

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1999 - 2004

Friday, March 16, 2001

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (CONT'D)

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

This Honourable House is now in Committee of Supply.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE:

Mr. Chairman, it is indeed a pleasure for me to open this bowling attack this morning which promises to be very rough today. The weather is pretty good today and we expect a very good batting wicket. There will be no showers at all today.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that a country's future lies in its ability to produce food and its ability to turn agricultural inputs into manufacturing outputs. Therefore, I see these two sectors, the production of food and the ability to manufacture food and equipment for the country, as providing the background work to a strong economy.

Historically, Barbados has been known for its production in fine rum and sugar. Sugar and rum has been the backbone for this country's economy. For centuries, sugar has played a vital role in our economy and the production of rum and molasses has helped our country to become the country that we now know it to be.

It is also important to note that over the years we have been able to produce fine mahogany furniture, manufactured clothing, light industries, chemicals and electrical items for export. Traditionally, for the last 50 years or so, certainly from the 50s, when the first Barbados Labour Party Government formed the Government of this country we were able to set up these industrial plants across Barbados in places like Grazettes Industrial Park, Newton Industrial Estate, Wildey Industrial Park and Six Roads which came afterwards.

The point I am making is that the Government of the day saw manufacturing as important not only as a source of labour but also as a source of revenue. Most of these products were exported not necessarily to

the Caribbean area but to the Americas because Barbados used to produce gloves, hockey sticks and so on for the Canadian market and produced a number of chemicals for the offshore market. It is important that the country sees manufacturing as important. Both Governments through the years have placed a number of emphases on the manufacturing of these various products to help boost our balance of payment. So it is important for us at this stage to put more emphasis on manufacturing.

I know that since 1994 this Government has reversed the fortunes of the manufacturing sector to such an extent that it is now producing almost double what it was producing in 1994. We have, therefore, to thank the Minister of Industry and International Business who has put forward a number of new ideas and initiatives to fast-track and move forward manufacturing.

Government has helped the manufacturing sector. In fact, I believe that when one look at agriculture and manufacturing one will notice that Government has put a number of fiscal incentives in place to help manufacturing and agriculture, so much so, that we have heard the Honourable Prime Minister speaking about an export culture. In fact, what he was trying to portray is that we should have an export culture where manufacturers are allowed, not only to see themselves as providing a role for the economy and not only bringing in foreign exchange, but they should be placing this country on the map.

When you go to North America and you see the various Barbadian products such as rum, pepper sauce, mauby and the various products that are now on the shelves in Canada and North America you feel very proud knowing that these things are Barbadian products. I should also say that, in some Latin American countries such as the Dominican Republic, I have seen some of our produce on the shelves there. I have seen the Barbadian rum, the pepper sauce, the jellies and so on. So there needs to be a more direct relationship between what we export and what we are producing within the country.

Over the last five or so years we know that the competition within the export market has been tougher. We have noticed that the world has become a sort of a global village. We know that there is the removal of import licences, import duties and so on. There is a more liberalized world now and this has caused, to some extent, some manufacturers to believe that they cannot compete. In fact, when you talk to them they talk about the high cost of labour and the high cost of inputs like raw materials and so on. I believe that Barbados must see itself as not trying to compete within a low market where products are cheap. We have to be more efficient. I believe efficiency should be the hallmark of our manufacturers today. I believe that our manufacturers must start producing more to standards than they did in the past.

It is also important to note that we have to look at how we teach our children the importance of manufacturing. Children need to start to believe that they must be part and parcel of the new drive for manufacturing. There was a time when there were exhibitions across this country. There was a time when children were able to showcase what they produced. I remember at my primary school, for example, all the boys in the St. George area had to be involved either in craft at some time in the day or be involved in the making of ornaments or plaques in the woodwork workshop. So there was a lot of activity going on even at the primary school level. I am not sure what activity goes on today so this must have caused us to slip back to some extent.

I also see the importance of cottage industries within our society. I do not know if the Ministry is placing any emphasis at all on cottage industries but I must say that Barbados was noted for producing, especially in the homes, a number of things like guava jellies, jams and so on. In fact, I must say that

when you look on some of the shelves in Barbados you can see the seasoning that is now produced in the homes and we can look at this to try to market our products.

I believe that Government can help in the long term financing of this industry. Those householders who are involved in cottage industries should be given long term financing at low interest rates because this would definitely help the industry. We need to be able to tell people that everybody cannot work outside of the home. We have to go back to those times and we have to put emphasis on persons within the home. The cottage industry must be expanded. I think more research has to be done in terms of what raw materials are made available to our local people and to the industry.

There is also a need for a marketing strategy. I think that the Ministry of Industry and International Business should help in this marketing strategy to help these people to market their products.

10:10 a.m.

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Continuation of Hon. G.A. CLARKE:

For example, those of us who have gone to places like Jamaica would know that throughout the countryside, on the highway, as you move to Montego Bay there are a number of markets along the highway with people selling their produce. If you go to Cuba, you will find there is a market day where people are able to sell their produce, their art and crafts.

I believe that we need to encourage this type of thing where persons are able to sell their produce along the way to tourists so that tourists can take them back. I am not saying that it is not done now to some extent, but more can be done in terms of encouraging local people to get involved in small manufacturing of an indigenous nature.

I also believe, Mr. Chairman, that in terms of solar energy, we have pioneered solar energy within the Caribbean and, I believe, within the world. I do not know of any other country that has started before Barbados. As far as I know, we have pioneered solar energy. I believe that we need to expand the technology to produce a more efficient product. It is quite efficient now but we need to get it into the North American market. People will say that there are various seasons in North America, but solar energy can be stored and I believe that some more research and money should be put in this area to help the persons who manufacture and produce solar energy.

People talk about Barbadian rum, and I understand that there are some countries in the Caribbean who are now producing rum and labelling it as Barbadian rum. Clearly, there is a belief throughout the world that Barbadian rum is important. I think that more should be done in producing this product as an exotic product. More should be done in producing it, not necessarily in bulk, but there is need for us to look at the way we produce and market our sugar.

In the whole question of liberalization in the world today, when I was at college we thought it was a theory but today it is more practical. I do not expect to see the whole theory of liberalization coming to fruition so quickly but it is indeed a fact of life that the world has become more liberal. I used to be a proponent of that as well. I believe in the liberal theory but liberalization itself, to some extent, does not help the home producer unless he is prepared to compete, and with the cost of labour in our society it sometimes makes a disadvantage for the local producer.

Mr. Chairman, I also believe that in Barbados there are a number of foreign investors who are looking to get into the market for housing. I know they are trying to bring their new concepts into Barbados. A number of these investors are looking to get joint ventures with Government and we are now looking at a few of them from Trinidad, from Canada, London and as far away as Italy. There are many persons who want to bring their technology and their money to go into joint ventures. We are looking at this type of thing.

This investment would help to encourage employment, production within the building industry, cement blocks and windows. Surely, there is a demand for housing within our economy. We know that we have to watch these investors very carefully because we had a situation a couple of years ago with the Venezuelan housing scheme that did not go as we had planned. We have to watch these investors but Government is considering looking at some of these investors because we cannot do it ourselves.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that both Governments have tried in manufacturing and I see a role for manufacturing in our local economy. Thank you.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head and I want to say that the Honourable Member for St. George North seems to have the capacity to deal with this Head better than he can deal with Housing. I want to congratulate him on how he has been able to link manufacturing and agriculture. As I was on my way here this morning I said that what I would deal with is the lack of knowledge of the Ministry of Industry for not realising that there is a connection between manufacturing and agriculture. That is why I cannot understand why the Honourable Member for Christ Church East did not make that link and I came here this morning with the intention of making that link.

The Honourable Member for St. George North two seconds after I mentioned it to the Leader of the Opposition was able to do it, so I want to give him some credit for acknowledging that the Ministries need to come together and recognise that there is some crossing of Ministries and that they need to sit down and put a proper plan. That is why I have always said that modern day government cannot be the same way as the way we used to operate a couple of years ago.

We have to recognise now that marketing cannot be done by any one Ministry and that Government cannot continue any longer to look to the private sector to be the agency to market goods in Barbados, especially export goods.

That is why I would like to remind this Parliament that the Democratic Labour Party will always continue to be the Party with foresight and I want to remind this House that it was in 1975 when the Right Excellent Errol Barrow, recognising the importance of Government agencies in marketing a product, took it upon himself to market sugar to get the maximum returns on that sugar and was widely

criticized in Barbados.

I am telling Barbadians now that if we do not do the same thing to manufacture that manufacture will not go anywhere in this world. I will give you a good example. In Barbados today there are many people producing bottled seasoning and the quality is very good so much so that when the tourists come to the island and get an opportunity to taste a piece of meat that is seasoned in Barbados they always want to know what it is seasoned with and when you introduce the bottled seasoning to them they are prepared to take some of it out of the Island.

I want to take a step forward. Can you imagine all of those people having the capacity to produce one unit and that unit has the capacity to be exported? We could easily be supplying the world with bottled seasoning if the Government would recognise that it has a role to play and if it recognises that marketing cannot be any longer the domain of the private sector but they must take a lead because we are not now dealing in a world where licences are the key. We are dealing with a liberalized world and we must also make sure that we maximise our output.

The only way that can be done is if there is an agency and I hope the Minister for Industry will take notes on this particular issue because it is from his Ministry that we would expect that the cottage industries will be given that marketing agency to help them, not only produce for the local market but also to produce for the export market. If that occurs, what will happen is that agriculture will gain, because most of the end products like seasoning will come from the agricultural industry. We cannot now start looking at if somebody is running a Ministry and that person is running another Ministry. There must be some inter-locking decisions and there must be foresight to propel the industry the way it should go.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot any longer believe that a Minister has the right and the only say in his Ministry. That is why I am saying, Sir, that any future Prime Minister cannot be a Minister in a particular Ministry but he must use the Prime Minister portfolio to oversee all Ministries and bring the correlation between those Ministries.

We cannot continue to run Barbados as how we were running it in the nineties, the eighties and the seventies. It calls for a new management style. Trade liberalization and globalization has dictated that maybe the style that the Americans have used may be the best style to run a country like Barbados in this modern age. I also want to say, Sir, that we always look at the negative aspect of things, and I believe the Honourable Member for Christ Church West would agree with me on this particular point but, even though there are many negative things out of the OECD, there is one positive thing that came out and that is that we got some free marketing. If the world never knew that we were offering low rates in taxation, because of that conflict, we were able to get some free ads. I am telling the Minister of Industry that I am not happy for the spin-off coming from those free ads because we should have had a team to make sure that we were out there getting the business that came with the ads. We concentrated too much on the negativity without looking at the positiveness that could have come out of that particular branding.

If you are not doing anything wrong, you need not worry. Let the people who are accusing you continue to live in the doldrums. It is for you to use the information that has been placed in the world to run with it. I am getting the impression that instead of the Caribbean countries using the positive aspect

of the accusations against them they drew back as if they were doing something wrong not recognising that they had a good platform to go forward.

That is why I am hoping that after this speech next year I will not hear any lame duck excuses coming out of the Ministry and that our offshore banking services will be propelled to such an extent that we can maximise the unfair market share in the world. There are too many people who believe that because we are small that we always have to lie down and accept the punishment dished out to us. I am saying, no. In this liberalized world we cannot.

I also want to draw this House's attention to another matter that we have found ourselves in, another situation when we were caught up with licences for our rum. I cannot understand why we would have three or four different agencies to look after the marketing of our rum. I am calling on Government once more to recognise that one of our major export products happens to be rum and to take the lead in marketing that product.

The private sector's role is to provide the product but Government in this liberalized world must understand its role must be to propel those products to the extent that we can maximise the sales and foreign exchange from those particular products. Government can no longer sit back and say that this role belongs to anybody. If we are to survive in this world Government has to understand that its role for marketing must be the key to success in industry.

10:25 a.m.

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Continuation of Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Sir, I hope that this advice will be taken in the light that it has been given and people will acknowledge that if we are to go forward that Government cannot sit back any longer and decide that anybody has to push a product.

Sir, to me, Banks beer is the best beer in the world even though I do not drink beer. This is my belief and no one can stop me from having this belief.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

No, I do not drink any kind of alcohol. Mr. Chairman, we cannot have tourists come to this country and tell us, based on the usage, that we have a good beer but yet we sit back and believe that Banks beer is only good for Barbados.

Sir, the Government needs to identify that product that can hit the world market and run with it and no excuse can be made because the name Banks might be a Guyanese name because all we need to do is

develop a brand name called Barbados Beer and promote Barbados Beer throughout the world because when tourists come here, what they look for is not Banks beer but Barbados Beer. They are not interested in the name, they are interested in the product. We cannot stop our export product from going forward because of some connection to another country.

Sir, the Minister of Industry must understand that a proper marketing strategy must also be developed for the local market because the same way that I can acknowledge that I have a role to push local products, other people must also understand and acknowledge their role. If we do not push local products, we will find ourselves every year looking for money to finance the deficit and we will not be able to find that money on the local market neither will we be able to find it on the external markets because we will not have the capacity to borrow on the external markets.

Sir, I hope that people who feel that they have a right to everything foreign recognise that there is a cost to their taste. We cannot continue any longer to feel that because we have the capacity to buy a product that we do not care about the masses. If we do not have a country with a good mass base, we will not have a country. The development of one's country must be judged on the masses and it cannot be judged on the upper class for the simple reason that if you have a good mass base then you are sure to have good productivity. Sir, capital cannot work alone. Labour and capital must work hand in hand and that is why I will always continue to put a case for the masses in this country.

The biggest problem in Barbados today is that a lot of people do not understand the importance of labour. People believe that once you have money, it can do anything but that is not true. There must be something to work that money. We are not fortunate today to have robots, Sir. The truth is that we have to understand the importance of workers.

This is why I do not understand why foreign companies believe they can come here and get tax holidays and even though they are getting a tax holiday, they still want to pay the workers of Barbados a pittance. I always believed that the only thing this country has when foreign companies come here is the capacity of the union to get a proper wage for the workers which in turn spins off in taxes and national insurance etcetera for the Government and the capacity then for the economy to have a spin in the right direction because, as you know, Sir, most of the money which the workers earn happens to be disposable income. It is really the workers who propel the economy of Barbados in terms of revenue etcetera and keep the engines going.

Sir, I thank you.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Chairman, in my concluding remarks last evening I mentioned how this country has been able to make progress and achieve development through its efforts at economic diversification.

Mr. Chairman, perhaps I should say that late in the 1950s a conscious decision was made that for Barbados to depend exclusively on sugar would have been shortsighted. In the late 1950s through the Barbados Development Bank Board, a programme was designed by which industrialization in this country went forward.

Mr. Chairman, I must also mention that over time we may not have been as farsighted as we should

have been because you would well recall that in the 60s and 70s the incentives developed were designed more to entice foreign businessmen to come here than to provide a regime for local entrepreneurs.

When I say we were rather shortsighted, what I mean without being critical or unduly harsh is that in the early days it seems as though the thinkers of the time felt that with a need for us to have capital invested we had to look beyond our shores for that capital and lure it here through a set of incentives.

I am happy today that local manufacturers, for the first time, have been given a chance because even though the Small Business Development Act is all embracing and includes wholesale, retail and non-manufacturing activities, the Act is sufficiently wide and far-reaching in scope as to provide a number of important incentives to indigenous manufacturers, who can start small and who can qualify as small business people in their early days and who, through their own efforts, can use that Act to get the kind of assistance necessary and then carry their businesses forward.

I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. He was quite correct that in this current era marketing of industrial and manufactured goods is critical. The reason why it is so important is because of the competition facing Barbados manufactured goods abroad.

10:35 a.m.

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Continuation of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

It would not be fair, Mr. Chairman, for everyone to think that the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation should carry 100 percent of that marketing. Even though the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation is primarily a facilitator and has the interest of the sector at heart, ultimately, individual industrialists should take an active part in their own marketing in a situation where as world trade is liberalised, they might be able, for the first time, to penetrate markets that are opened up to them.

Mr. Chairman, I mentioned this considering that notwithstanding any problems that industrialists might argue that they face, they need to be so focused as to both seek out and try to locate new attractive products and new attractive markets.

Sir, they might rebut me by arguing that they have problems associated with cost but at this juncture in our history, notwithstanding what people perceive about Barbados' costs, we are now into an era where efficiency, as mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. George North, must stand at centre stage and that efficiency must be designed not only to enhance quality but also to contain and control cost, Mr. Chairman.

There is no question that the era for manufacturing is by no means closed. Therefore, through their own efforts and through any existing incentives that have been given to them, at long last local manufacturers should branch out and face the future with faith; should forget the past and what transpired before to constrain their activity and move forth with courage.

The Honourable Member for St. George North, in a week that has clearly been his, made another important point. The Honourable Member for St. George North has been in enormous form and may that batting form influence the West Indies to achieve later on this weekend. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George mentioned something of enormous importance. He mentioned the whole question of solar energy and I am going to refer to it.

I mentioned earlier this week, night before last, that in an era where the reality of climate change is such, that we need to do something about what causes adverse climate change. We need to explore alternate forms of energy. The reason being, that those emissions resulting from the use of hydro carbons, diesel and gasoline are very much the principle contributors to global warming.

It is amazing that the gasoline creates heat and fire in there and when those emissions rise into the atmosphere, they create heat and fire up there too of a kind that would warm up the atmosphere. Mr. Chairman, because of the reality of global warming, there is no question that the world is being challenged to find alternate forms of energy, whether solar, wave or wind, the reason being that we need to be proactive in cooling down the atmosphere since we know that the cause is the excessive use of that hydro carbon.

I can assure the Honourable Member for St. George North that not only are we determined to exploit solar energy more but we have now diversified our approach to this question of the use of solar technology. Beyond using solar for water heaters, we are now into something called photo voltaic.

I would like to invite every Combermerian and every non Combermerian to go up to Combermere School where a pilot project has been launched and the school itself is involved in the process of creating electricity using solar technology. We have been using it for 25 years solar for water heating. We are now creating electricity at Combermere School. Indeed, Government Headquarters at Bay Street is also part of this pilot phase of experimenting with photo voltaic energy.

Sir, some of the electricity which fuels Harrison's Cave comes from photo voltaic energy. If I took you, Mr. Chairman, up to St. Thomas and went to a place called Bryan's Road, you will see a structure there with some panels on the roof of the structure facing the sun, and that technology captures energy and runs photo voltaic to the Cave.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that you are not going to be amazed, we are also in Barbados entering an exciting new era where we are using photo voltaic for refrigeration. I want to give the greatest compliments to Professor Hon. Oliver Headley. Through his efforts, he has been able to apply photo voltaic energy to make ice and to cool water. The fish markets in this country are going to benefit. A special millennium project has started at the Speightstown Market; the market in St. Philip, which is another dispensation I had the honour to be associated with but which has turned out that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South will be administering, will also be a location at which photo voltaic will be used.

Mr. Chairman, when we consider how environmentally friendly solar energy is we also have to look at how environmentally friendly wave and wind energy can be. This world has warmed. The currents and the waves around Barbados have gotten so strong that they themselves are generating energy. It is a

question now of accessing technology where we will be able to capture that energy, store it and release it.

There is in the West Indies a gentleman called Professor Al Binger who is a close associate of Professor the Honourable Oliver Headley. Professor Binger is now seeking to access funding and technology by which we capture energy from the waves and use that to add it to the solar rays.

Sir, I mentioned earlier that Barbados is going to be the headquarters for the Caribbean, as a centre for renewable energy where we are going to carry out experiments designed specifically to do research to be able to generate new forms of alternate energy. I just thought that I would mention that for the benefit of the Honourable Member for St. George North who otherwise made an outstanding speech but as I said earlier this has been his week.

I conclude, Mr. Chairman, by making the observation that we need to sustain, maintain and enhance our whole drive to economic development, we still have to accept that manufacturing and industries have a role to play. The days are by no means over but the challenges of this era of globalisation and liberalisation are challenges which manufacturers have to see as giving them new opportunities. A positive businessman must always look for the opportunities while minimising or eliminating the threats.

There is no point, Mr. Chairman, in my view of manufacturers going back to what happened nine or twenty years ago that had been adverse to their interests. They have to realise that there is always the potential for the identification of new products or for the adaptation of the making of changes to existing products. They also have to recognise that they can look for technologies that would help them to increase efficiencies while decreasing costs. They have to look to new markets and go beyond traditional markets; they have to look to markets where incomes are high and markets to which transport is easily available and they have to consider all the variables, but I do not want them, whatever BIDC is prepared to do for them and will do for them, to rely entirely on BIDC. The BIDC is not always going to be there being proactive to facilitate and to help them. Ultimately, if the manufacturer and the industrialist realise that he is in the business to generate a profit for himself, his family and a contribution to national development, he has to take responsibility for steering the direction of his own business.

10.45 a.m.

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Continuation of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

I am not saying that in any way either to harshly criticize them or to say that they do not have problems, but I would warn not to surrender nor feel that the problems are not so enormous that they should shut down. I would watch them as closely as possible to see what challenges are going to encourage them to be more creative, more innovative and more determined.

I conclude by saying that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was correct when he mentioned the potential that agro-processing has in our lives. I would not say that Government should be a direct investor in agro-processing but Government should be prepared to look and revive any incentives that are there that can be so reformed to make agro-processing, run by the private sector, more attractive than what it is right now.

With these few observations, Mr. Chairman, I am eternally obliged to you. I thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I just want to add another dimension to this debate, to introduce another aspect of the responsibilities of the Ministry. We have had a very stimulating debate so far and I look forward to the continuation of the debate on the several matters as they relate to the Ministry.

Sir, we had a very full discussion on the challenges which we face as a result of the internationalization of domestic policies. The past paradigm as it related to the domestic economy, is with sovereign countries having the sole right to do whatever they want within their own borders. The matter of respect for sovereignty was a matter of non-intervention and was interpreted in a much different manner than how it is being interpreted these days, so that matters relating to the protection of intellectual property, taxation and virtually matters relating to anything, concerned no one but themselves.

Sir, with the WTO and other supra-international organizations there is an increasing trend towards the redefinition of sovereignty. In fact, Sir, in the United Nations Document "Banking, Tax Haven and Secrecy, 1988" they have a very interesting discussion on sovereignty. I can only describe it as "sophistry" the way that it is presented in that document, but they laid the foundation for the approach that the OECD, WTO and other persons have taken. For example, they said in that document, that whilst every country has the sovereign right to do what it wants, that the exercise of my sovereignty must not impact negatively on the exercise of yours, which sounds fine on the face of it.

However, Sir, they extended that discussion into tax matters and the United Nations laid the foundation where they were saying that whilst one country has sovereignty to structure a tax system the way it wants to, that the same country cannot so structure its tax system as to infringe on the ability of another country to collect that country's tax.

It is true, Sir, the document is here. I cannot make this a document of the House, unfortunately because this is my only copy, but it is in this document "Financial Haven, Banking Secrecy and Money-Laundering". But Sir, there are other areas in which that same principle had intended to be applied. In the area of intellectual property to which this Ministry has responsibility.

Now, this is an area in which Barbados also has always had an interest. We have had a Copyright Act in our intellectual property protection for many years. However, with the coming into force of the WTO there was a component of the WTO arrangement called "Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)" and for the very first time Intellectual Property Rights and their protection were integrally linked to the matter of trade in goods, so that countries like Barbados had no option but to implement the TRIPS agreement. Failure to protect intellectual property could result in sanctions being applied, not to intellectual property, but on trading goods and vice versa.

Now these TRIPS regulations were really pitched at a level to inspire industrialized countries who had,

through various means, and including lack of protection of intellectual property, raised their standard of production in manufacturing and all knowledge-intensive areas and having gained world supremacy, sought to extend their reach so that the drivers of this development included the rapid development of technology.

It also included the fact that the manufacturing supremacy of the United States which was there since the 1980's had been eroded over time by Japan and the Asian Tigers through imitations and products of very, very close likeness. So they were concerned about piracy, counterfeiting and so on. So that the TRIPS agreement is pitched at a greater aim of protecting the interests of industrialized countries and in fact, Sir, scholars have described much of the TRIPS arrangements as instituting a new form of protectionism and making it more difficult for developing countries to attempt to catch up in the technological world.

Be that as it may, notwithstanding the fact that this agreement has certainly been forced on us and that we have to commit resources in these Estimates towards ensuring our compliance, there are areas in which Barbados, as a generator in intellectual capital, can benefit from the arrangement and I speak in this area about persons in the creative arts: musicians, photographers, poets, authors, computer programmers, so that they, in particular, can benefit from these arrangements.

But what are the areas covered by this TRIPS arrangements Sir? The areas relate to copy rights and related rights, trade marks, including what is called service marks, industrial designs, geographical indications, lay out designs of integrated circuits, as well as, Sir, undisclosed information including trade secrets and test data and that is a new and important one, Sir.

Now, Sir, what the TRIPS agreement basically had set out to do was that it had, by way of establishing minimum standards for compliance, created a harmonization of approach to intellectual property protection, so that the minimum standard of intellectual property applied in the United States also applies in Barbados and the Netherlands.

It also specifies what measures of enforcement are needed to be put in place to protect these rights. Clearly, Sir, countries like the United States who are creators of intellectual property - in fact the film, music and software industries - thrived off the earnings of intellectual property and their interest is to have the rights enforced around the world.

So there are similar administrative and criminal procedures and also a dispute settlement mechanism within the WTO to settle issues that arise.

Sir, like I said, that is the origin of it but what we have to focus on is how best we can use these arrangements that we are forced to be party to, to the benefit and advantage of our people in Barbados.

First of all, the musicians of Barbados have been making significant progress and significant inroads in penetrating many overseas markets. The music of Barbados, particularly calypso and other forms of music as well, have received a level of acceptance overseas that has never been heard of before. Once upon a time, Sir, if you wanted to have a good party in Barbados you needed to have Trinidadian music. The tables have turned so much Sir, that if you wanted to have a good party in Trinidad you needed to have Barbadian music. That is the way things are and that is a good thing.

Aside.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

And they love Alison Hinds over there. But also Sir, in the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, all over the northern Caribbean they have Barbadian music.

10:55 a.m.

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Continuation of Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

Sir, if we take as truth the statement that imitation is the highest form of flattery, then Barbadian musicians have been greatly flattered all over the world because there are persons who have imitated their music either by way of bands in the Northern Caribbean recording their version of these popular Barbadian songs or worse yet, Sir, persons who are pirating CDs.

I once was speaking to a leading Barbadian musician, Sir, Edwin Yearwood - Krosfyah, who was travelling through the Caribbean on one of his many tours. We were chatting in the Airport in Puerto Rico, about business and how music is going and he related a story to me: He was walking down Nostrand Avenue in Brooklyn, New York and a fellow said, "skipper, buy this CD here only \$10 real good music, current music." When he checked, lo and behold, it was a new Krosfyah CD for which there had not yet been a distribution arrangement in place in the United States. The fellow had pirated the CD, imitated the art work, had it wrapped in plastic and here it was, he as the creator - the person who had a voice in his head and came up with this wonderful music, Sir, who invested money to bring the music to a quality where it could meet commercial production - was not the one who was getting the benefit. Worse yet, Sir, he was being asked to take out his own hard earned money to pay a pirate.

The same thing happened in the Netherlands, Sir, long before there had been any distribution agreement. There were people in the Netherlands selling Krosfyah's and other CDs from Barbados so it is a major, major problem.

What the intellectual property legislation generally seeks to do is to provide protection and an opportunity for persons who are the creators of works to benefit by way of earning a livelihood. Sir, the bottom line is that in order for us to be able to ensure that Edwin gets his full measure of protection in overseas markets, we need to reciprocate by way of properly enforcing Intellectual Property Legislation here as well.

One of the areas, Sir, in which Barbadians have become accustomed to pirating and which under the TRIPS Legislation they will see that the creator of those works will not tolerate it any longer, is in the area of computer software.

It had become somewhat normal, Sir, that if I bought Windows 2000, Windows NT, Lotus, DOS or whatever software, and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy had a computer, I would go and load some stuff on for him. That was a normal thing...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Honourable Member, now that you are having your break, you have one minute to wind up.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

I will have to move at the speed of a computer, Sir, in order to say all that I have to say.

The essential point, Sir, is that Barbadians are going to find that the creators of software - and already we are seeing it where Microsoft has had, over the last several months, a team of investigators, they call them auditors, doing through the Caribbean, checking on the level of licence agreements. The extent of that, of course is that they are checking on the level of piracy.

Even within Government where it has been the regular practice, for example, if we had a piece of software in the office, and we copy it here and we copy it there, the Government has now had to introduce licencing arrangements in order to ensure that we are legally correct, Sir, in the use of our software.

Sir, the whole fact is to downsize in terms of Barbadians general usage of computer software. the 'upside', Sir, is that Barbadians will find that if they respect the licence agreements embodied in the purchase of software, then they have access to the help lines and other support which comes as part of that package. Also, Sir, it would ensure that we, as a country are able to fight in the international community on behalf of our creators of such products.

Sir, I will say in closing that we have young people who are themselves creators of computer software. There was a young man for example, a few years ago, not more than 18 or 19 years old who created a piece of software here in Barbados for a Canadian company and that piece of software was the leading seller on the Canadian market for several months. It was a piece of what they call off-the-shelf software, sold in supermarkets, IT stores and so on. We have talent here. We can become net contributors to the knowledge pool of the world and therefore we need this strengthening of intellectual property.

Sir, when I return, I will speak a bit more about trademarks and service marks and the missed opportunity on the one hand that some Barbadian businesses are losing and also to praise some other Barbadian business. For example, Automotive Arts and a few others who have recognised the inherent value in their trademarks and service marks and who have started franchise agreements across the Caribbean to exploit the creativity that went into the branding and development of their product. In this intellectual property legislation, Sir, we are proposing to use on behalf of the manufacturers, the business people, the artists, the creators of intellectual property generally to help us brand Barbados and to help us fully exploit the economic benefits from our creativity.

I will return to this subject in my next intervention, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Hon. Sir HENRY FORDE:

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister has given one more reason why it was necessary to include in these Estimates significant sums for professional services and I hope by now, he has convinced the Leader of the Opposition of the dangers ahead and the challenges ahead for Barbadian business and industry.

Yesterday, Sir, I dealt primarily with the offshore sector and I do not want to revisit that immediately but to deal with what a distinguished Barbadian has described as the knowledge gap and it relates particularly to the statement of the Minister about intellectual property rights.

Mr. Avanash Persuade, one of the two bright and distinguish sons of Vishnu Persuade, was educated right here in Barbados at Harrison College and he is today the Managing Director of Global Markets Analysis and Research at State Street Bank.

11:05 a.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. Sir HENRY FORDE:

He has produced in the March/April 2001 issue of Foreign Affairs an article called "The Knowledge Gap". I wish that every civil servant, every politicians, every Minister and every Leader of the Opposition will read this article.

He makes the point that the developed world has run ahead of the developing world at such a fantastic pace because it has come to recognise that capital, labour and natural resources are certainly essential ingredients of economic enterprise but that in recent years technology, as well as information, innovation and creativity are very important in expanding economic attention.

He analyses what has happened out of the GATTs negotiations and the Uruguay Round where developing countries like our own have been totally outpaced and this is what he said;

"In a globalizing and liberalizing world, unlimited capital can be tapped across traditional boundaries."

He shows where cross-border private equity flows have leapt from \$US268 billion in 1995 to \$US1.1 trillion in 2000 outstripping Government bonds. It is doubtful whether much of that has come into the emerging markets except in Asia.

So he said:

"It is doubtful that the knowledge revolution will let developing countries leapfrog to higher levels of development..."

He goes on to say that the reality is this. I will make this a document of the House. I will quote from him.

“For the last five years, forward-looking financial markets have suggested that the knowledge economy will actually expand the gap between rich and poor. From 1990 to 1994, when the knowledge revolution was nascent and technology sectors were dwarfed by more traditional sectors, U.S. investors in emerging markets received returns of 117 per cent.”

Do you understand that, Sir? The yield that they had on their money operating in our markets made them 117 per cent in profits.

“That high payoff reflected the significant risks involved and the emerging markets’ potential for robust growth from low levels of development. Over the same period, investors would have lost 2 per cent in overseas developed markets.”

He goes on to deal with that position and he deals with what is important that we have to bear in mind. “Knowledge - and I have emphasized this in Barbados - comes from people with the time and resources to discuss, think and experiment. One approximate measure of these activities is the number of scientists and engineers engaged in research and development. According to the most recent World Development Report by the World Bank, the United States, Japan and Germany have on average 3,805 research scientists and engineers per one million people. That ratio is 31 times the equivalent figure for Malaysia, Thailand and Brazil - 121 per one million. Yet the ratio per capita GDP for these two groups of countries is just 3 to 1. The knowledge gap is therefore 10 times the size of the income gap and it is growing due to the brain drain from the developing to the developed world...”

Now, Sir, we have not got the figures for Barbados but let us bring that right home here. The point is that Barbados, despite its boast of 98 or 99 per cent literacy rate, is far behind because we have not caught up yet with producing enough scientists, engineers and technologists through our schools and through our universities to be able to challenge the knowledge-based competition that we are getting.

It is true that Barbados is outstanding among the Caribbean. My friend, the Honourable Minister of Education Youth Affairs and Culture, assures me that the number of graduates in the engineering and scientific field, in fact, that the number of graduates in Barbados, are higher than the average 17 per cent. She is telling me that roughly more than 10 per cent of our people go to tertiary institutions. She tells me that if you add those going overseas it is much ...

Asides

Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE:

At all tertiary institutions both here in the Caribbean and those overseas. For tertiary, I am not only using the University of the West Indies, I am using Erdiston College, the Barbados Community College (BCC) and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP). She said it is 25 per cent. I am saying that if it is 25 per cent, it is creditable but is not good enough for the future. Caribbean nations must understand that at least 55 per cent of our people must get a tertiary education if we are to make a difference.

This is the whole point I am making. We cannot expand our international business or international trade, we cannot be innovative and we cannot be really in the forefront of the knowledge development unless we take the educational plant that we have and expand it further.

In this regard, I am not done talking Barbados. Barbados has done well in the Caribbean. We have to understand that challenge, that is, the relevance of EduTech to international business and international development. Sometimes when I hear the carping criticisms that you hear about some of the initiatives of the Government I wonder how many people think and realise what is happening in the world at large and realise that unless we position ourselves now we would lose what we have and we will not keep up with what is happening overseas.

He continues to say:

“Equally vital to the development of innovation - this is Persaud - is networking between knowledgeable people.”

He goes on further to make the point that if you are in the United States of America and you are in a small town in the backwater of Iowa you can go on to the Internet and access people around you and get in touch with them. When you are in a developing country in the backwaters of Africa or the Caribbean you can go into the internet too and get some information but you cannot get the proximity of people around you even though you are leading in these events.

He said:

“Many researchers in developing countries lack this opportunity. The same goes for civil servants who wish to explore policy options.”

Sir, this is the point. I have really got to ask Barbadians to understand what is happening.

He continues:

“Whereas in 1998 an average of 557 telephone lines existed for every 1,000 people in the United States, Japan and Germany, there were just 3 for every 1,000 people in Bangladesh, 4 in Nigeria and 19 in Pakistan - countries with a combined population of 365 million. In the middle-income countries such as Malaysia, Thailand and Brazil, the average is 134 per 1,000. Some optimists argue that wireless technology has allowed countries to bypass expensive investment in laying lines, but the gap in mobile phones is even wider than in fixed lines. The hot spots of Mumbai (Bombay) may hum at mobile chatter, but there was only one mobile subscriber among every 1,000 people in India in 1999, compared with 310 among every 1,000 Americans.”

Now, Sir, Barbados' picture is brighter than that because we have been able to build up a good telecommunications industry here. It is not perfect but is better than what exists in several of the developing countries and in some of developed countries as well.

11:15 a.m.

Thursday, March 15, 2001

Continuation of Hon. SIR HENRY FORDE:

We need a good telecommunications base and industry. We need to increase the number of telephone lines available so that every household should have. That is why in Bonnets, for instance, despite the carping criticism from some chap who says he is running for the Democratic Labour Party, I was able to donate some computers and I intend to upgrade them. We have to get out of this carping criticism because thinking, even ahead of the Government, I saw it necessary to ensure that people at the lower income level had access to the internet and otherwise where they could not afford them - grandmothers and grandfathers.

Government has now adopted it as a policy. They too must be at the cutting edge. This cross-fertilization requires our being in physical proximity to the biotechnology experts, the geneticists, the atomic physicists, which we do not have here, Sir.

That brings me on to balance. I think I made the point that again the Government is on the right trend. We cannot criticise a Ministry in circumstances where you are going for research. We need more not less of it. What I would like to say - I am not the Prime Minister and have no longer any ambition of becoming one. I am not like the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who has the ambition, I do not know whether he has the aptitude, but he certainly has the ambition. The point I want to make is this, sometimes we must combine some of the activities and it seems to me that we are going to have to look at a better way of bringing international business and international trade back into some of these areas to be able to cope with the challenges in order to maximise the use of the money which we have for research purposes.

The Honourable Member makes the point about intellectual property and the problem caused by TRIPS. That was bad negotiations on the part of the developing countries. Some of the very developing countries' diplomats were the ones in the United Nations pressing for these points without understanding what the developed world was doing.

When I was Foreign Minister I gave them a fit .You had to look at the developed countries and see them miles off. This is what happened as Avinash Persaud, a Guyanese/Barbadian said.

“Patents are one direct measure of the resulting innovation gap. The total number of patents filed by residents in the United States, Germany and Japan in 1998 was 539 347. That statistic dwarfs the 453 issued in Brazil, Malaysia and Thailand or the 57 issued in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nigeria. China and India, with a combined population of 2.1 billion, filed only 17 862. This yawning patent gap between rich and poor reflects where profitable innovation is taking place and where it is not - and this gap is set to widen further.

For example, the completion of the mapping of the human genome has spurred health research into bioinformatics, developmental biology, and proteomics - which is leading to a spurt of patent applications almost exclusively in the United States and Europe.”

That is what is happening. Sir, you will have to give me five more minutes to just finish this.

We have to get ourselves into position. When I became Attorney General I noticed that we had on the Statute Book in 1976, after ten years of independence, an Act that once you filed a patent in England and you were an Englishman it automatically applied in Barbados. I repealed that Act and brought the legislation here to repeal it and we then started to reform the Intellectual Property Act which my distinguished friend and colleague in his outstanding job as Attorney General upgraded that legislation recently.

We understood the importance of intellectual property. We have only now begun to get into the psyche of Barbadians that you have to protect your musicians, your dramatists and your poets, but there are still Bajans who want to listen to all the music for free. They resent the fact that Crossfire or Gabby or any of the leading bands would want to protect their intellectual property. They will tell you, "Who is Gabby?" But Gabby is more important in earning foreign exchange for Barbados than people who are commission agents merely selling goods in Bridgetown, in my view, unless we understand carefully that you have to pay for these things, that people must pay for them. We get into a psyche that you have to get something for free and somebody must talk for five hours on a telephone without paying a cent for it. You must use Gabby and Crossfire and Edwin Yearwood's intellectual property and not pay them a cent. It is a wrong attitude.

Unfortunately, we, as politicians, continue to inculcate it in the people's minds. We are in a competitive world and, let me say, Sir, that I am pleased with the initiative that Government has been taking to assist Professor Headley in packaging his innovations in solar energy. Barbados should be the leader in the development of solar energy. If the United States, Canada, Sweden and Britain had access to solar energy all year around as we have here or they have in Africa they would have been spending billions of dollars in developing that; but not here in the Caribbean. Our scientists at the University have to spend their time instead of bothering about politics bothering about these things.

In my university, Cambridge, which I follow very carefully, Gates has just given US\$230 million to create Gates Scholarships. He has gone further. He has given an equally large sum of money to set up a Microsoft Valley in Cambridge to take the scientists on the academic side and link them to the experimental side. I do not know how much my colleagues read but I follow up these things and the reason for that is that Europe and the United States see the challenge of countries like China in the next decade who are trying to forge ahead fast and have more sympathy towards developing countries like our own. They want to position themselves intellectually to dominate outer space where the potential is vast, to dominate Antarctica and the oceans of the world and to make sure that we become as I said yesterday hewers of wood. That is the way they are. Unless we wake up and protect the things we have, and we have to spend money on it, we are going to be worst off.

Sir, I know you are looking at me to come home and I want to come back on this. Just let me say, Sir, that I support the grant for intellectual property. The Department of Corporate and Intellectual Property Department has only about 25 people, most of whom if you look at the Personal Emoluments are in the clerical range. We have to be joking in Barbados if we are not spending money on bringing the researchers to back them. We have to be joking if we cannot position the scientists at Cave Hill and at Mona and the young men with initiative and creativity at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, with those in the music industry and those in the sport industry, two areas where the United States of America dominate. We have to be joking if we do not have the money to do the research and development

necessary, whether in the legal field or whatever field it is, in order to back up these innovators that we have.

Sir, I am very concerned about it, because let me say that the two fastest growing industries happen to be sports and culture. We have to spend more on sports and culture, because it is a way of dealing with the young people who may be disillusioned and going into violence, and keeping them employed. We have to spend in such a way that we maximise the profits from their ability by patenting them through the intellectual property rights that they will have, backing them with enough money.

Sir, I am saying to the Minister that the next time he is arguing before the Estimates Committee bring me along and let me argue for some money, because we can make a good case why we have to expand in these fields.

I want to congratulate the Minister of Agriculture because his department has been working hand in hand, I know, with Professor Headley in this field. I believe that if Bill Gates can find \$310 million to give to Cambridge some of the people in Barbados who want to pull down everything so that they can import somebody else's goods should be giving money to support the development of solar energy.

Can you imagine the fantastic effect that it could have on agriculture? Can you imagine if we are getting our fish and using solar energy what it can do? Can you imagine that it can reduce the unit cost of electricity and so bring down the cost of manufacturing for us and bring down the cost of telecommunications? The opportunities are there. We have the natural talent.

All I ask is for our country to be rational and instead of being light-hearted and on the periphery in the debates to take seriously that knowledge is the future for Barbados.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I am glad that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West continued in the same vein that I started but one of the most observant aspects of his speech is when he made the comment that Gabby is more significant to the foreign exchange gains of the country than the non-trading sector. That is a comment that I will play in my mind because on Monday I heard the contrary so that I have to do a comprehensive analysis of this.

It is also interesting that the debate on BET was also started by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. This is something I feel very strongly about and, as I have said in many places, the Barbados External Telecommunications Unit cannot be seen as a place where you just provide internet services, telephone services and cellular services for the simple reason now that we are going into e-commerce and we are very much part of that. We must recognise that the same way a manufacturer would see a raw material as part of its cost that the services provided by that company must also be seen as an input cost into things like e-commerce.

If we, as a Government, cannot recognise that it is very important that we take charge of that company and that we do not look for direct benefit from that company in terms of profits and that we need to look at the end direct profits. I want to explain this, Sir. Normally I would make a statement like that and leave it for the interpretation of the House, but this issue is too important to just leave it there. The company, as it stands today, needs to make a profit for its shareholders and you cannot fault the

company for maximising its profits. Government must recognise that it is not just a service but it is part of the input costs for the development of Barbados.

11:30 a.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

This is why I strongly feel that the time is right, especially now that we are into globalisation and trade liberalisation, for the Government of Barbados to have a second look at the ownership of BET if we are to go forward. We have to recognise that the Government stands to gain more by owning that company, look at the indirect profits that will come from that company instead of looking at the direct profits that BET will be making. If we take charge of BET, we can increase the employment of Barbadians so that they can compete in the outer world, make some money and Government through taxation can then get their benefits back.

Sir, if there is one thing that we have the capacity to compete with on the world market is telecommunications services. I hope that the Minister of Industry is listening because he needs to understand the importance of the telecommunications services at this time. We also have to understand that we are in a good position to have control over St. Vincent and St. Lucia and if we put a proper plan in place we can deal with the OECS on that particular matter.

The Prime Minister of Barbados has been saying for a long time that there is a need for a link between the OECS and Barbados and if there is one issue that we need to have a link on is in telecommunications. We have the fortunate position that two of those countries have a direct feed from Barbados. We cannot on this side, accept excuses. We have to be bold and imaginative and take decisions in the interest of Barbados and the Caribbean.

Sir, at many Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meetings, I have said already that the Caribbean cannot be a single market only for trading among ourselves, it has to be seen as a single market to export. This is the error that we are making because we should not be discussing the single market in the year 2000 for trading among ourselves. We should have moved to a stage where we are now seeing the Caribbean as a single market to tap into the external markets. Instead of that we are still discussing how we are going to be trading among ourselves.

Sir, I do not want to 'poo-poo' this idea, I want people to accept the significance of the point because if we are to go where we need to go, we cannot be now dealing with whether we are going to fish in Trinidad waters or not, the important thing is to bring the linkage between the total Caribbean, have one supply and one source to export. Sir, we have to use the year 2001 as the springboard.

I hope those who have influence, like the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, will use this influence in Cabinet to let the others understand that the world is not waiting on us. It is what we do tomorrow that is important because if we do not make bold decisions now we will always be in trouble. We will always be flying all over the world looking to borrow foreign exchange to keep our economy going.

Can we continue to credit on the future of our grandchildren and great grandchildren? We have to decide now that we are going to leave a foundation for them and it cannot be on borrowed time. We cannot continue to blame other people. We have the capacity to do it now and we must make those bold decisions.

Sir, take a company like Pine Hill Dairy which makes tetra packs. North Americans should not be complaining that they cannot source tetra packs whenever they want them. I do not blame the Pine Hill Dairy for this, I blame the Government of Barbados and I will tell you why I will blame the Government of Barbados. The Pine Hill Dairy has to make profit for its shareholders but it is for the Government of Barbados to recognise that they need foreign exchange to keep the country running. If the Pine Hill Dairy, through a product call tetra pack, has the capacity to get on the North American market or anywhere in the world, it is for the Government to put those initiatives to make sure that the Pine Hill Dairy does what it has to do. The lead must come from the Government not from the private sector because the private sector's job is to make profits for its director and it is the Government's job to provide the foreign exchange to keep the country running. The Government has to understand its role and make those bold initiatives.

Sir, this foolishness about the manufacturers of furniture not producing is because we need innovative ideas. We need to understand that manufacturing in Barbados cannot only be seen as a product for the local market anymore. If mahogany has a market overseas, it is not for the manufacturers to recognise that, it is for Government to recognise that and put the plan in place. Sir, I have said already in this Parliament that I do not support manufacturing where a man feels that he can go into a plant for eight hours and close it down and also has two neighbours doing the same. I believe that Government must put the necessary incentives and initiatives in place to make sure that we have a twenty-four-hour capacity and that people would have something to encourage them to work together and help reduce their overhead costs.

Sir, what happened in the 90s up to the year 2000 was good, I fault no one for what happened then but from here on, whatever is done should not be the private sector, it should be the Government. Government must understand its role and also understand that at the end of the day it is the Government that has to provide foreign exchange to keep the economy going and the impetus to make sure that the manufacturers understand what is demanded of them by Barbadians.

This is why I will continue to ask that the Companies Act be changed because the major problem with cash flow for many companies in Barbados has to do with the Companies Act of Barbados. I will not continue to accept that because people are doing something in the United States and in Canada that we cannot change our Companies Act to suit our Barbadian way of life. People have to understand that whenever Barbadians buy shares they expect to get back a return on their investment. If they cannot be guaranteed that they will get back a return on their investment they will keep their money in the banks.

I am saying to those who have ears to hear that money in the bank is no help to Barbados. It is money in the manufacturing, hotel or agricultural sectors that will generate the capacity to expand Barbados. It is okay to brag about the amount of savings but the truth is that it is not the savings that will provide the growth, it is the manufacturing, agricultural and all the other sectors in industry.

Sir, I hope that there is the capacity to understand what I am saying on the frontbench. I see no reason

why there is not that capacity.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West lamented the fact that some people spend five hours on the telephone as a short cut to say that he supports metering. I want to tell the Honourable Member that people must have the capacity to use the telephone to share ideas and that there is a social cost to everything.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

I would like to ask the Honourable Member to be precise about what he is saying and not to insinuate things in here.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that he implied this is the way he is thinking. Sir, that is my interpretation.

11:40 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D.St. E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, people have to understand that the telephone system has worked well for us and because of that we have saved many dollars in terms of transportation et cetera.

If a man is living in St. Philip and he is producing furniture and had a problem with a furniture manufacturer in St. Lucy, he can pick up his telephone and speak to the furniture manufacturer to solve the problem that he is encountering without disrupting his production time.

We have to see the telephone not only as an instrument for people to gossip. Sir, gossiping is good because it helps to unite a society.

Asides

Mr. D.St. E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, the Minister speaks about someone in New York and the artiste being able to hear the person playing the music and offering him to sell. Sir, we tend to look only at the negatives. The truth is that even though that guy who is playing is pirating, he is marketing the product for the artiste before he does it himself.

Asides

Mr. D.St. E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I am not saying that what he is doing is right but sometimes out of a negative you can get a positive because by the time that CD is launched, the market taste is there already. That is all I want to say.

Asides

Hon. Miss. M.A. MOTTLEY:

Sir, I really have to respond to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy because there is a peculiar sense of logic in almost every debate in this Honourable Chamber. I think that before this Head is called he would want to have the opportunity to assure the artistes in this country that he in no way condones piracy, because for a group of young people who are already struggling in order to be able to garnish all the sources of revenue from the investment that they continue to make each year, piracy is one of the greatest threats that they face in respect of their work and the development of their professional revenue base.

I believe, Sir, that in Barbados we see things a lot of the time from a distance and it is only when they affect you personally that people begin to appreciate what other crimes do in respect of the loss that goes to the victim.

We have artistes who spend up to \$30 000 to \$40 000 every year. Some even reach \$60 000, to produce music. They pay the recording studio, the engineers, the producer, sometimes when they are only performing artistes and not composers, they pay an advance fee on the song for the usage of it, they then have to pay the graphic artists; they have to pay for the manufacturing of the CD which is done outside of Barbados, unless you manufacture just a few for the radio stations, they have to pay to import that into the country and the most that the Government gives them is duty-free access in respect of the product that they make. They then have to pay to promote and market the music.

Sir, while all of those sums of money are spent, for a person, as happened as recently as last year, to be releasing their music in other jurisdictions, whether in Trinidad or New York, before they have even got back the official copy of the particular CD, is an injustice which we have to fight against.

I believe, Sir, that there has not been sufficient training on the matter of copyright and piracy by the law enforcement officers. I feel that we as a Government will have to do far more than we are doing to ensure that the average policeman in the force is au fait with the ingredients of the crime of piracy as they are with the ingredients of the crime of murder, the crime of robbery or the crime of the possession of drugs. Sir, there has to be a commitment at the same time that we are doing the public training for the law enforcement agencies, I know some have already been done. We have to make sure as well that the law enforcement agencies, the Police and the Customs in particular are given full training at all levels of the rank in order to be able to help fight piracy.

Sir, we live in a world where technology has made the movement of information so easy, that it becomes virtually child's play for persons to take a song on to file on a computer hard drive and then transfer it by e-mail or to save it and burn it onto CD Rom. It means, therefore, that there has to be a greater level of vigilance if we are to see persons within this sector suffer.

I want to say, generally, that the work of the artistes in Barbados, as I said in my second reading, is an indication of the kind of ethos that is needed on the part of our private sector in terms of the sale and services to the rest of the globe. In 1991 to 1994, Sir, I was involved within an enterprise which managed a band. The first three years of that exercise we had very limited opportunities for travel outside of Barbados other than a one-off gig. Ninety five percent of time, like all other bands at that time other than the Merryman and possibly Spice occasionally, they performed locally. By 1993 the market

started to change and by 1994, maybe, one-third of the time out of the country. By 2001 the majority of artistes in this country spend, perhaps, less than one-quarter of their time in Barbados and they are on a circuit across North America, Europe, Caribbean, and even Latin America performing and earning foreign exchange for this country.

Sir, when you see the band on stage, that is not the extent of the employment opportunities. There are engineers and other technical staff. They carry their own lighting, there is management and sometimes they use their separate publicists and promoters. Sir, every unit, in fact, spawns a greater level of employment in respect of opportunities within the entertainment industry.

As a Government, we took a conscious decision since 1996 to support elements of the promotion in recognising that we may have had to help underwrite some of the performances overseas to help create a broader base. I am happy, Sir, that we have done it because it has shown to us in the last two to three years, in particular, that there has been a significant return on that investment in respect of the numbers of people who now work almost full-time outside of Barbados. We have to ensure that we can bring more of those people to the fore and to give them opportunities also to work outside.

11.50 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY:

Therefore, one

of the things that we are supporting this year is

a separate CD product, the production of a compact disc in relation to spouse, not only the older singers, but also from the younger ones because we recognize that a lot of these singers do not have access to the capital in order to make the investment in respect of the production of CD's.

It is not like vinyl where you can go up to Applewaite Record Factory and get some persons to make a record for you, it is a more complex practice and indeed, because we are competing with the music from the rest of the region the quality of the production has to be far better than it was before, because we know that our natural competitors are those persons in Jamaica and Trinidad who have had a longer history in this business than we have.

Sir, I am a firm believer in the fact that the entertainment and cultural industries have a lot of potential to the creation of employment and the earning of foreign exchange. I did not start to believe this when I first came into the Government and the Leader of the Opposition, I would like to think, is one of those persons who share my view because both of us, prior to political life, would have felt the passion in respect to the potential of the entertainment industry but the proof of the pudding is in...

Aside.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY:

But Mr. Kellman was not around when you and I were in discussion. The point I am making, Sir, is

that those within the formal sectors of the economy are now beginning to recognize that when the name of Alison Hinds is mentioned people in the corporate sector start to respond in ways that they were not responding in the past. And when a group like Square One can draw sponsorship from companies, especially a company like Western Union who is not based in Barbados, but who recognizes the drawing power and symbolism of Alison Hinds, then they know that they are onto something because the only thing that differs is the volume that you are able to attract. Therefore, we have a responsibility to continue to help develop those market products, but we also have a responsibility to continue doing the developmental work because there are lots more good musicians within the music industry but they require the consistency and must realize that every time one writes a song does not mean that it is a good song, but there must be quality control in the entertainment industry the same way that there must be quality control in the tourism and manufacturing sectors and that very often that quality control is best imposed by oneself, rather than imposed from an outside mechanism and that there must be certain things that must be done if we are going to sustain our playing life over a certain period of time. For example, Sir, I maintain that sometimes people have to come off the road and be recharged, even if it is to be able to do new writing, even if it is to be able to rehearse properly again and that you cannot run a band 365 days a year, five years straight and expect it to be fresh. Therefore, they must keep themselves in the same way a manufacturer recognizes that his plant needs some down time in order to be serviced and to be able to produce at an optimum level.

Unfortunately, I am not sure whether they are approaching the task of booking themselves out to other ventures, taking into account that they need down time in order to be creative and to do the rehearsal with all kinds of performances.

I also believe that the international business sector is capable of focusing - and I said this to my colleague the Honourable Member for Christ Church East and indeed, the Director of International Business - on the entertainment industry as a niche market for the attraction of persons to invest in Barbados in the investment vehicles that we have available. The publishing industry and I do not mean the book publishing industry now, but the music publishing industry is one of the biggest industries in the world and because of its allied relationship for intellectual property rights it means that without doing further to the investment you make there is a considerable return on your investment even for a period of time after your death.

In those circumstances Sir, I believe that investment in any activity relating to intellectual property right creates its own momentum and therefore has a greater level of return than just a normal investment of which there is no residuals or royalties.

In those circumstances, I really believe that the same way that we go overseas and market ourselves to persons who are interested in exempt insurance entities or for capital insurance entities or foreign based corporations, that we need to be able to tailor that promotion as well, particularly in respect of international business companies or possibly some of the other products like societies with restricted liabilities et cetera, to focus a gathering on those accountants and attorneys and tax planners who make the decision on behalf of most of those entertainers in this world because there are very few entertainers who handle their own business and that we need to meet with them in a focused way to promote Barbados internationally as a major domicile for investment companies for persons within this sector.

I believe, regionally, Sir, there is a bright, young lawyer in Trinidad by the name of Allison Demas

who handles the work for the Copyright Organization of Trinidad and Tobago (COTT). One of the things that she has been doing with Caricom export persons is to be able to look at the profile of the kinds of incentives that we have developed throughout the region for attracting investment by those involved in the entertainment industry. And it is significant, Sir, that it is very seldom that here in Barbados we have spent a considerable amount...and I want to carry you through this slowly, Sir, because we sometimes forget what, as a Government, we have passed and what we are trying to put there to enhance the competitiveness of these artists.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

I would like to remind the Honourable Member that she has got one minute.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY:

I will do it very quickly, Sir. First of all, these artists have the benefit under the Income Tax Act to only pay tax on 50 per cent of royalty income. Secondly, Sir, any foreign exchange that is earned outside of Barbados, under section 12 (a) of the Income Tax Act they can claim as export tax allowance.

Certainly, Sir, with the restrictions that were removed in respect to the ownership of international business companies all artists who are exporting their services or products need not be doing so outside the region through a vehicle of an international business company given the preferential tax benefit in respect to the sale of those services through the Investment Development Corporation and indeed, it was announced by the Honourable Prime Minister in his Budget Speech last year that he is going to be removing the restriction in respect of the sale of service in Caricom. We also need to see how that also benefit them rather than relying on the export tax allowance under the Income Tax Act.

But under the Small Business Development Act, investment relating to the cultural industry also benefits as an approved area. Under the Small Business Development Act in respect to domestic activities the cultural industry - music, arts, whatever, also benefit, so that persons whose gross does not exceed \$2,000,000 can claim Income Tax at the level of 25 per cent instead of the 40 per cent and benefit from all of the other incentives under the Small Business Development Act.

Therefore, we have to recognize that we have put a range of incentives in place to be able to make the cost of doing business to the average entertainer or visual artist in this country more affordable. Where we have to intensify, is perhaps a public education programme and linking directly with the lawyers and accountants because these persons are not persons who are traditionally hired lawyers or accountant these are people who must start recognizing that they, themselves, must form an association to speak with one voice rather than making us believe that the private sector of Barbados is only a group of traders on Broad Street and does not reflect those persons who, in truth and in fact, help to generate considerable wealth to this country. If necessary, Sir, I will come back. Thank you.

12:00 noon

Friday, March 16, 2001

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

Mr. Chairman, I do not want my view, in relation to this particular Ministry to be mixed up or clouded and I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church West erroneously attributed to me, a

view about Sub programme 491 which never came from my mouth.

Yesterday, I dealt exclusively with Sub programme 490 and the general management section of the Ministry. Sir, I said that all the Minister had to do was to identify how the significant increases in the areas over a six-year period were being matched by - whatever he may want to say - increased registrations, increased revenue or whatever. I do not think that was achieved yesterday but I am going to move on.

What I will say with regard to Sub programme 491 is that a stronger case needs to be made by the Minister for additional resources to be made in relation to this area for two reasons. The first relates to the importance of developing this section as mentioned both by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West to keep pace with development, both domestically and internationally, in terms of the kinds of activities in services that Barbadians are getting involved in and the profile of Barbados as a country, both within CARICOM and beyond CARICOM, can develop.

Secondly and more importantly is what is going to be happening with regard to the Caribbean region as a whole, as a result of the implementing of Protocol 2 to the CARICOM Treaty. Sir, that brings me to that aspect of which I would like the Minister to tell me - regarding Protocol 2 to the CARICOM Treaty, since we are dealing with many of the services that are going to be freely traded under Protocol 2 when it comes into full operation - what work programme the Ministry of Industry and International Business has identified as being relevant.

When I look at the studies that have been done in CARICOM relative to the legislative and other changes that will be necessary to bring Protocol 2 into being to make free trade in services rights of establishment and so on throughout the entire Caribbean, I think this is an area of work that is going to be expensive. It is going to require a lot of technical work by lawyers, drafters and it is also going to see a very intensive period for Parliaments in the Caribbean amending legislation that is going to cut across all sectors and almost all activities which fall under the categorisation of services.

I believe that not enough has been said about Government's commitment to providing both the resources and a timetable for the implementation of the changes consequential on Protocol 2 to the CARICOM Treaty coming into being.

I mean, Sir, it is a challenge for a country like Barbados with a Parliament that meets often. We have a very strong drafting department and the Government from time to time has made resources available to supplement the work of drafting and also we have, to my mind, a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to respond to the changes that Protocol 2 will usher in.

I fear very much that the rest of the Caribbean and particularly the OECS countries which are still - despite what the Honourable Member for St. Peter said at the beginning of this debate about the alien land holding - the OECS countries some of which are still passing new legislation that offends against Protocol 2, to the CARICOM Treaty including new alien registration. It is called legislation in some territories. I am saying that the OECS countries are going to need even more resources made available to them and some OECS countries are still passing pieces of legislation which impose conditions and militate against free trade in services and impact on rights of establishment against other CARICOM

nationals.

The point I was making is that it is as important to us that they meet their time schedules and that we assist them as much as possible, as it is to ensure that we in Barbados do what we have to do to meet the programme required under Protocol 2.

I truly believe that the intent and the spirit of Protocol 2 can unleash, for Barbadians in particular - this is my view - great opportunities in terms of services and I mean all kinds of services. The UN classification is extremely wide. In fact, I think Barbados is better positioned - despite what the Honourable Member for Christ Church West said about areas in which we are lagging in terms of the Caribbean region - we are certainly much better positioned by way of the advance of our legislation and the infrastructure that we have.

Except for exchange controls, I think we have a better developed and certainly a capital market that has more integrity than many of the other countries in the Caribbean. In a sense, we stand to benefit more than any other country in the Caribbean region. All other things being equal, I think the Minister, therefore, needs to tell us what he sees as the benefits and how he is going to apply the resources in this particular area to ensure the speedy introduction of Protocol 2.

I do not think that the comments of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy should be interpreted to mean that he is in favour of piracy. What he was saying is that the young entertainer probably should have seen the virtue of somebody already marketing his material, even though the benefits do not flow immediately back to him.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East knows that there are Barbadians living in Brooklyn who can get you any CD...

Aside.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

Your problem, as usual is that you do not listen and therefore you will fly off the handle and say the wrong thing. Calm down and listen for a few minutes. When I am finish, you want to challenge me, fine.

There are Barbadians who for the benefit of other Barbadians, run businesses where you can dial certain numbers and get them to send the latest CDs to Barbados from Brian McKnight and others, for US\$1. We know that this is going to be an area of great challenge because while we are down here trying to help others protect their intellectual property, if that entertainer did not see the man with the CD, he would never have known or perhaps even conceive that somebody would be approaching any man walking down a street in Brooklyn or wherever with a copy of his CD.

We are not going to get cooperation...

Aside.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

...the same point I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church West made yesterday about the British common law position where they are not going to help your local tax authorities in collecting taxes which you owe them.

12:10 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON:

Even though we are signing all of these conventions and there is supposed to be reciprocity and similar levels of enforcement and so on, we probably do more per capita to facilitate the enforcement of other people's property rights than they will ever do for us. Therefore, I think, it is critical for us to recognise that we are moving into a single market and economy with economies at different levels of economic advancement and that we have to get it right within the region because it is true that outside of the Caribbean region there are great opportunities for them and some of our artistes have done exceedingly well.

Invariably, those who are going to get on the international market are going to receive some kind of protection because as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East said they are going to have distribution agreements and they will have other players relating to them...

Asides

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON:

Well, even so, but at least there are notions of protection. However, within the Caribbean region as a whole that is not exactly so. I believe that, as I said, when we go into our new arrangements under Protocol II and in terms of reciprocity with our CARICOM partners that we have to make sure that everybody is functioning in the same kind of mode.

The reality is that piracy exists. The reality is that for the vast majority of Barbadian entertainers even if they bring piracy to the attention of authorities very little is done to deal with it. That is the reality. So how do we move it from that stage to a stage in which they feel that the creativity and ability that they have will sustain them throughout their lifetime, assuming that their art is what they survive on exclusively, even if they do not.

The last point I want to make relates to the question of telecommunications. I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church East has not got to that area yet and I am not sure if he intends to but I do not think that he should ignore the importance of the comments which the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, made about the role of Barbados in the rest of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). It is true that we did not exercise a buy back option of the Cable and Wireless shares. There may have been valid reasons at the time when we sold it but when we look at what has happened now we can justify the sale of the shares. I do not care what other people say about

it. I am saying that in the context of what is happening under the new arrangements with the World Trade Organisation, the fact that we offer telecommunications as an area in which we are going to have open competition, that Barbados should see itself not standing alone but as part of the OECS arrangement. I think we should not miss the boat nor should we believe that it is so important for us to go along with what Cable and Wireless wants but pretends it does not want by not accepting our regional responsibility to find a way to get into the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) and also beyond that as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said for us to find a new opportunity for Barbadians and other Caribbean citizens to become owners of shares in the telecommunications sector.

It is critical for us to get back to that stage in an environment of open competition because if we accept that that is the direction in which we are going then we can see exactly how the playing field will unfold. In the arrangements that existed before we had a monopoly, we had a pricing structure that was regulated by a public utilities entity and we had arrangements in which there were cross subsidies which may not exist subsequently. Therefore, as I said, it provides a good opportunity because you can see exactly the direction in which we are going.

I believe the Barbados Government made an error in not aligning itself more closely to the countries of the Eastern Caribbean in their arrangements in terms of liberalization of telecommunications.

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

This is a short 15 minutes. It is 20 minutes past 12. We normally have lunch at half past 12.

Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY:

The Honourable Minister during his last submission made reference to the issue of sovereignty. I think that presentation actually revolves around the principle of sustaining our sovereignty in the new international environment.

This is a matter which I raised briefly in my presentation during the second reading. I said then, and I want to restate it, it is my view, that one of Government's most primary responsibilities is to safeguard the sovereignty of the State and in that new context, the issue of prudent economics becomes prominent. I see the whole thrust of this Ministry's policy in its programmes as being part of that prudence which attaches itself to Government's economic programme which is the management of policy at this time.

Capitalism, we would all agree, sustains itself as it pursues its excesses by creating and maintaining class divisions. We should logically expect that in the era of super capitalism when super profits are being pursued that the business of class division of societies and class division amongst states would, in fact, be further intensified.

Yesterday, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas spoke with some intensity to the matter of that attack on our sovereignty and made reference to race. Historically, we find that the pursuit of profits under the guise of capitalism is attendant by features of race, greed and profit. That has not changed. It has become a much more so the case. Therefore, we should not be surprised that our sovereignty is under assault and that an attempt is being made to ensure that we are categorized among that class of

States which are viewed as inferior in the international arena. If one looks at the dichotomous approach to relations between China and Cuba, it supports a view. The needs of capitalism are basically raw materials to fuel the motors and consumers to make use of the products which are derived from the capitalist approach to things.

I would want to make reference to two or three other things by looking at how the development of indigenous industries continues to be stifled because I believe that that is part of the policy of ensuring that there are class divisions among States. Historically, things like the Navigation Act and Mercantilist Policy have been used to ensure that exploitation, extraction of surpluses from States such as ours and things like monocot dependency is perpetuated. That is still obtained in many of the States about us particularly in the Windward Islands.

12:20 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Rev. J.J.S. ATHERLEY:

Against this backdrop, it becomes therefore more important that we understand the importance of developing new industries, alternative sources of energy such as has been referred to in this debate, solar energy, wind energy. Of course, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has already given us the benefit of his limited appreciation of matters of energy when sometime ago in recent months he advised the Chamber that all of this heat being generated around the place is a result of a kinetic form of energy.

We go beyond kinetic forms of energy and refer to these alternative sources of energy and we really need to have more than a token appreciation for these things. We need more than a token appreciation for the development of cottage industry. I support that very strongly. We need to have more than a token appreciation for the development of the craft industry. We need to see these things in more sophisticated terms.

I had an experience five years ago in Ecuador. I went to a small village somewhere in the country along the Equator line and I was offered by an indian man a craft item which was very attractive and caught my interest immediately. On close examination, there was clearly displayed Made In Barbados. On further dialogue with him, I discovered that he is wont from time to time to leave Ecuador, come to Barbados, sell these things to Cave Shepherd, Made In Barbados. Many tourists buy them. There was I being offered that for sale.

I am trying to suggest that there are opportunities out there for which we need to have more than a token appreciation. We need to have a more sophisticated view of cottage industry and craft industry in Barbados better than a dreamy-eyed view of the development of alternative sources of energy. We need to go past the stage of experiment and make these things become a reality because that is the counter to the assault on our sovereignty, the effort to sustain us as mono-crop dependencies or limited sources of productivity in the world arena.

The second thing that I would want to make reference to in order to support what I am saying about assaults on sovereignty is the matter of the use of the financial institutions traditionally and the biased way that our development has been influenced. Traditionally, these financial institutions have given us financial support for development of basic infrastructure. Economies like Barbados have gone beyond the point of basic infrastructure. We are now at the point of enhancing our infrastructure for productive purposes. We have now reached the stage where the counter from the other side is that using policies like graduation we are limited in terms of our access to funding to build our productive capacity.

Our development has been facilitated for basic infrastructure which served the purpose of producing for those who seek to make profit while, at the same time, having come to this stage in our development, we are faced with the prospect of being denied, especially through agencies like the IADB, the financial assistance which we need for enhancing our productive capacity. These are the realities of the attacks on our sovereignty today. We cannot be blind to these and I think the Minister sought to come to that point in his earlier presentation.

The use of the trade mechanisms, GATT, in the initial stages and its successor, the WTO, would have focussed initially on commodity trading. Now we have come to the place where we have moved away from trading in basic manufacture, basic commodity trading, to a point where we want to develop our services infrastructure. These mechanisms are now, therefore, being used in this way to attack this new thrust on the part of states which seek to develop them in order to maintain and perpetuate the inequities in trade, to stifle the productive capacity of economies such as ours.

Financial services, as we have already heard, offer great prospects for states such as Barbados with the educational and infrastructural base and with the telecommunications infrastructure to take off. In the face of this, we see this new threat. The OECD is but the latest in this group of bullies who seek either to stem or reverse the advances made. What I am basically saying is, that when we are dealing with the issue of attacks on our sovereignty we are dealing with a reality and we can examine that in a historical way. We are faced with successive attempts on the part of those whose intention is simply to rape us for profit. We are faced with the prospects of our best efforts being thwarted.

I would like to make one more point, with your leave, Mr. Chairman, and it has to do with the whole business of enhancing and improving technological capacity. I was in Malaysia last month and had the privilege of sitting on a panel that looked at the business of globalization as it impacts on poverty in developing states. One of the points I made there and which I wish to make now is that we have come to the point in Barbados where we have just about wrestled with the traditional context of poverty. We have addressed things like job opportunity, significant improvements in health services, transportation services and availability of these services to people which, in some circles, is still an index of success in terms of addressing poverty.

We are at the stage where we must now wrestle with the new context of poverty and I think the Right Honourable Prime Minister was seeking to make this point when he referred to the use and availability of technological capacity. We cannot afford to allow a situation in Barbados to obtain where because our people do not have access to technological capacity we create a new dynamic of poverty stemming from that.

I believe that it would be tragic if, after spending so much money on education - I think it is \$300 million this year - we come to a place where a new class of illiterates are created because our people do not have access to technology. So we are faced with a new poverty context while at the same time we still try to wrestle with the old context of poverty. In that regard, I see the Ministry of International Business and Industry as having a pivotal role through its policy of telecommunications, through its policy on manufacture, through its policy on international business, and having a critical role in ensuring not only that we defend our sovereignty but that we offset any kind of situation which would see created in Barbados at this time a new poverty situation which comes out of a denial of access to technological privilege and technological capacity.

I would want to salute the Government for its policy on EduTech with reference to the building of community resource centres and making technology accessible to people at the community level. I would want strongly to urge prudence in terms of pursuit of a policy on telecommunications so that we do not see any reversal of the move towards making ourselves more technologically efficient. Thank you.

On the motion of Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. A.P. WOOD, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour, the Deputy Speaker, and asked for leave to sit again. Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 135 p.m. today.

Hon. A.P. WOOD:

I beg to second that.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 1:35 p.m. in the afternoon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

12:35 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

This Honourable House is resumed. When the suspension was taken, this Honourable House was in Committee of Supply to that it will now revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

This Honourable House is now in Committee of Supply.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

Mr. Chairman, at this stage I want to take an opportunity to speak to a few of the initiatives which will be undertaken during the course of the year and which, essentially, form the basis for increase expenditure and in some cases where expenditure is not substantial, represent new areas of activity. Also, I want to respond to some questions raised by way of request for information.

Mr. Chairman, first of all the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition concerning our progress with double taxation treaties and bilateral investment treaties. Those of us familiar with this business know that at the heart of the international business sector during last year we were able to conclude and sign double taxation treaties with China and Cuba, which brings to eleven, the number of double taxation treaties which we have. During this year we shall continue to press for progress by way of concluding negotiations with Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, India, South Africa, Malta and the Netherlands Antilles. Interestingly, Sir, Malta and the Netherlands Antilles have only recently shown interest and they did that during the OECD Commonwealth meeting which was held here in Barbados where the Minister of Finance of those two countries met with us to indicate that they had a very keen interest in that form of collaboration with us. By way of bilateral investment treaties there are now eight of them and we will continue to spread that particular mechanism as well.

Sir, it really goes to the heart of what has been at the core of our approach to international cooperation in international business matter. The double taxation treaty and bilateral investment treaty are models that work. They speak to the exchange of information, to transparency and non-discrimination and they really provide a clear alternative basis to what the OECD is suggesting at this stage.

Sir, in terms of product development there is an International Banking Act which has already been drafted and is out for comments by persons operating in the industry. Also, Sir, the mutual funds regulation has been with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and has been drafted and that too is also out for consultation and should be implemented shortly. We are also awaiting for introduction to Parliament, at a soon date, certain legislative amendments which would usher in new insurance products. I will give the names but I will not go into details of them now: segregated accounts and protected cells which are devices well known to the international business community and which are not part of the product offering of Barbados. This will greatly enhance our international insurance efforts.

Sir, the other matter relating to international cooperation relates to Barbados' involvement in a new entity called the International Tax and Investment Association. This is an organisation which has been created by the non-OECD countries as their means of collaboration in order to have a coordinated and coherent response to the OECD initiatives. This organisation was created at the last meeting of the joint non-OECD working group in Paris recently. In fact, the organisation will have its first formal meeting next week in London. Barbados has offered and it has been accepted that Barbados will be the host of the Secretariat to that organisation and the Honourable Chamber will be kept informed of progress.

Sir, we will continue to improve the functioning of the corporate registry by way of various public sector reform efforts and, in fact, next week there will be a lunch hosted by the corporate registry at which some of these ideas will be launched in association with the office of public sector reform. This is an important matter in relation to the competitiveness of our international business sector.

Notwithstanding the concerns of the Honourable Member for St. John with respect to investment promotion efforts we, along with the private sector, continue to be involved in a number of investment promotion activities. Essentially, we feel that the job of the Government is to ensure that Barbados has brand name recognition as a place for investment. The actual specific investment opportunities will be done by the private sector and that joint effort will ensure that we are able to maximise possible returns on any investment activities that are made.

Sir, I would just want to underscore the need for a wider range of professionals to become involved in the various aspects of what I call the new economy. One of the aspects of this new economy is the policy remit of this industry. However, this industry, as you know, does not produce goods but provide simple service - policy direction, encouragement and facilitation. However, we will not get too far if only a very small number of lawyers and a small number of accountants are involved in the area. Therefore, whether it is in e-commerce, entertainment, international finance or intellectual property we are trying our best to encourage a wider range of participation by a larger range of persons.

Sir, technical assistance provided through the Ministry will be a \$5 million technical assistance programme to the manufacturers, as discussed earlier, as well as to other business persons in the area of how to enhance their intellectual property protection. We recognise the need for us to be a catalyst and to provide some administrative support to the clients in our sector to help them to maximise any opportunity which might exist.

Sir, I just wanted to make that short intervention at the start of this afternoon's proceedings.

I know that one or two other members want to speak before I wind up but I just wanted to respond to those questions that were raised concerning some of the specifics of the programme of the Ministry and to underscore the point that in addition to regularly planned and scheduled programmes, much of our time, energy and financial resources will have to be committed during the course of the next year to keeping ahead of and responding to the various initiatives of the international organisations and initiatives of our competitors as they have potential to threaten the very existence of the sector.

Sir, after other Honourable Members have made their contribution I shall return to wind up.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH:

Mr. Chairman, thanks for the opportunity to make an intervention in relation to this Ministry under Head 21 dealing with international business.

Sir, let me say from the outset that I will continue to give commendations to the Honourable Minister, to the Ministry and its officials, for what has been an outstanding year of work and many outstanding accomplishments during that year. I was going to speak in terms of the complimentary nature of the two Ministries, the Ministry of International Business and the Ministry of Tourism but the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has caused some level of debate regarding an issue in which he has displayed a

high level of ignorance....

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Honourable Member, I think you have a good command of the English language and I would like you to use it to the fullest.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH:

Sir, the Honourable Member is devoid of knowledge on the issue of distribution and marketing and how the intellectual property of Barbadians would help us to provide the type of society that we need as we go into the 21st century and beyond.

1:50 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of HON. N.A. LYNCH:

The point has been made here by more than one speaker in relation to true professionals and the concept to how globalisation impacts on the type of professionals that we produce in this society.

It is obvious, as we have all heard from the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, that the professionals of the 21st Century are those who are able to transcend national boundaries. Rather than speaking of a sovereign state, we are going to go into the concept of sovereign individuals. Those who are able to ply their trade across what now not necessarily exists as national boundaries and those who are able to ply their trade anyway in a way in which the trade that they are producing and in essence operating cannot be duplicated by any other human being on the face of the earth. That makes them a unique individual in the scheme of things.

Fundamentally there are two sets of people that we believe would make a difference in this nation and that would develop Barbados artistes in terms of culture and our sportsmen. Sir, to make a statement along the line that one can actually take the intellectual property of another human being and pirate it and that in essence can help with the distribution and the marketing of that particular product is nothing short than ludicrous.

Mr. D.St. E. KELLMAN:

On a point of order. Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. I have never said that it would help to distribute the product. I think the Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression that I mentioned anything about distribution of the product. The Honourable Member knows quite well, Sir, being a marketing man, the point that I have made. I fail to believe, Sir, that we have spent or wasted our money on marketing on the subject.

HON. N.A. LYNCH:

Sir, there is no where on earth that the concept that you take a man or woman's intellectual property that he or she is seeking to distribute internationally and you can some way or the other take it and pirate it, and where he or she does not gain any type of benefit for it, and tell me that is going to help

with the marketing of that specific product. It is absolutely ludicrous.

Sir, anyone who would propose to push that line or argument, particularly in an environment in which we have struggling artistes in a small developing nation like this, who are seeking to ply their trade overseas is completely ridiculous. We should never let that type of argument go abroad or go out of this Honourable Chamber. It is absolute nonsense.

Asides

HON. N.A. LYNCH:

There is no way that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy can take that negative and turn it into a positive.

Asides

HON. N.A. LYNCH:

That is as ludicrous as you can get.

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please. Order.

HON. N.A. LYNCH:

Sir, he has displayed a high level of ignorance on most subjects and he intends to display them as widely as possible and this is no exception.

Asides

HON. N.A. LYNCH:

Sir, I want to make it abundantly clear how the Ministry of Tourism and International Business does its business. In this new economy I want to speak about the Ministry of International Business in terms of the successes they have had in the year in relation to the high level of offshore business that they continue to attract to Barbados. If you look at the number of IBCs, Foreign Sales Corporation and insurance companies that have been attracted to Barbados in the last year, it underscores the kinds of substantial efforts that are being made in that Ministry.

Sir, it is an opportunity to compliment them on the outstanding work that they have been doing in relation to the OECD matter. The neo-imperialist group that has emerged is seeking to take us back many centuries in terms of the work that we have been doing. They have indulged in a lot of work in keeping the OECD and its doctrines away from our shores. However, we are not yet out of the woods and the OECD seemingly is very intent on the virtual destruction of many of the economies in the Caribbean.

Sir, with all that has been achieved so far, I wish to add that we are not yet out of the woods and the OECD continues to be very powerful. The irony of the situation is that all of the high standards that

they are pushing, are the same standards that we have always sought to establish for Barbados, the same standards that have always characterised our own offshore sector, high prudential standards, transparency in our financial interaction and international financial stability.

Sir, the main objective is we must avoid uncertainty to establish in the minds of the international community that Barbados is a very safe jurisdiction and one that maintains the highest standards. Barbados has always been vigorous in its fight against money laundering and financial crimes. This is nothing new for Barbados. However, we are clear that we must continue to identify the elements that act as constraints to our own competitiveness in the financial marketplace.

Sir, I have always thought that the answers on these issues in terms of separating Barbados from tax havens and to be labeled as such really speaks to the issue of the establishment on one corporate tax rate across the board. That way we would not necessarily have to speak on the matter of international business companies or any other entity but we would have one corporate entity registered in Barbados who would have the same level of corporate tax. Therefore, we would not be accused of ring fixing or anything else.

Sir, I understand that the Ministry of International Business and the Ministry of Finance have already embarked on such a study. This study is to determine if you were going to have one level rate of tax across the board which a company registered under the Companies Act in Barbados can enjoy. Therefore, there would be no need to label Barbados as a tax haven and everybody would enjoy the same level of tax rates.

Sir, the issue that is most fundamental is the issue of the level of tax that you would want to put in place. It is my understanding, Sir, that the Ministries are very advanced in terms of speaking to the issue and what rate they would want to put in place.

Sir, the linkage between tourism and international business becomes more complete when you look at issues of the characteristics of both centres and how they operate.

2.00 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. N. A. LYNCH:

We are operating in a rather high-cost jurisdiction in terms of the achievement to business at both the level of international business and tourism. The issue along the line of energy and employment costs are things that characterize both industries.

In addition, Sir, when we spoke about agriculture along the same lines, I have always thought that whenever the IDC goes on the road to market Barbados that it obviously...Sir, I do not understand how it can ever be done in an environment without actually being able to specifically link it to the issue of tourism and tourism development on this island.

The Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) is responsible for marketing in much the same way the Barbados Tourism Authority (BTA) is responsible for the marketing of the Tourism's

products and in essence, Sir, both industries need the same level of attention.

Now, I believe tourism success is important to how much off-shore business we are able to attract. I want to make the point that tourism success is important to how we are able to create an environment for better attraction of the off-shore business and as well the ability to attract certain levels of investment in the tourism obviously impacts on our ability to attract people in the off-shore industry.

Now, the standards that we need to set in place, apart from the issue relating to the standard of living and the quality of life in Barbados as a carrot dangling to attract the off-shore business, the issue that potential investors would want to know is which are the other entities that have actually invested in Barbados? And although that speaks to the issue of the economic and financial stability of our country in terms of the quality of visits that you are able to attract, you also need to look at your number one productive sector, look at its ability to grow, look at its ability to survive both the short and long term period and it tells you something about the country in terms of where it is going and how you intend to get there.

When we look at our number one tourism sector and determine whether or not it will survive in both the short and long term, obviously people look at these issues and at the quality of the products we have that can attract...

Aside.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH:

You also look very clearly at the level and the quality of hotel products that you are able to attract and the issue of recognizable brand is an issue that we have discussed here and at other places in terms of whether or not Barbados needs to have certain recognizable, international brands of hotels on the island.

I am making the point, Sir, that although it is a necessary and unique issue for us to have indigenous brands in Barbados the issue is that we have recognizable international hotel brands in this country which enhances our ability to look for investment in other places. Both investors and consumers are interested in the type of brands that they know the product and can easily determine what type of product there is. It also speaks to the issue of investment across the sector and people are confident enough that these international brands will do well in Barbados and certainly enhance our ability to attract business in other sectors.

Sir, people also look, not only at that but, for example, at the quality of the airlines and airlifts in the country to be able to determine, particularly in tourism, where we are going and how we intend to get there. So it is important for us to make the linkage and to understand that it is fundamental that how we do in that number one tourism sector, how we are able to enhance Barbados and to attract the certain level of investment would determine, as well, how we do in the international business sector and the other sectors.

In terms of manufacturing and the link between manufacturing and the tourism sector, as I said, Sir, when I spoke on the issue of agriculture, that we have spent a lot looking at some of the components of tourism development in terms of marketing, research and development, property development and institutional development without looking at the linkages and how these linkages really develop the

tourism sector.

In this particular area one of the linkages that is fundamentally important to our tourism industry surviving deals with the issue of how we link manufacturing to that industry. Sir, there are two elements involved. Not only is manufacturing needed and will survive and continue to be one of our main productive sectors in the future but the level of manufacturing and how we link manufacturing to tourism, is now important for the survival of the manufacturing industry. I believe, Sir, that it is important that manufacturing has a place in our development in the future in terms of its supply to the local and export markets. I am also talking about the ability of manufacturers as well, to supply goods and services. The supplying of goods to the tourism sector is a major plank to the development in the manufacturing sector to survive in the immediate and long term.

And Sir, I know the supply of manufacturing items to major foreign exchange earners, in essence does not look as if it is for export, but the main fact that people from the exterior are consuming the goods in Barbados and that it is generating foreign exchange, in essence speaks to a wider principle of manufacturers being able to contribute to their own exports.

But Sir, I do not believe that we have ever spent as much time as we should in terms of the research base for understanding how manufacturing in Barbados can compliment the tourism sector, or in essence, in the supply of goods and services to the tourism sector. I believe that it is one place that we have not spent enough and have not done enough in being able to create a Research and Development Unit within that Ministry dealing with manufacturing and with the issue as to how manufacturing can compliment the supply of the tourism industry.

There are issues that are important; the quality of the product, consumption patterns, substitutions to the industry and in terms of a high-cost jurisdiction, being able to do it effectively. It will also call for the issue of re-engineering their operations to be able to supply quality goods and services and quality items, because whether we want to realize it or not, whether we want to state it fundamentally or not, we are still in an environment and in a tourism sector that is considered to be of very high quality and high class. And that is not to say that we do not have the judicious mix of tourism development in Barbados. That is one of our branded components but the statement must be made that if you are going to supply to the tourism industry in Barbados it calls for a higher level of quality in supply, particularly from the manufacturing sector.

I believe, Sir, that whether or not we go a little bit above, every manufacturer in Barbados does suffer what everybody else suffers from, the issue of high cost in terms of energy and labour. I believe that people are still willing to pay, in essence, a fee for what might be considered as quality goods being produced on this island.

I believe, for example, take the tourism sector, there is no productive sector in Barbados that might be more willing to take first from the manufacturing sector in Barbados than the tourism sector, but obviously we have got to have very good evidence about how furniture is utilized in the tourism sector and issues surrounding quality and quantity of the supply to the tourism sector.

I believe that if we are able to do that effectively that we will see the linkage being effected from that. Sir, the other issue that we can talk about in terms of the linkage particularly to the manufacturers and

tourism sector is the issue with the supply of linen, towels and the issue of the production of rum. I know the Honourable Member for St. Lucy talked about the supply of beer but there are a number of issues that link the tourism sector to the manufacturing sector and I believe one of the major components must be that we must expend some additional resources in the coming years to be able to identify these areas as to how we can link better and how we can better the manufacturing sector to the tourism sector in terms of research and development.

I am obliged to you Sir.

2:10 p.m

Friday, March 16, 2001

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not an expert in marketing and I have very little knowledge about trade. What I do know, Sir, is that this particular Head seeks, as part of its mission, to reposition the Barbados economy and the mechanism which is responsible for assisting the economy and the productive life of the Caribbean people. It sets about to reposition itself as a counter position to what the industrial world has been doing within the last decade.

The point is that the industrial world repositioned themselves long ago and in doing so, they did it through innovative technical means in order to counter the positions that small states have put in place before, in order to get a small piece of the world's economy.

This is nothing new. It is a system that goes back to the Eighteenth Century and the struggle with the one imperfectibility. The first thing someone must understand who is responsible for a ministry like this, the history of change in order to understand why change will come at intervals in history.

We have seen it over and over again and most of the time when the changes are made, they are glorified. They are placed in most cases. However, sinister they are, they are placed in a sacred aura and in euphemistic terms that make mankind believe because of the propagandist in the metropolitan world. This is where the faith in the small states are. That the intellectuals in the industrial world sell these concepts to small states and we repeat them like parrots and begin to talk about how glorious globalisation is, everybody is talking about the gains and benefits of globalisation.

Every day I hear the contradictions and the difficulties of the struggle against globalisation but the marketing technique of intellectuals in the United States of America is to make people believe that globalisation, liberalisation, all of the euphemistic terms is so sacred that it provides opportunities for us.

Because people learn through EduTech to operate a computer, the community thinks that level of achievement in technology would allow them to get into the world market.

I am not as impressed as others about some of the proposals that have been made to counter the position which we are in. I have heard people talk about looking at indigenous crafts and selling it on

the world market.

I do not know what volume of craft we can sell in order to move at a developmental process.

I believe it might be a good survival technique for a few individuals. I have heard people talk about all different types of industries and the unique nature of our indigenous wood, not understanding that what is happening in the international arena, with all types of synthetic materials that are a cheaper unit cost than the genuine commodities that we are talking about.

If you look into homes, you look into the motor cars or whatever, you will be seeing synthetic materials with the similar appearance to the genuine material being used because of the cheap unit cost. So it is very competitive.

The concept of globalization is only an extension of what the United States was preaching back in the Ninth Century when people like James Monroe, the President of the United States of America felt it was important for the United States of America to expand its external markets in order to facilitate the increase in the productivity of the United States.

All that technology has done, this new change, this so called glorified thing that has happened to the world, is to increase the productivity as a consequence of new technology and forced the industrial world to look for external markets. If they have excessive production, it is going to affect the United States economy and that is what has happened during the days of the Roosevelt era that I talked about - excessive production in the market which led to the collapse of the economy including jobs. You have the goods but you have no purchasing power to purchase the goods.

What is happening all like now is that you have the goods, you are reducing the importance of labour and replacing labour with technology. Therefore, you have to find external markets. You put your propaganda at work in the intellectuals, send it across the world - the Caribbean, the Western parrots begin to shout about globalization and how glorious it is and they are struggling with it every day.

The countries that are now mouthing it are struggling with it every day so this task is a very complex and mammoth task. It might be a small Ministry but it is coming up against a new found mock form of the Monroe Doctrine. That is all it is, a new form of the Monroe Doctrine. The United States markets must be protected and you ask us how do you continue to follow this treacherous path of impressing upon people, that they have some God given right to protect the world markets and set the guideline of how those markets should function, design their programmes and meet with the international agencies which they set up - IMF, the World Bank and now the OECD. And if you do not conform to the dictates of the United States of America, you will be perceived as an unfriendly partner.

All of a sudden, Barbados is an unfriendly partner because our tax systems are attractive and it is my view that the small percentage of benefits which we get from trade attracts foreign revenue. Even that the United States see as a major challenge.

You have to be aware of the psyche of these people because Europeans in general believe that they have a god given right to be responsible for the world, whether in the United States of America or Europe, they believe they have a god given right. If you look at the philosophy of all of the Presidents

of the United States, they were always consistent on one thing and that is the principle of the doctrine.

Whether they apply it in Haiti after the Revolt of 1971 in Haiti, they went in and pretended that they were the peacemakers between France and Haiti on the pretense that they were collecting reparations for the French Government. The consistency of it is an expansion of the Monroe document. They continue to do it and we have to understand that clearly. We could talk about many recommendations but we have to come up against American imperialism.

2:20 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation Mr. T. A. PRESCOD:

Kwaame Nkrumah, the President of Ghana, said that neocolonialism is the highest form of imperialism. That is what we are witnessing here.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Honourable Member, I do not want to stop the flow, you sound impressive, but at least I would like you to go a little closer to the subject. I know that you are a Historian but come a little closer to the subject, please.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD:

Sir, there is a perception that you have to understand. If you cannot see it, Sir, I will have to explain it to you. That is my responsibility, Sir.

I am trying to explain to you that, what appears to be prescriptive as a solution..., we have to understand the current dynamics which exist around them and the philosophy that shape the thinking of the people who are putting these things in place. So whether these people have the interest of the world at heart by opening markets and subscribing to certain principles of a free market, reciprocity and all of these things...

If you want to believe that, Sir, it is just that you have a different opinion to me but I know that there is no reciprocity. You cannot put a child who is 4 years old and tell him to start at the same tape as a man who is thirty-something years old and say to him to start equal and finish the 100 yards and see who would be fastest. You cannot make that point. Neither can you expect a small state that has no industrial base like the United States of America to compete in an open market with the United States of America. We have to use what techniques we can in order to attract business so that our people could survive.

I am saying that you could deal with the matter by isolating history but you have to understand that history in itself is dynamic and it changes at points. All I am saying to you is that the ideas that influenced the present doctrine of liberalization are nothing new. Therefore, you must understand the difficulties we are going to face because even when you have a genuine cause and you are arguing with strength assiduously to change conditions you will not change the philosophy that guide them. To

believe that the International Monetary Fund would be supportive in a new system is only not to understand that when someone exposes the vulgar nature of the beast and expose what is happening to the world that there will always be an agency that will want to make you believe that it is so righteous that it is prepared to make the necessary amends in order to facilitate small states.

We have to turn to our intellectuals, our politicians, and make sure that wherever Caribbean people are in the western world and throughout the Caribbean diaspora in the circumstances, that they have to move collectively as one voice to fight for the change.

The United States of America Government Senators depend on the West Indian people in New York City every four years for support. They want the vote of black people and the Spanish votes every four years especially the Democratic Party. If they want that vote, I am talking about lobbying, Sir, because lobbying will influence the decision-making process, they should agree to certain conditions if they want their vote. If they want to get the support of West Indians in New York then they will have to support the concerns of the West Indian people or they will not get any votes. It is as simple as that.

We have to use all types of, what I described as, unconventional approaches in order to force them into a retreat because their philosophy and their objectives are consistent and unchanging. I do not know if we can make a little adjustment here and there but we do not have the competitive edge in relation to them with technology to believe that we can use normal conventional approaches and survive in the future.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

You have got two minutes to conclude.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD:

That is why Caribbean States must come together and sing with one voice on this issue. They have to recognise that this is a problem. Just like the Asian countries were forced to come together after they collapsed, Caribbean countries must come together with one voice and challenge the OECD. This will then make the task of the Minister much easier when he is talking about repositioning the Barbados economy.

I am not satisfied, Sir, with some of the dignitaries which we have in the international markets. I cannot hear their voices. There was a time at the United Nations (UN) and in other forums across the world where the voices of the Barbadian representatives were heard expressing their views strongly on these things. My understanding on what is happening now is that we do not have those voices as loud as they used to be. I do not know if we have passive individuals representing the State or not, but we need to have people as the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said yesterday, that show some passion in representing the genuine interest of the people within the region.

I strongly believe, Sir, that it is going to be very difficult for a small individual state to do it alone or even to judge the minister based on the constraints attached to the allocation of the particular vote that we are talking about under Head 21. I believe that he understands what is happening, the matrix of the entire World Order web, and I have no doubt that in the near future we will begin to see some hope.

I thank you very much.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I rise again on this Head to say that the Barbados Eternal Telecommunications (BET) is now asking for a raise and we must not accept them at their word. The only example of metred rates that we have in Barbados is the cell phone cost. If one was to look at the cost of cell phones in Barbados and use that as a basis for judging metred rates I will say that there is no single Barbadian who, in a sensible fashion, would want to have metred rates introduced in Barbados.

I have already said to them that if they want to convince me and get me to convince the public of Barbados, the first thing they should have done would have been to lower the rates for cell phones. I went on to say to them that if they had done that when you are outside cleaning your car you would not need to rush into the house to use the normal telephone you would easily feel that it is just a matter of just lifting your cell phone and answering it instead of looking to see who is calling you.

I think it is important for the Government to tell BET, because they have been very silent on this particular issue, especially the Minister, that there is no reason why they should only be 20 000 to 28 000 cell phones in use in Barbados today, that a cell phone should be seen just as a normal telephone and that by just lowering the cost of the hardware is not going to change the effect of metering on the minds of Barbadians. It is that usage cost that will make the significant change in Barbados. If anyone feels that the Opposition is just criticising BET because they want to criticize BET they are wrong.

I also want them to understand that the Opposition well understands that the payment to the workers as severance at this time was cleverly done by them. What is also very important is that there is a rush to pay out the workers but there is no rush to amalgamate the companies. I am going to explain to this House why, Sir. If they do not amalgamate the companies right now, it means that BET will carry the cost over and they will be able to use that in their tabulation when they come to the Fair Trading Commission but if they pay the severance now that high cost will also go in order for them to get a good rate before the Fair Trading Commission.

2:30 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN:

I want these international companies to understand that there are people in Barbados who understand well how international companies operate within their shores. I do not have anything against BET, but I must understand as a parliamentarian that my first commitment will be to the masses of people in Barbados. The next thing that I have said to them is that I cannot understand how they can tell me that they need a rate increase when they have not fully serviced Barbados. Let me explain that, Sir.

There is still a large number of people in Barbados who would like to have a telephone and everybody knows about the optimum cost. Everybody knows that after the break-even point that every additional

telephone means additional profit for BET. You cannot come and tell me, Sir, that you need a change of rate structure until you have fully serviced the telephone services in Barbados. I hope a word to the Minister on this particular subject should be enough to convince him that he cannot accept lock, stock and barrel of what is proposed. I mean the Minister of International Trade and Industry. Because BET must produce the statistics and they cannot believe that there are any persons around like the late giant Wendell McClean who has passed away. Lord bless him in his grave. They are not people who are prepared to educate Barbadians on this particular subject and they will have an easy ride to rate hearings. I have already promised my constituents that I will fight on their behalf until they have fully serviced the telephones which they need to service in St. Lucy.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot understand when they put down the sub-station in St. Lucy in 1970-71 that every single line was taken up. Yet still today, Sir, there is a great demand and they have not seen the possibility of extending that service so that they can supply the demand that has been created in St. Lucy. When we have to deal with these issues, this is how we have to deal with them in their totality. They must understand that if they are going to market a product, they must market it in a wise way that will impact on my people in the north and the masses of people in Barbados.

Sir, those who feel that because BET is a large international company that they must accept their policy lock, stock and barrel, the Opposition cannot because we have to be the watchmen for the masses of people in Barbados. If Government feels that the policies given to them by BET can propel them in the international market, I am saying that it will not and they need to have a second look at that Green Paper produced by BET. The Government must understand, as I have said before, that they need to recognize that the services of BET must be seen as an input cost.

Sir, I thought the Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN:

I thought he would have recognized that the 800 number is used by the Americans.

The English and Canadians must be able use their call cards to call out of Barbados also. That is a very important point if we are really going to develop our tourism product. Sir, I thought that the Minister of Tourism would have been able to see the link between telecommunications and the tourism industry by using that important point in this particular issue.

Another point I want to make before the impression is given, Sir, that we have not been getting any help from the United States Government on the matter of the OECD. That is not true and we should be fortunate to realize that, even though another leader might be prepared to change his mind, we must challenge that leader to come out and say why he should change his mind on the stance taken by a previous President. As it stands now, I am prepared to say that we have the backing of the United States until they are prepared to say otherwise. I want to congratulate the United States Government for backing the Caribbean countries on this particular issue. I have no reasons to doubt that they understand the significance of the Caribbean to them. I know that they understand and there is no way they can afford to back down in supporting the Caribbean on this particular issue.

Sir, Caribbean countries must stop behaving in a manner that because they are small they are of no use. They have to stand up to international organizations and let their voices be heard. That is why I am saying that Caribbean Governments have to stop depending on international organizations for what they want and be prepared to take the lead and bring the G77 countries together to form their own banking organization and law making organization. In the same way the G8 countries can do it, the G77 countries can also do it because there is a basis and a precedent for it.

We cannot continue to behave as though only certain countries can be world powers because of size. If one looks at the size of Britain or Singapore, one will recognize that you do not have to have the land mass to be significant in this world. You must have foresight and the willingness to tell the world where you stand and have the foresight also to develop your economy with the capacity to allow you to talk in this world.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I suspect that all Members who have wanted to speak under this Head have spoken. If that is the case, I will proceed to wrap up the debate on this particular Head.

First of all, Sir, let me thank those Honourable Members who have spoken. The contributions have been most interesting and stimulating and I could assure you that I have listened with very keen interest and the officials representing in the presence of the Permanent Secretary and the Managers of the Departments represented by the sub-heads under the Ministry have been here for the duration of the debate. They have been taking careful note of the suggestions of Honourable Members.

Sir, in closing this debate under this Head, I want to indicate to you that this Ministry is satisfied that we are on the right track in fulfilling our remit to lead the way in taking Barbados to success in the new economy. There is much building and shaping that will be done. There is much repositioning that has to be done and this Ministry is proceeding along that particular course.

2:40 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

We are confident about the future and confident that all of the sectors under the Ministry's portfolio will be in a position to contribute to that future. Manufacturing in Barbados is not dead. It needs to be re-focussed, retooled and re-branded and Government will work hand in hand with the manufacturers. I indicated that there were two distinct sections, international and domestic with their own issues and dynamics. We are confident that there is a role for both and we will use a mixture of trade and industrial policy to enable the sector to retool and re-brand itself.

The trade policy, the use of safeguard requirements, physical use of incentives and we had a debate a few weeks ago. On the industrial side you heard mention of the technical assistance programme. Those will be utilised to reshape and re-brand domestic manufacturing. On the international side, Sir, we will continue to promote Barbados internationally as a good location for manufacturing. Clearly, Sir, the promotion will be targeted at specific niches which will be able to take account of our particular circumstances as a middle income economy with a highly skilled workforce. We know that we will not be competing at the lower end of the market because our costs are not there. We also have advantages in the upper end of the market and that is where we will pitch our tents.

In the international business sector, Sir, we continue to be confident in the success which we have been able to demonstrate so far by way of removing from the position where we were a lone voice in the wilderness crying out for our right to earn a living in this new world order. It has now garnered the support not only of others in similar circumstances as affected countries but also a number of OECD countries which, just as Switzerland and Luxembourg, recognised from the beginning and they abstained from supporting the OECD initiative. There are a number of other countries, some quietly, some not so quietly, who are themselves raising concerns.

The results of performance for last year have shown growth over the previous year and that, too, is a sign of encouragement. The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure which are included in the documents before us are all geared towards ensuring that we have adequate share of resources to take us forward in that sector.

In the area of intellectual property development we had a very rich debate where members expressed a number of views but all persons, even those persons who misunderstood the impact of piracy on the creative works of our local artistes, all persons were fully supportive of the need to strengthen our intellectual property framework in order to provide protection and in order to allow our creative persons to earn a proper livelihood from their endeavours. Sir, the programmes as described there are geared towards that.

In the area of telecommunications which is a fundamental input into all aspects of the new economy we have started some weeks ago a fairly full debate on the telecommunications policy in Barbados.

I do not propose to rehash the contributions made thus far in that debate and certainly that debate will continue in this House.

Sir, let me make it abundantly clear...

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression that he cannot discuss part of his Head because we are in a discussion on a Green Paper. If that is true, that particular section of the Head cannot be voted on. We would have to wait until the Green Paper is completed.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

I hate to interrupt the Honourable Member when he is on his feet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

You cannot put a point of order.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Sir, he cannot interrupt me when I am on a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

No. He cannot interrupt you when you are on a point of order.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

I am saying, Sir, that if you have a subsection under Head 21 you cannot come to the House and say that you cannot debate that when you expect this House of twenty-eight people to pass a particular section and you are saying because of a Green Paper that it cannot be debated. Then it means that this Head has to be taken out of the Estimates and when the Green Paper is completed it could come back as a supplementary. Is that what the Minister is requesting, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Please rephrase your statement.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I am sorry that I am in this House because I would be able to use suitably unparliamentary language to respond to the Honourable Member. Unfortunately, I am constrained by the Rules of the House. I said no such thing and the Honourable Member is at his mischievous best and his best is his worst.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is reflecting on the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

He is not reflecting on the Chair.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I am not reflecting on the Chair as you rightly ruled. I am only exposing the Honourable Member for what he is trying to do. I merely said, Sir, in an introduction to making some comments on the matter, that we have started a debate on the issue and that the debate will continue. I did not say, infer, or suggest that there could be no debate, because there has been debate by other Honourable Members who did not speak in that debate, and even others who have made comments on telecommunications. The Leader of the Opposition commented on telecommunications in his submission. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West, as did the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, and I am making my comments now. The Honourable Member knows that and he is just being mischievous. I was simply making the point that the debate will continue on the telecommunications policy.

I want to say that in terms of the way forward and the work of this Ministry as embodied in the Estimates of this year we recognise telecommunications as being the key input into all aspects of the

new economy and that the reforms as put forward by the Government which are built on a few key things - liberalization of the sector to get away from the exclusive monopoly arrangements as they stand now: the introduction of new players in the market to bring new services and new technology to get over one of the problems which we still experience today even though we have a system that is better than other developing countries it is not as good as the developed countries which is the benchmark; and to get away from the high prices we pay at present.

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

In all of this, what is important and what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy does not recognise, is that what the Government has set out as broad principles still have to be subject to regulatory authority and approvals by the Fair Trading Commission in the same way as with the Public Utilities Board that any proposal for change in prices or price structure all have to go before the Public Utilities Board. The Fair Trading Commission is a strong Commission both by way of the legislation which created it as well as by the very eminent team of persons which the Honourable Minister of Commerce has chosen to be directors of that Commission.

Sir, let me say that I expect there to be continuous debate on the matter and let me say on the matter which is currently before us that in relation to the lay-offs which have been in the news of late those lay-offs have never been part of any discussions, negotiations or otherwise between the Government and Cable and Wireless.

As a matter of fact, Sir, I notice in the news that the company worldwide seems to have adopted this misguided strategy of job cuts across all of their centres as a means of cost saving. We do not share their particular views. In fact, Sir, this administration, arising out of concerns about lay-offs in the economy generally, had introduced an Addendum to Protocol II of the social partnership which in turn formed the main part of Protocol III to do with security of tenure and to establish certain procedures where companies felt the need to go in the direction of retrenchment.

As far as the discussions were concerned, as far as all the documentation that was sent to us, the discussions relating to the merger of the companies to which we agreed in principle centred around a figure of 40 and 50 persons in administrative positions which would be affected by a merger, because if you are going to have a single board of directors, a single management structure, naturally you would have that kind of redundancy occurring. Those matters, we were told, would be addressed by way of voluntary separation over the process of time so that at the point of the merger they should be to optimal size.

We were just as surprised as anyone else with this strategy which, obviously, was not dreamed up by the negotiating team with which we dealt but which, based on the reports which we have seen in the news, would have come by way of instruction from London and affected across all of the operating entities of the company.

We do not support it, Sir. We certainly recognise that there will be circumstances and the Protocol is written in those terms. The Protocol says that the social partners will make every endeavour to ensure that workers have security of tenure. It also recognises that there would be circumstances in which

redundancies would occur from time to time and it speaks about economic redundancies, redundancies due to technological change and it listed a number of circumstances.

What is important is that it makes provision where a number greater than ten per cent of the workforce is to be affected as in this case for the matter to be brought to the attention of the social partners and for the matter to be addressed there. I have already received correspondence from both the Barbados Workers' Union and Cable and Wireless indicating a request for a meeting of the social partners to ventilate all of the issues surrounding the proposed reduction of staff at Cable and Wireless in Barbados. We will certainly deal with it in that tripartite forum.

Let me reiterate, Mr. Chairman, that the Government has not been part of that arrangement which I described earlier and, in conclusion, Sir, in wrapping up this Head, that the Ministry will continue to ensure that it discharges its responsibilities in telecommunications, intellectual property matters, in investment promotion and export development and in all other matters which fall under its portfolio to discharge them in a way that recognises that we cannot do things in the new economy in the way in which they were done in the old, that we are in a process of change which is so rapid that it is no longer good enough to move it in the right direction but that we have to move at the right speed. Otherwise, we will be run over.

We recognise, Sir, that we have to reposition this Barbados economy within the next four or five years because by that time, Sir, all of the agreements to which Barbados will become party will be fully in force and in place and, in fact, there is no learning curve. We have to get it right the first time.

We are satisfied, Sir, that the mix of policies which form the basis of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure as captured in this document and which were represented and which were extensively discussed within the circles of Government and represented in the programme budget of the Ministry of Industry and International Business and in the individual programme documents of various departments will be able to get us safely there.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 21 stand part.

Hon. A.P. WOOD:

I beg to second that.

The question that Head 21 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT

\$77 499 548

Hon. R.D. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman, this is the second occasion on which I am speaking as the spokesperson on the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure as it relates to Head 37, Ministry of Public Works and Transport.

Mr. Chairman, Barbados depends heavily on tourism for most of its foreign exchange and it depends

on the offshore sector for foreign exchange also. Barbados is headquarters to many international and regional entities. Over the years, this country has been blessed by having its citizens work hard in order to build this country.

3:00 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. R.D. MARSHALL:

They should be allowed the opportunity to have a high and decent standard of living. Because of these givens we have to continue to maintain and keep on developing our infrastructure.

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport's primary objective is the planning, design and development of a comprehensive road network system, making provisions for the maintenance and rehabilitation of highways, subsidiary roads, tenancies roads, residential and other public accesses and the replacement, strengthening and otherwise maintaining of all bridges, jetties, wharfs and similar structures and has indicated that for the financial year 2001 to 2002 some \$58 541 177 will be spent on its road network systems. Sir, included in this sum is \$47 656 405 which will be spent on highways including the Six Roads to Searles Highway, Bridgetown road and safety improvement project and other highway improvements.

The main area of spending will be on the Bridgetown bypass and highway project. Sir, this project involves the IADB and the Government of Barbados. It takes into responsibility the rehabilitation of many of the highways in the outer and inner ring of greater Bridgetown. A contract sum of \$53 176 989 was awarded to Rayside Construction Limited in April of 2000 to do this project. The project which started in May 2000 is to be completed in three sections.

Section A started at the University Drive to Brighton Corner, Deacons Roads, Fairfield and ultimately the Eagle Hall junction. I will also say that a major sub-component of this project is the construction of the new market at Eagle Hall which is to replace the old market which was demolished in order to realign and improve the Eagle Hall junction.

As I said, the contract for the market was awarded to House & J Construction Limited and the revised estimated cost is \$3 761 460. This project is now scheduled to be completed by the end of April this year.

As I have said, the project started at the Frank Worrell roundabout at the bottom of the University Drive, came in a southerly direction and to date the road has been completed at the end of the junction by Yearwoods Road and Brighton corner. During the time of the building of that road there were many dislocations for the traveling public and pedestrian alike. The people in Black Rock area living in the two adjoining constituencies, St. Michael North West and St. Michael West Central, the constituency I have the honour to represent, suffered much dislocation as a result of dust. Traffic had to be diverted and

that traffic used Deacons Road, Free Hill, Brownes Gap, Seclusion Road, St. Stephens and the Clevedale area. Many of the roads were destroyed and people in the area suffered because the pipes were damaged by heavy vehicles using the roads because these roads were not built for that use. At the end of the day, when the project is finished we will rehabilitate those roads that were destroyed.

The Bridgetown bypass road which started at Brighton will continue to the junction at Deacons and Fairfield. We are now into the driest time of the year and the contractor has mentioned to me that they are running smoothly in that area. The utility companies have been good to us and continue to provide cooperation in the execution of their duties. To date they have completed all of their underground installation between the roundabout at Brighton and Yearwoods junction. At the end of this, the Barbados Water Authority will complete the laying of its mains to the Fairfield Road section. Sir, the wall at the Psychiatric Hospital has been taken down and a new wall put in place. The mahogany trees have been saved and we have only lost four them. Two were removed to build a driveway to one of the houses and the other two were standing where the 1.5 metre sidewalk is to be built.

The road will be seven metres wide and the sidewalks will be 1.5 metres wide. The area will benefit greatly from these sidewalks in that there are two schools in the area, the Primary School at St. Stephens and the Ellerslie Secondary School and many children from the surrounding area use these schools every day. In the past, it was not comfortable for them to walk on these roads without sidewalks and these 1.5 metre sidewalks will be very useful to children and adults using the road.

We had complaints from one or two of the business people in the area who were talking about compensation but there is nothing in the agreement that says that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport will pay any compensation for loss of profits.

The junction at Fairfield and Deacons Road is being widened. Two houses at the corner of Fairfield road were demolished and we will be putting some traffic lights there. Also at Eagle Hall there will also be traffic lights and these lights will be synchronised to give a flow of traffic between Eagle Hall and Bank Hall.

The Eagle Hall area will be improved. The landmark, Mapps Grocery Shop, will remain but the old Eagle Hall Pharmacy and the old Smith Pharmacy will be removed. We are widening the junction to improve traffic in the area and also to put paved sidewalks in the area.

3:10 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. R.D. MARSHALL:

Some 10 years ago that same Bank Hall road was refurbished and it has stood up well.

The next section will be started by the junction of Tweedside Road and Welches. We will be moving in a southerly direction over to Pine Road, Culloden Road, up Dalkeith Road, the Garrison and end at Hastings. There will be a traffic light section at the junction of Culloden Road and Beckles Hill to improve that area.

They will be losing some of the trees in the Pine Road area. Some of those old cabbage coconut trees will be lost but after the construction and the sidewalks are put in place we will be replanting trees in the area. The sidewalks would be 1.5 metres wide and the same thing will happen on Culloden Road.

There will be some dislocation where some of the houses would have to be acquired and in some cases we have to find suitable accommodation for those people. For instance, the house at the corner of Tweedside Road and Welches corner, that house is occupied by Mr. Clarke and will have to be demolished. He would be occupying one of the houses that was built by the Ministry at the corner of Passage Road for those persons who are being dislocated as a result of the Bridgetown Bypass Project.

There are a number of houses at the corner of Passage Road and ten of them are now being occupied. Some work is being done to one of those houses to accommodate Mr. Clarke who would be moving from the Corner of Tweedside Road and Welches Road.

At present there are some units being built at Country Road Corner by the Ministry of Housing at a cost of about 2.3 million dollars. There are five blocks and we have been promised two blocks which would house persons who have been dislocated as a result of the Bridgetown Bypass Project.

Mr. Chairman, the other phase, the inner-ring road, will be starting at President Kennedy Drive and Westbury Road. We will be going along Westbury road in a southerly direction, across Passage Road, Country Road and up to the Globe Cinema. I will also add that Passage Road will become a two-way street once more. The sidewalks will be widened and traffic lights will be placed at the junction of Passage Road and Baxters Road, Country Road and Whitepark Road and Roebuck Street and Country Road junction, then it continues up to the Globe Cinema.

Mr. Chairman, this project will be over a four-year period. We are happy that to date things are going well. The contractors and our project team are working well together and we believe that if we can push the majority of the work during the dry season we will not have to do too much night work. This Ministry is very happy with the progress of the Bridgetown Bypass Project.

Sir, about two or three years ago, many of the roads in Barbados had become very dilapidated as a result of the utility companies digging up roads and not replacing them. Another reason is the unusual rainfall that we were having where the water got under the unpaved roads and destroyed the roads. The third factor is that the roads were not built to accommodate the type of equipment that is using the roads.

Sir, the Government of Barbados decided that we have to look at rehabilitating our roads and a four-year programme was put in place by the Government to repair and pave the highways and residential roads throughout Barbados. Phase one of this project got on the way last year and I am happy to report to this Honourable Chamber that the Ministry of Public Works, I must compliment of officers and staff of the Ministry, have done a fantastic job in rehabilitating these roads.

In our four-year programme we decided that we were going to be paving a number of highways. We were hoping to look at Collymore Rock, Deighton Road, Matindales Road, Halls Road, John Beckles Drive, Bay Street, Jemmotts Lane, Church Village, St. Philip, Kirtons, St. Philip, Lead Vale, Christ Church, Speightstown Bypass, Gagg's Hill, Bathsheba, part of the ABC Highway around the Everton

Weekes round-about, Green Hill, Jackson Road, Fairfield and Mile and a Quarter Road, St. Peter. To date I am happy to report to this Honourable Chamber that we have been able to put in place all the rehabilitation work in many of the roads. I would say that it is a record for the Ministry.

Sir, we had planned to fix Martindales Road because that road is a very busy road. When we went in to fix the road we realised that the road was so bad that we would have had to use a special material called geofabric. When the geofabric arrived in Barbados to start the programme, the utility companies like Bartel and the Barbados Light and Power indicated that they also have to do some work there. The Ministry told them that they would wait on them and to go ahead and do their work. The Barbados Water Authority complained that they did not have the funds to cut the tracts and the Ministry told them that they would cut the tracts for them. After the Ministry decided to cut the tracts for them they said that they were out of pipe and are awaiting the arrival of that pipe. Sir, that road should probably get on the way soon and we will start work on that road in August, 2001.

Sir, the road at John Beckles Drive is on schedule. There is always water and sediment on the road going down behind the hospital. This water comes down from the direction of the hospital and from the Careenage when the tide is high and settles there. This road needs some rehabilitation and it is being done. If you look at a copy of one of today's dailies you would see that workmen are there working and we hope to have this between six and eight months.

3.20 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

River Road has been completed, it has been scarified and paved. Collymore Rock has been deferred because I do not think that at this time it really needs... it still has some life in it. The Deighton Road has been completed, Halls Roads has been completed, parts of Bay Street have been completed. The whole of Bay Street has not been done yet because of the Bridgetown Sewerage Project for that area, they might still have to do some work, so I do not think to go in there, pave, then they do work and then we have to repave the road, so that section between the Jemmotts Lane corner and Beckles Road corner, that junction still has to be paved.

Parts of the ABC Highway section was paved. Speightstown Bypass is now being paved. Constitution Road has been completely paved. Leadvale has been completed. St. Elizabeth Village has been completed. Church Village to Ebenezer has been completed, Kirtons to Six Roads has been deferred to this new financial year and I am quite sure the Minister of Agriculture and Representative of that area will be very happy to know that there is some work being done there. I will also like to say at this time that the three contractors involved in this programme were: C O Williams Construction Co., Rayside Concrete Works Ltd., and the Ministry of Transport and Works. So, as I said that is a report on our rehabilitation of roads programme.

Now, in this year's programme, Mr. Chairman, this will be the second phrase of it and we will be looking at spending another \$5,000,000. This is a four year programme and for every year we are

spending \$5 million on each programme, so within four year's time we will be spending some \$20,000,000.

This year we are hoping to look at Fairview, Christ Church, St. John's Parish Church, Station Hill, Bay Street, Ruby, Kings Park, Sanford, the President Kennedy Drive, Eastbourne and Well House area, Dayrells, Lowlands, Thicketts, Vineyard, ABC Road by Norman Niles Roundabout, Martindales Road, Glenburnie, St. John - gabion construction is going on in there now and we would hope that we have done Village Road which is being done in two phrases with phrase one already completed.

The Member for St. John would be very happy to know that because he is always complaining that there is a lot of work being done in that area. Kirtons, Six Roads, Bath Road, John Beckles Drive, Maynards, Retreat, St. Peter, Portland, Boscabelle, Lower Parks, Easy Hall, Hortons' Village, Goodland Main Road, and Deacons Road. So these are the main roads in Barbados...

Aside.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

As I said, that is the programme and the spending of \$5,000,000 on that programme.

Now, I want also to say to you, Mr. Chairman, that the other section of Searles to Six Roads is to be completed. We are doing some work on the Roundabout at St. Patricks, Christ Church and we are experimenting in that area for a concrete roundabout. It is not the first concrete road, but it will be the first concrete Roundabout. The first concrete road in Barbados was in the area of Motor Services and since then four such roads were put in the Well Gap/Cave Hill area by Black Bess Quarries Limited.

But as I said, we are experimenting with the concrete roundabout and I we hope that this year we have enough money to complete all of our work in that area. The Ministry is very happy to see the kind of work that is continuing in that area.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to that four-year rehabilitation road programme the Ministry of Public Works and Transport will also be looking at repairing and repaving a number of residential roads in Barbados. This last financial year, we were able to do a number of roads in Barbados and I can submit some of the residential roads that were done this financial year - Stanmore Terrace was completed, Retreat Terrace was completed, Gemswick was completed, Foul Bay was completed, Vault Road is in progress and is almost completed, Edghill Terrace has been deferred until the next financial year, Spring Farm, St. Thomas has been completed, Kew Land has been completed, Briar Hall and Welchman Hall have been finished.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Honourable Member, you have got about three minutes to conclude your presentation.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman, I will take a break now and will come back.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head No. 37 and to say that it is surprising to hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central speaking on this Head stating that his Ministry is responsible for all roads in Barbados. He then went on to outline the number of roads completed and to be completed and he has already recognized that St. Lucy needs to go it alone, because nowhere in his speech did he mention a road in St. Lucy that was completed or was to be completed.

So, if it is the policy of the Minister of Public Works and Transport that St. Lucy is not part of Barbados as it stands today, I will report that under the street light on Sunday night at Moon Town, down by the Fish Market and ask for a decision to be taken.

I want to say, Sir, with this particular Ministry there is a rather interesting observation that I cannot relate to. I have listened to the Minister of Public Works and Transport and he has given a good reason why his vote should be much larger than what it is today. He said that many roads have deteriorated and that because of the weather many roads have been undermined by the weather conditions in Barbados.

But do you know what is rather interesting, Sir? After hearing the Minister speaking, I had to take up my Estimates of last year to see how much money was voted for the Minister of Public Works and Transport and I recognized that in last year's Estimates the Ministry of Public Works and Transport got \$85,000,000 and based on that argument I thought that the Honourable Minister for St. Michael West Central, knowing the demand for road repairs in Barbados would have been able to convince the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs for an increase in his Budget. But when one looks at the Estimates for 2001 you will see a reduction in the amount of money allocated to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport.

I would like to find out from the Minister of Public Works and Transport which Head has been cut, which line item has been reduced substantially. And I am going to give the Minister of Public Works and Transport the opportunity to answer me before I look at my Estimates. I am also going to ask the Minister of Public Works and Transport to tell me why he has put such a good case to this Parliament for an increase in his Head and he could not put that same case to the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs.

I also want to recognize that this Ministry has the responsibility for having a proper road policy and if one is to judge the road policy of this Ministry by the confusion that is seen on the roads on mornings and evenings then one would have to recognize that we need to get back to the drawing board and do something about the road system in Barbados.

3:30 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

We cannot continue, Sir, to penalise the public service vehicles, when at the same time, this Ministry is totally responsible for some of the headaches on the roads in Barbados. I was hoping that the Minister would have been leafing through his Estimates to give me that information but it is clear to me that the Minister understands quite well which Head I am referring to.

After this 30 minutes, I will use the Estimates to find out which one and then in my next 15 minutes, I will have to tell the House the one that has been severely reduced. I do not know the reason so I will like to know from the Minister of Public Works, which one is it?

Mr. Chairman, this particular Ministry is also responsible for the Barbados Water Authority and we have been told in this Parliament that the Barbados Water Authority needed to get finance, Sir, to build a recycling plant down on the Spring Garden Highway and that if we were to build that recycling plant there would not be any more water shortages in Barbados. The truth is, Sir, I am demanding that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas speaks in this debate because my MP needs to tell me why we have a recycling plant which runs to Millennium Heights and the people in Welches Terrace cannot get water on mornings from that recycling plant.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy cannot demand that I speak. I exercise that right in here on the basis of equality with him. I am making my notes to speak in this debate but my name is not Mr. Yearwood.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

As far as I know, Sir, there is no Mr. Yearwood in the Cabinet of Barbados and it was a Cabinet decision to have a recycling plant for Barbados. The Minister, as far as I understand...

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

No, No, he is not my MP. I am speaking to my MP and he must tell me, Sir, why the people of Welches Terrace, Redman's Village, Arch Hall and the surrounding areas cannot get water.

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

No, No, the biggest lie. The biggest lie...

Mr. Chairman, I am now being interrupted with an aside to convince me to talk about a desalination plant. What desalination plant? Have you looked at the brochure coming out of that company? Look at the brochure and you will understand why it cannot be a desalination plant...

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

It is not my wording. It is the brochure's.

You will understand why it cannot be a desalination plant. This Parliament was told that there is supposed to be a desalination plant in Barbados and the first at that time might be at Sandy Lane but not the one built by the Government of Barbados and the other relationship.

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

That is not my job. I have already explained to this House why that is a recycling plant and not a desalination plant. If you were not in here, I am very sorry. I am dealing with the Estimates as they stand today...

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

That is your job and you need to find out why you were tricked, not me. I was never tricked.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the technocrats in Barbados must recognise that street lighting cannot only be where people live. When people get off buses, they must traverse towards their houses and they need to have street lighting in those areas also. There is a myth in this country that street lights should only be placed on highways...

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

...Listen, that is what the Prime Minister addressed on Monday. That is, the Prime Minister for That Side.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that we on This Side believe that street lighting must be placed in all areas. The problem with the Other Side is that they can only relate street lighting to crime and somebody who happens to be an expert had to be affected for them to understand the importance to street lighting but I knew that ever since.

Sir, I am saying that there are areas in rural Barbados where the people living there do not have the privilege of a bus service and those roads leading to those houses must have proper street lighting systems in place.

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

No, do not tell me to move on because it is hitting too hard. Do not tell me to move on. You cannot dictate the pace.

I also want to know from the Ministry of Public Works, Sir, how come last year in the Estimates when I brought up the issue of repairing the road at Alexandra in St. Lucy, I was told by a note passed to the Minister, that that road could not have been fixed because it was the crop season.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Sir, it is now being fixed in the crop season.

I am saying, Sir, that the Ministry of Public Works cannot frustrate my farmers in St. Lucy. They must not frustrate them because they had time enough to fix that road during the out-of-crop season and that the plantations in the area should not now have to have their traffic diverted and waste money on fuel because that road was not fixed when it should have been fixed. You have to understand that we have to look at the forces that sometimes can affect the progress of the agriculture industry and this is one of them that is affecting the progress of the agricultural industry.

Another interesting observation by the Minister, Sir, he said that Mapp's Shop in Eagle Hall will remain but the Eagle Hall Pharmacy will have to go. I want an explanation why Mapp's shop will remain and that is part of the curb but the Eagle Hall Pharmacy will have to go...

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

...and it has gone already.

I want to know and I will not accuse the Minister on any pauses on this issue because I do not believe that the technocrats in the Ministry of Public Works would get involved in politics but I want to know the reason and I am demanding a reason why Mapp's Shop will remain.

I am also asking the MP for St. Michael West to give me the reason why Mapp shop will not have to go and that might be selling things that might affect the health but the pharmacy to look after lives will have to go. I also want to know, Sir, if Barbadians can expect - and I am not going to make a judgment in this first 30 minutes. I am going to be fair to the Minister and I am going to give him an opportunity to tell me, Sir - an increase in bus fares.

He understands quite well why I am asking this question. That is why I am asking him to look at his Estimates and then get back to me before I form my own conclusion. I do not want to form conclusions on this particular Head. I want the Minister to tell me the reasons.

Mr. Chairman, I have already spoken about the water shortages. I have not heard any complaints coming from your constituency so I cannot defend you. Sir, am I to believe that your constituents are well served when it comes to water. If you have a water shortage, Sir, you could have spoken to me and I would have highlighted it on your behalf.

Sir, in case you have the same problem that the people in St. Lucy have and the ones for St. Thomas of which I can speak of also, I will also speak on your behalf.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

All is well in Christ Church, so he needs no roads. Everything is well so I could see why there was no allocation for roads in your constituency and you are a very grateful man, Sir.

I also want to know from the Minister of Public Works, Sir, how come two months before the last election that Colleton to Crap Hill road was very important for MTW and their technocrats to try to finish that road before election but now the road has not been completed after election, nothing is being done on that road.

3:40 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

I want to know what dictates the importance of road repairs in this country because I would hate to believe that the technocrats at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport would get involved in vote catching because I know they would not, so I will not accuse them of that.

I want to know from the Minister when I can expect some work on the road from Colleton in St. Peter leading to Crab Hill in St. Lucy as was told to the people prior the last election and during the last election that it would be done. If the reason given at that time is not now the same said reason I want to know from the Minister if he had any discussion with the Honourable Member for St. Philip South on these matters and if the same thing that guides the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development does not guide him also for the simple reason the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development said that he is a man that believes in fairness and equity. I want to know from the Minister of Public Works and Transport if he is also guided by fairness and equity and if the people from St. Lucy can expect to be guided by a policy of fairness and equity and if that is true how comes we cannot get our fair share of roads in St. Lucy.

If he needs another year, we are prepared to give it to him but we will need to know when that policy will be implemented by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport not only in St. Lucy but throughout Barbados because we need to see that policy of fairness and we are not seeing it. Every time the Minister of Public Works and Transport talks in here he talks about Black Rock, Eagle Hall, Clevedale and Fairfield as if there is only one constituency and if he is a minister only for a constituency and not a minister for Barbados.

For too long now we have been having Ministers in here who do not understand their responsibilities. The Minister of Finance might have sent a signal to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport when he reduced his estimates because that might be a signal that some of the money from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport will be removed and placed under the Rural Development Commission, I am not too sure of the Urban Development Commission, so that fairness and equity can rule in this

country.

I am telling the Minister of Public Works and Transport that if he wants to get back his budget that he needs to adopt that policy and I can assure him that the Minister of Finance will give him back his budget because he understands the meaning of fairness and the Minister will understand what equity is all about.

I am going to give, as I have said before, the Minister the opportunity to get up and defend those questions that I have raised under this particular Head. If he does not, Sir, then I will be forced to come to the conclusion that the reason that I thought of in my first 30 minutes is not the same said reason as the one that went through the Minister of Finance's head. So it is up to him to decide what policy he is going to take.

Mr. Chairman, there is no doubt that a lot of work has been done by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport by the drainage section and the well cleaning section et cetera. It annoys me to see the amount of work that is being done because somehow one gets the impression that a lot more work could be done if a careful policy was put in place. Sometimes one gets the impression that the people who are cleaning the wells are behaving like foreigners who send inferior car parts in here to make sure that they break down to get some more work.

I am hoping that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport recognises that they must have a policy in place because sometimes the people who are cleaning the wells, and not every one of them, there are some of them, would leave the stuff to wash back into the wells again. I am wondering if we are having a recurring decimal to make sure that there is always work in cleaning wells because there is no doubt that for the last two to three years wells have been cleaned in Barbados. If a person represents their constituency well they will know that a lot of the wells which were cleaned last year are being cleaned again this year which means that something is wrong.

I am told that the way we are structured in Barbados that our drainage systems in the well base are good, so how come that this is occurring. If you are removing the necessary structures, why is this happening. We also have to make sure that when wells are cased in that there is some system in place to make sure that certain things do not enter the wells because the types of things that are coming out of the wells cannot only be blamed on those people who dig the wells but must be blamed on those persons who have to manage what would normally go into the wells.

That is why I am saying that the demand on the technocrats at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport might be too great, and maybe, I do not know, the Minister needs to tell me this, that he probably needs to expand the workforce at that particular level.

In terms of road repairs, I cannot understand why the workmen in St. Lucy should have to borrow equipment from St. Peter. I do not believe that St. Lucy should be dependent on St. Peter for anything when it comes to road repairs and neither should St. Peter have to borrow from St. Lucy and I do not like it, Sir. I believe that we should have our own equipment. What is even worse is to see that St. Lucy has to borrow from St. Peter as if because they have the Prime Minister next door he must get all the equipment and because I am a Member of Parliament that my constituency cannot get any equipment to repair the roads. One of the reasons why a lot of the roads that should have been repaired in St. Lucy are

not being repaired is because of a lack of equipment and not necessarily because of a lack of material.

I have already told this House that the main problem with the repair of roads in Barbados has to do with the type of equipment that was left at the depots when Mobile left Barbados. I am saying to you, Mr. Chairman, that there is no doubt that the pulling out of Mobile from Barbados has impacted negatively on the road works of Barbados because a lot of equipment that was used by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport had to be changed because whereas Mobile was using a water-based product, the product coming out of Trinidad and Tobago is now an oil-based product and it is clogging up the jets of the equipment.

I hope, and I am told, that that has now been solved. It is not a matter of just solving that particular problem, it is a matter of making sure that all the necessary equipment is given to the depots because the Prime Minister said in this House that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport will not be involved in building new roads anymore, that that will now go to the Rural Development Commission and the Urban Development Commission and will be subcontracted. If the Ministry of Public Works and Transport ...

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I think the Honourable Member is misleading the House when he said that the Prime Minister said that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport will not be building roads anymore. The Prime Minister said that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport will not be building tenantry roads.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, when we speak of roads, we normally speak of roads as tenantry roads and when we talked about other roads we talked about highways. I am surprised that the Minister of Public Works and Transport does not understand the difference between the two.

3:50 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

I am surprised that the Minister of Public Works does not understand the difference between the two. This will be a learning experience for him today.

I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that the Prime Minister said that MPW would not be involved in building roads as you and I would know them in the tenancies and they will have to continue building highways and repairing the normal roads. But I am saying that if that is so the Ministry of Public Works and Transport will have to be more efficient than ever when it comes to repairing roads because they do not have that workload and their efficiency and their expertise must increase because now they will be the specialists on road repairs in Barbados.

As you recognise, Sir, I have not touched on the Transport Board and the Minister has not touched on it. I will give the Minister the opportunity to lead the debate on this particular issue. I have asked the Minister to tell me why his Estimates were cut from \$85 million last year to \$77 million this year. I know that every Member of Parliament in here is complaining about the transportation system, about bridges, wells, the rural network in terms of repairs and the demand every Tuesday on the Minister of Public Works is so great that he does not have the time to go on site visits with me in St. Lucy and this is about a year or two that he has been promising me to do it. It tells me that he is not lacking work, that the demands are great. I understand why he cannot get to St. Lucy.

Also, we have another scenario that I want to deal with in these 30 minutes. Black Rock Road has been a bone of contention and no Minister of Public Works can believe that in this day and age his Ministry can disenfranchise people, and not acknowledge that there are disenfranchising people and the tough talk to the citizens of Barbados, especially the masses, must stop. I have kept away from this debate. I said I would give the Minister of Public Works the opportunity to retract some of the statements made by him on the Black Rock/St. Stephen's Road.

You cannot tell a man who is in business that you are going to affect his business and then behave as if he has to appreciate what you are doing to him. The man in his own right has rights also and the Minister of Public Works cannot continue to behave as if he is the only person living in Barbados and looking to survive. The attitude of the Minister of Public Works must change because his intentions, as I thought, were good. If he continues with that attitude I can only believe that what I thought were intentions are not really intentions. A man from the grassroots must know how it affects the grassroots when they are affected and people like us, all twenty-eight of us, I believe, are from some grassroots upbringing and must understand that we cannot use our Ministries to oppress those whom we are supposed to be helping.

Thank you. I will stop at this point, Sir.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

Mr. Chairman, I listened very carefully to the comments of the Minister of Public Works and I want to say how glad I am that at least the continual supplications I have made to subsequent Ministers of Public Works has not, it appears, fallen on deaf ears in relation to provision being made in the Estimates in respect of works to be done in St. John during the course of this fiscal year.

Let me make the position clear that the work I have asked to be done are not in the nature of tenantry roads and so on. I believe that I made my position clear. The Rural Development Commission until recently had never done a single capital works project in St. John. I believe that based on what has been pledged that part of that patronage, a small part, will be thrown our way in this fiscal year. The roadworks that were necessary in the parish of St. John do not directly benefit communities except that it provides access to those communities. They have very important infrastructural roads to pave because of the large number of tour buses and tourists who travel along that highway from Foster Hall right across to Codrington College and going into St. Philip.

The disgraceful state of that road for the past six years - in fact, the Foster Hall Road as I remind the House on every occasion that we get to debate this Head was rendered impassable in the apocalyptic or I

should say prophetic showers in October 1994 that heralded the advent of the Barbados Labour Party's new administration. Those showers destroyed the foundation to that road. It was closed and remained closed since then and this is the first year that I have seen any significant provision being made for that area.

Glenburnie has been a nightmare because even though in 1990 MTW did resurface that road and buses were able to pass down there, over time because there is the Scotland District area, there has been a lot of movement and subsidence and therefore there have been problems there.

Bath, which is still a major attraction both to Barbadians and to visitors and by and large has been a safe beach, the road to that, has very badly deteriorated and at the top of Bath Hill the road to Sargeant Street is also very badly deteriorated. The road between St. John's Church and Station House Hill, District D station has gotten smaller and smaller over time.

There are children who travel on that road going to Lodge School and the road in Supers in which I share jurisdiction with the Honourable Member for St. Philip North is another road that has deteriorated significantly. There are two roads to Consett Bay and I see that provision is being made with respect to repairs for one. I am not sure which one it is but I assume it is the one from the College Road right down to Consett Bay, a very picturesque area. All of this is major infrastructural work which has been allowed to mount up over time, particularly since October 1994 when rain did a lot of damage to that area.

I really hope that the Minister of Public Works in the interest of Barbadians and tourists and, in particular, those persons who live in those areas that have been cut off in the parish of St. John will realise all of these projects during this fiscal year. It is a very ambitious programme and I know that whenever there are cutbacks the first people to suffer are the people of St. John. Therefore, I do not believe that the Government should cut off its nose to spite its face. Those developments that have been identified are critical in my view and also from the point of view of natural disaster mobilization because a large area of Barbados is cut off without any major highways and the alternative routes are all areas of unstable surfaces like through St. Margaret's.

I believe that this is urgent work that needs to be done and I hope that the Minister will, in fact, be able to undertake these projects within this fiscal year.

4:00 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport also has a very bad habit in the constituency of St. John and I have reached the stage where I do not even write letters any more because you never get replies to them either from the depot or from the Ministry so I am finished with that. I have stopped with that three years ago.

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport will send a crew in, start to do drainage work or start to put curves and so on, fill the area with marl fill between the curb and the road that is there and then leave the surface for months and allow the marl to wash away. We have had that in the area of the Glebe in St. John going right into Coach Hill and I would like to know what is happening. The people of St. John know that the nephew of a senior Government official has moved into Glenburnie so it is their view that all of the MTW workers will move into Glenburnie. I do not think that is necessarily true but at the same time when they saw all of the other projects come to an end and everybody being mobilised in Glenburnie they came to that conclusion. I would like to know so that I can quell their fears why it is that the work in the Glebe did not reach completion.

I would also know whether the road leading from the Glebe in St. John to Bath Hill, known as Coach Hill or Haynes Hill is going to be done. There is also an area between Bath and Newcastle where there are some small bridges and there are some surfaces that have been eaten away that also need to be repaired. There are a lot of banana farmers in those areas and they need access to good and efficient roadways.

Sir, I have noticed all of this identified in the Estimates as work to be undertaken. It would not be the first time that some of these things have been identified but I hope this year that the work will actually be brought to fruition.

There are a couple of other things I would want to ask the Minister about. We have been hearing a lot throughout the years about a building code for Barbados. I would like to hear what progress has been made in that regard. I also notice that from time to time electricians approach me about the question of the manner in which the Government's electrical engineering department makes adjustments to the requirements in respect of the inspection and approval of wiring to houses. In recent times, a couple of electrician have said that they have been new rules applicable to them and those rules have changed from the way in which houses were approved before. I want to know what procedures the Minister has in place because very often these small contractors lose a lot of money if the rules are changed or if new requirements are put in place and they are not made aware of these requirements. I have come across one or two who have actually been able to establish that as a result of changes which they were not aware of that they expended considerable sums of money and were not able to complete the projects in time or get the approval of the electrical engineering department.

More important in terms of this debate, Mr. Chairman, is the question of traffic and traffic management in Barbados. I have heard most of what the Minister said but I do not think that he spent a long time dealing with the question of the problem of traffic management. We can either wait until the situation gets like London or Trinidad. There was a time in Trinidad when I was a student when it could take you four hours to get from Port of Spain to ?Valcain? until they put in the priority bus route and even when they did that, they still had major traffic problems. It is part of the affluence of the society and it is true that there are a lot more vehicles on the road but it is also the responsibility of the Government to ensure that it deals with the management of traffic on the road efficient.

I want to know what the Minister has been doing both by way of actually managing the traffic that is on the road during peak hours and also seeking to introduce other innovations in terms of working hours or whatever else could ease the traffic situation in Barbados which is extremely frustrating and seems to

be getting worse.

It does have an effect on productivity because people cannot plan their day effectively. As I said, it also impacts during working hours. I am certain that the public service must suffer a lot of downtime as a result of civil servants having to go and collect their children after school at about three o'clock and then again traveling home after 4:30 p.m. All of these traffic pressures then have an impact on productivity and have an impact on the amount of time that people can devote to their task whether in the public service or in the private sector.

I believe that the Minister has a very big challenge in relation to the question of traffic management and I hope he can assure us that plans which are now being implemented - some of them which relate to projects which have been in the pipeline for a long time and did not even contemplate the amount of traffic that we have on the road now - are going to make a significant impact to traffic management in Barbados.

I would also like to find out from the Minister what is the role of the Ministry of Public Works in relation to street lights because I see \$2 million for traffic lights and street lights but I know that provision of street lights is now a matter for Urban and Rural Development Commissions and I would like to find out what the role of the Ministry is in that regard.

Sir, I am going to deal with the issue of the Transport Board. I know that I asked a question in my Second Reading of the Attorney-General but he declined to answer it. It relates to Section 7 of the Transport Board Act.

Asides.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

I wanted the Minister's view because I am assuming the Ministry of Public Works is acting under the law. My colleague on this side tells me the answer has already been given by way of the size of the provision in the Ministry of Public Works and the Minister of Finance was looking for savings in other areas to compensate for the Ministry of Public Works profligacies in respect of the Transport Board.

I want to find out from the Minister what procedures are in place in the Transport Board with respect to contacts and where the Minister will derive his power from to overturn the decision of a tenders committee and if he has done that, what is the source of that power either under the Transport Board Act or under the rules if they exist in relation to the financial rules of the Transport Board. When the Minister answers that question then it will determine whether I need to pursue the matter any further.

4:10 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D.T. GILL:

Mr. Chairman, I rise to make my contribution to Head 37. First of all let me compliment the

Honourable Minister for his undaunted, indefatigable spirit over the past year as he attempts and succeeds, in most instances, to keep up with his promises to the various constituencies. I think that the Honourable member for St. Lucy was off track when he openly stated that the Minister seemed to be only concerned with his constituency and not the others. Later in my speech you will see that the Minister has been spreading the works across the island as best as he can.

Sir, the last time that we met here at this exercise, at the Pine North South/East West junction, works were just about to be started. Sir, that was a junction for years. If it were possible for my father to come back alive, he would most certainly enjoy driving in that area. I remember the evening he met a collision there and whenever you drive through there, particularly, coming from the Minister's office and heading in a westerly direction to South Bend in Pine Gardens, it was always a risky feeling. I know the Minister himself never used that route before the lights were installed. He would always use a little circuitous route above the Barbados National Assistance bond, come through the back particularly when he goes to collect his child in the afternoon. I asked him and he said to me that it was a little unsafe to cross over from the eastern side to the western side. Today, Sir, you can drive through without even thinking.

I must hasten to add that although it is not necessary to show the arrow as you go from east to west you could make the left turn. Sir, there is need for an arrow.

Asides

Mr. D.T. GILL:

It is not clearly visible and sometimes you have people hesitating and they are only reminded by a toot of a horn. I do not think that it distracts from the advantage which those lights have created at that junction.

I must also hasten to add that the road widening exercise has also contributed to the safety of the children, particularly those going to the Irvin Wilson School who suffer from impaired hearing problems. I would like to ask the Honourable Minister to see if it is possible for him to get a sign, I have seen them in Canada, with the basic diagram of the outer ear lobe with a stroke through it which shows that there are children using the area who have a hearing problem. I would like a sign placed at the Collymore Rock junction, if possible, and one over at the Government Headquarters junction to make the drivers aware that there are children with hearing problems traversing that Pine North/South road with great frequency.

I was speaking to the road widening exercise and it does make walking now a lot more comfortable and people who go for exercising walks can now do so without looking over their shoulders for the oncoming traffic which makes walking a lot more difficult. I would like to find out if it is possible for the Ministry to see if it could acquire that additional 50 or 75 yards of road. I guess they would have to acquire part of the land of a Mr. Pile and his next door neighbour and it will give a full and comfortable distant from the wall which begins just above Mr. Piles's entrance to his property to just beyond it. If that is acquired and the extension continues, then, Sir, I think the whole road widening exercise and traffic light installation would complement each other to the maximum.

Sir, we heard the road works may not be concentrated along the Collymore Rock stretch at the moment. Anyone using that area - I abhor using Collymore Rock whether it is early morning, midday or

late evening. That road is always congested. I said on several occasions in this Honourable Chamber that even if it is not one way, people going up Collymore Rock should not be able to make that right turn going across Brittons Cross Road or the one to Villa Road. Likewise, people coming out of those roads should not make the right turn to go up Collymore Rock. If you check it out carefully, those turns which cut across the flow of traffic tend to halt at least some 10 to 20 cars and compounds the error.

I do not mind if the Ministry uses that road as the guinea pig in such an exercise but we would like to see more a circular unidirectional flow along Collymore Rock and all those roads which are, Belmont Road, Bridge Road and those that are heavily used, particularly, at peak hours between 8.00 a.m - 9.30 a.m. and 2.30 -5.30 p.m., more so than just road widening. I know that Collymore Rock itself could do with road widening from Budg-buy Supermarket entrance to the Villa Road entrance the cliff there could be removed.

Sir, with reference to the acquisition of the land of the properties at the top of Tweedside Road, I am a little saddened of the plight of Mr. Clarke, whom I know personally. He follows his former neighbours who have been relocated to the Passage Road development. Sir, it is not easy for people who have reached a certain age to dislocate them, particularly when they single or husband and wife and having lived in an area for quite some period of time. I know Ms. Bailey, who used to be Mr. Clarke's neighbour for some period of time, coming back to her house because her house is the only one that was not demolished, although the vagrants have started to demolish if for the Government. They would not have as much work to do when they are ready to demolish it.

Sir, every day between two the three times a day Ms. Bailey would go back to her house. I would wish that the Ministry would look around for houses - I can see her when two houses were put up for sale, not far from where Mr. Clarke resides, if possible if they could reconsider. I know the traumatic affect it is going to have on Mr. Clarke when he is sent down to Passage Road. Mr. Clarke has spent his entire life at Tweedside Road. He just had to walk outside of his house and get a bus to church, clinic or town. Sir, that in itself is a certain culture and sociology to which Mr. Clarke belongs.

4.20 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D. T. GILL:

I must say thanks for the work that was done at Halls Road, but Martindales Road is a problem. I do not know if the geo-fabric alone will be enough to solve the problem at Martindales Road in terms of the denigrating of the surface. What I would tend to think is the problem at Martindales Road is that Martindales Road drains Pine Road, Pine Road in turn drains Pine Garden and Pine Hill. So water comes from above Erdiston College, onto Pine Road. And if you check it is a serious habit that as people along that area and similar areas reconstruct or redevelop old houses into offices they bring the driveway over what used to be the storm gutters so that when you have a relatively heavy downpour the water no longer finds its way as intended. That entire stretch of Pine Road where new businesses have sprung up, Sir, 90 per cent of them are guilty of that problem. They literally obstruct the free flow of water along the box gutter, so what happens is that water in turn goes through the avenues in Belleville,

into George Street and then finds its way into Martindales Road.

Now, Martindales Road is another problem with drainage. I have seen the Unit work out there and having gone back to look at it I do not think that they have addressed the problem that seriously. It seems to me that at one stage there was one system of drainage which has now been blocked off to facilitate another form drainage which has resulted in stagnation of most of the water. That whole water course there, in my opinion, calls for better storm gutters, better guttering across the road with grills and going back and identifying where the wells are. The other day I was surprise to see some of those wells off Halls Road have now been taken in by people's palings. The water course is still there and people complain to me that when it rains, as was the case of October and November they had to take out a sheet or two for the water to find its way out.

I see a practice happening along the river bed just outside of Weymouth. Last Saturday morning I was there and saw the Public Works truck making quite a few deliveries and offloading volumes of water. When I checked they said that they were bringing water from Headley's Land - nothing wrong with that - trying to get it into the river, but they were missing, falling way too short of the target, to get into the canal at Halls Road to find itself into the Constitution River...

Aside.

Mr. D. T. GILL:

That is what I was told. I asked the gentleman what was he doing and he said that this was water coming from Headley's Land. I told him next time to have an attachment long enough so that the water would not just go onto the river bed and just settle there but that it can go into the canal itself. And Government must be able to do that. If a private citizen were to do that they would be charged with one or the other of the Health Laws.

In that area Sir, I would wish that there is regular maintenance of that whole area - because it has now become an official dumping spot. If those people have an old stove, mattress, or whatever they just tilt it over the wall of the drainage system and that has sprung up as another unofficial dump.

Sir, I am not sure and I guess the Honourable Minister will go on to highlight what is happening at Hindsbury Road, but Roebuck Street continues to be of particularly great concern to me, particularly coming to the furthermore section of Roebuck Street, as opposed to the lower part. The wear and tear of vehicles is a little much and I do know if you can get some geo-fabric in there but certainly that needs cutting up and smoothing out to make driving and the pressures, particularly on cars a lot more comfortable.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Honourable Member has got two more minutes.

Mr. D. T. GILL:

Thank you Sir. There seems to be a little mix-up as to where Ministry of Public Works and Transport function begins and ends, The Ministry of Health function begins and ends and the Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Natural Resources begins and ends.

Sir, on more than one occasion I have asked and the response has been good. I have asked persons from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Engineering Departments to accompany me on visits to some problem areas and when I get there I am told that “no, this is not mine, you would have to contact the Ministry of Health”, or “no, it is not Ministry of Health, it is under the Ministry of the Environment”, so I would wish Sir, that the three Departments could come together at some point in time and work out a common approach and strategy for problems particularly where drainage compounds with dumping, dumping compounds with health hazards, because the three are not mutually exclusive, they all lend to the problem of the other.

Sir, I do not remember which Member from the other side spoke about the weeding of the side of the roads and allowing it to wash back into the drain, but in recent times I have seen - and I think the same way that you could be negatively critical I guess where praise is due that it should be given.

In recent times I have seen some dump trucks actually following the people who keep the side of the roads clean after they have debused the area and I must say that it is pleasing and a pleasant sight as it moves away from the old habit of leaving it there to be washed back into the drain. So I hope that this practice does continue and I know for sure that it will be welcomed by most Barbadians.

Sir, I am grateful.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Thank you.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

Sir, are you identifying me to speak also before I take the break.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

You want to go a little further?

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

No, no, I will take the break now. I was rising to...

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Please take the break now.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

Can I speak after the break?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Well, the Honourable Minister Greenidge asked to speak and I nodded my head. On principle I believe that I should give the Honourable Minister Greenidge and I like to keep my word.

On the motion of Honourable D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Honourable R. N. GREENIDGE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

4:30 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

When the Suspension was taken the House was in Committee of Supply to which it will not revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

This Honourable House is in Committee of Supply.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

Mr. Chairman, I am just going to make my contribution in note form so that the Minister can easily himself make a note of what I have to say and to save time so that others can speak before the guillotine comes down.

Mr. Chairman, in respect of drainage, I would wish to draw to the Minister's attention that when we have heavy rains the water comes down from Shop Hill and Arthur Seat and settles at the bottom of Jackson, near Rockhampton Road. It floods at the slightest invitation and this has been so, for as long as I have represented St. Thomas.

We have had site visits. Before Mr. Ashton Gibson who owned much of the land around Brown's Gap died, I, along with representatives from the Drainage Unit visited the site and Mr. Gibson volunteered to use his land for wells to be dug in Brown's Gap which would take and water coming down from Shop Hill. Sir, that has not been done and I would like the Minister to give that some urgent attention.

There is a pool room at the bottom of Rockhampton Road and a little grocery shop. At least once a year that road is flooded out and it is not fair to the people and no effort has been made to do remedial work there.

Aside.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I am talking about the main road. The main road is what floods but it comes from Rockhampton road, down Arthur Seat and Brown's Gap to the main road. The rain water comes from those four areas and is collected at the bottom of that area.

Sir, in respect of Sub programme 516 at page 144, I notice that it is the Ministry's intention and it is

written in the Estimates in the notes to do some work at Dukes and Bucks. The Nation Newspaper has raised a campaign for work to be done at Dukes Tenantry. Work was in fact done in 1990-1991 under the Venezuelan Project and curbs were put it but it was just a marl fill. I remember going there when it was under construction and speaking to the workers and I warned them that if they just put the marl fill, it would wash off and that is what has happened.

There are not many houses in the village of Dukes. There are only about 14 houses and we can do some remedial work there and alleviate the problems in that area. I would not at this stage, despite the pressure from the Nation Newspaper, encourage the construction of the road from its beginning to the Village itself. It is one of the longest tenantry roads in Barbados and the Government has to make a decision because the people do not want to move. They do not want to be relocated because they have one of the best views in Barbados.

We should consider whether that area should not be kept with a view to housing development. It will be the last area in St. Thomas for housing development. It would seem to me that we can create a substantial housing area at Duke - The Duke's Tenantry where houses can be built on either side of the road. Then we will get a chance to build the road but if we try it now, we are going to repair pure dead miles and that has been MTW's problem over the years.

Sir, at page 59 of the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto, 1999, we said,

"A BLP Government will systematically strengthen all the unstable bridges and will build new ones where appropriate."

For about three years, the road leading from Grand View through Christie Village to Butts and Old Sharon has been impassable because the bridge there has broken away. The residents wrote to me and I wrote to MTW and inquired about it. I was told that they had to do an evaluation of the cost. That evaluation was done and the cost of restoring the Bridge through Christie Village to Butts is \$190 000. I am therefore asking the Minister to do it this financial year, beginning April 1, 2001.

I was told last year that when the work at Vault Road was finished the team, would move from Vault Road to Christie Village to rehabilitate the bridge. The work at Vault Road has not finished but as soon as that work is finished, it would make sense to take the team down to Grand View, Butts and repair that bridge.

It would not take long because it is only \$190 000 to fix the bridge and the importance of that is that it will enable traffic coming down Shop Hill to get on to Highway 2A by going through Grand View instead of going right to Shop Hill, down through Sharon. It is a short cut and it will take some of the pressure off the main road, Sir.

Sir, I wish to speak to the Minister about two pieces of legislation. The Architects Association had new architects legislation prepared. They sent it to the Ministry of Transport and Works which is the Ministry responsible and I am encouraging the Minister to have the paper brought to Cabinet for the architects to have new legislation along the lines of the draft that they have developed as an association. In other words ninety per cent of the work of drafting has been done. Bring it and we will tidy it up and we can get it in the House this year, Sir.

Similarly, there are penalties to the Highways Act that go back to 1900 and are outdated. They make no sense and in fact, there are many penalties in the road traffic legislation that need upgrading. I had asked in February last year for a paper to be done in a matrix form, looking at the sections in the regulation and suggesting certain changes with penalties that would modernise it. It has not come.

Sir, in respect to Regulation 48, I think it is on the Road Traffic Regulations relating to music on mini buses, Zrs and so on, that needs to be dealt with. My concept, which is personal and not necessarily the Government's, is that in order to stop some of the playing of vulgar music on public service vehicles, all we need to do is to legislate against the playing of recorded music by tape or disk.

A person can still have a radio and I am all in favour of all vehicles having radios for the purpose of getting information about the traffic situation, bad weather or whatever. That radio can still play music put out by radio stations but the problem is in people making cassettes with nasty lyrics, selling them to school children or to the drivers of these mini buses and Zr vans who then play the cassettes and play the nastiness in the buses and vans.

All we have to do is stop tape-recorded music or recorded music. We can give it a definition that can be found in the Copyright legislation. It is a simple thing. We just did it in the Broadcast Regulations. The mischief that we must aim at is recorded music. We can allow the playing of radios but we cannot allow the playing of recorded music.

5:00 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

Sir, a question was asked about the street lighting programme. In the 1999 Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party at page 27, we pledge to:

“Extend the street lighting programme until lights are installed in every rural community for the protection and safety of the residents of such communities.”

We have been noting carefully that the lighting of bushy and desolate areas are contributing to a reduction in crime. I do not have time to go into it today, Sir.

The Government, in accordance with this pledge at page 27 of its 1999 Manifesto and also as a contribution to crime reduction, is asking the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, with the money in the Estimates, I thought it was \$3 million, to collaborate with the Police to identify areas which need to be lit to make the particular vicinity safer.

Asides

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

I like that suggestion. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is suggesting that Members of Parliament could have an input in that. I have no problem with that. It is understood that this will be collaborative effort between the Police and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport.

My concern though is the speed with which this programme can be carried out. It is getting on to two months now since I wrote the Ministry of Public Works and Transport asking them for some streetlights on Bay Street by the Coastal Zone Management Building where there is a paved car park but there are no lights there and opposite the car park at the Harbour Lights on the other side of the road by the Bay Mansions, I think that is what it is called, where there are a series of utilities poles running back towards the clinic but with no lights on them. Criminals, both drug pushers as well as those who will rob, harass and commit crimes against people hide in that area on Bay Street at nights. There are just probably four lights that are required there by the pasture opposite the Harbour Lights car park and they probably need four at the paved car park at the junction of Beckles Road there where the Coastal Zone Management Unit is. They have not been put in.

Sir, I asked for lights elsewhere through the Rural Development Commission and within less than a week those lights were put in in an area where there had been serious criminal activity. Now that is the difference. In less than a week we got streetlights in an area in St. James where there had been criminal activity but where there were no streetlights.

This financial year would come to an end and those eight lights that are necessary on Bay Street we will not get. I am going to counsel the Minister to ensure that he has people, one or two persons, who are dedicated to ensuring that this street lighting programme is carried out expeditiously otherwise some of this money is going to lapse next year, mark my word.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE:

Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by saying that no one can make me change my mind about the fact that some of the worse roads to be found anywhere in Barbados are to be found in St. Philip North. This is not really for lack of asking because I have been asking. I would hope and pray, Sir, that in the coming financial year some attention will be paid to those roads in St. Philip North. That is as much as I want to say on roads.

Mr. Chairman, it is not often that I agree with the Honourable Member for St. John on anything but I did hear him mention earlier today that something should be done to alleviate the flow of traffic in Barbados and I agree wholeheartedly with him on that.

This idea, Sir, of staggering our working hours has received a lot of talk over the past three years but really and truly no action has ever been taken on it. I want to say that we seem scared to attempt it but I wonder why we would have to be scared for something like this because I am of the view that staggering our working hours is part of our developed society. I think that there is nothing really and truly to be ashamed about and there is nothing to be scared about.

I believe that as long as our organs of production can accommodate the staggering of our work hours that we should go for it. We are smaller than most countries which have attempted it. This means, therefore, that we have more limitations in terms of the roads that we have to choose from and that there are more challenges which we will face generally so I believe that we need to work on this.

We are very heavily centralized. By this I mean, Sir, that all of the economic and working activity is virtually centred in Bridgetown. It takes me half of an hour to get from East Point in St. Philip to the Bussa Roundabout but then it takes me a full hour to get from the Bussa Roundabout to Independence Square. Sir, do not tell me the answer to that is that I should leave home at 6:00 a.m. to get into town at 8:30 a.m. because everybody usually gets the same idea - people think the same way.

5:10 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE:

All that you do when you attempt that, is put the problem at a different hour. Basically, that is what happens. If you think of when they excavate a road on the South Coast, people try to get away from it and everybody comes over Rendezvous Hill or people tack by the Gymnasium and Upton and everybody thinks alike in those circumstances and take the same road.

I would like for it to be possible to measure the stress levels of people on our roads on mornings. This traffic congestion leads to very reckless driving. People do all types of craziness on mornings. I have seen one chap on the inside, between everybody. He cut into somebody's vehicle and the fellow got out, took out of his trunk a piece of two by four or something like that and smashed his windshield. I believe that people are forced to do it because of the amount of stress that they have to endure in the choked up and suffocating traffic congestion that we have.

I do not know how long it is going to take us to realise that everybody is fighting for our roads at the same time on mornings and on evenings. Our total working population, Mr. Chairman, and our total school population are fighting on mornings and evenings for the same piece of road. It almost reminds me of the African situation which you see on CNN so often, where because of drought, famine or starvation you have to bring in provisions for these unfortunate people and they have to rush to get them. In the same manner, we have to rush to get the roads. The only difference is that in once case you are rushing for food and in this instance you are rushing for the roads. It is the same thing.

Personally, Sir, I do not believe in limiting the number of cars per individuals or per fammily. I think that that hurts more than anything else. That is an option that I am not too keen on going for. We have to think of novel ways of solving this particular problem. I know of two Latin American countries where they tried to solve the problem by saying that on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays cars with numbers ending in, say, 13579 and so on can come into the city. On Tuesdays and Thursdays cars with even numbers can come into the city. Again, I do not agree with this.

I know that countries are trying to cope in various ways with traffic congestion. I think that particular method is artificial and will not work here. I do not think that we can tell people to buy a car and only use it on certain days. The very day that you are telling them not to use it might be a day when there is an emergency and they may very well want to use that particular vehicle.

I know that the Ministry of Transport is trying and I am not putting the blame on them as well. I know that they have tried. In recent times they have tightened up in this area of parking. I have seen it along Cavan's Lane in Bay Street and all around but very often what happens is that when you solve Problem One all it does is to show you that there is another problem there. When we solve Problem One by tightening up on parking on Bay Street all it shows is that we need two more high-rise car parks in the City.

The point I am making is that it is my firm belief that if we had staggered hours of work it would reduce a lot of the noise level we have in Bridgetown now. It would almost be like having two shifts. I think that it would reduce and relieve the stress that I have spoken about and give people a lot more options. If you know that you begin work from seven o'clock on mornings until one or you begin from two until whatever, then a working mother who has to take a child to the doctor can more easily accommodate that type of thing with staggered hours.

Right now what the mother does is stay home the whole day. Even if they have to go to a funeral sometimes you find that some people stay home the entire day. I would believe that those who would have been working one part of the day would be able to accommodate these things. I am sure that productivity would increase and that is the point I am making.

Therefore, when the Inter-Ministerial Committee which is set up to look at transport in Barbados and involves the Ministry of Labour, Education and Transport, when they sit down next time, this is one of the top priorities that they have to look at. We have been the leader in the Caribbean for so many years and I do believe that we can look at this particular option and we can do something about it.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. A.P. WOOD:

Mr. Chairman, it would be very remiss of me if I did not rise to make a contribution to the discussion on the Head of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport.

Mr. Chairman, a couple of years ago I acted as the agent in the constituency of St. Philip South for change and we all know that St. Philip South was a constituency that hitherto was characterised by two main things: a close tie to the Democratic Labour Party and gross neglect by that same Party. This was manifested in particular in the areas of infrastructure, particularly the roads, street lights, community recreational facilities, natural gas installation and the list goes on and on.

Mr. Chairman, one of the most honest statements made by the Honourable Member for St. John since I came into this Honourable Chamber was that the roadworks in St. John were allowed to mount up over time. That was the same occurrence in the constituency of St. Philip South. In the same way, it was gross neglect on the part of the Democratic Labour Party in my constituency. We all know the same

obtains in St. John.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to report that I am going to spend the next 10 or 12 minutes speaking to parochial issues because the good people of St. Philip South have seen the light and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport has played its part in the changes in the constituency of St. Philip South and I am going to go quickly.

Let us start with the roads. They have done a road in Gemswick and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East will bear me out on this. When we opened we had the ground-breaking ceremony at Lauder's Hill and a lady from my constituency, Mrs. Roach, was at the time visiting her son who lives in Lauder's Hill and she joined us for the ground-breaking ceremony. She allowed me to know that it took her 65 years to see that road in Gemswick paved. That is an area that a previous parliamentary representative of St. Philip South lived all his life, Mr. Reynold Weekes. The residents of Foul Bay have had to wait up to 50 years for that road to be paved.

5:20 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. A.P. WOOD:

They have asked me on every occasion to thank the Ministry of Public Works and Transport for that work and this is the best place for me to do it.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central made mention of the fact that there is a project which recently got started. This is a road project running from Six Roads to Kirtons via Four Roads where I live. In my considered opinion that is the most important stretch of road in my constituency.

Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that there are three schools and that children have to traverse that road during school time. There is Princess Margaret, Six Cross Roads and St. Martins/Four Roads Primary School and that road is in terrible condition and I am happy that road has actually started.

I want to appeal to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, the Minister of Public Works and Transport, that recognising the frequency of the use of that road by school children, to make sure that provisions are made for sidewalks. They do not have to be very broad sidewalks but do give them some kind of sidewalk to secure their safety.

They have been doing a wonderful job in the area of Crane where my constituency office is, so my constituents making their way to the office find it less difficult now. I thank them for providing the sidewalks there and all is going well on that project.

Mr. Chairman, I want to take this opportunity to say special thanks to the crew at the depot. We hear

a lot of talk about inefficiencies at the depot but I can say that the one at Six Cross Roads which I visit on average two or three times a week that they work very assiduously in the parish of St. Philip. They have responded virtually spontaneously to the numerous requests that I make of them.

I find that over time the road signs were blocked by bush and trees and was causing numerous difficulties for motorists. I have asked them to drive through the constituency with me and look at the areas which need some measure of debushing and they have responded well. Also, I have asked them to take a look at the conditions of the signs in the constituency. Mr. Chairman, you can drive through my constituency now and see new signs. All the road signs that were in a state of disrepair have been removed and they have been replaced with new signs.

Mr. Chairman, I want to use this opportunity to make mention of the work of the Transport Board. In my constituency, the Transport Board has responded to some calls. I have asked them to seek to improve the bus service in certain areas, namely, Highlands, Diamond Valley, Oldbury Terrace, and Union and Ruby Developments. They have seen it fit to ensure that we have an improved bus service in all of those areas. I have asked them to signal to constituents living in those areas, if it is all possible, to place bus stops which would leave the constituents in no doubt that the alteration to the service has some measure of permanence. They have done that in Highland and in Diamond Valley. The residents are happy and have asked me on each occasion to say thanks to the management at the Transport Board and the Honourable Minister of Transport.

Mr. Chairman, there is one area of concern which I need to bring to the attention of the senior officers of the Ministry and the Minister of Transport. We have been served well in the areas mentioned but I have a particular concern in relation to flooding in my constituency and there is a lot of work to be done in the area of drainage to have these problems of flooding dealt with.

There are a number of open wells and others that are virtually collapsing and that is a cause of concern. I want them to pay some attention to these open and collapsing wells in areas like Second Avenue, Woodland Park. There is also a problem at Headings Circle, Marchfield near Mr. Brathwaite's, Headings New Road and in Arlington there is an open well at the top of the gap leading to the Weekes family.

In Rices near the playing field there is an open well just off the playing and this really is a cause for concern because Rices is central to my constituency. We all know that large numbers of young persons use that playing field. The Sunrise team plays in the BCL competition and they have to use that playing field as well. The well is outside the perimeter of the playing area and it is really a cause for concern. They have signalled their intention to do something about it but the sooner the work is completed the better it would be for all those who want to use the playing field.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

I will now ask the Honourable Member to wind up in one minute because there are two other members who would like to speak.

Hon. A.P. WOOD:

Mr. Chairman, Sunny Meadows near Four Roads is an area where the flooding is also severe and in Seaview Development we also have a problem with flooding. Last but not least, a problem which has

been outstanding for a long time in the area of Woodland Park. I sincerely hope, not only because my loving sister lives in Woodland Park but we know what happened a few years ago when the houses in Woodland Park had to be evacuated because it rained and the oil floating on the water was going into homes. Some people were compensated and some were not compensated.

Mr. Chairman, once again I want to thank the Ministry of Public Works and Transport for the way they have discharged their responsibility in my constituency. There is a lot of work to be done but if they continue in the same vein, I have no doubt that continued improvement will be brought to the infrastructure of my constituency.

5:30 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Mr. D.St. E. KELLMAN:

I want to ask the Honourable Minister of Public Works to recognise the importance of cutting down Sutherland Hill because it is impossible for two buses to pass each other in a particular section of that hill at any time. I also want to ask the Minister of Public Works to recognise that some work has been done in Broomfield but there is a need to tidy up that work before a serious accident is caused in that area. Sir, that is the work being done in the area that leads to Broom Field Plantation.

Sir, I want to ask the Minister of Public Works when will I get a reply from his Ministry regarding a request to have a road linking River Bay to Bishops. Sir, when a person leaves River Bay to go to Pie Corner, he has to travel a long distance to reach there. However if a bridge is built, it would reduce the time of travel. Also, when will I get a reply from the Ministry of Public Works regarding the linking of Free Hill and Josey Hill to Lowlands? Sir, that is another area where motorists can save a lot of down time if the linkage was to be made. Sir, the bridge leading to Cove Bay, St. Lucy has been badly constructed and whenever there is a heavy down pour of rain the water overflows the bridge and goes down to the main Pie Corner area instead of going through the water way into the sea. I want to know when that will be corrected. Sir, when there is a heavy downpour the residents of Little Bay and Cove Bay are trapped in that area and you can understand the pressure that the residents living close to the sea have to undergo.

Sir, the road to the south of that particular bridge needs to be repaired. The water comes into the bridge and then floods the area, making it impassable for residents living to the south of that area. Last year I asked the Transport Board to recognise that people living at Greenidge, Rock Field and Oxford, St. Lucy need to be able to access the public transportation system, instead of disembarking a bus and having to walk a long distance to reach their homes. Sir, it is quite easy to be done. I was told when I asked about Oxford that they could only do it when they received the buses. They have received the buses and I have not seen any action. I am calling on the Minister to recognise that some attention must also be paid to St. Lucy.

Sir, in my opening speech, I asked the Minister to tell me why his Head has been decreased. He did not reply so I had to go back to my Estimates and I realised that the subsidy to the Transport Board has

been cut even though the Minister and the Transport Board, over the last two weeks, have been able to put a very good case to the public of Barbados why bus fares must be increased.

Sir, I am saying that you cannot reduce the budget for the Transport Board and at the same time ask the public of Barbados to pay an increase in bus fares. I also want to know from the Minister, why Lisle Linton, at the Transport Board, would have encouraged the Minister of Finance to reduce the subsidy to the Transport Board by 3.4 million dollars. I would hate to believe that insurance would cause that to happen to the Transport Board and to the public of Barbados.

I thank you.

Hon. M.A. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I rise just to bring a few things to the attention of the Minister of Transport and his officials. I would like next year to be in the same fortunate position as the Honourable Member for St. Philip South and to speak glowingly of all the work that has been completed. In those circumstances, I would appeal to my good friend and colleague, the Honourable Minister of Transport, to deal with some matters that substantially predate his presence in the Ministry. I would like to deal with them one by one because some of them, in my opinion, reflect bad governance.

Sir, some three years or so ago, the Ministry of Transport and Works cut down the cut rock on Bush Hall Main Road, by the park, it has remained so like that for the last three years. I wonder if the Honourable Member of Parliament and the people of Bush Hall are the only people who pass Bush Hall Main Road. Anybody who works in the Ministry of Transport and Works, who passes Bush Hall Main Road, cannot help but see that work is incomplete. They have dug out part of the road, the water settles there, there is no side walk and the people get wet when they walk up and down the road. It cannot be fair that you went on your own volition, nobody did not ask at the time, you cut out what appears to be rock for the construction of a side walk and that remains incomplete for three years. This predates the Honourable Minister of Transport.

Secondly, the Honourable House will be aware that I have spoken to this matter already but I am happy to report now that I have promise of the Honourable Minister of Transport that work would start early in the new financial year. He has argued for the money and the money is in these Estimates and I want to thank him for that. Once again, that was a situation behind Warrens Polyclinic where they dug up the playing field where the youngsters used to use without reference to them, me or anybody. The Ministry of Housing was putting down commercial housing units, the road started some three and a half years ago, it has not been completed and I am happy that the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works has recognise the injustice that is being done to the more than two hundred households behind Bim, Friendship Terrace, and that he would see to it that early in the financial year, on his word and the word of the Chief Technical Office, that the concerns of those residents of Friendship Terrace will at last be met.

I also want to bring to the attention that I have written the Transport Board on numerous occasions about a bus service for Skeetes Road, Jackman and Hothersal Turning. Sir, when the bus comes down in the morning from Proute and other areas in St. Joseph it is full by the time it reaches Exchange Hill. Therefore, the people who live in Bibby's Lane, Exchange Hill, Lears, Skeetes Road, Jackman and Hothersal Turning cannot get into the bus. This is now five years that I have been begging for this. I

have written for it; I have spoken for it and what it does is continue to encourage illegible pirate operators from Market Hill in Suzuki Vans not properly insured for carrying people. Sir, I dread the day that anybody gets serious injuries on that route because I am going to hold the Transport Board responsible if that happens.

It cannot be fair where more than 2000 people living from Exchange Hill down to Hothersal Turning and they cannot get to work on mornings. Sir, I have kept very quiet, I have been patient, I have written letters and we cannot get it and it is five years now.

Sir, I am also asking for the drainage, like my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, in Jackson. Jackson has been flooding out for years and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, I think, has brought it to the attention of the House. I had a site visit there last year with one of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas's representative and the representatives from the Drainage Unit. Sir, there are serious drainage problems that have to be dealt with from the mouth of 1st Avenue Jackson up to Sharon, Arthur Seat and Brownes Gap, and all of them cause a flood of water to come down. Indeed, Sir, when that water comes down you cannot get into 1st Avenue Jackson and 1st Avenue Jackson has in more than a hundred households.

Sir, the road in 1st Avenue Jackson also needs fixing but I am not making a request for that to be done yet because I do not think that we should be unreasonable. Since the Ural Development Commission is very kindly constructing the road at the end of that gap, we have agreed that we should wait until the completion of that road before MTW goes so that there is no wastage of money in respect of that.

Sir, I also want them to look at the drainage in Civilian Road, Bush Hall as well as Perfection New Road, Bush Hall. Once again we have asked about this occasion after occasion, long predating the Honourable Minister of Transport, and we have had no assistance in the matter. Sir, the same situation applies with Parade Road and Review Road, Bush Hall.

Finally, There is a face of cut rock when you come to the bottom of Skeetes Road, Jackman, the entrance that is on the Lower Estate side. Sir, it is a funeral waiting to happen, that is all I can call it.

In winding up, Sir, I am pleading with the Ministry of Transport and Works, whom I know knows about it because they have put the reflective mirror, they have visited there with me on more than one occasion, that this must sometime find itself in their Estimates. Sir, because I do not make any noise about it does not mean that it is not an urgent need. The people need for that cut rock to be cut down so as to prevent an accident or the lost of life or limb.

I thank you, Sir, and want to urge the Honourable Minister of Transport that in this year he should have been as productive as he has been in the last year and, perhaps, Sir, I would also be to thank him next year for the promises that he made today. Sir, I would then be thanking him for the substance of the work he would have done.

I thank you.

5.40 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of The Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman, I want at this moment to thank all Members from both sides who spoke on this debate. I have noted their concerns but I would like to say “were they not ten cleansed, where are the nine?” I want to thank the Member for St. Philip South for this thanks.

Mr. Chairman, I want to answer a few queries that were made of me. First I would like to say that at this time of the year, during the dry season when the Drainage Department section of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport does most of its cleaning of wells and water courses and we, very soon, will be putting the Department in place where they can start their well cleaning. I know that there are some wells with the covers all broken and I am quite sure that now it is the dry season a lot of this work will be done.

I also want to mention to this House and to the people of Headley’s Land and the Member for St. Michael West that work is continuing at a great speed at Headley’s Land, Bank Hall where we are running a canal from Headley’s Land, Taylor’s Land, along Bank Hall, down through the back of the Barbados Workers Union/Perry Gap’s area, out to the Constitution River. The National Housing Corporation have acquired a property below the Globe Cinema - that would be demolished in order to run the culvert through there. The steel for the work is being bent and fabricated off site. I have just put an extra team to work two weeks ago, so a lot of things are happening there so that when the rainy season comes those people from Headley’s Land, I do believe, would have their problems alleviated.

Many members spoke about the concerns of the bus service in their area. The Member for St. Lucy, in particular spoke about bus problems in Oxford, Cluffs and Greenidges and I would say at this time that the Transport Board has bought over 200 new buses. I am saying today in this House that sometime ago, the Transport Board buses that were removed from the short routes and the Private Service Vehicles were on those routes. I am saying today that the management of the Transport Board, through the Chairman, have given a directive that all the short routes that were given up in the past have to be revisited. The Transport Board has to go on both a cost-containment and revenue-earning exercise in order to make itself financially viable.

The Member for St. John queried about the traffic congestion in Barbados. Yes, we at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport are very concerned about the traffic congestion in Barbados, especially at peak hours and I would like to... I have a note here - I will get back to that when I find the note, but I have to say a few more things.

The Hindsbury Road Project is a road that takes over 17,000 to 20,000 vehicles per day and that road is up for reconstruction. It is not just to be repaved, the whole road has to be rehabilitated.

So far we have a contract in the sum \$413,770 awarded to David Lashley & Partners Inc., for design and supervision of road at Hindsbury Road. The firm has submitted a preliminary report which examines improvements to the carriageway, drainage and sidewalks from the junction of Cameron Tudor Roundabout to Gilkes Road, Station Hill. The firm, in their preliminary report has commented as

follows:

‘The northern end of the site approaching Station Hill was shown to have poor soil condition and it is proposed to stabilize the area and to use geo-tech fibre and geo-fabric materials to work in there. It is, however, proposed to locate the Barbados Water Authority (BWA) mains but it would be impractical to remove other utility service...’

But I am telling them that whatever it takes they have to make sure that the services are removed from the road and put at the side of the road, because at the end of the day when this road is rehabilitated I do not want to know that anyone goes in there and cuts the road for any reason whatsoever. I am not saying that you should do it on all roads because if a road is not dug up you cannot really go and dig it up, it would be too expensive, but any new road that is being rehabilitated or put in place for the first time, all the services should be run at the side of the road.

‘...in the current design, every effort will be made to avoid the relocation of houses. The preliminary report suggests that at least three properties will be affected. Several accesses to properties will be effected in order to provide sidewalks along the entire length of the whole road. Improved signs will be provided and this will include culverts, wells, reshaping and recovering the roads. The total project is estimated to cost over \$5,000,000.’ That is the Hindsbury Road.

Mention was made of the Martindales Road earlier but that Road lies on the Constitution River bed and it has water springs under the road itself and the whole road lies on silt and mud. We said that that whole road will have to be allocated also.

Someone mentioned sidewalks. Yes, we have to come at some time and ask the Ministry of Finance for some kind of sidewalk vote. There are a number of Representatives of Parliament and people from the different constituencies have been calling and complaining about the lack of sidewalks, especially in areas where there are schools.

This year, I can say that work is being done at the Lester Vaughn School, St. Thomas, the Jackson area, Club Morgan area has a dirty bend there for quite some time and there are always accidents in that area, therefore work is being done in that area. We have cut down the rock at Oistins’ Hill and will be cutting sidewalks now to make that road available to those persons who have to use that Hill on a daily basis.

You, yourself, Mr. Chairman, and some of your constituents have complained about the lack of sidewalks in the area going towards the Deighton Griffith School and Water Street Boys’ School. Those roads are to be done in the future, but as I said, for this year for sure we are looking at the Lester Vaughn School, Club Morgan area, Oistins area and Pine junction where we have just put traffic lights. We are putting sidewalks from Gertz Supermarket area towards the junction at Pine Road/Government Hill. In fact, all of that land belongs to the Government so there would no problem in acquiring land.

Coming onto street lights, I want to say that last year Waterfords Bottom had been a dark area for a number of years and we have been able to light that area with about twenty or so lights.

The question raised, I think by the Member for St. Lucy, when he spoke about the junction at Eagle

Hall/Mapp's Shop, most of the realignment at the junction is at the side opposite Mapp's shop, over by Dr. Smith's Pharmacy, that is where most of the work is being done, not the side by Mapp's Shop. As you might probably be aware Mapp's Shop, itself, has a fairly broad sidewalk in front of it.

5:50 p.m.

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Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

In the vicinity of the pharmacy the source of the road has to be aligned through by the pharmacy and we have to demolish the whole pharmacy in order to have the road passing in that area...

Asides.

Hon. R.D. MARSHALL:

...The Organisation of American States (OAS) assisted by providing a grant and a consultant who prepared a study. A paper is to be sent to Cabinet next month after the Attorney-General's office has perused it and approved it.

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport will shortly be meeting with the Police, rather by the middle of April, to discuss the improvement of the street lighting. The Police's decision is required to determine the areas which are most critical. Afterwards, the Barbados Light and Power Company will be requested to provide the improved lighting.

Sir, I now want to touch briefly on the Licencing Authority. During the last two years, we have completely computerised the department in order to move away from the old manual way of doing business. We have always felt that when the department was fully computerised, we would be in a better position to offer and deliver a timely and higher level of service to the general public.

Some progress has been made by installing a number of computers in the department for the upgrading and recording of driving licences and vehicle registration information. However, there is still a considerable amount of work that has to be carried out in order to debug the system and have it picture perfect.

I would also say at this time that we in the Ministry are working very hard and in fact we had a meeting three to four weeks ago with members of staff from the Ministry of Labour where we looked at civil service reform in the Licencing Department. One of the items we are looking at is decentralising the area in the Pine as well the facilities of Pine, Holetown and Oistins. We are also looking at putting facilities in place at Bridgetown, St. George and St. Philip where persons will be able to go and pay their licence and their road tax. Therefore, instead of going to one central area, persons will be able to go to an office in Bridgetown, where you do most of your business, anyhow, St. Philip and St. George in order to make it easier for the general public.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to say at this time that we have been voting some money to work on the bridges around Barbados. A list has come to the CTO where there are a number of bridges in Barbados; namely, St. Andrew, St. John, St. Joseph that need some attention and those are being worked on.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, at this time, I would like to thank all those Honourable Members taking part in this debate. I would also like to thank the staff from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport for the hard work rendered.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask that Head 37 stand part.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

Sir, now that we are committed, I propose to treat this matter like any other Bill. Five sets of amendments have been circulated and I think the proper procedure is that we should have these Amendments voted on. I therefore move that these Amendments as circulated be the Amendments to the Schedule.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

Mr. Chairman, that would allow us to call the Heads as amended.

I believe we have to recommit Head 25

Hon. A. P. WOOD:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 25 be recommitted.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

**HEAD 25 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE
AMOUNT \$39 572 984 (AS AMENDED)**

Hon. A. P. WOOD:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 25 As Amended stand part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 10 - GOVERNOR GENERAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$952 154 (AS AMENDED)

Hon. A. P. WOOD:

I beg to move that Head 10 stand part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 11 - JUDICIARY - \$219 298 AS AMENDED

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

I beg to move that Head 11 as amended stand part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 12 - PARLIAMENT - \$6 567 340

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

I beg to move that Head 12 stand part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 13 - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - \$45 623 334

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

Sir, I beg to move that Head 13 stand part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6 236 763

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

I beg to move, Sir, that Head 15 stand part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 16 - MINISTRY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8 639 709

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

I beg to move that Head 16 stand part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 17 - THE OMBUDSMAN - \$291 930

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

I beg to move, Sir, that Head 17 stand part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 18 - AUDIT - \$796 399

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

I beg to move that Head 18 stand Part.

Hon. D.A.C. SIMMONS:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

6:00 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

HEAD 19
MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

\$92 139 532

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

I beg to move that Head 19 stand part.

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

HEAD 20
**MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS
AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

\$8 493 600

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN:

I beg to move that Head 20 stand part.

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

HEAD 23
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

\$195 363 369

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY:

I beg to move that Head 23 stand part.

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

HEAD 24
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

\$74 896 173

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY:

I beg to move that Head 24 stand part.

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

HEAD 26

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

\$39 331 177

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

I beg to move that Head 26 as amended stand part.

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

HEAD 27

MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

\$91 310 634

Hon. N. A. LYNCH:

I beg to move that Head 27 as amended stand part.

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

HEAD 28

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

\$22 124 336

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

I beg to move that Head 28 as amended stand part.

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

HEAD 29

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

\$278 664

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

I beg to move that Head 29 stand part.

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

HEAD 30

ATTORNEY GENERAL

\$56 040 833

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

I beg to move that Head 30 as amended stand part.

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

HEAD 32

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE

\$32 799 306

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

I beg to move that Head 32 stand part.

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

HEAD 33

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SPORTS AND PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

\$29 075 206

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE:

I beg to move that Head 33 as amended stand part.

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

HEAD 34

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND CULTURE

\$239 261 707

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY:

I beg to move that Head 34 as amended stand part.

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

HEAD 37

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT

\$77 499 548

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

I beg to move that Head 37 as amended stand part.

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

HEAD 38
MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS

\$34 817 003

Hon. G. A. CLARKE:

I beg to move that Head 38 stand part.

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

HEAD 50
POST OFFICE

\$10 692 591

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

I beg to move that Head 50 stand part.

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

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 as amended was called and passed.

Clauses 3 - 4 inclusive, were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the DEPUTY SPEAKER, the passing of one Money Bill in Committee of Supply with amendments and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Appropriation Act, 2001.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that brings us to the end of a very long and tiring debate. I think it is fair to say that the debate this year has been characterized by a high quality of contributions from Honourable Members on both sides and I think too that I can say, I have been in here most of the time, that it has been a debate free from rancour and acrimony.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

Even if it was, it was of such minimal proportions that it was not easily remembered.

Sir, the fact that we have been able to conduct the people's business on the most important budgetary matter for the year, the Estimates of Expenditure which are going to govern the expenditure of all government departments for the next year in that sphere, I think, speaks volumeS about the maturity of our democracy.

6:10 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Continuation of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:

In that spirit, Sir, I think that speaks volume about the maturity of our democracy. I am, therefore, bound to compliment the Members on both sides of the House in my capacity as Leader. I do so with the greatest pleasure.

Sir, our week's exertion has been relatively acceptable with the efforts of the Clerks at the Table who have been most accommodating during the long hours. We could not have done the work in the manner in which we were able to complete it without the contributions of the Public Officers, particularly the officials in the Ministry of Finance. I do not believe that it is easily understood or understood at all by the general public the stress that the officials in the Ministry of Finance must necessarily undergo between December and today to ensure that the accounts of Government and the monies voted for in these Estimates are carefully prepared. There is a methodology that one has observed over the years that begins from about November. It really gets very intense from late January. There are key persons in the Ministry of Finance who are constantly under pressure working with every Government Department and Ministry that has a Head assigned to it in this Schedule to ensure that these Estimates are properly prepared and that the revenue of Government is properly spent.

Sir, I do not think that anybody has done that before and I want to take this opportunity to say this because I have gone through this several times to really put in the public record the contribution of those officers in the Ministry of Finance. While they are working with us to fine tune the figures we have put up to support our programmes, at the same time everyone of us is submitting supplementary requests. They have to deal with those at the same time as they are looking forward to the new fiscal year. It is a tour-de-force to get these Estimates prepared in this way because of the quality of our Estimates. I know, Sir, because I have shown our Estimates to my colleagues in the region from time to time and we get the highest marks for the quality of these Estimates.

Sir, the Catering Staff have looked after us this week with their usual charm and pleasant attitude. I wish to thank them for the service which they rendered. But especially at this time, Sir, we must compliment the Parliamentary Reporters who have sat every day for the seven or eight hours with us and recorded faithfully our various contributions for Hansard and historical purposes. I wish to thank the Reporters upstairs for the work which they have rendered. The Press have had to endure our sojourn for

seven or eight hours a day and they, too, have to be thanked for attending Parliament faithfully and reporting to the best of their ability the contributions of Honourable Members over that seven or eight hour period. It is not easy to condense the column entries that you are given by a newspaper or the five minutes or whatever that you are allowed on the broadcast media what Members' contributions have been made. I thank the Press, too, for their coverage of the Estimates Debate 2001.

I thank Members on both sides and I wish, Sir, to thank you. Yours has been a task thrust upon you in adverse circumstances, but all on this side marvel at the way you have readily moved into the position and the ease with which you have discharged the new responsibilities that have been put on you, Sir. Throughout it all, Sir, you have had a sense of humour and calm that have helped to maintain the dignity of this Honourable Chamber. Sir, the one who has had perhaps the hardest time of all is the Chairman of Committees. I feel for him, Sir. He is admitting that it has been very hard.

Sir, I did it once in 1979 when I acted as Chairman of Committees. It is hard, Sir. You have to concentrate the whole time. You cannot sleep and the Chairman of Committees has done an excellent job this week in keeping the debate focused, structured and relevant to the particular Head. All Members have respected the rulings of the Chair without any quarrel, Sir, and again it is testimony to the way you have conducted the proceedings this week that we have done our work expeditiously and finished within the time frame that has been allowed by the Standing Orders.

ADJOURNMENT

Sir, with those words, I wish to move the usual motion and that is that this Honourable House be now adjourned until Wednesday, 21st March, 2001 at 11:00 a.m.

Sir, the reason I do that and I ask Honourable Members to hear me carefully. The Order Paper is already distributed and it says Tuesday. I am asking that we not come on Tuesday but rather we come on Wednesday. On Monday the Prime Minister explained that this year he was trying to clear all arrears on this year's Estimates as far as practicable. The paper work has not yet been completed. It would be unfair, Sir, if we get those Order Papers on Monday afternoon to ask Members to come with less than 24 hours notice. I want to give all Members an opportunity to see the Papers because I think most Ministries will be effected and there is one substantial amount for the University of the West Indies in the Supplementary. So that in order to give Honourable Members enough time, I am proposing that we adjourn until Wednesday, 11:00 o'clock.

Sir, the Senate is due to sit on these Estimates in any event from Monday. I have spoken to the President of the Senate and I have indicated to him what is likely to be our schedule for next week. So that the Senate can sit Monday and Tuesday. We will sit Wednesday and they can complete on Thursday if they need to. We have to complete this work before the 23rd March, 2001 when Government's accounts are closed.

With those words, Sir, I beg to move again that the House be adjourned until Wednesday the 21st March, 2001 at 11:00 a.m.

6:20 p.m.

Friday, March 16, 2001

Rt. Hon. O.S. ARTHUR:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to second the motion for the Adjournment. Sir, at the start of this debate I gave my deep debt of gratitude to the public officers who participated in the preparation of these Estimates. I acknowledge that I had to depend more on the public officers this year because of the range of unusual assignments that I had. The public officer who would have contributed most and given technocratic leadership was the Director of Finance and Economic Affairs. During the course of this week he was unable to perform his responsibilities to Parliament because he suddenly collapsed, had to be hospitalised and is still under observation. I know that the House greatly values the efforts that he has made to these Estimates.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank the staff of Parliament, the Clerks, the Reporters, the other members of staff and the public officers who assisted us in conducting these Estimates and to Presiding Officers themselves, the Chairman of Committees who did an excellent job.

I would also like to on behalf of myself and my Deputy extend to the Director of Finance and Economic Affairs our best wishes.

The question that the House be adjourned until Wednesday, March.... 2001 at 11 o'clock in the morning was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

6:27 p.m.