology was not prevalent in terms of the rapid technological improvements was the classroom, but yet we expect these children to come and work at the same banks, television stations, doing all of those things which interact with technology, Mr. Speaker, but never having been exposed to it.

More importantly than the exposure of technology was the capacity to be readily trainable. Do you know why? In 1980, there were no video machines in anyone's home in Barbados. There were no nintendos, no computers. When I was a girl going to school, I never had any of those things at my home. And I am considered a young Minister. It is not like the Attorney General reflecting on his school days, or the Minister of the Environment and therefore, my memory is recent, like that of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

The point is this, Sir. So much has happened between 1980 and 2000 that if we were only to train for a specific type of technology, those same children would be useless once the technology changes. The one thing that guided us, Sir, in the development of the reform is that need for a sound education and also the need to be readily retrainable at any stage of

your life. What guided us in EduTech and in the White Paper on Education Reform was the principle of exposing children to technology, as it is now, but never deviating from the objectives of the provision of a sound education, thus causing them to be readily retrainable.

It does not stop there, Mr. Speaker, because as I said, values have changed in this society. Before, when you walked into a room, irrespective of the children knowing who you are, once you were a senior person – I did not say old person – children stood and would have addressed you as “Sir”. This is not a practice that is now being observed generally by young persons any more.

The point is, Sir, when we, as a country, became independent, we spent the last 35 years telling persons about their rights; there is a right to free education, there is a right to do this and a right to do that, but we had never told them that they had a responsibility to learn, once they had that free education. We thought it was implicit, but it was implicit to the generation who had seen others suffer and who have had brothers and sisters who did not benefit from the same free education. They knew that what they were getting was something special and they had to value it, and that the responsibility to learn was implicit. But when we have the next generation coming, Mr. Speaker, who do not see any reason from which their brother or sister benefitted, they took it all for granted because we never told them that they had a responsibility to learn. Just as we never told people that they had a responsibility not to be indisciplined, to have a responsibility to themselves, their families, the community and their country. Thirty-five years after independence and we are now scrambling to reinforce the foundation that will allow us to redevelop our population who feel that sense of responsibility to themselves, to families and to their country.

We, Sir, in the schools, have to accept the responsibility of being one of the primary mechanisms through which that responsibility can be reinforced in this society, along with public education, the government, the parents and the church, but the school must be one of those environments, therefore, we have had, Sir, to review what it is that we are teaching.

It is all right, as I said, to produce a majority of persons who are going to work on a production line, who do not think critically, but, Sir, once you are asking people to exhibit responsibilities, or to work in an industry such as the services industry, where they have to interact with others, they must be able to think critically and to ask questions. The one thing we do not need is a bunch of people who accept everything they are told without question. They do not know how to speak or to express themselves. And the Chief Education Officer likes to express it this way when she said that we

know well how to ask the questions that enhance gossip: 'who?', 'where?', 'when?'...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Or as the esteemed educator, who is now the current Member for St. James North said, 'with whom?' But we do not know how to answer the questions 'why?', or 'how?'. If you ask the average Barbadian why he is doing something, he will carry you all around the world and you will not understand what he has said. Ask the average Barbadian how to do something and you could as well not ask him in many instances because once again, you cannot get a clear and concise answer.

Our educational system, if I were to sum it up in one phrase, has lost the capacity to teach children how to ask 'why?' and 'how?' and how to provide the appropriate responses to those two questions. If you are going to have a tourism sector and if we are going to reach the level of quality that our pricing structure demands from us, because as the Minister of Tourism says all the time, our natural competitors are not those countries in the Caribbean anymore. Our pricing structure has us competing with Dubai, Mauritius and such countries and if we are to provide the quality of service that is commensurate with that pricing structure, Mr. Speaker, then we must have well educated, confident, creative and polite citizens and our educational system has a duty to teach those children how to ask "how?" and "why?."

12.35 p.m.

Every time somebody asks you something or tells you something, ask 'how' and ask 'why' and be prepared to know how to answer 'how' and 'why'. If not, you will become uncritical victims of whatever circumstances you find yourself. Whether in a relationship, whether in a job, whether with the church, or whether with a group of friends who want you to smoke marijuana or get into trouble. Ask 'how' and ask 'why' so that, Sir, represents all of the reasons why educational reform became necessary and why this is being done at the same time.

Sir, I started to tell you about the introduction of technology and I went off the point to reinforce the view that you cannot change the kind of citizen that we want to produce in the educational system, unless there is a commitment to a number of changes that are simultaneous and interwoven, there is a seamless integration across these changes.

Sir, there have been a number of major technology firms that went into one or two of our sister countries in the Caribbean and offered them a couple million dollars in technology. Do you know what happened to the technology?

It is a white elephant because it is sitting there and people are not using it.

When we started to design EduTech, Sir, we realised that if we wanted to change the kind of student that came out of school, we had to fundamentally change how teachers taught. No longer could that child feel, in a world where information is readily available that the teacher was the font of all knowledge or that the only one who could give them knowledge was the teacher.

In many instances now, the child could even access knowledge that the teacher had not specifically obtained. In those circumstances, Sir, that teacher also had to be retrained because that teacher was no longer teaching a child to just accept facts uncritically. The teacher now had a responsibility to involve the process of critical thinking and hence they need to change how they teach.

But once you change how you teach, and you do not change what you teach, then you have children asking you – because you gave them the critical thinking skills – "Why is it that I am not learning anything about my history or my heritage. Why is it that you tell me that the environment is important and there is nothing on the environment in this curriculum? Why is it that you tell me that African heritage studies are important and there is nothing to reflect about black people, except black people as slaves or as victims?"

Mr. Speaker, you have to change what you teach, once you start to change how you teach. Sir, every teacher will be retrained over the course of the programme which has already started. Sir, there cannot be retraining without curriculum reform.

Sir, in looking at what we teach, we realise that some people do not write exams well. The fact that I do not write an exam well does not mean I am 'duncy'? Does that mean that I cannot succeed in this society? Or get a job? And what we realise then, is that we have to change how we test. Once you change how you teach and what you teach, you have to change how you test. We now have to incorporate things like, continuous assessment because, a child may work well all along, Sir, but that child just cannot do an exam. The child's stomach gets nervous and the child starts to feel shivery so we introduced continuous assessment both at the common entrance exam where, instead of it being a one shot exam, as was introduced in 1976 – because it was never there all the time. People forget that that is only a recent introduction. We now have 40 percent of the child's marks coming from continuous assessment. All children entering Class One, in primary school from September 2001, will be the first batch of children who, in 2005, will be coming out on the basis of the dual mode of assessment – the one shot exam, and the continuous assessment, with primary school from Class One to Class Four.

Sir, I just want to say here for the record that when people talk about the abolition of the Common Entrance Examination, let them remember that Barbados had the system of feeder schools where particular primary schools fed certain secondary schools. It was before my time but it was within recent times, when we had that system of feeder schools. Children who did well, but whose family did not know anybody in this country, could not get to go to Harrison College or other schools that were designed to help them attain excellence. When we therefore talk about abolishing the Common Entrance Examination, I am saying to you that the Common Entrance Examination, is the most equitable way of determining access to secondary schools because it places every child on a level playing field.

I go further, Mr. Speaker, to say that where the problem with the Common Entrance comes, in my view, was in the nature of its being a one shot examination. If you stop it from being a one shot examination and you start to gather the skill profile of that child through Class One to Class Four and you combine that with an examination, because let us not make our children feel that they do not have to face exams or competition in life. They have to because that is the nature of life. When you have the combination of it, I verily believe, Sir, that we will have a better design system that maintains the equity of the Common Entrance but allows for a better profile of that child's ability to be gathered to determine what is the appropriate school for that child.

We have other modes of assessment, Sir, when we change how we test. We also have the continuous assessment being an integral part of the national diploma for secondary education. Sir, those children will not only sit examinations at the end of their time but they will also have marks gathered as they go along.

The Ministry of Education has taken a fundamental decision that, rather than develop the in-house expertise in testing measurement beyond that which we currently have, we will buy our services from the Caribbean Examination Council, whose very existence is to deal with assessment mechanisms. That is the reason for their being and therefore, with them being headquartered in Barbados, it is convenient for us to outsource the moderation for the continuous assessment, the Common Entrance Examination Administration and the National Diploma for Secondary Education Administration for the Caribbean Examinations Council and to be more effective.

Sir, we changed how we teach, what we teach and how we test because I am answering the charge about too many changes, and I am answering the observation, which may well become a charge. Therefore, having changed how we teach, what we teach and how we test, if we make the same mistake that we made in 1983 where we brought about the

democratisation of education through that Education Act, we would be forever doomed. And what is that mistake, Sir?

You cannot set targets of quality unless you make people accountable because if not, I could talk in here until 'the cows come home' and I do not have a system of holding people accountable for what they are supposed to do, Mr. Speaker, the system can fall. I must be able to measure your performance against what is it that you are supposed to do. 12.45 p.m.

It is significant to note, Sir, that in 1983 when the Education Act was passed that we understood then that there was a need for an independent appraisal system for teachers but we could not reach an agreement. For 15 years, before we concluded the agreement year before last, negotiations have been going on in Barbados for a system of teacher appraisal.

When we had the Press Conference to launch a system for teacher appraisal, the Barbados Union of Teachers, the Barbados Secondary Teachers Union and the Barbados Association of Principals for Public Secondary Schools were present. I remember Mr. Desmond Browne, the Principal of the Lodge School and Mr. Patrick Frost, the General Secretary of the Barbados Secondary Teachers Union making the point that even before the current Deputy Prime Minister was Minister of Education, in fact when the Honourable Member for St. George South was Minister of Education, they had been trying to settle a system of teacher appraisal because they understood then that once you democratize a system and define duties for people they have to have a system of appraisal to hold them accountable. Now, good Lord, Sir, if we introduce reforms to how we teach, what we teach and how we test and we do not have a mechanism to hold people accountable, what is the sense of spending over \$400 million in education in this country?

I am saying to you, Mr. Speaker, therefore, that this Ministry is very sensitive to the recognition that we are asking people to make a lot of changes. I am saying to you, Mr. Speaker, that we no longer have a fairy godmother or godfather who is willing to assist us out there in the world. Britain and the United States of America are two of the countries that constituted the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) when there were attacks to the very viability of Barbados' international financial services sector.

Lest we forget, Sir, as an independent country we have chosen to adhere to a principle advocated by a National Hero of Barbados, a former leader, that we should be friends of all and satellites of none but in so being there are consequences. If I want to be able to tell somebody as an adult to go and fly a kite I have to accept the consequences of my telling them to go and fly a kite even if it means deprivation or sacrifice.

It, therefore, means that this country does not have the luxury of time to prepare itself for a destiny that is changing around it. We know that by the year 2006 there would be a Free Trade Area of the Americas. We know that by the year 2008 the future of the sugar industry would not be as we know it today. We know that we are still waiting for the final resolution of the OECD battle. We know that we have had a change in the society by the number of murders that we have seen, the incidents of drug abuse, the incidents of AIDS and the incidents of road accidents. So are you still telling me, Sir, that we have the luxury of time to change how we teach and what we teach our children, how we test our children and how we measure how it is done.

I am suggesting to you, Mr. Speaker, that we are already 20 years behind the learning curve and that the changes which we are introducing today should have been commensurate with the early years of independence but sometimes we ourselves are the best examples of the old time proverb "Hard ears you won't hear, own way you gine feel". It is a little bit of this feeling that we are doing now that is causing us to be resolute about the changes that must come to this society and to this economy but those changes can only come once the profile of the person who is coming out of the school system changes from that which has been coming out over the last 20 years.

Now, that does not mean that our system has been disastrous. We still have the best results in the Caribbean for CXC's. We still have some of the best trained persons in that elite group that we have been training so well for over a century but we do not have it across the board. So can we be satisfied with what we are producing across the board? No, we cannot. I am saying to you, Mr. Speaker that this process of reform must be a process that goes across all governments who are committed to the precepts of social justice with Barbadians being able to provide for themselves in the best possible way that they can.

This might be the appropriate time to take the break because I will just come back and deal with the substance of the Bill as well as to update where we are on the civil works and the actual curriculum reform.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the House be now suspended for lunch until 2.00 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to second that.

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.
12.53 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, when we took the suspension, I had been addressing the issue as to why this Ministry was implementing so many different changes all at once and I was making the point clearly that these changes are all required to bring about the change in profile of the kind of student, the kind of young Barbadian, that we need in order to build this economy and keep the society socially cohesive and to be able to respond to whatever challenges that the early twenty-first century may pose to us.

In those circumstances, Sir, I would only add that were we to introduce technology without changing how we teach we would not be successful. Were we to change how we teach without changing what we teach, we would not be successful and were we to change how we teach and even what we teach while retaining the old system of exams, the one-shot Common Entrance, the school leaving certificate which has no relevance in today's economy and is not accepted by any business as a valid certificate, we would not change that profile. Were we to do all of that without changing how we measure the performance of teachers, how we measure the functioning of schools through institutional appraisal and inspection or even the performance of the Ministry through independent evaluation, we would not be successful and that is one of the reasons, Sir, that the principle of accountability is so integral to any educational reform in the early twenty-first century and we have ensured that at each level there is accountability.

For the purpose of those who would wish to know, the first Ministry of Education only came about in 1958 so that over the course of the last 43 years the Ministry has implemented many policies but there had never been an independent evaluation mechanism to determine effectively whether these policies are working or not. Once we committed to the kind of cohesive and comprehensive reform package under EduTech and the sum of money which is in excess of \$400 million over seven years on top of an already extensive budget, we needed to have a system that allows us to evaluate whether the policies we are implementing are, in fact, reaching the goals that we set out to reach and, if they are not, to be able to change them so that they can reach it.

There is no ego in this matter. We have as a Government a desire to reach a particular outcome. We use strategies to reach that outcome and if those strategies are not being effective we must never feel so wedded to those strategies that we do not change them in order to reach the desired outcome. This Government has therefore reached an agreement with the University of the West Indies which saw

the establishment two years ago of the Education Evaluation and Research Centre to which we have paid \$475 000 in each of the two years to ensure that they are capable of designing the tests and the independent mechanisms to see whether, as we implement the EduTech programme, we are meeting the desired outcome of the programme. That is the accountability of the Ministry. Of course, the final accountability is with the electorate and that mechanism is already taken care of every five years.

At the level of the schools, the Education Act in 1983 provided for institutional appraisal and in spite of that provision no institutional appraisals were carried out on a regular basis until two years ago when the Chief Education Officer required institutional appraisals at Mount Tabor Primary, at Louis Lynch and indeed at St. Leonard's. I have one with me now for Alma Parris and we have been systematically appraising schools and institutions, their curriculum, their plant and equipment, the staffing issues, the student issues, the management issues. We have been systematically doing that because we believe that every institution which is publicly funded must be accountable to the people of Barbados if we are to ensure that we are capable of reaching the objectives that we want to reach in terms of changing the profile and the job of the school in the educational system.

I want to commend publicly the Chief Education Officer for taking that stance because, as I say, there can be no ego in these matters. If something is wrong, we need to investigate what is wrong and put ourselves in a position to fix it. It is for that reason that we believe that if you have accountability at the level of the Ministry and you have accountability at the level of the institution then there must be accountability at the level of the individual teacher, the individual head of department, the individual senior teacher. Therefore, the completion of the task which was necessary when we passed the Education Act in 1983 is now finally in place with the provision of teacher appraisal.

Sir, we took a conscious decision that this was a new system of appraisal and therefore the first year which we would use the appraisal and do the training would be a pilot year and any information collected from that would not go on people's permanent records but would just allow us to be able to work the quirks out of the system.

I am happy, Sir, to say that we have been working over the course of the last academic year and there have been some responses from the teachers' unions and head teachers that suggested that they would wish a little more time to work out these quirks and to that extent we have agreed that the term coming up in September would be granted to them as another trial collection period for the training to continue

and for the data which is collected to be used only for the purposes of training and not to go on anyone's record permanently.

We have had an approach to the implementation of teacher appraisal which has seen the cooperation of all of the teachers unions, all of the principals, indeed, all of the stakeholders in the system. I want to say that I want to commend all of the teachers in the system who have been working assiduously to help us correct and get perfect the programme of appraisal. It is a fact that more people will benefit by way of promotion on an independent, transparent basis from that system of appraisal than would suffer from disciplinary action. More people will benefit from that.

Sir, as I speak to you today we implemented three years ago a system of interviewing for persons who want to become senior teachers in this country and over 65 people are being interviewed today, tomorrow and Thursday. In the past, what was done for the most part was that people were sent to act, not interviewed before, were nominated to act and they remained acting for five years, seven years, eight years. You never had an independent evaluation of the skills of the person. A lot of the people acted as senior teachers in this country. Once you start talking about leadership in a school you are talking about a different set of skills than are required for teaching. Unless you are satisfied the persons whom you are putting in those positions have the requisite skills, you cannot expect them to be performing.

That deals with the question of accountability. I do believe that we will look back on this in a few years, confident that we did the right thing and that we completed the safeguards that were necessary if the approach for democratization that was done in the 1983 legislation is to mean something and if, at the end of the day, we are able to make the transition from having an excellent education system for an elite to an excellent education system for the masses of the population.

Sir, that brings me to the issue of the rest of the curriculum reform. I would like to announce that as of this week until the end of September the Chief Education Officer or the two Deputy Chiefs will be speaking to the Barbadian public once a week, every week, until the end of September. We are doing this because we are cognisant that there are a number of significant changes coming both at the primary and the secondary level for curriculum reform that require us to keep all kinds of communication open with the public.

The public would already be aware that the document outlining the curriculum reform, a copy of which has already been laid in this Honourable Chamber, has been available for sale to the general public. Every single teacher in the system would have gotten copies of that document as well as the

teacher appraisal document. We believe that if the changes that are being effected are going to change your work and the substance of your work so substantially, you should not have to rely on an oral instruction but that every teacher in the system should have copies of it and that every parent should have the opportunity to purchase it. There is an abridged document for those parents who just want a cursory glance of it.

2.15 p.m.

Sir, we have also introduced for the first time attainment targets which clearly set what each child is to learn within a particular class and within a particular year. Those attainment targets that are in the public already are the ones for Class I and we are in a position now to release the ones for the early childhood reception years as well as for Class II. The remainder of the classes will be progressively released over the course of the next two to three months.

It is important, therefore, that the Chief Education Officer speaks to the Barbadian public to remind them of many of these changes. I can tell this Honourable Chamber that the Chief Education Officer would have met with teachers and children of every single secondary school since three months ago outlining these changes in detail to them and have worked through with them the salient changes that will be applicable from September.

The salient changes applicable from September are:

1. Every child entering reception in a primary school will have something conducted known as a Basic Skills Assessment Package. This is simply a form which allows the teacher to test and retract the cognitive and physical abilities of that child – what they can recognise in terms of colour, what they can do in terms of their fine motor skills and things that help us to be able to place where the ability level of that child is so that we can appropriately design programmes to be able to bring each child as far as possible to the same level so that teaching can take place from that level.
2. Every child entering Class I in the primary school system from this September will be the first batch of persons to undergo the process of continuous assessment so that by the time these children reach the level of the Common Entrance in Class IV in 2005 their measurement will reflect not only the one shot examination but their skills acquisition from Class I to Class IV will determine their appropriate placement for secondary school.
3. There will be a new system of levels introduced in secondary schools from September 2001. Forms will remain for administrative purposes but levels

are being introduced to better help us assess and teach the levels of skills that will exist in a secondary school so that in future each secondary school over time will offer from Level I through to Level VI. Level VI will be the equivalent of the CXC General Proficiency Examination and Level I will constitute a bridge year from primary to secondary with students leaving primary school going into either Level I or Level II depending on their level of proficiency which will be assessed by a combination of their Common Entrance performance and reading and mathematical test which will be specially developed for them within the first week of term for them to sit. This judgement will be made by the principal and teachers of the particular secondary school but there will be a right of appeal for parents who disagree with the judgement of the school with the right of appeal being to the Chief Education Officer.

Sir, the truth is that we need the Level I because a lot of children who score under par in the Common Entrance really need to have their skills consolidated before you can introduce them to an effective secondary curriculum and Level I will give you that opportunity to reinforce that child's groundings so that they can best take advantage of Level I.

Sir, I indicated that there is no automatic promotion either in the primary or secondary system as of this September so if you do not get it right and you need to spend two years in Level I to get it right, you simply have to spend the two years in Level I to get it right. You may move to Form II but you will be in Level I in terms of the teaching. We are sensitive to the fact that a boy may not want to be fifteen years old and still be wearing short pants so he may have gone up to Form IV but he will be taught in Level II or III because that is where he is in terms of his skills.

Mr. Speaker, it is for that reason that in addition to the National Secondary Diploma, schools will also be giving a certificate of completion and that certificate will show the last level that the children satisfactorily completed before leaving school. No child will leave school after 2005 in Barbados without some record of where their skill level is.

Mr. Speaker, this is important because that child, at some stage of his or her life, may want to access education again and the institution to which the child applies can use that certificate of completion to see at what level you can appropriately start teaching that adult, given the fact that you now have a record.

Mr. Speaker, you are familiar with an institution that is charged with the purpose of giving people a second chance in education but when those children come to the institution it does not know what level the child has attained so that

the institution has the impossible task of having a wide variety of skills in that classroom and trying to teach them a syllabus without knowing from which point each of them can be taught because of the absence of proper transcripts which show the knowledge that has actually been achieved

Sir, we have had an educational system that in the preservation of the provision of education for the elite has sought to exclude many. Many are excluded at the primary and secondary levels, many are excluded at tertiary level and what we are trying to do is to invert that process and instead of excluding to be able to expand opportunities for access at every level of the system as we go forward.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the modular design of the new National Secondary Diploma, the implementation of the levels and a programme that will see certificates of completion will allow us to be able to ensure that persons can access the system at every level, leave at any level but still be able to come back and fit into the system.

Mr. Speaker, once these levels are introduced, a determination will be made for those children entering secondary school in September as to whether they will go into Level One or Level Two.

Sir, there are some children whose school life will never see them wanting to achieve beyond the National Secondary Diploma but if it takes that child six or seven years to reach there then we are capable of providing that child with the opportunity of six or seven years.

There are other children who will reach the National Secondary Diploma in four years because they want to go on to the CXC General at Level Six or they can go on to do the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination or the Associate Degree. Every child does not have the same expectation out of the system but the system must be able to provide an open enough and flexible enough architecture that we are capable of responding to the individual needs of the citizens now that we have accepted the mantle of responsibility that education must be for all and not for an elite few. Therefore, the minimum level that you would wish, if you want to get a National Secondary Diploma, must reach level 5. For example, those children who have reached level 5 in four years, are those who will not have to do level 1 but who, because of their learning at the primary school, can move straight to level 2. Sir, the system now, because of the modular design, can anticipate the range of abilities and can provide adequately for those range of abilities.

2.25 p.m.

Sir, these are the changes that the Chief Education Officer and her two Deputies would be speaking to the

Barbadian public about on a weekly basis. We are also changing the reporting format to parents. At the secondary level we will not only be reflecting the child's academic abilities but we will also have a comprehensive section to match back with the curriculum reform on the child's social and emotional learning targets.

Sir, this is important for the reasons that I gave earlier in respect to the behavioural and disciplinary difficulties that prevent a child from learning if we do not deal with them. Therefore, not only would the parents have an attainment target where their child should be emotionally and socially at a certain age, as a norm – and if he or she is not there, what the parent should do to find out why the child is not there.

Sir, you also have the periodic reporting on a termly basis of that child's development on the social and emotional curve as well as the child's academic performance and performance in extra-curricula activities. Sir, all three of these will constitute the new contents of the report.

Sir, at the secondary level there is a difference in that there is a space for every child to comment on his or her own performance in the school and the report. Currently the report is sent to the parent, the parent signs it and it is returned to the school. In the future this will no longer be the case. There will be a space for the parent to comment and sign and there will be a space for the child to comment and sign, because more and more the process of self-assessment is a critical tool that is needed in the society and we believe that the child must be actively engaged irrespective of his or her own performance and must develop the honesty and the skills to be able to do that kind of self-assessment. Sir, those are some of the kinds of changes that will come in respect of September, 2001.

I want to update where we are with the EduTech programme. Let me say for the record, because I heard it said in another place by persons from the Opposition, that EduTech is now being passed as a seven-year programme. EduTech has always been, from the point of the signature of the loan and from the point of the public announcement, a seven-year education sector reform programme. We have had some slippage in terms of time because of the civil works process. I can happily report to this Honourable Chamber that all of the construction work, with the exception of the Hall of Combermere School which is being completed this summer, on the nine-year 1 primary schools and the four secondary Year 1 schools has been completed.

All of the technology hardware is in those Year 1 schools and almost all of the software, certainly the operating systems software, educational management software and some of the academic software is already in those schools.

Sir, there is a slight problem with some of the academic software which the Solicitor General's Chamber is sorting out. The training for those Year 1 teachers would have been long completed because our training has been in advance of both the civil works and the procurement for the technology and software.

Mr. Speaker, from September, 2001 those schools would be up and running. Three schools among those 15-year 1 schools where each child would be given a Studypro laptop computer are, Sharon Primary School, South District School and Alexandra Secondary School.

Sir, repairs are already being executed on at least six of the Year 2 primary schools. The schools on which repairs have started are, St. Matthew's School, Mount Tabor School, St. Jude's, School, Pine Primary School, St. Luke's Primary School, and Grazettes Primary. The completion dates for the majority of these schools are, in relation to Grazettes Primary School, we are anticipating that by November 2001, this school will have its work completed and, Sir, by October St. Matthew's Primary School, St. Luke's Primary and Mount Tabor Primary and by December 2001, Pine Primary School and St. Jude's Primary School.

Mr. Speaker, we have now issued the award of the tender for St. Paul's Primary which would start shortly. St. Bernard Primary, St. Andrew's Primary and St. Alban's Primary will go out to tender shortly. The working drawings are being currently completed for the new school to be built, which will see the amalgamation of Erdiston Primary and Carrington's Primary at the new site at Flint Hall, St. Michael. But suffice to say, we are cognizant that both students at Carrington's Primary and the Erdiston Primary Schools, as well as their teachers, have all been undergoing trying conditions. They have all been informed that there will be a completely new primary school built for them on that site, and the work on that should start by January, 2002. Given the time limits that we normally set they should be in that new primary school by September 2003. We know that it requires forbearance, but we also know that there is no gain in life, unless one is prepared to make sacrifices to make that gain come true.
2.35 p.m.

In respect to the secondary schools in Year 2, the tenders have all gone out, Sir, and they will close on 15th August, 2001. If the regular flow continues from that point, we should be able to start the refurbishment in respect of those schools in October. Those schools are: Queens College, St. Lucy Secondary, the Alleyne School, Louis Lynch Secondary School and Princess Margaret Secondary School.

Sir, in order to put us back on track, last year we went out for designs in the Year 3 and Year 4 schools and I am in a position to indicate to this Honourable Chamber that we

have allocated the Year 3 and Year 4 schools to five lots of design teams. The designs have almost been completed for the Year 3 schools and we hope to be able to receive a costing on them and to send out to tender for the Year 3 schools by the end of this calendar year. Therefore, once funds are available from the Minister of Finance, we can, in fact, expedite the civil works programme, because all of the preliminary work would have been done and the time that we have lost at the beginning due to the construction boom can, in fact, be regained.

One of the things that is concerning, in respect to the civil works programme in the EduTech Programme, has been the absence of local companies tendering, particularly at the primary level. While we know that the international finance institutions have very rigorous rules, the truth is that, in Year 1, we had a situation where only one company tendered for all of the nine primary schools that were being done, and that was having gone out to tender twice. Once we awarded the tender to that company, which is not a Barbadian company in ownership, that company then subcontracted to all of the smaller contractors in Barbados.

I am not blaming them for doing this because it is a very wise thing to do, but I asked myself, why was it not possible for a Barbadian company in ownership, to do the same tender and to subcontract to Barbadian workmen to complete the work. As fate would have it this year when we talked about it, we were a little more fortunate in that we have two other companies beside that one and, therefore, there are three different companies working at the primary schools level now. I am still suggesting to you that we would wish to see far greater competition and to that end the Ministry of Education, with the Bank, has sponsored a number of workshops showing small contractors what they need to do for this type of work, so that in the future, we can get more and more small companies tendering for construction.

May I say at this stage, Sir, that we, therefore, are happy with the progress under the EduTech Programme in respect to the training programme. As I said, it has always been ahead of both the civil works and the procurement of hardware and while we are finished with all of Year 1, we are doing the construction and procurement work for Year 2. We are training the Year 3 teachers in aspects of their training to ensure that those teachers are trained ahead of time and given the opportunity to be able to settle in.

There are a lot of ancillary agreements that we have with other people. We were happy when the Teachers Co-operative Credit Union, for example, placed a special interest rate and fund, so that the teachers can purchase computer equipment at a concessionary rate, given the cost of technology. Those are the kinds of things that the Ministry

has always been doing to be able to expand access for teachers in the system. Each teacher is also exposed to Information and Communication Technology and also being trained in the shift from a more instructive approach to a child-centred approach. In other words, making the child the centre of learning by incorporating critical thinking skills and technology into that whole teaching process.

In addition, Sir, each teacher is being exposed to the management of changed training which is currently being delivered. That programme has started a little later than normal because we had to tender for persons for that programme, so that we are looking at the processes from all levels. Can they master technology? Can they make the shift in terms of the educational approach to teaching? Can they manage the process of change? We are cognizant that we are asking persons to perform in different ways, apart from their normal or traditional way.

We have also reintroduced the induction course for teachers, so that no one will go into the classroom in September without having gone through an induction course to what is expected from them as teachers. It was unfortunate when this induction programme was suspended. We believe it to be absolutely essential, because you cannot expect a person to move from the street, as you would know, Mr. Speaker, into a classroom, without knowing what was expected of them and then expect to get quality from them.

This year, there are 62 teachers enrolled in the two-year in-service programme at Erdiston Training College. Once again, the process of teacher training had been stopped by the previous Government. Sir, three years ago, we reintroduced it. This is critical, because while these teachers are being trained, they are still being paid and therefore, teachers in fact, represent a very special category of persons, because as a lawyer, doctor, plumber, carpenter and in all other spheres, persons have to do without money once they are being trained.

What this now means, is that it is a double cost to Government because we have to pay those replacement teachers at school. It is not a cheap thing to undertake, but we have committed ourselves to it.

Let me say at this point, Mr. Speaker, that this Government is committed to the development of a programme that in the future will see us training surplus teachers in the system. However, as I said in this Chamber last week, in spite of the fact that the newspaper mentioned about 150 teachers leaving the system, the Ministry of Education has only received 27 applications from teachers wishing to go to New York to teach.

2.45 p.m.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the Cabinet of Barbados took a decision that we would only be giving leave, in any event, to twenty persons. We are investing too much money in the retraining of teachers in this country for our purposes, to allow them to leave right away.

In those circumstances, Sir, we feel that if we want to be able to have a ready pool of teachers available for export, then we need to expand the training far beyond where it is currently. We are in the process of reviewing how we will do that in the context of the rationalisation of the tertiary education sector which will be announced to the public over the course of the next few weeks.

Sir, as you can see, teaching retraining is well on its way and it is critical to the process. Let me just say at this point that the Ministry of Education will be putting a programme before Cabinet, to approve the joint delivery of programmes between Erdiston Teachers College and Mount St. Vincent University out of Canada for special educational training at Erdiston Teachers College. We also have been in discussion with two leading universities in North America. One in the United States of America and one in Canada to assist us with the development of material, delivery of the curriculum and the certification of students.

The tertiary sector is going to have to go into joint venture arrangements with established universities, if we want to be able to deliver the changes in as short a space of time as they are being required of us. So that you will hear us partnering, for example, with the Barbados Community College. You will hear us partnering at the UWI in Information Technology. We are partnering now in Special Education between Erdiston Teachers College and Mount St. Vincent University, Canada. We are hoping to continue discussions with the UWI for this same two-year initial training towards a formal Associate Degree. We may partner, hopefully, Sir, with Columbia University or McGill University of North America or other elements of the delivery of tertiary education. More and more, this is going to become a seminal feature of the delivery of tertiary education in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak to the issue of the Primary Educational Programme very quickly and also to St. Leonard's School. I can report to this Chamber, Sir, happily, that the award for the contract at St. Leonard's Secondary School has finally been granted. Phase two of the work has been fraught with many problems. We had to go to tender twice, which meant that some three years elapsed, in respect of the suspension of works between phase one and phase two.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we have a situation where there were serious problems in the administration of this second tender. I believe, Sir, that I have a duty to put these facts before this Honourable Chamber.

Sir, five companies sought bidding for St. Leonard's Secondary School, namely:

4. China Jiangsu Corporation, better known as the China State of Trinidad, based in Trinidad.
5. China State, Barbados.
6. PCC Steel Workers and Builders, one which I believe whose Chief Operating Officer is a former Minister of Government by the name of Mr. Lionel Craig.
7. Moorjani Caribbean Limited.
8. Hafeez Karamath Construction Limited.

Sir, here are the bids from the companies listed above:

- (a) China Jiangsu bid at \$11 097 267
- (b) China State, Barbados bid at \$13 934 991
- (c) PCC Steel Workers and Builders bid at \$13 952 485
- (d) Moorjani Caribbean bid at \$14 593 930
- (e) Hafeez Karamath Construction Limited bid at \$16 598 883.

Sir, the bids ranged from \$11 million to \$16 million for the same project.

Now, the Special Tenders Committee of Government chaired by the Chief Supply Officer, recommended that the contract be awarded to China Jiangsu Corporation, which is the Trinidadian China State Government. Theirs was the lowest bid which was \$11 097 267. The Ministry of Education accepted the recommendation of the Special Tenders Committee and China Jiangsu Corporation was duly notified of the award of the contract for their company.

During the course of time when the contract was being awarded, a report was made to the Ministry of Education that a principal officer of China State Construction, Barbados had attempted to offer a gift to the project managers who were the technical evaluators before the process of analysing the bids had been completed.
2.55 p.m.

Without going into the matter which I believe is now before the Director of Public Prosecutions for his review, an opinion from the Attorney General indicated that the bid by

China State Barbados Limited would not be acceptable for reasons of public policy and for reasons relating to the Prevention of Corruption of Offences legislation in this country.

So China Jiangsu Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago at the same time then was offered the contract without objections from the Ministry of Education and at the same time it was ruled that China State Barbados Limited would not be considered because of what transpired. China Jiangsu Corporation from Trinidad and Tobago, because three months would have elapsed while all of this was going on, then contacted the Ministry of Education and indicated that they were no longer interested in renewing their bid bond and was no longer interested in accepting the job at the St. Leonard's Boys' School. That was earlier this year.

This meant that there had to be a review of the contracts and to whom it would be awarded. The Special Tenders Committee felt that we should go back out to tender but the Ministry of Education felt that we had been out to tender twice on this project, that some three years had now elapsed and that for us to go back out to tender again it would leave the St. Leonard's Boys' School without the project being completed for at least nine months to another year. Since the project was being financed by the Caribbean Development Bank we had to go to tender outside of Barbados in a number of other countries and we had to advertise in 'Development Business', which is the journal accepted for the publication of these tenders where the minimum period for tender is 45 days.

We then went to Cabinet and to the Caribbean Development Bank. The Caribbean Development Bank indicated to the Government of Barbados through the Ministry of Education that it would then accept an award to the next valid evaluated bidder. I want to repeat that, Sir. They said they would accept the award of the contract for the civil works at the St. Leonard's Boys' School to the next valid evaluated bidder. I believe the actual language they used was the lowest conforming evaluated bidder. In those circumstances, the next lowest conforming evaluated bidder was PCC Steelworks and Builders Incorporated. The Cabinet of Barbados agreed with the procedure and principle set out by the Caribbean Development Bank and, therefore, agreed to the issuance of the contract to PCC Steelworks and Builders Incorporated.

Now, Sir, this has been a long and frustrating process over the last three years and I want to thank the parents, students and staff of the St. Leonard's Boys' School for bearing with us while we had this matter resolved. Sir, sometimes we get funding from international institutions but the rules which govern the time periods and the manner in which we do business can make the process so frustrating that you spend a longer time trying to obtain the objective than if you had committed to funding out of the Consolidated Fund in the first place.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is a relieved person today because he knows that, with the contract having been awarded, work would soon commence. The sum which has now been corrected for the contract to be awarded is \$13 434 782 with a construction period of 48 weeks. Work will commence on Monday, July 30, that is next Monday, and it is envisaged to finish by July next year to be specific once there are no major problems with the weather or on site with the building.

This would see the St. Leonard's Boys' School having for the first time a new multipurpose hall for the students and for the use of the community. It would see the provision of an autotronics lab which will allow the School to be able to compete with the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic in the training of the boys in autotronics so that they can work on the types of cars that are coming into Barbados now, most of which are controlled by electronics and computers. It would see a comprehensive craft building being done. One will be dedicated to technical drawing and one to industrial arts. It would see improved facilities for staff and administration. It would see the construction, for the first time, of a canteen because the St. Leonard's Boys' School has been using a mobile canteen for as long as I know and it would see a pavilion at some point in the future being built.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the forbearance of the management, staff, students, parents and the Board of the St. Leonard's Boys' School because this matter has been fraught with many administrative difficulties which were beyond the control of the Ministry of Education because once we accept that we were going to international funding then we are subject to the rules of the financial institution. As I have said, having gone to tender twice over three years we did not feel, once the Caribbean Development Bank was prepared to reimburse the funds for this project and were prepared to issue a formula for us to go to the next conforming bidder, that we should do otherwise.

Now, I know that because of the ownership of that company, a lot would be said, but I am prepared to answer it on all fronts. I am also prepared to suggest that because of a man's previous incarnation he should not be discriminated against in this country and this Government nor would I be party to that discrimination. Suffice it to say, because already over the last few months the Opposition has tried to create mischief on this matter through their columns and utterances, the Ministry of Education was prepared and, in fact, did accept the award of the contract to a company in Trinidad by the name of China Jiangsu Corporation which was the lowest bidder. It was only when China Jiangsu Corporation three months later turn around and refused the contract that we had these other circumstances coming on stream.

3.05 p.m.

On the question of the domestic primary programme, as usual, Sir, this Government has been spending in excess of \$2 million every summer on regular maintenance to primary schools. Sir, there are those who would wish to make an evil out of the virtue of the repairing of primary schools in this country and who would wish to encourage an intolerance among Barbadians when things are not done to time or in a manner that they believe they should happen.

I want the Shadow Minister for Education, a man in the Other Place – he tried to be in another place for St. Michael North East but he is now in the Other Place in the Senate. When he is on the radio or when he is in the Other Place talking about schools not being ready or schools finishing after time – to recognise that this Government has repaired more primary schools over the last seven years than previous Governments altogether since Independence.

I go further, Sir, I know of no Barbadian who goes to repair a house who does not expect there to be some dislocation during the period of repair. Even when they are fixing it up for Christmas, the house is confused, the curtains down, the furniture packed to one side because everybody knows that the only way you can do work and live in a place is if you are prepared to put up with some discomfort first in order to do it.

There is so little else for the Opposition to criticise in education that they seek to go after the school repair programme which for all kinds of reasons may have some delays. You know that it is of note that in the last two years on which primary school opened, none of the schools that we worked at were the ones that were the problems. There were those that we could not reach because of budget and we worked on over 40 of the 80 primary schools. Belmont Primary School was one of them.

In September 1999, I remember it well, CBC and others went up there to Belmont to complain about the conditions but what they did not tell you was that in the scale of things Belmont was not even among the worst forty schools that we had to deal with.

I spoke at the beginning of this debate that in 1890 when the Education Act was passed they were complaining about the state of elementary schools then and about the lack of cohesive and proper maintenance. I am saying to you, Sir, that governments all around the world, and this is no boast but it is a fact, have not usually put in place proper maintenance programmes. Part and parcel of what we have had to deal with in the domestic primary maintenance programme as well as the EduTech programme is to come to grips with the fact that while we may have built a number of new schools since the 1950s, as many as 20 plus new schools, that the majority of the school plant in this country remains untouched.

Mr. Speaker, much of that school plant comes from the nineteenth century. I gave figures in here that in 1844 Barbados had over 200 elementary schools and much of that school plant still exists today. When we went to South District School we wanted to keep the old building there by the roadside and once we went into the building, Sir, the engineers advised us that there was no way possible to keep the building. We abandoned the thought of it.

Equally, Sir, that is the case at all kinds of buildings. Four years ago when we went to repair St. Paul's we took off the roof and realised all of the up-rights holding up the roof were rotten so that what you went to do, which was to replace galvanize, you had to spend a bundle of money taking off the up-rights and replacing them. In almost every instance, when we go to a primary school what we go to fix is not what we end up fixing because the state of affairs is usually so bad that we have to expand the interest of the Government.

Sir, I only want to say that this programme is continuing this year. We have in the Estimates over \$2 million to spend. We have to keep back some for emergencies as usual but we have issued contracts for Chalky Mount, Charles F. Broome, Eagle Hall Primary, Ellerton Primary, Hillaby Turners Hall, Hindsbury Primary, Luther Thorne, Society – I know the Leader of the Opposition will bear me out and tell you that we fixed Society back in 1995 as well. We are back there again – St. Bartholomew, St. Catherine's Primary, St. John's Primary, St. Martin's Mangrove, St. Silas, St. Stephen's Primary, Vauxhall, Welches Primary, Wesley Hall Infants, Wesley Hall Junior and Wilkie Cumberbatch, which is perhaps the worst of the lot.

Sir, that does not mean that others where emergencies occur will not be repaired, but that is the substantive programme for the summer and, once again, we accept the responsibility of ensuring that the repairs of the school are in good time. Where it cannot be done in good time, the principal, the members of the staff and the students and teachers will all be informed and I want to commend those teachers who over the years have made up time when time has been lost.

I went to a primary school which was under a shed, was taught on a hill under a tree or under that shed. When the rain fell, we got wet. When you wanted to play cricket, people who were left-handers like me could not hit the ball past 20 feet on the leg side because there was a wall and you would be out. We did not have a playing field. We did not have enclosed surroundings but it did not stop the children who went to school there from learning well.

I am making the point, not that the children of this country do not deserve the best conditions, but I am simply

saying that we know what it is to produce even if the conditions are not what we would like them to be. We have had many children in this country learn even when they have had to 'scotch' at times while better was being prepared for them. Never let us lose that characteristic because the day we lose that tolerance is the day we lose a large part of the essence of what it is to be Barbadian. Barbadians know how to cut and contrive. Barbadians know how to be tolerant. Barbadians know how to sacrifice for greater good.

Those who would want to encourage for narrow political gain the belief that you must demand perfection when persons cannot even provide perfection in other circumstances for themselves is to create unreal expectations in our people and we will reap the consequences of it in the wider society at a later stage.

If all of us are committed to this country as they say and as we say we are, then I suggest to you, Sir, that sometimes we have to understand that the nature of politics in this country must rise beyond the provision of a street light or whether in truth or in fact you finish construction on time when you know it is not even the responsibility of the particular representative or politician because they are not the contractors. When you make people believe those are the things by which to judge people, then it is a case of living by the sword and dying not by the sword but indeed by a multiple Collins affliction because the consequences in the society as a whole will be far greater than a sword wound in the end.

3.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment seeks to set out the new provisions for the award of the Barbados Scholarship and new provisions for a new Award of Excellence that the Government wishes to institute.

Sir, until this amendment, the Barbados Scholarship and the Barbados Exhibition were eligible on the basis of the attainment of certain marks, having done 'A' levels in this country. Indeed, Sir, for a person to get a Barbados Scholarship they had to get two Grade As and one Grade B and for the person to get the scholarship it did not matter what grade was received in the General Paper. We are now changing that system because we feel that a Barbados scholar must be a person who reflects a well-rounded approach to the acquisition of knowledge, not only their speciality areas.

When the requirements were raised back in the 1980s from two As to three, people thought it too difficult but many people got scholarship since then and on average 15 to 18 people win the Barbados Scholarship every year. We have the unfortunate phenomenon of people winning the Barbados Scholarship and saying that they do not read and do not know a whole host of things that they should know about Caribbean society or general society.

We are, therefore, requiring by this amendment that a person will get a Barbados Scholarship if they get three Grade As in the 'A' Level Examinations and they also get Grade A in the General Paper. If they get three Grade As and one Grade B, they will only get a Barbados Exhibition. Sir, excellence must not only be in the field of speciality but must also be attained in general knowledge and preparation.

Equally, Sir, we are expanding the eligibility of the Barbados Scholarship beyond those who do 'A' Levels to persons who do either the Associate Degree at the Barbados Community College or the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE). In respect of the Associate Degree at the Barbados Community College, a person who attains a Grade Point Average of at least 3.80 and who got Grade A in Caribbean Society and Politics as well as English and Communications Studies at the Barbados Community College will now be entitled to a Barbados Scholarship as of this year.

Also, persons doing the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination who got Grade One in the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination must also get a Grade One in their equivalent of the General Paper, Caribbean Studies and Communications Studies paper. Once they are Grade Ones all across-the-board the person would now be entitled to a Barbados Scholarship.

There are three routes by which the Barbados Scholarship can be obtained instead of the one route and we have increased the criteria for the existing one route so that all across-the-board excellence must be shown in general knowledge, communications and the Caribbean society.

Sir, this clears the way for the Barbados Community College to abandon the 'A' Level programme as a day programme. They will still offer it on evenings as they have been doing during the course of this last year but not as a day programme. It is my judgment that within ten years the majority of persons in Barbados will either pursue an Associate Degree for which they can get credits for entrance to University or the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination which we have been introducing on a pilot basis during the course of the last academic year in sixth forms of secondary schools. We will be expanding that pilot come next year.

A person will receive a Barbados Exhibition when he or she attains not less than Grade B in the General Paper or Grade 2 in Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination, Communication Studies; Grade B in Caribbean Society and Politics and English. They should attain passes in no fewer than three subjects with at least Grade A in two of the subjects and Grade B in one subject. They should get in

respect of CAPE, Grade I in two two-unit courses and Grade II in another two-unit course.

I will make the document available to the Press and to the wider public because it is a very technical area. We have met with principals of the various institutions and this information was also announced to students more than a year ago so that students who come out at the end of the next academic year will be the first set of people to benefit under these new arrangements.

Sir, we have created a new award called the Barbados Award for Outstanding Achievement for those students at Barbados Community College who are over the age of 21 years old because we feel that the Barbados Scholarship should be reserved for people under the age of 21 and that a scholarship is something that you are capable of achieving early and not after a protracted period of many trials.

The Barbados Award for Outstanding Achievement would be available to persons who scored a Grade Point Average of no less than 3.75 in the Associate Degree programme and persons must be between the ages of 21 and 30.

The benefits of this award would be the equivalent to the benefits that you get under the Barbados Exhibition but it would not be referred to as an exhibition, it would be referred to as an outstanding award. The amendments also reinforce the power to look at the National Development Scholarships, Government scholarships, Government Bursaries to the University of the West Indies and the enabling of grants which is a programme of assistance for persons up to the amount of \$2 000 a year in their final year of study in a tertiary programme.
3.25 p.m.

We believe that these amendments to the Education Act will help raise the bar in terms of achievement and it will send a message to all students, who want to achieve in the system, that simply studying to attain excellence in a specialised area without becoming well-rounded, well-read and capable of critical analysis and expression will not be sufficient. We want students who are well rounded, well-read, capable of critical analysis, capable of sound and concise expression and who, therefore, are capable of being trained at any institution across the globe at any stage of their development. Sir, if you can achieve that level you deserve the merit of being referred to as a Barbados Scholar, a Barbados Exhibition winner or a recipient of the Barbados Award for Outstanding Achievement.

I have every confidence that in the same way when we raised the bar in the 1980s carrying it from two 'As' to three 'As', that by raising the bar on this occasion, with the appropriate application and discipline our students will now

expand their base and be able to attain this new level without giving the ease on the Consolidated Fund. We fully anticipate that we will still be giving out 10 and 20 scholarships each year to Barbados Scholars but we will know that when we give out these scholarships, that these students are those who truly deserve the Barbados Scholarships by reason of being well-read, capable of proper expression and capable of critical thought and analysis.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent a long time today reviewing the state of education in Barbados and placing it in the context of historical development, recognising that a society must always determine what its views and values are and where it wants to go. I must ask the question all the time, whether it is for citizens to meet those expectations and if those expectations are not being met by the profile of students coming out, then it requires change in the educational system. The only unfortunate thing is that change is not a short-term measure. It takes time to bring about change in education and it takes even longer to see the consequences of that change. We are cognizant that it is likely to take at least seven to ten years to see the kind of change that we want to see in the education system come about.

Sir, we believe that we will over the course of the next decade begin to see the results of this reform. We are cognizant that it does not always meet with all expectations but that reform effort is absolutely critical if we are to change the kind of Barbadian and the kind of Barbados we want to have.

I have not dealt with special education today, Sir, because there needs to be another day to address debate on that neither have I dealt fully with tertiary education but I have tried to deal with some of the basics of primary and secondary education. I trust that we can continue the approach that has served us well in this country, where it has been little divide on what is required with respect to education and that the policy continuity that has been the hallmark of Barbadian Governments irrespective of the source of those Governments, shall be the thing that will carry us stronger and stronger into the 21st century.

I thank you.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this Education (Amendment) Bill. I want to state from the outset that it is clear to me that the Government has decided that they need to cut the vote on education as it relates to the amount of money spend on scholarships. Do not mind that you have been given the impression that you have a wider area to choose where you can get a scholarship. When one looks at the height of the bar, it is clear that it is not by accident but well planned and structured by the Cabinet of Barbados. Sir, one must recognise that we are in an age of

globalisation and the best way that we can explain globalisation is to recognise the educational process that we have to follow. We must also recognise that at the primary level, which we regard as the primary schools, is where people of like minds and areas associate to start their educational process. They go on to the secondary schools where they meet a different grouping of people from all across Barbados, then they go on to what we regard as the tertiary level, where, instead of having only to compete with those persons from within Barbados, they have to compete with persons from outside of Barbados.

We have to understand that if we are to improve our education system, we have to recognise that we must have some organisational structure in place that we know the goals that we want to achieve. It does not make sense telling students that they must go to school and learn well; that there must be a system to judge teachers; that the Ministry of Education must interact with the teachers and the students and that the Government must provide finance if we do not know at the end of the day where we want to have our education system and what we are hoping to achieve.

I am saying that from the beginning we must declare what we want to achieve and how we want to impact on the world. I am saying that it cannot be from the mouths of the Barbados Labour Party to tell us the goals in education because the Democratic Labour Party brought free secondary education in 1961 and by 1967, the late Errol Barrow was clear in his mind where the educational process should have been and where it would go. Sir, that is why I found it rather strange listening to the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East as she related to the issue and she made reference to his name. I do not think that it was by accident. I think that it is more by training and affiliation that the Honourable Member would have recognised the greatness of the man.

The point that I want to make on this particular issue, is that instead of the Barbados Labour Party looking at a progressive statement and recognising the progressive statement, continue to lament the fact that the Democratic Labour Party wanted to destroy king sugar. Today, in the year 2001, we are hearing Government acknowledging that we are not advancing our educational system fast enough and that they must implement systems to help implement when, since 1967, the great Errol Walton Barrow would have said and would have laid the foundation for those advancements and also recognizing the fact that in order to impact on the world, we had to put forward our educational system. Yet, instead of us taking the baton and running with it, we have behaved as if this society is one which produces persons to work in the fields and to be maids for others. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that we must understand that in order for us to ...
3.35 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You mean that that is still over your head? Do you want me to break it down for you? I will leave you in the hands of that famous calypsonian...

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, let us proceed.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am saying, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South would understand this point, that our educational system must be able to teach how to export goods, services or people. And I want to repeat that, Sir, that our educational system must be able to teach us how to export goods, services and people and how to import raw materials, people or services, to help us to export. Education must be seen as the solution to globalisation, because if we do not understand that we could as well shut up shop and go home. And the simple reason being that 1961 and we can only approve 20 teachers to leave our shores, then our educational system has failed us, especially in an age of globalisation.

In the 1960's when our educational system had not progressed as it is today, we had no problem in sending persons out of Barbados to work. But yet in 2001, we can only give up 20 teachers. What it does mean is that the educational system has failed us and we have not recognized the power of education.

I am saying that we have to understand our greatest natural resources in this country has to be our people and if we cannot give up our people and to use them to earn foreign exchange in this country, then we have failed our country.

I have not said anything on this matter, but have waited for the occasion. I am saying that if we had to be judged, as a Government, as to how we relate to globalisation we would have failed, because if there was one thing that gave us the golden opportunity to show that we understood what was happening in the world was when that right was given to our teachers to leave our shores and go elsewhere.

I am saying, Sir, that it is not mindful that the system was not put in place for us to have replacement teachers, but the Government would have to accept that responsibility. I am saying, Sir, that everybody should have known that globalisation is not just something that has been upon our doorsteps in the 1990's, but has been always with us. What might be new is the ability of some countries to send their services and their people to our doorsteps to get jobs without us interfering. Mr. Speaker, the same way that those things could have been seen by other people, then if we were a progressive country, we would have seen and would have done likewise.

Mr. Speaker, three and one-half hours were not needed to discuss that issue. The point is that it is our educational system that must be used in order to advance this country. No one should believe that a bus driver can simply drive a bus; it took education. In the 1960's, we sent hundred of workers out of Barbados, to England and other places, to drive buses, yet today, we cannot even give up 27 teachers, but yet, we are bragging about how our system has progressed. The problem in Barbados is that our educational system should have progressed quicker, but we have failed it. We feel that some one owes us something and it is for that reason, that we just have to fall into place when the time is right, we do not have to have any forward thinking about us, but we must sit back and get up some day and decide that we are going to do this and to do that. We cannot do that, Sir and we must be prepared and bold enough to tell our people what must be done and what is required of them to defend ourselves against certain things that are happening in this society.

I want to say this, Sir, and I have said it on many occasions. I have listened to the Honourable Minister and I have no intention of becoming involved in contracts, but one of the things that I hate is having international organizations telling me how to spend money that I am borrowing, Sir, because the point is that I have to repay the principle and the interest and they cannot tell me who to do the work...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Rules? Small nations must stop accepting this foolishness. Let me tell you this, I was in the sugar industry when the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) gave that advice to borrow a loan of \$US3 million to help build Portvale Sugar Factory, but the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) knowing that they had borrowed a bad loan, then passed that loan onto Portvale by way of the Barbados Sugar Industry Limited and the loan had to be repaid by Japanese Yens.

I want the Minister to understand that whatever was stated today it has to be matched by the advice given to the sugar industry and, the same way that they had given bad advice previously, then it is possible that that bad advice will also be given again, therefore, I see CDB as an international organization in the same way that I see the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). I am telling you, Sir, that I do not believe they have our interest at heart. They know what they stand for and will continue to dictate that interest and not the interest of the people of Barbados.

We must understand, Sir, that a lot of focus must be placed on primary education. I do not believe – and I have already said this in Parliament – that the days of having primary schools next to secondary schools must stop. We need to separate primary schools from secondary schools because the type of behaviour that comes from the secondary

schools, is not the type of behaviour that one would want for the younger children at primary schools. I am very serious about this and that is why I have already said to the Minister that the best example she could start with is the removal of St. Lucy Primary School from next to the St. Lucy Secondary School. If there was zoning, I might not be able to make this argument, but we do not have zoning and that is why I will make the argument today based on that point...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I do not understand who pretends that they do not understand that point, the point is that St. Lucy Secondary and Primary Schools are in St. Lucy and I am Parliamentary Representative for that constituency and I have to know what affects that school. Also Sir, the Barbados Youth Service must come under a different department from the Ministry of Education. That allocation is wrong and I believe the same way that persons cannot travel on the land that secondary schools are responsible for, then no one should be able to travel on the land that the Youth Service is responsible for. And that that land spreads too wide and far...and that is also a message for the Honourable Minister for St. Thomas. Pay heed to this particular point...

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The Barbados Youth Service which was once occupied by the American Naval Base and took hundreds of soldiers to protect, as it stands today, they do not have the capacity to guard the students. It is also too near to the action spot – and you know of what I speak, Sir...

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: No, I am not clarifying that. In Parliament, one should understand everything. I am not a teacher. That is a job for a teacher. That is a job for the Ministry of Education...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not necessary follow.
3.45 p.m.

I know the Honourable Members for St. Thomas understands quite well of what I speak and that he will do everything within...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: At least it is better than your 'D' or your 'F' because, according to the calypsonians, you have failed in every department.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I cannot even remember the calypso.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that one has to recognise the importance of these things. Also, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East made a point that I would like to speak to, that is, in the earlier days, teachers were paid according to performance. The truth is that all of us understand the point but the point that must be made is that in those days the types of jobs that people were prepared for, were either to be managers or supervisors on the plantations. It was not hard to teach a man how to manage a sugar field or how to supervise a sugar field. The truth is that the educational system today is quite different and because we do not have zoning, we cannot say that one teacher is teaching better than another because they are not working with equal students.

I might even be able to produce an argument in this Parliament that teachers at the newer secondary schools who get such good results, should be better paid than the ones at Harrison College and The Lodge School, *et cetera*. For the simple reason, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip North said, they have worse material to deal with and their results should be judged on a different level to those who have everything in their favour.

Sir, when you look at that particular point, you should not look at the point from one side, you must be prepared to look at that point from more than one side. Merit pay cannot be seen through the eyes of the Minister but through the eyes of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am not praising myself. I am just making a point. If you disagree with what I am saying, then you need to get up and say it.

Also, Sir, we have to ask ourselves whether or not we are going to continue to have primary schools with increasing numbers. I have watched a system given to us, again, Sir, from outside and I want to repeat, Sir, I have watched a system given to us again, from outside, where they are telling us that we must amalgamate our schools and that the teacher to student ratios must increase.

I am saying, Sir, that we have to watch that ploy because, if we do not watch it, we are going to find that instead of being able to send teachers out, that we have decreased the number of teachers available to our students. For the simple reason that the system now, instead of having 20 to 1, we are now probably going to 40 to 1 which means that as this system continues, the number of teachers available will decrease.

Sir, in making the point that the Minister failed to recognise, by accepting the World Bank's policy on the number of students a teacher must teach, that that policy has also caused us to decrease the number of teachers in the system. Whenever we amalgamate schools, that is exactly what we are doing, that is, increasing the number of students and decreasing the number of teachers available.

Sir, we have to be careful because history will show us that sometimes the smaller the classroom the better the results. A good example of that, Sir, is at Half Moon Fort Primary School in St. Lucy where there are small classrooms and the results are very good. This is an example to show that what we know and what the outsiders understand, is quite different.

Sir, even though we know that, we are still accepting the advice coming from international organisations whose agenda is not in our interest but, because of the dollar, we are prepared to accept the advice coming from them.

You know, Sir, where I stand on that particular matter. My argument is that international organisations look after G8 nations and they do not have the interest of the G77 nations at heart. I will continue to make that point throughout my political life, for the simple reasons, Sir, that it is all about looking after the interest of their friends. The rich nations do not see the poor nations as their friends and the poor nations must understand that they must cut the cloth to suit the piece of gear they want to wear.

Therefore, we must stop allowing people to dictate what is good for us. Sir, another good example of that we would have seen was when we had the OECD battle. Even though we were doing things right, the OECD saw it as wrong and that is the best example in the twenty-first century that small nations should always cite. Yet, in less than one year, Sir, we have already forgotten everything about the OECD and have not educated our people on the processes like the OECD, *et cetera*.

I am saying, Sir, that the OECD situation should be a case study, even from primary schools level where we should be educating our primary school children about things like the OECD, globalisation, *et cetera*. If we do not do that, Sir, we would be just like Zimbabwe where we would have given up all of our fertile lands and then beg our people, because of survival, to go back to the lands. It is rather amazing. We have an educational system that does not teach our people the importance of land.

I am saying that our educational system must teach our people how to survive because survival is the key to everything.

I am saying that because the Zimbabweans, in crunch time, have to go back to the land, we have a brilliant opportunity now before we get to that stage, Sir, to understand the importance of our land.

One of the things in education that students must be able to understand is that they must be able to examine a case study and come to a long-term conclusion, instead of coming with a short-term one.

Sir, for example, less than a week ago, the teachers in our primary and secondary schools should have been asking the students their opinions of the sugar industry and the agriculture industry. That should have been something that teachers should have been bold enough to ask those youngsters, how they feel and be prepared to guide them through things like that, Sir.
3.55 p.m.

What we have is a situation where a month ago somebody can tell us that they support the Government on a single new sugar factory but then the same man could come back using the same data and tell us how he supports Andrews Factory being the new factory and our students have not been asked by their teachers to come to the conclusion and to recognise that that same man could not be using the same conclusion that he used previously and that a new factor now would have to be in the equation.

I do not know whether our educational system is able to ask our students which is the better between golf courses and fertile productive lands but I plan the first opportunity I get to ask Mr. Cave why is his new thinking so different to his old thinking because this is what is confusing the students and then the teachers would be blamed without recognising that this will be impacting in a negative way on the students and not the teachers or the Ministry of Education.

One month ago, a senior person within society with much respect from the students of Barbados gave them a good reason why they should walk the left side of the road but now all of a sudden without the students are now told that they should walk on the right side of the road with no reason given for the change of direction. So how can our youngsters be able to put up with these changes without being confused?

So I am saying today that the biggest problem facing our students is confusion of the mind because of the seniors within society. Therefore, we need to get rid of all of those negative forces that are now confusing the minds of Barbadians especially our young students. We also need to teach them that it is not always everything that glitters that is important, that they need to stay on track and they need to be focussed to achieve what they need and that they cannot look at the lifestyles of other people and believe that they can

achieve the same without having a good educational background.

When we were youngsters, Sir, as you would know, our parents always use to say to us to go to school and learn well because if we go to school and learn well we will achieve everything we want. The truth is now, that system is not in place anymore because after you have done that there is no guarantee that you will come and get a job like we use to because the world is now so selfish, that although that is what is being preached every day, we are hearing now about mergers and that is more pressure on the youngsters.

I am going to tell you one thing, Sir, we must not ever believe that the youngsters do not understand the meaning of mergers because they understand that when you merge how hard society is going to be for them. That is why I feel that a lot of them believe now that it is a waste of time going through the educational system as we thought it used to be because they are realising now that the system that was supposed to deliver the goods is no longer delivering those goods.

People are wondering why it is that people would go to primary, secondary and even tertiary schools and yet still have no faith in the system that we now operate.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: So after 40 years of free secondary education...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: There is still hope, Mr. Speaker, for the Honourable Member St. James North. The best opportunity he had in becoming the Minister of Education is this year, 2001, after certain 'do-flickies'.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: So, Mr. Speaker we have a system now where we are being told that the Barbados Community College would have to be looked at in a different light. I have no problem with that. We have to ask ourselves now if this system that we are having if we might not be limiting the number of students that would be able to do 'A' levels. It is okay to come and pretty this up and make it sound good but at the end of the day what is important is the end effect of what is happening. I personally believe that this is a smart way of downsizing certain things.

Previously, the Minister was telling us about the increases at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the Barbados Community College and the various fourth form schools and now all of a sudden there is a change of heart.

The Minister does not think it is possible anymore to use training as a way to reduce the unemployment level now that she has recognised that this particular system has impacted on the Ministry of Finance and that they need some elbow room. So the Honourable Member is now using the reduction in 'A' levels places and the reduction in scholarships to help deal with this particular situation.

So I hope that the amendment to the new Education Act would be productive although I do not see it happening. I hope also that we will recognise that our educational system must take us into that new era where our people would now recognise that we are not dealing with a local problem but is dealing with an international problem and that we need a new thinking. We have to understand that a man sitting at a desk in Japan can replace a man, not even one man in the generic sense but 10 men, in Barbados by the simple use of a computer. We have to recognise that we are in a technological age and that we as a people have not educated our people the way we should and we need to fast-track the system that we are using so as to get us back in line.

I want to leave this with you, Sir. Our people must be seemed as our greatest resource and we must be prepared to use our people to draw foreign reserves for us. The same way that other people understand how to use their people to extract foreign exchange from us we must be in a position to do the opposite to them.

I thank you, Sir.
4.05 p.m.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, Sir, before actually coming to the substance of what I propose to say, I want to commend the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East for having treated this Honourable House to the type of background that has informed education and the development of education over time and certainly since the eighteen hundreds.

Some years ago on the Floor of this very Honourable House, a White Paper on Education was discussed, and the recurrent theme throughout that White Paper was that "Each One Matters". In an era where there has been tremendous change all over the world and in the Caribbean, the time has clearly come when we must focus on educational systems and our school system and we must assess what strengths there are, identify what weaknesses there are, and then in light of recent developments worldwide, fashion a system of education through reform to ensure that each person in the system actualises himself or herself.

I was heartened, Mr. Speaker, when the Honourable Minister for Education made bold to say in here today that the reform that she contemplated could not have been properly achieved without teacher retraining. She indicated that as curriculum reform was being contemplated, as new

shifts were made in policy, as EduTech came on stream, the old way of doing things could not continue.

The Honourable Member stressed that it would have been pointless moving into the Educational Sector Enhancement Programme using persons to teach who were ill-equipped or not prepared for the job. This highlights the whole challenge at hand. It shows that the whole process of teaching and learning is dynamic and that the way of delivering education in 1950 cannot be the way in 2001.

Some years ago when I was Over There, I suggested that the time had come when rather than seeing educational change and improvement as being taken up with new school buildings that we had clearly come to the situation where we needed to identify a more modern type of infrastructure and I mentioned the notion of making fuller use of technology in education. I am happy to say, Mr. Speaker, that we have now come to a situation where not only is technology being used more but it is used in a very imaginative way to be able to channel the energies of young people and at the same time to stimulate them to take on what is going to be required of them in this modern world.

Mr. Speaker, we have come to a situation where the typical boy and the typical girl in school must not only become aware that life is now more challenging than before but the typical student of this generation must learn and accept that this age is so fraught with turbulence in education and in the economy that today's student can only be sensibly prepared to go to the world of work if such a student has a wide range and wide variety of skills.

I am therefore urging, Mr. Speaker, that today's young student in the school system, whether at the secondary or tertiary level, must be a multi-skilled person. The reason why I am saying so is that even though new opportunities emerge we are realising a particular pressure on our resources in such a way that the conditions in the labour market are not as benign as 40 or 50 years ago. When I did "O" Levels and before I completed my studies, my peer group came to town and went to Service Commission, sometimes with one certificate or two certificates and walked into a job in 1968 and 1969 and have remained in such jobs. There are young people today with five and six "O" Levels who do not have that facility, who cannot challenge for a job even though in the sixties it was considered to be an achievement to have five or six "O" Levels. So what point am I making?

I am making the point that the type of security available to graduates years ago is not present now to the same degree as it was before. For today's student to fit properly into a labour market and economy, that student must have so many skills in addition to a basic education that the student will be

able to maximise his choices. Or even if you want to address the question of normal academics, let us look at the technical/vocational side of education. Suppose there is a young boy or a young girl who does not see himself or herself as wanting a white collar job or wanting a career as a clerical officer or in administration and wants to be technically motivated, that student can be encouraged to do plumbing while at the same time training to do electronic wiring, while at the same time training to do steel-bending. I am expressing it in easy terms, Mr. Speaker, the reason being that I do not want the student of today to believe that one necessarily has to be focussed academically to succeed.

A person who sets easy, simple goals can very well, especially in an era where construction activity is present and where such construction activity can continue for a long time, easily do plumbing, electricity, masonry and carpentry together in a two-year period. That way that person can better challenge in the job market for an opportunity than if that person had one skill.

Today's youth cannot fall victim or fall prey to the temptation of specialisation. There are those of us who understand about specialisation and the division of labour. There are those youngsters who 30 years ago would have contemplated a career as an accountant or as an architect or as a teacher specialising in a given field but as the population has increased and opportunities have grown in some areas but have shrunk in others, it is now a very dangerous thing to be a specialist in one job. The reason for that is that if the opportunity you seek to meet your specialty does not exist then you are in trouble. However, if you have two or three skills, your specialty or first choice when denied to you will still see you being able on the basis of your wide variety of skills to settle for your skill of second choice and such like.

The Educational Sector Enhancement Programme, EduTech, when viewed from the point of view of a teacher delivering it, has potential to do many things. A lot of learning goes through the eye and the ear. A lot of learning need not occur in the framework of teacher/talk and teacher/chalk. Using computers creatively can stimulate and motivate. The whole core, as you know, Mr. Speaker, from experience of the teacher interacting with the student in the student's interest is to so inspire the student that a student wants to learn and achieve.

4.15 p.m.

The beauty of using computers in the classroom is to motivate, stimulate and capture the imagination of the student. At the same time, the computer by itself can be so programmed to actually teach the student. Sometimes the computer has such a dynamic effect on youngsters that it is the principle and sometimes the exclusive medium through which we can reach them.

There are good teachers in schools who report difficulties in reaching students. There are teachers when they fail to reach students sometimes turn to other students to find out if these students can encourage their peers or assist them directly. The teacher who is not reaching the student must try to work out ways and means by which he can keep the students interested and motivate the students.

Mr. Speaker, there are definite skills required in the real world which the computer can pass on to the student and equip and train the student. This is especially so in the context of a country that had transcended the agrarian economy and has almost catapulted itself into an economy of services. If in the future, our young people are going to be confronted by an economy that operates on the tertiary level of services then the EduTech programme for those visionaries who have been sensible enough to encourage and introduce it, will be that type of programme that will well-equip our students beyond current expectations of their peers and teachers into the new economy of services.

The day cannot be too far off when the educational system, based on the reforms that are now being practised, will see those who transmit knowledge encourage greater self-reliance amongst our children. If we encourage our people to copyright their literature, poetry and songs and if we encourage our young people to practise self-employment and be their own entrepreneurs, then the reforms referred to today will square with these objectives and with these ideals.

Mr. Speaker, I think the Honourable Member is on the right track and she must be complimented. The Honourable Member did not mention it expressively in here today but one of the first things the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East did when she became Minister of Education was to examine critically how many children were achieving and the restraints, inhibitions and constraints that were preventing the maximum achievements.

The Honourable Member discovered as far back as 1994 that in excess of 70 per cent of our students who attended secondary school left without any form of certificates. She therefore, sought to diagnose the reason for under-achievement. The Honourable Member came up with the evidence that suggested that some children were confronted with genuine learning disabilities like problems with sight, hearing and dyslexia. Using that type of diagnosis, she then moved on to the White Paper on Education with the theme 'Each One Matters'.

I will speak to this theme in the way in which the Honourable Member for St. Lucy should have spoken to it. If we say that each one matters then what we are saying is that the 70 per cent that do not have certificates and who could be described as being left out or disappointed and if

they had been brought up in an ethos where each one mattered, something would have been done to identify what to do with them and something would have been done to work on them.

Mr. Speaker, 'Each One Matters' suggests that a human being, born in the image and likeness of God, must not be left out of the mainstream of education and that where he or she is not achieving to the satisfaction of traditional standards of achievement that he or she should not be disregarded. Therefore, the whole range of reforms contemplated are designed to reach a lot of these children.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East clearly has a vision to stop people from being marginalised by the educational system. The Honourable Member said that there are already established agencies to deal with social engineering. The Honourable Member mentioned the Probation Department, the Youth Juvenile Scheme and the Child Care Board and that each of these has a role to play in developing our people and that each of these has to be involved, not as a separate entity doing its own thing but collectively in the process of saving and redeeming our youth.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the question, how a child at Mount Tabor at age ten could have character, respect and behaviour but fifteen years later that child is on 'the block' defying society, turned off by established social norms and such like.

The Committee to which the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East referred, that broad-based Committee, drawn from the social agencies and working with the education system will be dealing with these things.

Mr. Speaker, recently you were declared fit having been subject to therapy and you came to the wicket and batted a good innings. Sir, you suggested that even though those on the block engaged in antimonial behaviour, if you could retool them and give them a skill you should be able to redeem them.

Mr. Speaker, when we contemplate policies in here, we do not do so in a frivolous way. The types of programmes at the prisons are aimed at rehabilitation and redeeming persons and are also part of this whole process of what the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East calls social justice.

I think that if each one is to matter even the fellow who ends up spending eighteen months in jail as a first offender with no inclination to repeat the offence must not be left out. He must be redeemed if each one matters. Mr. Speaker, if life were different, the Divine who says that He would forgive seventy times seven, in the world of politics it would have to be higher for some of us in here. Sir, if the Divine

is prepared to give us a chance at redemption, who are we on earth and in this Honourable Chamber to be so judgmental when a fellow goes wrong as to write him off entirely, find some excuse, external to ourselves, to blame for his having gone wrong.

4.25 p.m.

I think that this debate should focus all of us on taking stock of where our youth are in society. I proposed the question earlier in this contribution, how is it that a well-behaved child at the age of 16 when he reaches the age of 18, becomes like a monster. Mr. Speaker, it may very well be, that in addition to all we are doing in here in terms of looking at the education system, we may have to focus clearly on society and economy to find out if development in society and economy do not run contrary to the aspirations of persons out there who would like to get back on track.

Is there a grouping of people who run anti-social behaviour because of certain developments outside of themselves which entice them to that type of behaviour? We have to take stock. This is the type of debate where all Parliamentarians should put our youth as those who would run our country in the future as being the primary resource that we have and we should do our utmost to ensure that these young people do their utmost.

The final point I would like to make in support of my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, is this. In a situation where life does not stand still and where it is highly probable that today's standards, under the influence of elasticity, is adjusted to a different norm or group of norms tomorrow in an era, certainly, where nobody can sensibly resist change or should quarrel about it.

Mr. Speaker, the last point is – I am very supportive of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, in the area of this whole process. Mr. Speaker, note what I am saying, this process of curriculum reform. I am using the word process deliberately. Indeed, when we cease career learning and teaching, we should never focus on events but always on processes, there is a philosophical difference. An event happens and a process is ongoing and continuing.

Sir, when I refer to the process of curriculum reform, I am both suggesting that improvements and developments are evolutionary in nature, evolving, growing, coming out gradually, emerging, and at the same time I am also putting the philosophical position that in the specific context of education where it cannot stand still, that learning is a process and this has to be carried.

Mr. Speaker, too many of our people see learning as something that comes to an end when we are 16 or 17 years

old. I once had a friend from St. Philip who was so convinced that once you achieve a certain amount of learning that was it. He swore that after he graduated from secondary school he would not even read a traffic sign. As far as he was concerned he had arrived. Sir, where the world changes and where we have to meet new challenges, we have to be prepared always to learn something new. Sir, the way the world is, nobody under the age of 45 years old can truthfully get up and boast that he or she has a secured position in this world. Therefore, all of us should be prepared to learn anew and continue along that process of training and retraining and education.

Sir, a young fellow, who is 18 years old, should not only be encouraged to develop as many skills as possible but he must be told that learning is ongoing and that education is never ending. I think that in the context of the Minister's proposals for curriculum reform, where down the road, over the next five or six years, there are going to be adjustments to our schools' curricula, not only must she be complimented but she must be credited with the type of vision that takes into account where Barbados' society and economy could be between the year 2001 and 2010.

I have been supportive. I must apologise that I was a little slow in getting up to make my speech and being in the wrong position to make such a speech. Mr. Speaker, I close by saying that all Parliamentarians should seriously focus on the critical role of education.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East in her introductory remarks said and gave credit to education as a possible means of achieving forward and social and other mobility. We here, in a non-partisan way should not only be supportive of all that the Minister has been proposing in the whole Ministry but we here should be prepared to go out into the community and say fearlessly to all and sundry out there that there should respect and uphold education and, themselves, always be prepared to learn more.

Sir, a lot of learning is what we call incidental learning. There are Honourable Members in here whom I have heard speaking about finances and they have never studied it. Through a process of incidental learning by listening to the radio and reading they were able to pull it all together in their brains and come and talk sensibly on this matter. When we talk about incidental learning, I am therefore challenging Barbadians to go beyond learning in the school system to learning in the informal situation. I regret the fact that libraries are not used to the same degree as there were 40 years ago. I compliment the fact that today's policy makers are trying to diversify the activities within libraries to entice people there. I saw recently in the newspapers a programme conducted in Spanish in a library and I gladly welcome that.

Mr. Speaker, one of the values of the EduTech programme is this. Sir, where the EduTech programme after seven years would have done a lot to stimulate interest in learning, then a lot of our youth may very well come away from that programme with the advantage of recognising, just by being exposed to the computers, that their learning and education need not occur within a formal setting of the school. Sir, even though the computers of the EduTech programmes are being used in schools, there are going to be bits and pieces of stimuli coming out of the Education Sector and Enhancement Programme that will drive all young people to yearn to learn; to want to learn in the future; to be multi-skilled themselves; to be able to apply themselves to the plough with a determination to achieve nation building.

Mr. Speaker, even though I have told you twice that I am going to conclude soon, there is something known to us educators, something known as accepted domain. Where this country is now, requires those who have this responsibility, to focus the attitudes of our young people. Sir, that is why I was expressing dismay that at primary level the attitudes look good and 12 years after they are completely different. Even though we would be multi-skilled people and prepare them for the job market, there are still some basics about civilities that people should have. Therefore, it is that effective domain. The educational sector enhancement programme that can be used to focus persons on healthy behaviour. I want to see greater patriotism. I want to see the youths of the future develop these values that the Honourable Member of St. John talks about all the time. And he was right because quite often a lot of under-achievement has to do with the family, either through inadequate family structures or inadequate stimuli coming from the family.
4.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I take a special delight in supporting what my colleague, the worthy and Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is proposing. There can be no question that as time goes on, that refinements will have to be made in the interest of standards for the Barbados Scholarship. I want to say that I have been very serious and sincere about all that I have put before this House today. I thank you.

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

Mr. D. T. GILL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to the Bill before this Chamber. The last Speaker was in his true prolific style, although he said that even though he started out slowly, he certainly ended in good mark and style.

Sir, one thing that is certain is that this Bill before the House and the contribution of the Honourable Minister,

shows that the policy and framework for education in Barbados has been very well thought out, clearly defined and, Sir, it is a policy which will serve this country well into the next 15 to 20 years with the occasional adjustments as warranted.

Sir, it must also be seen as the necessary adjunct to the White Paper which was presented some five years ago when I was in the Senate and one sure thing is, Sir, is that there is no hard and fast way, neither is there any quick-fix way to the system. Sir, there are certain things that must be realized and certainly to the student or pupil around whom all change or policy should be centred.

Sir, you must also recognize the person being taught and where exactly you want to get. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East speak to the fact that the guidelines will show what a child should know at age 6 or 7; whether it has to do with shapes and colours, or history, or background or its origin. This serves in great measure and in good stead, particularly when children are moving from one country to another you will see the level of achievement. If I understand her correctly, this system of gauging and marking children will continue well into their mid-teens and beyond.

I remember about two years ago, a Barbadian child about the age of 8 to 13, who was living in St. Lucia for about five years, then came back to Barbados. The guardian brought the child to my office and showed me a letter from the school he had attended in St. Lucia. Sir, there was no way that the educational authorities here would have been able to know exactly where to place that child. It caused great pain to that child to find out that having been tested, he had to go back to a level which was pre-common entrance. That, Sir, in my opinion, had turned that child completely off and today, he is somewhere in North America, but I am sure that in North America that child would have found even more difficulty settling into such a system because, as you know, European countries always ask for transcripts; they want to know at what time and at what level you have developed.

Sir, the system must be one in which you know where you want to place a child from point X to point Y and at what time of the child's development. You cannot get away from the fact that the teacher has to work and very hard. It is true that primary level teaching, in my opinion, must be one of the most difficult tasks to be found in any part of the world. Where you have to take a child who is not fluently conversant, who does not know what it is like to be away from his home setting, who has still not gotten over the basic toilet training, and the teachers bring this child up to a level where he or she is conversant and can explain himself or herself as the occasion arises.

Sir, I have the greatest of respect for primary school teaching and it is to that end that I would never forget my primary school teachers. I would never turn my back on my primary school and that is why, on any occasion, however I can be of help to them, I will be.

Sir, there are times where individual teaching is necessary. There are times where remedial teaching is necessary. There are times when collective or group teaching is necessary. The Honourable Minister has shown us in her presentation where there will be need and where it will suffice the case in point.

Sir, there is also the place for growth. Today we find many people scoffing at rote. In my opinion, rote does serve its place. There are a lot of things that cannot be understood at a given point in your life, but having gone past that and on reflection, it then makes a whole world of sense.

Sir, there is also a place for repetition. The language is about repetition. You say the same thing basically everyday, that is why when you get the publications, particularly in foreign language, they focus mainly on things, for example, travelling, what you say at breakfast, at the train station and shopping because these things form part and parcel of your day-to-day life. Sir, it is for that reason that one can find a child singing two or three Crop Over songs with the maximum of facility, because it is repetitious and they hear them all the time.

There is also a place for drill, whether in the classroom or on the playing field and I would wish that we give some greater attention to sports as a part of developing education.

Sir, from time to time, I happen to be involved with some junior sports and I can see what type of classroom student an individual is, particularly the way in which he or she applies himself or herself on the playing field. There has been a lot of talk about conflict resolution – a new term for me – but sports can bring out the best in us. It can teach us how to resolve conflicts. A well trained and disciplined sports person knows that one does not achieve anything easily. One also knows how to accept victory or defeat, and not to impose your strength afterwards in an overwhelming manner upon your opponent. All of these things, Sir, form part and parcel of life.

Sir, whatever the technology be in getting the practice – as the educators would say, practising to fix a concept – whatever it is, it must be varied and it must be multiple in choice. Therefore, Sir, I can see from the very presentation of the Minister that great account had been taken in the aspects and the ways of fixing these concepts.

Sir, at the same time, one must want to know what one expects as one's return. Does one want an immediate return?

Does one want a long-term return? Sir, I am concerned if the returns that we anticipate with the monies that we are spending will be pleasing to our hearts, in another ten or fifteen years down the line.

4.45 p.m.

Sir, I remember clearly as a boy, my next door neighbour was a teacher in Pitman typewriting and shorthand and the basics. Sir, he had three school shifts per day, a man by the name of Mr. Cane. Today, you could still find senior clerks in the Government system who would have come through his training.

Sir, I also remember the time of the year when those results would have been printed in the newspaper and you would see people gaining passes for fifty words a minute, one hundred words a minute, one hundred and twenty words a minute, distinctions or otherwise and this was a big part of people's education. I am sure were he to have been alive today, he would have been very well advanced in the new and modern technology.

Sir, I say that to say that there are, at various times of our development, various types of technologies which will drive our educational system. At that time, it was shorthand and typing, as I said, and students who left school without any certification, would have done a basic English, a course in Pitman, then they went to the intermediate and advance stages and then they would have progressed to Oxford and Cambridge or Cambridge, as the case may have been. Sir, it goes to show that achieving is not an easy task and there is nothing new when it comes to adapting and changing to the current technologies.

Sir, it is my firm belief, particularly at this time of the year, when it was driven home even more forcibly that there should be some sort of zoning in our primary schools. The constituency which I represent has four primary schools and on the periphery, another four or six and Sir, the same thing obtains in St. Michael East and St. Michael South East. If you take those three constituencies together, you have no less than some twenty primary schools.

Sir, it is of some concern to me and I am sure for the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, who is with us here in the Chamber, and the Honourable Member for St. Michael East who had to leave – we all share the same concern – that people who live within these constituencies complain that their children do not have an opportunity to attend the schools in their constituencies which they would like them to attend while there are people who come from outside of the constituency and have free and easy access to these schools.

Sir, it is somewhat disturbing to know that you have a child who has just cleared five years, lives within walking

reach of a school – and would not have to encounter great traffic because the school is just a stone's throw away from the house – when you have to put that child on a bus to travel a distance of a mile and a half to two miles to school. It is a very difficult and daunting experience and I would wish, Sir, that a zoning practice be done where there is a first choice from immediately within the constituency. The zoning could be done with respect to the electoral boundaries where the first choice is within the immediate area and then the other choices from just on the outside of that area.

Also, Sir, at this time of the year, there is great pain and difficulty when some parents are looking for somewhere to send their children. These children have reached age sixteen, had to leave school and the parents know that these children are not yet ready for the world of work. These children do not have skills and they do not have the ability to get into the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the parents are not sure if they would get into any of the skills training programmes.

I would wish, Sir, that the primary schools which lie idle from 3.00 in the afternoon until 9.00 the next morning that these plants be used for the teaching of basic skills from which an individual could exist. These would help to complement the skills training as well as the Polytechnic.

Sir, there are many retired teachers who went into the service at age 18, or 19 and they have put in thirty to thirty-five years. They are relatively young and still have a contribution to make and I think this evening teaching, is a second chance at the cherry, where such resources could be easily applied and used to the advantage and improvement of these cadres of students to whom I refer, who have sort of lost their way and are at an age where they could be led down the wrong path.

Sir, I have seen it work with the school board system in Canada, where my brother supervised as president of the school board in the greater Montreal area for the Protestant School. He managed a large budget of billions of dollars, where he did not interfere with the curriculum but with the equipment necessary for the physical school plant. The maintenance of such activities fell squarely and fairly on his shoulders, and I saw him work assiduously and long hours each year to get...

Asides.

Mr. D. T. GILL: You get the same complaints at times, as you may get here but, Sir, it is a long and demanding process, keeping the school board and the school plant working smoothly.

Sir, over the years, I have seen lots of schools needing repair and this Administration must be given full marks. It

is true, that at times, work on a school is projected to last from August to September, but after dismantling and going into the structure of the school, much to your dismay, all the basic building structures have to be replaced. Then, Sir, that contributes to the protracted period of time.

I know that in my constituency, there was great hue and cry at the beginning of last term, when the students of St. Paul's School had to relocate at Bishop Court.
4.55 p.m.

I must say that all that was done was well done in trying to accommodate the children at the new facility and they are doing exceptionally well there. They have a wide expanse of land to run around. They make themselves merry and they are able to play sports over a greater area whereas at their old ground it was quite a bit of concrete for their playing area. Some of the children are asking that they remain there. They like the ambiance, they like the fresh air and they like the trees.

As I have said, the children have done exceptionally well and we should laud the contribution of the principal and the staff in getting over that hurdle because it was felt that a change just after the Easter term would have been detrimental to their success in the Common Entrance Examination but that proved to be the exact opposite. Sir, it has been drawn to my attention that the tender was awarded on July 20 and work will begin any time now.

Sir, the other two schools in my constituency, Carrington's Primary and Erdiston Primary which would very soon be merged as one, I am informed that the detailed work drawings are now being prepared and work is scheduled to start some time in January. So I am grateful for these two projects, one which is just about to start and the other which will commence very shortly.

Sir, I am also pleased to hear that electives such as woodwork, metalwork and textiles will form part of the curriculum of the national secondary diploma. Sir, this brings skills as being part and parcel of a child's education. Sir, you know only too well that students who would have passed through your hand and who would have gone on to do skills such as plumbing, automotive maintenance and electronics are the girls and the boys who are smiling at us. Sir, they demand a price. Gone are the days when you go under the bonnet with the old tools, a spanner, a screwdriver and a searchlight. It has gone way beyond that. You just drive your car and leave it there and they do all the analytical work that should be done using computer techniques.

Sir, at times we think that our children have got to study too much in a given time frame but the Russian system I am told is one in which children amass lots of facts up to university stage. I remember, Sir, when I went to university in Canada

in Canada there was one student who was from Eritrea, because there was that free flow of students from Eritrea to the USSR,... and when we thought that we have done a lot down this side of the world at 'A' levels, those students who had gone to a similar level in the USSR had actually covered second year university where that system is built on lots of facts and exposing yourself to a lot of material even if you do not use it to get in because they are of the belief that it helps to develop the brain at a later date.

Sir, the way in which students shy away from Mathematics once they have reached a certain age is of concern to me. It seems as if we pump them up for the Common Entrance Examination but I think a study should be done to see how they perform after the Common Entrance Examination. Sir, it would seem from that stage that children are shying away from Mathematics. Even in going to university they cleverly choose subject areas where they will get away from Mathematics. This is probably so because of a bad introduction or getting into concepts which really belong to the secondary level but which are dabbled with at the primary level. Sir, since Mathematics is an exact science and you are either right or wrong, our children have been taught that it is something devilish to be wrong, therefore, in this instance they shy away from Mathematics. But Mathematics is part of life. Whatever you do, as you think, as you arrange yourself and as you plan your day, believe you me, it is all based on Mathematical concepts.

Sir, as you know, I often say that I would like to set a Common Entrance Mathematics exam. I would not get too involved in it. It would have to be done quickly and expose them to things like currency, length, time, shapes, mass, weights and maybe a few graphs and that would be it. I would leave all the other areas for when they enter into secondary school because I think if you cram too much into these children at too early an age they can see it as the end all and the be all. Again, I am pleased to see that there will be a system where our children will not be pushed up as age warrants but rather they will be promoted on what they have achieved.

Sir, in my opening I spoke about methods, how we have to change according to the times and our education being driven by technology. Sir, if you speak to my mother or people of her age they will swear by the Royal Reader. I feel my mother still has one put aside somewhere. We all had to study from the Royal Reader and from a card. She taught us and the children from the neighbouring areas. My home at that stage right through was an institution and they all came in.

Sir, there was a time where every child use to travel with a log table. You do not find children with log tables these days. There was a time when the slide rule came in. You do not see children with slide rules these days. The

children have calculators now and they go to the calculator for whatever. Sir, this is part of the changing technology and part of the problem because for every advance we make in life there is an associated price which we have to pay.

Asides.

Mr. D. T. GILL: That is a basic science postulate, for every action there is a reaction. Sir, it is for that reason that you can go to an old shopkeeper up in Savannah Road and he or she could work out 15 per cent VAT without going to any calculator because they know about shifting the decimal point and then dividing by two and adding the two and that is 15 per cent VAT.

5.05 p.m.

They work it out quickly but, Sir, although our children are a lot more advanced and exposed to a lot more technology, I tell you 15 per cent VAT does give them some problem to work out.

I remember and I think it was Bobby Simpson who said if you stay down long enough you will get a catch in slips. I have seen syllabuses because I did some teaching a few years ago where in Mathematics at 'A' Level they took out a section called statistics and dynamics and they kept strictly to pure Mathematics. Today, Sir, I am told that they have returned. So, Sir, it only goes to show how change in technologies helps to shape our teaching or learning and the upbringing of our children.

I can see, Sir, you are signalling to come home, but before I do so, I have read recently in the daily publications a bashing of my old secondary school and unfairly so, a bashing of Harrison College, and it has no right to be so, Sir. It is a school that if you take a stroll up there you would see that that school still has the old equipment of 30 to 40 years ago. You will see that even with that sort of equipment, they are still able to do very well, not only in the curricula as we know it, but they do very well at extra-curricular activities whether it be cadets, volley ball, athletics, quizzes or spelling

Sir, on that note, I commend the Honourable Minister for her presentation today and I can safely say that the education of Barbados is in good hands. I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, I want to make a very brief presentation. The first observation that I want to make is that I did not even realise that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was Shadow Minister for Education. It struck me when he was speaking that it was sad, painful. He struggled a lot to make a response to what the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East had to say and, indeed, I realised he had a lot of speaking about sugar factories and golf courses and mergers and anything else that he thought would have made up some time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few brief points and the first thing I want to speak about is the whole question of making it compulsory for the primary school children to do a foreign language, to study Spanish. I am aware that there is one school of thought that says that many of our children are already deficient in English language skills and that what we should be doing is to concentrate on giving those children the very basics, giving them a better grounding in English skills at the primary level and forget the foreign language altogether.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I share the other school of thought which is that it is an extremely healthy thing for us to have our youngsters learn a foreign language at a very early age. The world is contracting on a daily basis and I do believe that this generation of school children will be called upon to speak at least two languages. I believe that our people will continue to have to go to Venezuela, go to Puerto Rico, go to Margarita and so on, whether it is to shop or to work.

I do believe that that second language is going to be of tremendous benefit to them in the long run. I have practical experience of this, and I know exactly what I am speaking about because we now have a scheme where we send a lot of our young ladies on the hotel programme. They go to the United States of America to work and they have to do a bit of conversational Spanish before they go off to work in the hotels. They have already told us that the smattering of conversational Spanish that they do in six weeks is of extreme benefit to them because when they go to the rooms they can tell the guest "Good morning, how are you?" and when they are leaving, they can tell them to have a good day. That has been extremely beneficial. As I said, the girls are always saying that one of the best things that we did for that programme was to insist that they do some kind of Spanish.

Mr. Speaker, I do believe that in order for a child to be able to speak the language fluently, we have to expose him or her to it at a very early age. I do not think that anything is wrong with our experimenting with it at the primary school level. The point I am making is that a lot of the responsibility is going to rest on the shoulders of the teachers because when you are teaching primary school children conversational Spanish you have to make it interesting.

I would think, Sir, that what would have to fall on those teachers to do is to transform their classroom into a restaurant type situation for example, where all of the food is labelled in Spanish, all of the drinks are labelled in Spanish, where the waiters and the bartender will speak Spanish and the students will come in and ask for what they want in Spanish. The point is that they have to make it extremely interesting when it is conversational Spanish, otherwise, the whole thing is going to fall through. It must be interesting because we know what kind of attention span primary school children have.

I want to go on to say, Sir, that it is about communication and I think that Spanish is more useful as a spoken language than it is when we write it for exams. If you write for exams and you never speak it, you are better not to have done it in the first place. I think that what we are able to do here is to give our children the basics to communicate and we want to put out a more functional student. That is the important thing. That is why we are going into teaching Spanish in the primary schools. We want the child to be extremely functional.

Education is not really about getting certificates. It is about empowering people and we have to prepare our people to take advantage of whatever openings we can find. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy did make a point after all. He said that we are now and have become an exporter of people, which is a fact. I want to make the point that we have actually exported farm labourers, hotel workers and are now exporting – a lot of people in Barbados might not realise it – jockeys and grooms. We are exporting nurses, teachers and doctors. It is a fact that we have indeed become an exporter of people.

We have to be insistent about the use of language, in this case, Spanish, as a tool for development because by making them do Spanish, I think it provides them with extra capability and it gives them confidence in themselves and education just cannot be about dealing with people who need employment. We need to make our people as confident as possible.

Mr. Speaker, today the Barbados Government continues to spend a lot of money on paying teachers, training teachers and so on. I have to make this point and I think the Honourable Member for St. Lucy also came quite close to making the point as well. Some of the most qualified and perhaps some of the best teachers in Barbados are to be found in the newer secondary schools.

I do believe that the Barbadian public is extremely pleased about this because they want quality education and teaching for their children.
5.15 p.m.

I know of a situation where a young girl who goes to school at Princess Margaret School in my constituency gained in one sitting four Grade 1 and two Grade 2. When I checked, her grades were just as good as those at Queen's College.

Sir, the efforts put out by the teachers at the newer secondary schools sometimes is twice as much as the effort put out at Harrison's College and Queen's College.

Mr. Speaker, I still consider myself to be a teacher. It was my first job after leaving school and I know that you, Sir, still consider yourself to be a teacher because once a teacher, always a teacher. I am happy to see that the newer

secondary schools are gradually earning their status and are now being accepted in the same way that the traditional grammar schools are accepted. Parents now can hold their heads up high and say that their children go to Ellerslie Secondary School, Louis Lynch or Deighton Griffith School. Sir, I have to tell you that this year one of the Barbadian students who got First Class Honours was a student of Springer Memorial Secondary School.

I was looking at the newspaper and some of those schools have virtually caught up with Lodge School where the cut-off mark is concerned. Mr. Speaker, when I was a boy going to school people only spoke about two schools, Harrison's College and Lodge School. These two schools dominated academics in Barbados. Who would have thought that Ellerslie School and Louis Lynch School would have a better cut-off mark in the year 2001 than Lodge School? It is simply beyond the imagination.

Asides.

Hon. R. N. GREENDIGE: Mr. Speaker, the decline at Lodge School started when there was an impasse between the Headmaster and the Board some years ago and since then the school never caught itself. Parents did not want their children to go school there and the marks dropped, generally speaking. Sir, I am going to make the point that conflict between Boards of Management and principals can have a devastating effect on schools. It happened at St. Leonards, West St. Joseph and at Springer Memorial Schools. The point must be fully made that the Boards we appoint are not executive Boards. For the most part they are appointed to support the principals and not to be involved in a tug-of-war with the principals.

Mr. Speaker, Barbadians are still regarded by their regional counterparts as being among the most educated in the Caribbean. Our educational standards are still quite high in spite of the criticism we get.

Sir, since I was in Cabinet, we have raised the standards of the Barbados Scholarship twice and in spite of that we continue to get a whole string of Barbados Scholars. I believe if we were to carry it up again we would still get a whole string of Barbados Scholars because our standards are very high. Sir, we have to make sure that there is no dip in our educational standards in this country. Sir, I know of the tremendous work that you do in your other capacity to ensure that the standard does not drop.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said there are students who shy away from Mathematics and I have made a similar note saying that the teaching of Mathematics is of concern to me because if there is one subject that we have a dip with at CXC, it is Mathematics.

One of the things we have to do is attract and hold good Mathematics teachers because those persons who are good at Mathematics do not end up in the teaching profession. We have to find a way to harness them and encourage some of the best people from University who do Mathematics.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said he would like to set a Mathematics paper himself but this could well be the problem because we might have to look at what type of Mathematics problems are being set at CXC because you could have the situation where people are of a particular mind set and the papers never vary so we continue to have a hard-line type of paper being set and we have to make it more flexible to give people more opportunity to pass.

Mr. Speaker, I think we need to concentrate more on primary schools in the areas of language, drama and computer skills and what the Honourable Member for St. James North referred to as capturing the imagination of our youngsters in Barbados.

Sir, I thank you.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank all Honourable Members who have spoken in this debate for their contributions. The nature of education is such that it is far reaching in its tentacles and, therefore, while we do not in this Honourable Chamber get much opportunity to discuss it in a dedicated way such as this, the truth is that we could spend a number of days exploring all the different facets of education. Today we have only touched a few core elements.

I hope that indication which I gave earlier that the Chief Education Officer and his two deputies would be speaking to the Barbados public at least once a week every week between now and the end of September, would be an indication to this Chamber of the seriousness with which we treat the reforms that are being introduced and the extent to which we would wish the public to have all available information, so that they may be comfortable with what is being implemented.

The Ministry, like it did in the past, would also be setting up a hot line so that anyone who has queries in respect of the changes that would be taking place from September can call into the Ministry, have those queries addressed and where necessary, come in and speak to officers in the Ministry.

I want to salute the technical and administrative officers, but in particular the technical officers in the Ministry of Education, who have been working beyond the call of duty in ensuring that they are doing the work necessary to bring about reform. They have been consulting with the teaching fraternity at the point of the secondary

school and the primary school and they have been speaking at PTA meetings almost every weekend. I have Officers who are addressing PTAs across Barbados on the reform method; they have been addressing elements of the private sector and church groups and that is because, in addition to their call of duty within the Ministry, they recognise that we have a responsibility to articulate these issues clearly to the public so that we begin to engender a level of comfort. We too understand that change in the context of a small society is sometimes difficult to swallow. We really do believe that without this change we will not be able to meet the challenges of the 21st century in the way that we were able to meet the challenges of the 20th century. We need to put ourselves in position where those children who will be charged with the leadership of all the institutions across this country and charged with the responsibility of creating wealth and maintaining a socially cohesive society, that those students are well equipped to do, so that they can adequately maintain the legacy which we have inherited and which has put us in the enviable position of enjoying one of the best qualities of life anywhere on this globe.

5.25 p.m.

Sir, with those few words, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time and to say that we look forward to the students of Barbados raising their efforts to the new bar that is being set by this amendment to the Education Act, thereby ensuring that we have students, not only who are good and excel in specialty areas but are well-rounded, well-read and capable of critical analysis and sound expression.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 – 3 were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, 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 motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Education (Amendment) Act, 2001.

ORDER NO. 9 – UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES (GUARANTEE OF BONDS) BILL, 2001

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to deal with the matter which is before the Honourable Chamber, which is designed to provide a government guarantee for Bond issue to finance the University of the West Indies capital works project at its campus at Cave Hill in Barbados. The sum of money with which we are dealing is US\$10.475 million. Sir, this Bond issue to raise this sum of money, is designed to help finance infrastructural work at Cave Hill in the following areas:

6. Student accommodation and facilities.
7. Creative Art Centre.
8. Accommodation for the Centre for International Services, which was a recently established centre within the campus.

Sir, in respect of the student accommodation and facilities, Sherlock Hall, which has been there for sometime, has fallen into considerable disrepair over the years. Members may be aware of the fact that the University built new accommodations which it opened three to four years ago, but it was always intended that the accommodation at Sherlock Hall will be refurbished in a comprehensive manner and, indeed, that it be done largely because of roughly 1 000 overseas students attending the Campus, which, at the moment, only provides accommodation for 25 per cent of those students.

5.35 p.m.

This is significant because, in its strategic plans, the University of the West Indies has always been indicating that the Campus must continue to have a thrust which attracts students, particularly from the Eastern Caribbean. While it has been the main focus for those students in the Eastern Caribbean, over the last two years, the St. Augustine and Mona Campuses have become very attractive options for Eastern Caribbean students and for a number of reasons, including the overall exchange rate which they benefit from when they go to Jamaica and Trinidad.

We believe that by the provision of additional accommodation on Campus which is subsidized by its cost that it will be better able to attract larger numbers of students, once this project is completed.

We also recognize, Sir, that by the additional accommodation available, it will enable the Campus to attract more summer school students from across

North America in particular, so as to be able to bring in foreign exchange, not only to Barbados, but also additional revenue to the University of the West Indies to help increase its revenue earning capacity.

The renovated Sherlock Hall, when completed, will provide accommodation for 90 persons. It will accommodate facilities for meetings, seminars and other support facilities. In addition, a three-storey block is going to be constructed to provide additional accommodation for 6 to 12 persons in 6 two-bedroom, self-contained flats.

The Students Union will be expanded and developed to provide an entertainment area on the ground floor and offices and support space on the first floor.

The Campus cafeteria, as anyone who has visited the Campus recently, would have seen, has already started the renovations and, in fact, some of the money from the Bond issue will help support that effort.

The estimated cost of the renovation to upgrade Sherlock Hall, the Students Union, the Cafeteria and also the provision of a new health clinic will be US\$4 million. The Campus has earmarked US\$1.5 million from its own resources for the project and the remaining US\$2.5 million will come from the Bond issue.

In respect of the Creative Arts Centre, it has been the desire of the Humanities Faculties at Cave Hill, for some time now, to be able to expand its offerings within the area of the creative arts. There are many of us who feel passionately that we, in the Caribbean, have to move to a position where the cultural industry will constitute more and more a significant section to our economy. In those circumstances, we have to expand the training that is available within the various aspects of the cultural industries. These aspects are: drama, theatre, creative writing, music and the recording industries, technical theatre, culture, painting, photography and dance.

Indeed, Sir, the Caribbean Examination Council has just completed its syllabus on drama and dance which will be offered in the secondary schools throughout the Region very soon, therefore, the University must place itself at the tertiary level to strategically respond to those students who are coming on.

We, at the Barbados Community College, over the last few years, have introduced an Associate Degree in the performing arts. We have the Associate Degree in Fine Arts and now a Bachelor Degree in Fine Arts. The Creative Arts Centre at the Cave Hill Campus is intended to be a Centre which will be at the pinnacle of education in this area.

There will be a 500-seat studio/theatre, an exhibition area, music rooms, dance studio, recording studio, library/reading room, production and dressing rooms. These are all critical facilities, because as we all know, Sir, we have an assortment of good facilities in Barbados and we need the expansion, wherever possible.

The National Cultural Foundation, for example, is now about to put down two dance studios at West Terrace, St. James, because of the access to dance studios in the country. The days of persons having to dance on concrete floors or wherever they could have, is a thing of the past and we would want to ensure that the dancers have access to properly sprung floors, so that they do not damage their knees and other parts of their bodies.

It is anticipated that the Creative Arts Centre will cost US\$6 million to build and to be properly equipped. It is anticipated that the Centre will also be self-financing in the long term because of the revenue that can be generated from the rental of these facilities, given the shortage of overall facilities in Barbados.

As I have already indicated to you, Sir, the Government has accepted, through the Ministry of Culture, that these facilities should constitute part of the national resource base, so that we will not be duplicating where the University has put up facilities that are capable of being used for general community and national purposes.

US\$2.5 million of that US\$6 million, Sir, will come from the University of the West Indies and has already been raised. The other US\$3.5 million will come through the proceeds of the Bond issue.

It is further projected that approximately US\$4 million is required to provide the teaching and training space to properly house;

1. The Centre for International Services.
2. Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies, which is the new name for Social and Economic Research.
3. The Education Evaluation Centre, which I spoke of earlier today, was set up two years ago and is the entity which will be doing the independent evaluation of the size on the policies under the EduTec Programme. It will also be offering services to other Ministries of Education in the Region.

The provision of the Centre for International Services, as well as new headquarters for the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute and the Education Evaluation Centre, as I said, is expected to come to just under US\$4 million.

The University has also been seeking funding from the European Union, but will be providing some of the funding from its own budget.

The planning for this programme has been in place for quite a while and it is, therefore, the desire of this Government that this Bill will now enable the University to receive the proceeds of the Bond to proceed with this capital works programme.

What I can say to you, Sir, is that the University has also satisfied the Government that, as of September, 2001, they will be charging a small fee to students at the Cave Hill Campus to be able to help with some of this work and they will have a line of recurring revenue to be able to properly maintain these entities. This fee, I believe, has already been announced to the students.
5.45 p.m.

Sir, the terms and conditions are available in the Schedule of the Bill and unless there are any specific questions, there is nothing to say, other than that the bond issue is for a period of 12 years and the amount is to be drawn in three tranches. The first on 31st July this year, the second on 31st October this year and the third on the 30th June, 2002.

The arranger is the Republic Finance and Merchant Bank Limited of Trinidad and Tobago and indeed, Sir, the interest rate is floating at the six-month libre rate, in addition to the three hundred and fifty base points, determined two week days before the issue date and this will be reset annually, on the anniversary date of the issue or fixed at fifty basic points above the floating rate as determined in the schedule.

The interest will be paid semi-annually and in arrears and the bond issue shall be repaid in twenty-four semi-annual payments.

With those few words, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, from the outset, I would want to say that every year, either in the Estimates or in the Supplementary Estimates, this Parliament is asked to pay large sums to the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus (UWI).

We are told by this Parliament that there are some countries which do not pay on time and they incur additional cost to the UWI and that we, as a country, have to help share in that particular cost.

What is interesting about this particular Bill is that even though the cost is being shared by other territories, this loan guarantee is picked up by Barbados. One would have wished that the Minister would have explained the reason why other territories call upon the UWI but this particular loan guarantee is only picked up by the Government and people of Barbados.

The major question that one would have to ask in the interest of the masses of people in Barbados, is that having guaranteed a loan to the magnitude of \$20.95 million, how would the UWI raise the necessary revenue, not only to repay the capital but to service the interest?

It would be rather interesting, Sir, because all I am hearing is that we will rent the dance floor, we would get additional rents coming from the additional rooms that will be rented out and that a small fee will be charged to each student. What interests me, Sir, is that we were given a commitment in this Parliament that the charges for tertiary education are paid by this Government and that the Democratic Labour Party was the party intending to charge the people of Barbados for tertiary education.

Sir, the situation is now, Mr. Speaker, that the Democratic Labour Party of which I am very much a member, has not come to Parliament to support or to request from Parliament but a small fee will be charged and because of the commitment given to this Parliament previously, I would prefer to stick to the previous commitment and not to agree to this particular small fee. I will say to you Sir, anything that starts small can expand. As you know, Sir, you have to crystalize sugar first in order to get a grain and this is like the crystallisation process in the sugar industry. I can tell you, Sir, that at the end of crystallising, you would get sugar. If we start tampering with fees at the UWI, I can see this as the back door approach to the introduction of fees at the UWI.

Sir, I am saying that we must ask ourselves if, we as a people, have not paid the UWI enough money this year and why is it that we are paying them such large sums of money and yet, the masses of people in Barbados are still being called upon to pay fees and, not only to pay fees but to guarantee a loan to the UWI.

One would have hoped, Sir, that the relevant information would have been given to this Parliament and one would have expected the Minister – and I know, Sir, this would have pained the Minister and most likely it would have been a cabinet decision – carrying the portfolio, would bring it to this Parliament. I cannot see the Minister accepting this without a fight and I know that the Minister would have fought the Cabinet over this particular measure.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Sir, clearly, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has a deficiency in his hearing. I indicated then, that the UWI will be charging a small fee to the students, not a tuition fee, not a fee charged by the Government of Barbados. Indeed, Sir, the fee is less than the amount that was being paid, under the Democratic Labour Party, even as a caution fee on that occasion.

I do not believe in circumstances where the Government of Barbados pays tuition fees ranging from \$5 000 to over \$15 000 for each student attending the UWI, that a fee of \$150 or \$200 that the UWI will be charging through the Student Guild, can be an unreasonable fee or can be approximated in any way to being a tuition fee.

The problem is, Sir, that the wounds of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy run so deep when he thinks that the Party with which he is associating, would have committed to the World Bank to charge tuition fees, not only for students at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus but also for the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am very glad that the World Bank, as I am told by the Minister of Education, advised us not to do this and that it was the old Cabinet of Barbados which have agreed to it.

Aside.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, on a point of order. The Cabinet of Barbados has no jurisdiction to deal with this. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy has shown now that he not only has a deficiency in hearing but he has a deficiency in logic and understanding. I hope, Sir, that I do not have to rise again because if I do, I would have to place him down in Black Rock.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, you know that I am well pleased to go to Black Rock whenever I am placed because that is part of Barbados and I have the right to cover the whole of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I have not heard one word from anybody on the Government Side and I welcome the intervention of the Minister because she quite correctly explained to this Parliament, the amount of money paid by the Government and people of Barbados on behalf of students, already, to the UWI.

I picked up on the tone of her voice that she is quite happy and she has no problems to pay that money. What I would like to find out from her is how she feels that we have to subsidise the cost to the UWI for other territories and I am

challenging the Government of Barbados to deny that the Barbados Government subsidised the UWI on behalf of other countries when they failed to pay their dues on time.

I am saying, Sir, that any additional cost coming out of the UWI cannot be on the back of the students. Considering what was said by the Minister of Education, I totally agree with her that any addition charged to Barbadian students at the UWI will have to be justified and I agree with the Minister on that particular point.

We have already picked up all of the costs coming from the other territories and I know that the Minister will agree with me that on many occasions...

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: We have already discussed this in here and one of the reasons why we cannot put a sum in the Budget for the UWI, is because the other territories do not pay on time.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: That is not true? Then, I need to go back to Hansard because somebody misled me earlier, if that is not true. We are told that you cannot compute the figures to put in the Estimates because you are never sure and sometimes you have to pay higher interest costs because territories do not pay on time.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, on a point of order. I was waiting to respond to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy when the debate was finished and I was winding up but sometimes you have to stop the foolishness when you hear it.

The reality is, Sir, that there is no case of the Barbados Government having to subsidise the UWI when other countries do not pay on time.

5.55 p.m.

The Barbados Government is not a bank. The University has its own bank from which it will draw funds when it has a deficiency in revenue. The reality, however, is that when the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus was established in 1967 and the College for Arts, Science and Technology was set up in 1963 under a Democratic Labour Party Government, there was an agreement that the Barbados Government, the Trinidad Government, and the Jamaica Government would come together and discount any amounts payable by non-campus countries by 40 per cent and that that discount would then be shared between the three campus countries. So from its inception we agreed to subsidize the non-campus countries by reason of a 40 per cent discount that is shared between the

three campus countries. There is no case that I am aware of that the Barbados Government has to subsidize the University of the West Indies by reason of any late payment or failure to pay on the part of non-campus countries. That is absolutely misleading and untrue.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, that was well said by the Honourable Minister – by slipping in the non-campus countries. The truth is, Mr. Speaker, it is known in this Parliament that some of the campus territories who are supposed to pay in funds... I think if my memory serves me correctly, Jamaica was the culprit which was paying their contribution late and that is why we had many Supplementaries in this Parliament and we have had many...

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House and it is improper for him to put in the public domain and to suggest to people that the Barbados Government has had to put money in the University because the Jamaican Government would not pay. That is improper and it is not true.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, if that is not true, the records of Parliament would have to be called upon for clarity.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member please, I am going to ask you to withdraw those words and I will tell you why. I believe that you will have to show me or give me some kind of proof of what you are saying because you are making a very serious allegation against a country and I believe...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please! Please! Just hear me out, please. Honourable Member for St. Lucy I am suggesting to you that you cannot just willy-nilly accuse a country...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister has given you the explanation of the non-campus countries. Could you proceed, please?

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, if it pleases the Chair, I would hope that the Chair would take it on its responsibility – you know, I do not get offended by statements made toward me – to check the supplementaries and debates of this Parliament since 1994 to see that that is correct because I am sure in my mind that we went through a discussion like this before and one thing that serves me well is my memory. But if the Chair is saying that this type of debate is not allowed I will give way to the Chair. I am saying that we have had this discussion and I am sure it came from the highest authority in this Parliament.

Sir, I find it rather strange and rather difficult to debate in this Parliament because already in this Parliament in this session I had a problem with Standing Order 32 even though I was right. I want to know, Mr. Speaker, which Standing Order I have breached again because this is a serious discussion that goes to the root of the masses of this country and I have a right to protect their interest because if you check the records you will see that the University of the West Indies had the largest allocation from a supplementary in this Parliament this year and now we are back here guaranteeing another \$20 million and I cannot talk about it because we have professors. If I was talking about the masses getting contributions, nobody would challenge me on it.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: That is not irrelevant. The point is we have to question everybody no matter where they come from. Furthermore, the university professors have to pay for us guaranteeing this type of money. If the reason why they are silent is because they expect the Cabinet of Barbados to bring resolutions here and they cannot talk anything about economic policy or do not have an opinion anymore because they expect a free ride in this Parliament tell them that Denis Kellman, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, will challenge them any time for the simple reason that whenever they come before this Parliament, if they cannot do the work that they have been paid for, and give an opinion to the masses in this country, I will speak out against them at all times.

If this is the deciding factor that got them then tell me, Mr. Speaker, because in this day and age of trade liberalisation and globalisation you cannot get an opinion from the supposedly most educated people in Barbados and now I understand that we cannot come to this Parliament and talk about them and how we guarantee...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am saying Mr. Speaker that this is a serious matter. The masses of this country contribute over 95 per cent of the intake and their rights have to be defended in this Parliament for the simple reason that when the University cannot pay this money it is this Parliament then we will come to. So I am warning you, Mr. Speaker, that when that occurs it would be reflected that this discussion was brought before Parliament by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and it was blocked. Do not get involved in those things, Sir. Remember I have endured many things already and ignored many rulings because I carry no malice in my mind but I cannot continue to debate in a climate where decisions continue to go against me because I am supposed to be the watchdog for the people of Barbados and I take that role seriously.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: That is nothing, a watchdog could be a bloodhound too. I have no problem with that. As I said already, I can take insults. I have been criticised from the highest authority down. It worries me not, for the simple reason that we expect that when you come before this Parliament you get lashes. This Parliament is not for thin-skinned people. This Parliament is for people who can stand up and take their blows and share blows too. I am not sharing blows yet but I have taken mine.
6.05 p.m.

I am hoping, Sir, that we understand that the University must produce a business plan for this money and I have not seen a business plan presented to this Parliament on how the University will finance this money. If they want a grant from the Government and the people of Barbados, tell us that they want a grant or a gift. Let us decide now which one because let me tell you something, Mr. Speaker, a guarantee could be a loan or a grant. It depends on the climate.

The day they do not have the money, the Parliament and the people of Barbados will have to pick up the tab and if they have the money they will help repay the grant but before we can even consider the possibility of their repaying this money they must first show us how they are earning it. I want the 'googly' and how power has been used. I would like to know what is this small fee. What is small to me might not be small to the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East. When I think it is \$1 000 it might be \$20 000 because of the standing of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.

Mr. Speaker, we have to be serious and realise that this is not an issue that we can just gloss over. Twenty million dollars is a lot of money. We also have to recognise that it is not a one-way relationship. Barbados is supposed to be at least responsible for one-third of the Cave Hill Campus but now Barbados has taken the responsibility for 100 per cent. What has happened to Trinidad and Jamaica on this particular arrangement? That is the most important question, Sir, because I am told for the non-campus territories they are supposed to write off 40 per cent but Barbados is now holding a 100 per cent position on this particular loan.

I would like to know, Sir, what has changed and when the agreement has been signed between Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad that the share relationship has changed. I am voting against it for the simple reason that I do not think that Barbados should guarantee 100 per cent of this loan. The Barbados Government should take its responsibility. It cannot continue to walk around picking up the slack for the next two territories because Trinidad & Tobago does not pick up the slack for our fishermen when they want to fish in

their territory. I do not think that we should guarantee a loan that they should be helping to guarantee. I am going to be voting against this one, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I have similar difficulties to those expressed by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy because I believe the Government owes it to this Parliament to explain what this particular guarantee is about. Is it a gift to the University? Is it part of the normal financing which Barbados takes up in any given fiscal year? How does it fit into the financing of the University as a whole if it is capital expenditure that the University is undertaking? It obviously has to be guaranteed by the principal beneficiaries. Is this a usual procedure? Does the Jamaican Government guarantee all of the bonds taken out by the University of the West Indies on any of the capital markets?

As far as I know, Republic Finance and Merchant Bank is a bank carrying on business in Trinidad & Tobago, so why is the Government of Trinidad & Tobago not involved in guaranteeing it? Does the Government of Trinidad & Tobago exclusively guarantee all of the obligations of the University of the West Indies in Trinidad & Tobago?

I think these are important questions that have to be asked, but it also needs to be asked against another background which is that the Minister has indicated that these facilities, or so it seems, are not going to be used exclusively by the University of the West Indies but that they have wider use or are going to have wider use in the Barbadian context.

If the Barbados Government has decided that it wishes to build such a facility at the University and hand it over to the University, that is another matter. Let us say up front that we have decided to build a \$20 million complex to achieve all the things the Minister says are supposed to be achieved and that because this is part of the development plan of the Barbados Government then we are guaranteeing the loan. If it is on behalf of the University, the simple question that has been asked here is that if there are other beneficiaries, why are those beneficiaries not involved in providing some form of guarantee or some form of investment?

Why cannot the University itself, based on the resources that it has, provide its own guarantee for a \$20 million loan? Twenty million dollars in the context of the assets owned by the University of the West Indies is not a large sum of money. It may be large in the context of the Barbados economy because of the fact that this Government has undertaken record levels of borrowing. Historically, this Government has undertaken the highest level of foreign borrowing in the history of this country in a single year.

On top of that, you have to add all of the guarantees and all of the other borrowing which is being undertaken on the capital markets to finance activities such as this. When you add this into the equation that is another \$10 million, really BDS\$21 million which is going to be used as part of this project for the University. The Addendum says "to assist in the financing of infrastructural works". Therefore, I believe the Minister needs to give us a clear indication as to whether this is in fact money being borrowed to assist and what is the source of the other funds, not just the \$1.5 million because that is a very insignificant sum in the whole equation. In other words, are there other sources of funds guaranteed by other governments in the Caribbean to assist in the work which is going to be undertaken?

I presume, Mr. Speaker, that there are ways to get around the accusation that there has been an increase in fees imposed on university students. The Minister said it is charged by the Guild. In my day, a fee was a fee, whether a registration fee, a caution fee, a guild fee. I was a member of the Guild of Undergraduates and travelled to every campus territory in which every university administration tried to get the Guild of Undergraduates to impose fees that they themselves did not want to impose on the students. On every occasion we resisted it, for the simple reason that they wanted to use the Guild as a back-door route to get money for the operations of the University. That is nothing new.

Therefore, I am not going to accept any allegation by the Minister that it is merely an addition to the Guild's fees because I believe that if the Democratic Labour Party was disingenuous in its approach to the question of increasing the university fees we too could have approached the Guild of Undergraduates and use that as a route of increasing the revenue which is extracted from students.

Whatever the fee is, \$100 or \$200, it is on top of books, and every year I have to end up subsidising students from my constituency who cannot afford, not because they are being worthless or because their parents are spending the money on Nike shoes, as is the popular refrain or paying for STV. They genuinely do not have the money to pay for the books and for many of the other tools and equipment that they may need to use during the course of their studies at the University of the West Indies.
6.15 p.m.

It is not the amount. I believe it is important to take the point made by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that it opens the door for the University itself to begin to negotiate directly with the Guild of Undergraduates and to seek to impose additional charges on students via the Guild of Undergraduates. The Government itself is opening the door to that despite its pledge that it would not impose fees on University students because if you use this method it

means that the University does not even have to consult the Government. The University can simply negotiate with the Guild of Undergraduates over time to impose additional fees including cost recovery fees which was the whole substance of criticism against the Democratic Labour Party using the Guild of Undergraduates.

The Minister cannot even give us an assurance that it will remain at \$100. It might be \$100 this year and when the University cannot finance the interest payment or the first annual tranche it might go to \$200 or \$300 or more without the Minister's knowledge. Therefore, these are valid and legitimate criticisms that need to be answered by the Minister.

I am extremely heartened to know, if it is true, that there is no delinquency by any contributing Government to the operations of the University of the West Indies. If that is so, it means that....

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: The Honourable Member is seeking to mislead this Chamber. It almost brings to my mind an exercise of sophistry to suggest that my denial of the Barbados Government bailing out the University for reasons of delinquency of Government payments can now find itself as a statement of fact that no Governments are delinquent. Sir, I leave Your Honour to deal with that.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Your Honour, I do not know how you are going to deal with it because you cannot speak in here. I am entitled to speak in here because I am not the Speaker and since I am the Representative for St. John nobody can tell me what to say in here. I will abide by the Rules and anybody who does not like what I am saying that is too bad for them. I want to make that clear. I can be put out of my seat if I breach the Rules but there is no other basis for it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, could you continue please.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, as I understand it, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said in here that we have come to this Parliament on several occasions to seek financing for the University of the West Indies and during the debate on seeking that financing this Parliament has been told that there are territories which have been delinquent. If the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East did not understand it and pulled others into her web of confusion, that is their business but that is my understanding of what is being said. Therefore, the response that was given...

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy indicated and I remember very clearly, Sir, that the Government of Barbados was being asked to subsidise the delinquency of people's payment and that is not the case. We have never

come to this Honourable Chamber to ask Parliament to subsidise the delinquency of other Governments. We came to this Chamber because we owe the University money to pay our due.

Sir, it is a misrepresentation to suggest that we have come here to subsidise the delinquency of any other Caribbean Government. The Leader of the Opposition who was a Minister of Finance and who knows better as a trained Attorney-at-Law should not mislead this House further and create mischief.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the difference between me and all the Members on that Side is that I have been a Minister of Finance. The Barbados Government, to the extent that the University does not pay its income taxes to the Inland Revenue Department, its National Insurance contributions, its water rates and all of those other things for which it has been delinquent in the recent past, subsidises the University of the West Indies. We should never underestimate the level of subsidies because the University's operations are global and, therefore, any shortfall has to be made up as a result of sacrifice by the people of Barbados either by way of cash flow into the national coffers or otherwise as a subsidy. They do not make a distinction between the Barbadian students that benefit from the subsidy because if I sat next to a Jamaican or St. Lucian student in the Law Faculty, to the extent that we in Barbados offer such a subsidy, means that we are subsidising the operations of the University.

Mr. Speaker, we subsidise those operations because of delinquency. When other Governments do not make their contributions on time it affects the University's cash flow and the University will come to the Minister of Finance and the Government eventually comes here to get a supplementary to clear the arrears.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East seems to want those things spelt out clearly. I do not think that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said anything that the Minister did not want him to say. I thought he assisted the Minister but the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East seems to want to defend countries just as her leader did when he had to subsidise the RMM which he made into a big issue. Caribbean Governments have always subsidised regional operations located in their countries. All of a sudden we were hearing how great the Honourable Member for St. Peter was because he extended overdraft facilities to the RMM and Ricky Singh was supposed to be abused by everybody because he raised concerns about the RMM and about operations here in Barbados.

Sir, this is nothing new. There is no Minister of Finance in Barbados who has not been faced with the problems of regional institutions and has not had to make accommodation for their operations in Barbados.

Sir, as I understand it, the Honourable Member is saying and I repeat that on several occasions when supplementaries have come to this House an argument has been adduced by successive Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Education that one of the problems they face is the delinquency of contributing countries to the operations of the University of the West Indies. If that is so, then all I am saying is that I am glad the Minister of Education has told me that because this is discussed every year at CARICOM Heads of Government, at the Ministry of Education meetings every year, at the Minister of Culture meetings when they talk about CARIFESTA and people not paying bills. At all of the Attorney General meetings.....

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Attorney General cannot get the Caribbean Court of Justice off the ground as he would like because while Barbados and Trinidad are willing to put up the money, many of the other territories are only talking but not willing to 'walk the talk'.

Mr. Speaker, this is not new to the Caribbean. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is saying that the Barbados Government is biting off more than its usual obligations to the University of the West Indies and if it is, we cannot support it. This seems to be a reasonable, fair and logical argument. Sir, if the Minister says that none of that is so, that no countries are delinquent, there are no arrears to the national economic system either by way of taxes, water rates or whatever, and that the university is operating on a surplus or a balanced budget, then there is no problem. Sir, if the facilities are being added to the sum total of the national development programme rather than to the university, then let us say that and make the point that Barbados is guaranteeing this loan because these facilities will be used principally by Barbadians. Mr. Speaker, if not, the debate, to my mind, does not make sense. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East has an obligation, I think, to explain and elucidate on all of these matters.
6.25 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would wish to say at this stage that it is unfortunate that the Honourable Member for St. John chooses to end his statement by seeking to obfuscate the issues. The facts remain that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy outlined to this Honourable Chamber that the Barbados Government was being called on to subsidise the delinquency of Caribbean Governments. Sir, that is not the case in this instance nor has it has been the case in previous instances. However, that does not mean that there is no delinquency from Caribbean Governments but for him to make that association is to seek to mislead, not only this Chamber but those who would innocently read what is recorded in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, in respect of queries that were raised, may I say to this Honourable Chamber that in every campus country, the campus Governments are called upon at some time to help guarantee funding for capital programmes. Sir, this is not the first time that the Government of Barbados would be guaranteeing a loan for the University of the West Indies. The Governments of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have done so in the past and invariably where the work is dedicated to one particular campus, it is that campus country that is asked to guarantee the loan. The Honourable Member for St. John, as a former Minister of Finance, however brief and fleeting it may have been, should know better. I forgot that as Minister of Finance he was too busy trying to introduce casino gambling and to give all kinds of duty-free concessions, so he would not have had time to remember that this was a normal occurrence with the University of the West Indies.

Sir, let me say that over the course of the last five years, the university has restructured elements of its financing. I am not aware of the University of the West Indies coming to the Ministry of Education within recent years asking for debt forgiveness for PAYE or National Insurance. We have put a system in place where if we pay our dues late, interest flows and the Governments are then due to pay the interest because we recognise that the university would have to receive funding from elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, the other Caribbean Governments have to pay interest as well. The concept of our subsidising someone with delinquency is absolute nonsense and reflects an attempt by the Honourable Member for St. John to try to cover up what was a nonsensical allegation in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, in respect to the question of whether the university is asking the Government for a loan or gift, this is a normal process. The university may have assets but obviously the financial community prefers a Government guarantee rather than seek to acquire some other sort of instrument or debenture on other assets of the university. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. It is required, not only by Governments or banks within the region, but when the university borrows from the Inter-American Development Bank, as it has done in the past, the Governments of all three campuses put up guarantees.

In this instance, the capital works programme is going to cost \$13.2 million and \$10.476 million is being raised from the bonds issue with the net proceeds from the bond being \$10 million which will go towards that capital programme. The university provides its own counterpart funding of US\$3.2 million and the remainder will be from the proceeds of the bond.

I do not know how you can construe from this Bill before the House that that could even be construed as a gift.

This is a straight case where the Government is guaranteeing the principal and interest in the event that the university defaults. The university has not defaulted, to my knowledge, on a loan that it has asked any Government in the Caribbean to guarantee in its over 50 years of existence. I do not know why the Leader of the Opposition would suddenly feel that because we are bringing a guarantee Bill, that the university would default and this constitutes a gift to the University of the West Indies.

Sir, the facilities which are being developed will benefit the university because it is located in Barbados and would considerably benefit the Barbadian population and the Barbadian academic community. In respect to the fee, this is no fee that is being charged through the back door. The university is trying to improve the quality of service to students. It has indicated that it needs to have some kind of cost recovery mechanism, whether it is through the Guild or directed to the students. Sir, this is not a tuition fee. The tuition at the University of the West Indies range from approximately \$5 000 to \$15 000 a year. As I indicated, the Government of Barbados pays the tuition fees of Barbadian students. We were not like the Honourable Member for St. John who, as a former Minister of Finance, agreed to a situation where the Government, these are not my words, these are the World Bank words, the Government of Barbados offered to charge tuition fees at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College and the University of the West Indies.

I have lived to see the day where the Trinidad and Tobago Government, having taken a decision to charge tuition fees to Trinidadians, are now recognising the importance of tertiary education, and they are now going back to subsidising the very same fees that they required Trinidadians to pay. Hence, it was this Government's decision to continue to pay tuition fees. There is a clear decision between the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party on this issue of tuition at the tertiary level.

We have maintained that it is necessary as an investment in the human resources of this country. Sir, the fact that we continue it year after year in spite of escalating cost, is evidence of our commitment. Sir, a fee of \$100 a year can be construed as the equivalent of tuition fees, that can only be described as sophistry.
6.35 p.m.

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY the Bill was read a second time.

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the House resolved itself into Committee, His Honour D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Clauses 1 – 3 inclusive, were called and passed.

Clauses 4 – 6 inclusive, were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, 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. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the University of the West Indies (Guarantee of Bonds) Act, 2001.

ORDER NO. – 7

FINAL APPROPRIATION (2000 – 2001) BILL, 2001

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, this Bill just catches up the Supplementary which we had done in the Financial Year just gone. They would have been debated before, so therefore, it is not unusual to have a debate on a Final Appropriation Bill.

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 separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the House resolved itself into Committee His Honour D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Clauses 1 – 4 inclusive, were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee without amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Final Appropriation (2000 – 2001) Act, 2001.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, that concludes Government Business for the day.

ADJOURNMENT

I beg to move that this Honourable House be now adjourned to Tuesday, July 31, 2001 at 11.00 a.m. and in so doing, I just wish to assure all Honourable Members...

Sir, we circulated today the new Bankruptcy and Solvency Bill, 2001. I wish to assure all Honourable Members that it is not the Government's intention to debate this Bill just yet.

It is 196 pages, 259 sections and therefore, people will need time to familiarize themselves with it and particularly for the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I want to give him the assurance that we will not be dealing with it.

With that observation, Sir, I beg to move that the House be now adjourned to next Tuesday, July 31, 2001 at 11.00 a.m.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: I beg to second that Sir.

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

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