
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1999 – 2004

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, January 15, 2002

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.20 a.m. on Tuesday, January 15, 2002.

PRESENT

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

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

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

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, LL.B. (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs) (Leader of the House)

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

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

Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A. (Oxon.)

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., J.P. (Minister of Labour and Social Security)

Mr. D. CARTER (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

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

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

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

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

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

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS

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

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

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

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

Hon. A. P. WOOD, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil., J.P. (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)

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

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P. (Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

Prayers were taken by Father Rev. Canon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, December 18, 2001.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, December 18, 2001, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to report to this Honourable House that I am in receipt from the Auditor General, the Report for the year 2001.

PAPERS

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

1. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Grantley Adams International Airport Inc.) Order, 2001.
2. The Value Added Tax, L.E.L Rollshutters & Products Inc.) Order, 2001.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay the following:

Annual Report of the Community Legal Services Commission for the year 1999-2000.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Annual Report of the National Insurance Board for the year 2000.
2. Annual Report of the National Insurance Board on the operation of the Unemployment Benefit Scheme for the year 2000.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay the following:

The Annual Report and Financial Statements of the National Conservation Commission for the Financial Year 1998-1999.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of One Million, Fifty-Seven Thousand, Five Hundred and Sixty-Seven Dollars from the Consolidated Fund to be placed at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 2001-2002 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates No. 10, 2001-2002 which form the Schedule to the Resolution and that the Explanatory Notes to Head 23 and Head 26 be amended as shown in Schedule II.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is with a great degree of sadness that I rise this morning to both pay tribute to the life and work of the former Clerk of Parliament, Mr. George Brancker and also to express condolences on the part of this Chamber to his family and close friends.

Sir, to speak of Mr. Brancker in this Chamber almost seems as if it is superfluous because for many of us, when you mention the words "Parliament of Barbados", if there was one person whose association came to your mind, it was George Brancker.

Indeed, Sir, for persons, particularly like myself, who are young in this field, it was particularly with the assistance of persons like Mr. Brancker that we have come to understand the rules and procedures, but more importantly, history and dignity of the institution to which we all belong. I believe, Sir, that his untimely passing is one that will cause all of us to feel that we are the poorer because with him went an institution.

Indeed, his body of knowledge, coupled with his sense of dignity, caused one always to feel that the place to which you belong in Parliament was a special place and one that had a history of distinction, accordingly, that you had a duty to live up to that legacy and to ensure that those coming after you would understand that you were simply preserving that which had gone before.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for us to see another person in the near future, who would equal the contribution that George Brancker made to the Parliament of Barbados and indeed, by extension, to the Parliaments of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to serve on a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association training trip to London and I was literally amazed by the number of enquiries from persons all over the Commonwealth, asking not for other politicians such as myself, but asking after Mr. Brancker and his health and well being. They asked me to convey their very, very best wishes and indeed, in so doing, reflecting on how at some stage, most of them would have had the benefit of his counsel, and most importantly, the pleasure of his company, and to be a willing listener to his many stories and recounts of parliamentary experience and parliamentary life throughout the Commonwealth.

The measure of the man, Sir, is perhaps reflected in the fact that he was equally comfortable in recounting aspects of Macaulay, as he was in discussing the areas of modern music and popular culture. It therefore reflected a breath of interest

and a sensitivity to his environment, but steeped in an understanding that the history of what went before us, truly has made up the sum of who we are today and how we view what we are to do in building a tomorrow.

For me, in particular, Sir, the passing is even more distressing. I have known George Brancker for virtually all my life. I think it would be fair to say that he was as close to being a father to me, without being my father, in that he had an extremely close relationship with my father that predated my birth, as they were house mates together at a residence in London. Indeed, Sir, on the other count that his first child, Nicholas is perhaps one of my closest friends and has been since childhood. In circumstances, therefore, of that deep and close family relationship, I feel even a greater sense of sadness.

I can safely say, Sir, that when I entered Parliament, I believe next month will be 11 years, the presence and counsel of George Brancker was invaluable to me. In those days, I was one of two Opposition Senators. I was new to the business of Parliament. There were no other persons from my Side who had the experience of Parliament on whom I could draw. In a very real sense, the way in which he counselled and gave advice, referred materials to read and guided, truly helped shape what became my deep love and commitment to this institution in the service to the people of St. Michael North East, in particular, but in Barbados.

I was also impressed by his keen sense of fairness which was displayed to all sides and to all persons. He, at no stage ever allowed any of his private views to be reflected in the advice and counsel he gave to the institution of Parliament or indeed, to the Members therein.

Equally, Mr. Speaker, I am of the firm belief that when one considers the way in which after his retirement from Parliament and his appointment to the Cabinet office, he openly advocated the need for Barbados to move to a Republic and to do so in circumstances which would bring no serious disruption to the Governments of this country, one understands the maturity as well as the commitment to this country that George Brancker displayed.

I say so because many a person looking on may well have felt that his keen knowledge of those things British, may have caused him to be committed to a Monarchical form of Government, when in truth and in fact, he really became one of the loudest advocates for the shift to republicanism. 11.30 a.m.

Equally, in respect of his research on matters parliamentary, he had no equal. Whenever there has been a problem or a matter to be researched over the course of the last seven years, certainly since we have been the

Government of this nation, Mr. Brancker was there to be able to provide that service and to do so with a sense of distinction.

I think I can fairly say, Mr. Speaker, that his tenure as Clerk of Parliament set a bar of excellence that will be difficult, if not nigh impossible, for persons to maintain as consistently as he did during his tenure.

I think I can also say, Mr. Speaker, that that excellence which reflected his work perhaps mirrors Barbados' own distinction in the Commonwealth of nations as one which is known for peace, stability, fairness and transparency in the governance of its people. It is in no small measure that the process of Parliament has managed to maintain and uphold that reputation not only due to those of us who served as members but equally to those who helped serve the institution as officers of the institution.

I also believe, Mr. Speaker, that we have a duty to properly record the history of this Chamber, those who have served in it as members and as officers, and I hope that the Management Commission will find it possible to commission such a work so that those who come 30, 40 or 50 years from now will have that opportunity to read of those who have contributed to this Chamber.

It cannot escape me, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Brancker's lineage was equally associated with this Parliament. Indeed, a predecessor of yours was his father. I believe he has the distinction of being the longest serving Member of Parliament in the 20th century having represented the parish of St. Lucy – and I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would speak at length about that when he rises to pay his own tribute – and having served the people of St. Lucy with distinction. It was perhaps a reflection of Mr. Brancker's own sense of truly understanding what his strengths were that he was not lulled into public life as people might have assumed that he should be, having had such a distinguished lineage to follow, but he recognised that his true strength and love laid in being an officer of Parliament and not a Member of Parliament.

I trust that one day would come when there will be a third generation of Brancker's associated with this Chamber and I look forward to being part of the association that would help make that a reality.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, these moments are not easy. I know that I speak on behalf of all Honourable Members and all persons associated with the institution of Parliament that on hearing of Mr. Brancker's passing there was truly a sense that an era in parliamentary life had closed. For those who would come after and who would not have the good fortune or benefit to have been associated with him, there will be a

deep sense of longing to understand who was this man that could have had such an impact on everyone with whom he associated as members in this Chamber.

Sir, an outsider looking on may feel that this type of tribute made publicly may well be in respect of someone who was a leading member of the institution as a Member of Parliament elected or appointed as a senator. The affection which has been felt for him on the part of all Honourable Members from all Sides is an indication of the extent to which he truly made a difference in the conduct of his job or should I say his vocation and love because it really could not be termed to be a job when one considers the hours he spent in these walls both when the House and the Senate were sitting, and when they were not sitting, and the extent to which he has stamped his indelible personality, interest and persona on the affairs of this Parliament.

In a sense, I do not envy the present Clerk because there would always be a temptation on the part of persons to compare you with that person who has gone before, but I say to him only that he too will develop his own identity and his own style and I am sure that once there is faithfulness to his job, that he would reflect his own personality in the work without necessarily having to feel that he could be a George Brancker because I do not think anyone can be a George Brancker other than George Brancker.

With those words, I wish to reflect to his family the deep sense of loss that we too feel as an institution, and as Honourable Members of the institution, and to say that the swiftness of his passing is one that has not allowed us to steady ourselves and recognise what we have lost. It is most unfortunate that before his passing we could not have captured in a format much of what we enjoyed in respect of his accounts and his writings and have it available to those who will come after us.

My old year's day, December 31, was spent in the evening seeing Mr. Brancker. Unfortunately, at that stage there clearly was a recognition that he was undergoing a very serious illness. I must confess, Mr. Speaker, that I could not bring myself to attend anything or go anywhere on that evening because there was truly a sense that we were in danger of losing one of the great Barbadians of the 20th century and certainly one who has served and has been associated with this Parliament with a level of distinction such that his reputation flows throughout the Commonwealth of nations, and such that his passing will mean that we will forever remember him with a sense of fondness, recognising that those heights which we have been able to attain as a Parliament have in some small way been due to his contribution.

It has been said that his crowning moment was the organisation of the 350th Anniversary of Parliament. I like to believe that his crowning moment was every time he took a Member of Parliament aside and gave them the counsel

that allowed them to become better Members of Parliament in the performance of their duties. Such was the nature of the man.

I have never seen him raise his voice in these Chambers or reflect upon anyone in anger in these Chambers but only to serve. Even if he may have felt that within him, he did not reflect that, and certainly saw his responsibility as one to serve and to enhance the knowledge of individual members such that the collective contribution of the Parliament would reach the highest level it could possibly reach.

I regret the passing of George Brancker but I give thanks for the life and contribution of George Brancker as a man, as a father, as a husband, as a Clerk of Parliament and to say that all of us will be the poorer for his passing but, at least, we have the comfort of knowing that his memory shall cause us to smile and believe that there went a good man.

I thank you, Sir.
11.40 a.m.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I join with the Leader of the House, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, in paying tribute to the late George Brancker as Clerk of Parliament and as an outstanding Barbadian.

Sir, in the days when it was still fashionable for Members of Parliament to remain after Parliament in the bar, a small group of parliamentarians would always be the last to leave and, invariably, I came to the conclusion after a while that that group of parliamentarians was not sticking around because of the plentiful supplies that were available at the bar at that time but, in fact, they were invariably waiting for George Brancker to finish tidying up his desk at Parliament and to come into the dining room.

As soon as he arrived, even the most loquacious of that number who gathered, who is not now a member of this House, would immediately be silenced as George Brancker would then start to regale us, correct those who were wrong, add information about our Parliament and generally augment the stories that had been told or, in some cases, completely retell them in his characteristic style and wit. For young parliamentarians – at one point myself and the Honourable Member for St. Peter were the youngest in this Chamber, we gathered often with him – it was an opportunity to sit at the feet of this outstanding Barbadian.

I have already paid tribute to George Brancker in the formal way at a dinner that was held in his honour last year and I do not propose to repeat, even for this record, the things that were said then, because the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East by and large covered that ground.

In response, he revealed to me and publicly that he held me as a baby, obviously in England, and he did no damage to me while holding me, for which I am grateful. At least I assume not.

Beyond that, George Brancker was one of those persons whom my parents would have spoken about as a person who either hung around the West Indian Student Centre or who otherwise was viewed then by Barbadians as an outstanding product of our country.

In a sense, he was always a household name and when therefore in 1991, I was attached to the Chambers of the late Errol Barrow, and those Chambers operated basically out of the Opposition Office, I got to see George more often and I recognised many of the qualities which were pointed out to us in the eulogy that was done at his funeral.

His great organising skill, and he would take on tasks that were not even his responsibility very often, his wit, his warm and caring approach, the advice that he gave, his courteousness, his firmness and, without a doubt, his stubbornness and, at the same time, his fairness, I think all of those are qualities that would have stood him well. In that sense, he was as constant as the Northern Star, reliable, firm, stubborn but fair.

Because he was a friend or because you thought he was a friend, it did not mean that you could, when about to do something foolish, call him and pray his assistance. If you wanted to abuse the procedures of Parliament, those who knew him well knew that he would stop you in your tracks. In a sense, his presence in this Parliament with no disrespect to you, Mr. Speaker, or to the other persons who have held that office or similar presiding offices, carried even more weight than the person who is the Presiding Officer.

I say that because he was able to head off many scenarios before they go to the stage where it was necessary for the Presiding Officer to intervene or to rule. That is what the key responsibility, to my mind, a Clerk in a Parliament like ours is all about. He has to give advice to the Presiding Officer, to Members of Parliament on both Sides, and that is why he has to be firm and consistent because there is a lesson always to be learnt from being in a Parliament like this.

There is going to be a point at which all three of the persons involved are going to talk to each other. The Speaker, or Presiding Officer, as well as the Member of the Government and the Member of the Opposition will eventually, whenever the dust settles, discuss the outcome of the matter whether it is in partisan terms or over a drink, and the Clerk who gave advice and who was often at the centre of advising all the individuals who were involved from their

different perspectives has to emerge, if he is to be respected as an individual who is firm and fair, in giving the advice.

Therefore, George Brancker was excellent at doing that but, beyond that, it was amazing that despite his dispassionate demeanour, that he sat in this chair at the Clerk's Table and one would think that he was not listening but if there was a malapropism, or any kind of slip of the tongue, you could rest assured that he picked it up. He did not write it down, but he remembered it and very often at the end of the session downstairs as we were talking he would remind us of the near miss or the miss that took place in the course of that debate.

In 1989 when the regional arm of the CPA was re-established, the Caribbean and the Atlantic regions, all of the countries attended the meeting in Bermuda and it was unanimously decided, because of his long experience, even though at that time he was not the longest serving Clerk, but because of his experience and his diplomatic skills, that George Brancker would be the first Secretary of the regional grouping.

He, therefore, blazed a trail. Once he was appointed Secretary, the regional grouping which had not met for decades was then planted firmly back on its feet, and I am happy to say that since 1989, as you would know, Sir, the regional CPA has met every year, and it has also been a great boon to young parliamentarians who have had the opportunity to meet with parliamentarians throughout the region and to build up their contacts.

We travelled with George to Trinidad in 1993. The late Senator Carmeta Fraser was on that delegation and assumed the leadership of the delegation by virtue, not of her status in Parliament, but by virtue of her political seniority. On the last night of that CPA Conference, we had a dinner at the Hilton and Senator Fraser pointed out to the Deputy Clerk from Trinidad that a piece of her luggage had been damaged by the staff of BWIA when she was coming into Barbados and despite her request nothing had been done to repair it. I saw George Brancker's diplomatic skills move into action. He was not sitting at the table.

11.50 a.m.

The Deputy Clerk saw the bag, said that there were hundreds of them in Trinidad and he would get one for her first thing the next morning. Senator Fraser objected, said that her bag was a unique bag and that there could not be any other bags like that in Trinidad since she had acquired it in Malaysia and it was not a cheap bag that she picked up in Frederick Street, so an argument started.

George Brancker then intervened, calmed down Senator Fraser and made arrangements for a new bag, of

Malaysian quality, to replace the one which BWIA had damaged. Mr. Speaker, had that matter got out of hand, knowing Senator Fraser as we knew her, it would have been a major diplomatic incident for Barbados.

Sir, I mentioned that because the swiftness with which George leaped to his feet and came to the head table, pretending to deliver a message and was able to calm Senator Fraser down was the same manner in which George Brancker had to cool the passion of Members of this Chamber.

However, if you were oblivious to his warnings, he would not continue to counsel you and you were free to do what you wanted to do and to bear the consequences of your failure to heed his advice.

He was a voracious reader who shared his books with whoever was interested. He made sure that parliamentarians who liked to read were provided with whatever reading material they wanted, and he would pick out the section of the *Times* which I liked and made sure these were available every week. Even though we have not been able to establish a library here, he thought it sufficiently important that with the limited resources available to him, parliamentarians were given research material to assist them.

He prepared volumes on matters relating to parliamentary procedure, the administration of Parliament, the historical development of Parliament and within the Commonwealth as a whole. The fact that he reduced it to writing demonstrated a level of discipline which does not exist in Parliaments in any part of the world but we have it here, already documented and available for future parliamentarians to see.

I found it rather curious though because there was one piece of advice George Brancker gave to me, not that I have followed it, but I felt compelled to reflect on it when he passed away. Once when I was quarrelling about something, I told him that I would put it in writing and he said that if he were me, he would not put it in writing because if you put some things in writing, they will easily be disposed of, but when you are dealing with politicians, there are things, if you put them in writing, they will file them away very carefully and then reach for the file in your most vulnerable moments. He said you should only reduce to writing what can be disposed of in the normal course of events and leave everything else to the spoken word from which you can always resile. Sir, that was the only advice I reflected on but, no doubt, there are many other pieces of parliamentary and other advice that George Brancker gave me as a young parliamentarian.

He never spoke volumes about his personal life. He did not need to because his children are extremely talented individuals who work in and for Barbados and their creative

minds and productivity speak volumes on his behalf and he should be extremely proud, despite his responsibility as a lawyer and Clerk of Parliament who loved this Parliament, to be able to make this contribution to his family and to have such talented individuals who are a credit to our country and who, no doubt, received those characteristics from their outstanding father.

Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East in only one respect. Our memory of George Brancker, the stiff, well dressed, erudite and distinguished Clerk of this Parliament is vivid, and to have seen him in any other context probably would have been very traumatic for Members of this Parliament, and although it is the work of God to determine how he disposes of us, it is probably a good thing that George Brancker, who was a towering figure in this Parliament, was not diminished so significantly by his sickness that others gazed upon him to reflect on the frailties of human life but that, in fact, he left us as swiftly as he walked into this Chamber on Tuesday. He raised his voice once or twice when the Speaker was coming into the House and he would thunder at those in the public gallery, not in anger but as a symbol of authority.

On behalf of my party, opposition parliamentarians present and those who served in Parliament with me who are not able to speak, I join with the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East in extending sympathy to the family of the late George Brancker and to all of those who in any way were diminished by his passing. I assure them that despite their grief and loss, that whenever parliamentarians in Barbados gather, particularly those influenced by George, that his name will live on and it will be impossible to talk about this Parliament for decades to come unless the name of George Brancker features very prominently in any discussion of successes or momentous events that took place in Barbados, or any discussion of the changing impact of our Parliament on the lives of Barbadians.

Sir, with those words, I join with the mover of the Resolution in lending my support and reiterate our sympathy.
12 noon.

Hon. Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to join with the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition to pay tribute to the late George Brancker, a distinguished Clerk of this House, of the Commonwealth, and a man whose reputation and knowledge of parliamentary matters is well known.

It was at a meeting sometime in the early '70s that he joined this House as a Deputy Clerk and later became a Clerk of the House. I well remember the many occasions when this House and, indeed, all Parliament were very indebted to him because of the great quality which was alluded to in part by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. George Brancker was a great teacher among the other parliamentarians. Indeed, in Barbados, he was a great teacher to a large number of primary school children who were brought here by their teachers and he would spare enough time to lecture them on Parliament, though he had some very peculiar methods of delivery.

I well recall that at the beginning of a session of this Parliament, some young enthusiastic and – to use the correct word – “ignorant” Members of Parliament, started to abuse the rules of the House in a most obvious form. One of Mr. Brancker’s obvious methods of dealing with that was to distribute clippings from articles written on various topics which were very necessary for young Members to know.

Sir, I think it is fitting to refer to some of the topics that were dealt with. I have looked into my desk here and have come across one of those clippings which I particularly remember. This article which deals with Points of Order was distributed in early 1992. The second paragraph clearly sets out something that all Members of Parliament should remember; that the test of whether a point of order is a real point of order or not is when it involves an interpretation of the Rules, directions and various provisions of the Constitution which regulate the business of the House. His method of teaching some of these young, ignorant Members of Parliament was to distribute these articles in the hope that they would have been read, and even if they were not being read, that Members would take notice of them.

Sir, the second one among the trilogy of articles that he distributed on that occasion was one which deals with the Rules and Conventions. It sets out the pattern of behaviour that one would expect of a Member of Parliament.

Sir, the third one deals with Parliamentary Convention. The last one, of course, was a very important one because it dealt with the grave offence of misleading the House. Sir, that article was prompted by the behaviour of a Member of the House of Commons who was convicted of a grave contempt of the House, for misleading the House by telling lies about his behaviour. Sir, those articles illustrate, in my view, the great respect that Mr. George Brancker had for good behaviour, good understanding and good parliamentary practice.

Sir, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, George Brancker did not only stop at distributing those articles. At his desk there are a large number of very relevant articles which he collected from time to time to be distributed to any Member of Parliament who had an interest on how Parliament works; its history and its procedure. Sir, I hope it will be a fitting memorial that someone would collate, classify and index all of these articles, to be bound together and put in the library of Parliament.

Sir, I have also spent many hours with him at that desk because it was always a very useful thing to do when the speeches in this House were particularly boring, to go into that office and have some discussions on Parliament with George Brancker.

Sir, I would also like to draw to the attention of the House a very signalled contribution he made to the history of this House. In the lobby, there is a record of all the Members of Parliament who are or were elected to this House since the advent of adult suffrage. He was very proud of the fact that he was able to persuade the Leader of the House and the Management Commission of Parliament, to allow that part of the lobby to be used in that way.

It is, indeed, to me a recognition of how strongly he felt about the history of this Parliament and particularly since it became a Parliament which is truly democratic. Again, I believe that perhaps a fitting tribute could be paid to him by some acknowledgment being made in some form or other to the fact that he was the author of the idea; the person who did the research, so that we will forever have a permanent record of the various Members of Parliament in this House.

Sir, there are a few other areas I believe should be made mention of today and there is one I particularly well recall. As someone who has been around Parliament for a long period of time, I think the incidences of the type that I am about to relate will indicate the high esteem in which he was held, and when I first entered this Parliament in the debates, the partisanship was perhaps at its highest point.

The then Speaker, who was the late Clerk’s father, had many difficult periods of time. Indeed, periodically he suffered by having to have a number of no-confidence motions defeated by his own party. Sir, he used to repeatedly call for the creation of the post of Standing Council to the Speaker because, as he said, he found himself too often in the invidious position of being accused, either by the Government’s Side or by the Opposition’s Side, of giving rulings which were partisan, when he felt that those rulings were grounded in good Parliamentary practice. It is a tribute to George Brancker that at no time since he became the Clerk that there has been no call by that Speaker or others, for the creation of the post of Standing Council and for the very simple reason, because of George Brancker’s knowledge of practice and procedure.

Sir, when the Speaker did indicate to him that he would like the benefit of his advice on any particular point of issue and Mr. Brancker gave it, everyone in the Chamber knew that Mr. Speaker was speaking from his head but, in truth and in fact, the ruling was given by Mr. George Brancker. I think that is a great bit of evidence of the esteem in which he was held on his objectivity.

Quite naturally, since he has served as Clerk for a long period of time, he would have been here in Barbados at the time of many great motions being brought in this House but, perhaps, the most profound of all was that he was Clerk at the Table when a motion of no-confidence was moved sometime in early 1994. Sir, the procedure, the conduct of the debate, the whole atmosphere was, to a large extent, in my opinion, however charged it was, calmed by the fact that there was a tremendous amount of consultation on both Sides as to what was the correct practice and procedure to be adopted on such an occasion. That motion, of course, will go down in our parliamentary history and I think it was apt that we place on record the fact that he played a major part in ensuring that the debate took place in a calm, even though charged atmosphere.
12.10 p.m.

Most speakers have spoken of him in a social context and I would also like to say that I was always impressed by the fact that he was unfailingly courteous to all Members of this House, irrespective of the political party to which they belonged. We, who have been Members of this House were shocked, like I am sure his family was at his swift and untimely passing. I would like to join with all Honourable Members in associating myself with the Resolution of Sympathy and condolence which will be sent to his family.

Thank you.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to join in paying tribute to the late Clerk of Parliament, George Brancker from a personal perspective. I certainly, would have benefitted in 1994 when I entered the Senate as Leader of Government Business.

Certainly, it is much to the credit of the late Clerk that he took me under his wing, taught me the ropes and all that was necessary for one to be able, not only to survive, but to strive in the environs of Parliament. That was characteristic of George Brancker. He loved young people. He loved to help. He loved to give freely of what he had and he certainly had talent and knowledge in abundance, and that was reflected in his giving.

We, certainly in that Chamber at that time represented a very young group of Senators, several of whom would have been first time in the political arena. He recognised that it fell to him, as an institution within an institution, to ensure that we were able to comport ourselves in such a manner as would preserve the traditions and high standards which have been traditionally associated with this Place and the Other Place.

I certainly, would want to start from a perspective of thanks and appreciation for the effort which our late Clerk made in ensuring that I was able to make a contribution in

this Parliament. As I reflect on the life and work of George Brancker, I certainly remember a part in our National Anthem where we speak of writing our names on history's page with expectations great and of being strict guardians of our heritage and firm craftsmen of our fate.

George Brancker, Commander of the British Empire, through his service in this institution over the past 30 years, certainly has become, by way of his contribution through public service, one of the supporting pillars of our democracy. And why do I say that, Sir?

The operations of a parliament within any society, is one of the most vital aspects of the perpetuation of democracy. Indeed, George Brancker, as Clerk, was a very strict guardian of the heritage of parliamentary democracy and of the operations of the Parliament of Barbados. He would suffer none to do anything such as would impinge on the democratic traditions which we hold within the Westminster system or, Sir, the Rules of Parliament.

He was also, Sir, not a person who looked only to the past by way of holding to tradition, but he also looked very much to the future. Indeed, Sir, during his period of service, he was a craftsman and an architect of our future, the future which we enjoy today, as a result of his earlier work, and the future which we, in this Parliament, and those who will follow us, will enjoy because of the foundation which he has made.

If we are in doubt, Sir, about the contribution which George Brancker, the Clerk of Parliament, has made to this institution, we need only look at other countries in the Commonwealth, which were not as privileged as we have been, to have the benefit of the knowledge, the dedication and all of those very strong, positive attributes which have been brought together in the person of George Brancker. You will see that the problems which they have in their Parliament are never seen here in Barbados.

Democracies as we know them, Sir, are preserved, by and large, through the quality of their public institutions. We, as politicians, have our part to play but we come and we go. We have our entrances and we have our exits. The constant factors in our system of democracy, however, are the institutions and whereas the people of the country can demonstrate their faith in one group of politicians, or an individual politician from time to time by way of the process of elections, our system of governance depends on the public being in a position to have a perpetual faith in the public institutions also, that the public institutions will preserve the Constitution and the various laws that govern us, as well as uphold such high standards such as would enable the citizens of the country to be proud of those institutions.

Sir, whether the institutions are the Parliament, whether the institutions are the various departments within the Civil Service, whether those institutions are the judiciary, the police force, the church, the school, the fact of the matter is that our system is strengthened. It is enlivened and it is perpetuated based on the quality of the institutions.

George Brancker, like other dedicated individuals who have built and maintained these institutions over the process of time, deserve our full thanks, praise and appreciation for their work. In fact, Sir, very often public institutions only come to our attention when there is a problem. We live in a world, Sir, where bad news is news. Good news is no news and therefore, to the extent that a number of persons in the wider community may perhaps not focus on Parliament as an institution, and its inner workings at the level of the Clerks, Reporters and other supporting staff, is a reflection of the fact that this institution has been kept out of the difficulties which, from time to time attend other institutions and cause them to be cast in a most unfortunate light in the news medium.

12.20 p.m.

It is really to George Brancker's credit over the past 30 years to have so administered his functions within this Parliament and ensure that this Parliament was kept free of negative reporting.

In the pursuance of that task, George Brancker was both fair as well as fearless. He was fair to all. I do not know if there is anyone who has passed through this Parliament during his tenure who can fairly accuse him of taking a decision based on partisan considerations. I do not know of anyone who could have accused George Brancker of making a recommendation in this Parliament based on longstanding friendships which he would have had with the older and more revered Members of this Parliament present and past going back to their time at school and other collegiate associations.

It did not matter, Sir, who you were, the only thing that mattered was what was the issue at hand and what the rules had to say about it and where the rules were not clear, what were the precedents and what was the Parliament tradition going back to the earliest days of democracy in a Westminster system, so we were able to benefit not only from that genuine human characteristic of decency and fairness which was part of George Brancker, but we were able from a knowledge which, of course, in his case was a combination not only of his natural intelligence but the fact that he recognised that knowledge also needed to be finely honed and that it can only be done by way of continuous efforts.

Notwithstanding his excellent academic record, notwithstanding his acclaim in the area of jurisprudence,

notwithstanding the already existing and already gone years of success as a Clerk in this Parliament, George Brancker to his last day as Clerk in this Parliament, and even after he had retired, continued to research, read, write and hone the knowledge which for those of us new to parliamentary matters covered all that there was to know. George Brancker was never satisfied with the level of knowledge he had in matters relating to Parliament. He, therefore, was an avid reader, an excellent researcher and a most meticulous writer.

It is not often though, Sir, one is able to combine those qualities with the pen and in the backrooms doing research. With skills as an orator, George Brancker was perhaps one of the best kept secrets outside of the parliamentary circles where all of this is well-known, but in terms of the wider public who did not often get the opportunity to hear George Brancker in full flight delivering his speech and delivering some humour, did not recognise his excellent grasp of the English language, his turn of phrase.

In fact, in addition to the turn of phrase, sometimes when you listened to George giving you a discourse on a subject, you sometimes thought you were listening to a talking dictionary. He knew more words than any man that I have known so far. That was the man George Brancker. He enjoyed language and he enjoyed playing with it. He worked with language as Broodhagen and other sculptors work with clay and he used it as a raw material to shape and express his thoughts and when you listen to presentations from him you would recognise that it had feeling, it had shape and it only leaves you to wonder what would *Hansard* have looked like in terms of being the record of the speeches of this Parliament were George Brancker to have been a member speaking on the Floor on many of the great and various subjects on which this Parliament would have debated over the 30 years that George served as a Clerk rather than as a Member of Parliament, and perhaps the record is the poorer for it.

George Brancker was a great organiser. His silent but firm hand could be felt as an organiser of State events at Parliament such as making arrangements to have the Throne Speech read in the Other Place. It would have been felt, Sir, on the occasion when we had reasons to celebrate important milestones in our Parliament history, for example, the 350th Anniversary of Parliament. George would also have been the silent, firm, organising hand in making the arrangements for the reconstruction and the reconfiguration of this Chamber from how it was configured in previous years when we did the renovation of this East Wing in the 1980s.

George Brancker would have been the firm, steady, reliable, silent hand in ensuring that when the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association of Barbados had on occasions to entertain our parliamentary colleagues from

around the world, that all of them left Barbados with nothing but the fondest memories of the productive meeting but also having had the opportunity by way of careful organisation to taste some of the culture of Barbados, to sip some of the delights of Barbados and to otherwise become involved in the spirit and the spirits as well of Barbados. Of course, on those occasions where we entertained important guests, the wit and humour of George was always remembered.

It is for both the social purposes as well as his recognition as being the foremost Clerk of Parliament in the Commonwealth that he was known by all, Presiding Officers, Members of Parliament and Clerks at the Table, as the doyen of Clerks in the Commonwealth.

It was, therefore, only but fitting that he should be recognised by way of the award of the Commander of the British Empire (CBE) awarded by her Majesty the Queen in recognition of his service which transcended the mere limitations of the precincts of the Parliament of Barbados and that his contribution spans the entire realm which made up the former British Empire which is now represented by the Commonwealth.

We, therefore, have been blessed to have had this institution by the title of George Brancker, CBE, as part of our Parliament. Our Parliament is stronger for it and our democracy has been made much stronger for it.

I want, Sir, to once again indicate my personal appreciation for the guidance which George gave to me on many occasions in the Other Place as well as in here in more recent times and I am sure that that can be said by all of the other younger Members of Parliament.

I certainly will miss the even tone and temper of his voice at State occasions when we were not only able to enjoy the language but we were also able to enjoy the most tasteful wit and humour.

12.30 p.m.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, this has to be a remarkable moment in the history of our Parliament because I do believe that the exercise in which the House of Assembly is involved is an exercise that one generally associates with the loss of leaders and with the loss of persons acclaimed to be national statesmen of the first order. It is fitting and proper that the House should be in this mood and temper.

I do not propose to give an appreciation of the life and the character of the late George Brancker in the terms in which it has been so eloquently given by others who have spoken in public hitherto, and those who are speaking in the

course of this debate, but I do feel a deep sense of duty to speak briefly and in a very personal way. Perhaps, I may have to put it as simply as this that the death of George Brancker will deprive me of one of the very but few great pleasures I have enjoyed in the office of Prime Minister of Barbados. I say that deliberately, Sir.

When this House no longer felt that it had a need for the services of the most distinguished Clerk in the Commonwealth and certainly one of the most distinguished servants of any Parliament anywhere in the world, I felt that there was an opportunity for the Office of the Prime Minister and for the Cabinet of the Government of Barbados to be embellished.

It was without a moment's hesitation that I urged Mr. Brancker to continue his tremendous record of public service by coming to serve as a Consultant to the Cabinet of our country. In a way, Sir, perhaps it was a fitting climax to one of the most outstanding careers in parliamentary service by anyone within and outside Parliament in the history of our country.

It was not a labour, Sir. To work with George Brancker was fun. I would have to say that he will go down as the closest that we have had to a counsellor to the Prime Minister of Barbados. His function in the office of the Cabinet of our country was to serve as a liaison between Cabinet and this Parliament.

People do not understand the difficulty that is involved in serving this House. Cabinet meets on Thursday. The House meets on Tuesday and much of the business that comes to this Parliament has to be transacted between Thursday and Tuesday. That relationship has not always been easy. George Brancker's function was to make it easier for the benefit of this Parliament. He was also serving in helping us rewrite the Constitution of this country, but he was doing something more, Sir.

It is, I think, very important and I trust that other holders of this office will understand what I am saying. It is very important that a Prime Minister should have at his side a person who has, in the words of the Psalms, known what it is to apply his heart to wisdom, a person who can be there to help the leader of the country discharge the enormous weight of the office of the country by offering advice drawn from a deep and rich experience. George Brancker did that, Sir, in the last few years to an extent that has never been done by any citizen of our country.

To work with him was not just a duty. It was fun, Sir. I will now miss the evenings when George would drop by the office just to talk about a matter in the public domain and to offer advice in a quiet way which generally was sound

advice. My staff and the entire staff of Government Headquarters will miss his friendly and jocular presence. I think everyone in this House must agree that the presentation of public ceremony in this country was enriched by the panache, the eloquence and the flair but also the sense of propriety that Mr. Brancker brought to those events. He lifted them by his eloquence and by his spirit.

For me, Sir, and I must say this for the record, it was a pleasure as a leader of the country to have someone of his qualities to be associated with the discharge of responsibilities that one has to carry. In a personal way, of course, Mr. Brancker at a critical time in my professional career as a politician would have exercised the influence that I have never made public. If there was one aspect of his character, it was that he was totally unflappable and he more than anyone else knew the virtue of an attribute which I want to share with young politicians that anger is a wasted emotion.

I remember a trip to Dominica at a critical time in my career when, like most politicians, I had an anger in me and he urged that you should never in politics do things in a moment of malice, nor for reasons of hatred, nor in a moment of anger, that those are wasted emotions. I would want to say to the House, Sir, and to younger Members at the sound of their voice that that mentorship to me at that crucial time was decisive in how I came to view my relationship to the political system.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, our world will be poorer and I think the strings of public inspiration will certainly run more thinly. This loss is grievous. It was not expected but it is a loss that is painful even as we reflect upon it. It is my duty on behalf of the Government, certainly, on my own special behalf to extend my heartfelt sympathies to his family and his friends and to say may he rest in peace and may the trumpets sound for him on the other side.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, the loss of George Brancker to me is not the loss of a Clerk of Parliament but of a friend, a friendship that has gone beyond fifty years. George, like myself, grew up part of our time in Carrington Village, that crucible of great men and women, the Lamming's, the Springer's, the Caddle's, the Tull's and the Brancker's. During the period that we were students at Harrison College, we spent a lot of time talking, not only George and myself, but a generation of Barbadians in the school at that time who were fired up with enthusiasm for public service, who thought beyond the immediacy and saw somewhere in the distance a society, a country and a community that they would want both to forge and to be part of.

We spent a lot of time talking. We talked in formal sessions and in informal sessions, in the social clubs, in the schools. There was one called the Acton Club where we

debated issues. We talked under the mahogany trees, down by the shed, at the back of the pavilion and on what is now the Transport Board compound but was Combermere School in those days. We crossed Combermere, went through the Globe, and up through the gully.
12.40 p.m.

As we went across Combermere through the gully on our way home, we also talked a lot. Those were days when the boys of Harrison College were engaged in keen and fierce rivalry and a scholarship was something that was unheard of, so the competition was fierce but, despite the rivalry and the competition, we forged very strong, enduring friendships and relationships that stood the test of time.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned this as a background to let you see how I feel about George Brancker. It is rooted in a long period of exchanges at all levels and, therefore, it is not just the loss of the Clerk of Parliament. Other Honourable Members very eloquently and forcefully stated the case of George Brancker as the pre-eminent Clerk of this Parliament and the most respected of Clerks of any Parliament in the Commonwealth, and I need not repeat that except that I have experienced it myself.

I have experienced his prestige throughout the world because wherever I travel over the past 30 years, I have heard people in Parliaments far-flung enquiring about George Brancker and speaking about him with the respect that was duly accorded to great philosophers. Sir, I do not need to go through all that has been said before in that regard because I have adopted all the words stated so far as if they were my own and I am glad to join in them.

Mr. Speaker, George Brancker was a good friend of my wife, Ordene, and the Haynes' family and I would be doing less than my duty if I did not, in this tribute, on her behalf and on behalf of the other members of my family, have them associated with this tribute that is being paid to George today.

Mr. Speaker, a lot has been said and I do not intend to enlarge on it but it would not be fair if I did not mention one or two things in relation to his career as a lawyer because all those who spoke so far, spoke of his career as the Clerk of Parliament.

George Brancker and I practised law in the early '70s and I learned a number of things from him. I saw George Brancker practising law in court as a junior to his father and the two people had entirely different dispositions. It was always interesting to see the subtlety and cleverness with which he was able to get his father to accept his subtle advice at the Bar table as they were working together without Sir Theodore losing the appearance of control. In other words,

George was able to get through to his father exactly what he wanted to get through and put words in the mouth of his father as he addressed the court without his father realising that he was doing the talking but that George was providing the thoughts and words.

He was a marvelous user of the English language as everybody said. I remember there was a standard form in which lawyers wrote letters in respect of insurance claims and when I started the profession, I used the standard letter that I found other lawyers used, but one day I came across a claim that George had submitted to an insurance company in Bridgetown and I was won over by the beauty of the language and the effectiveness of what he was saying in that letter.

Sir, the law survives on the use of precedent and one of the precedents that adorned my desk in the years before I went into Government was a copy of the letter that George Brancker had submitted to that insurance company. Sir, I am a humble person so I do not mind admitting to a little plagiarism from time to time. I stole his thoughts and his manner of expression and it became part of my arsenal.

Sir, I hear a lot of talk about jurists and jurisprudence but there are a lot of lawyers but very few jurists in Barbados and George Brancker was one of them. He brought a maturity of mind, a sharpness of intellect and a deep analytical perspective to bear upon the law. I have been in law for 37 years and I have not met many people in the legal fraternity who have brought that quality of intellectual decisiveness to law that George Brancker did.

Even though he stopped practising law in the traditional sense and brought his legal skills to Parliament, all of us who dealt with him know that you could rely on George to look at a legal problem in Parliament, whether it be legislation or something to do with parliamentary practice, and bring the power of his over-towering intellect to bear on the problem and to explain in simple terms that even the most humble of us could understand.

Sir, George Brancker's loss is a terrific loss. It is a great loss not only to this Parliament but also to Barbados. I join with other Honourable Members and members of my family in expressing the deep sorrow on his passing.

I give my sincerest special condolences to his widow and children, Melanie and Nicholas. This country has truly lost a gentleman and a scholar.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 2.00 p.m.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is now resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a short contribution to this matter currently before the Chamber. There has been a close family association between that of the late George Brancker and mine; in particular, my aunt and one of her daughters were especially very close to the Brancker's family. Sir, it was primarily through that family relationship that I came to know of the Brancker's family and got to know particularly the late George Brancker.

Sir, I must say that from the very first inception, it was clear that he was a man who had a very pleasant disposition and who could have accommodated all points of view. In fact, I well remember both his capacity and ability to handle those persons with whom he came into contact, who were putting very strong views at times, including myself. Sir, the way he used to handle it was primarily to ignore those persons or to just smile and say: "Peace, my brother". Sir, those things were very characteristic of him but having gotten to know him, I must say that I certainly feel all the wiser, all the less ignorant of having known him.

Sir, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has pointed out, he was a man who would devote some time for you, no matter how much the task was that he had to discharge. He always found the time to accommodate any queries that were made of him. Sir, I am certainly one of those persons who the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was early speaking of when he made the comments of being "young, ignorant Members of Parliament". Sir, I was ignorant in not having the slightest clue about what to do and I must say that on every occasion when I was in doubt, I would resort to the late George Brancker and make the necessary inquiries of him what to do. Sir, he was always on the ball in providing immediate assistance to me.

I recall my most scary experience was when I was put in charge of the Fair Trading Commission Bill which was sent to a Joint Select Committee. I did not have the slightest clue how the matters should have proceeded against the Joint Select Committee, it being the first time I had ever been assigned to function within the context of a Joint Select

Committee. Mr. Speaker, it was, I daresay, to the late George Brancker that I turned to for assistance and I must say that with his assistance, I was able to see that matter through to the end.

Sir, through him his talents were passed onto his children whom I also got to know over the years, particularly in the musical context. Sir, few Members would know that his son Nicolas Brancker was associated with a band called "Second Avenue". I well recall my moment in glory being the moment when I rehearsed the song "Reasons" by "Earth, Wind and Fire" with "Second Avenue", while singing with the falsetto with which I am very proficient.

I remember it was in the year 1985, at a lunch time, at a discotheque not far from here that I took the bold steps to go to rehearse this song "Reasons". I do recall Nicholas being fascinated in knowing that I could have sung that well, but that was my moment in time when I connected musically with the Brancker's family. I never bothered going beyond the rehearsal, not because I could not, but because time simply did not permit. I believe the Honourable Member for St. James South is very disappointed that I did not pursue that avenue at that particular time, since she, herself, had been a tower of strength at that time. Sir, again, I feel the better for that particular experience.

Mr. Speaker, on a more serious note. I want to say that I certainly cherish the opportunity of knowing the late George Brancker. My family and I feel his loss. I must say that I was quite stunned when I heard about it, for I had no idea that he had not been well. My family and I were quite shocked when we received the news and therefore, on behalf of my family I want to extend to the family our deepest condolences.

Sir, if I know the late George Brancker and I think I do somewhat, I do believe he would not have wished them to be grieving for him, but that they would be the tower of strength he would have wanted them to be, that they see his passing, not as a death to be mourned but to see his life as an event to be celebrated and given thanks for.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I will take my seat.

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

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, duty and indeed conscience not just encourages me but drives me to rise on this occasion to pay homage to a truly distinguished son of this our native land.

Sir, as a youngster growing up in this country, avid in my pursuit of readership, I would read virtually anything

including newspapers, and when about ages 16 or 17, I encountered an article which highlighted the call to the Bar of George Eustace Theodore Brancker. I also vividly recall that it would have been sometime between 1970 and 1971 that this distinguished and noble person came to this Honourable House as Deputy Clerk. However, it was between 1974 and 1975 that I got to know him well. Sir, the period between 1974 and 1975, was a period when the Trents Summer Day Camp in St. James was launched and George Eustace Theodore Brancker, essayed to come with his progeny to Trents Summer Day Camp, often alone, but at times accompanied by his comely wife, as they delivered their tender offspring to the care of the counsellors at the Camp. Sir, their means of transportation was but a lowly station wagon, white in colour but given to efficiency and was never known to have broken down, certainly when coming to St. James after allowing the children to come to camp.

Sir, I remark that here was a devoted father who, not only would bring the children to the camp but at times when his wife was not available he did so with alacrity and he was always punctual. The two offsprings never got to camp late. Sir, these two offsprings comported themselves at camp with the utmost decorum, Mr. Speaker, so much so that both of them, in their tender years, were befriended by all and sundry and not just their own peers but the counsellors as well. These two young persons were, in many respect, the love of George Brancker's life.

Sir, I entered this Parliament in 1991 with the blessings and support of the good people of St. James North and within weeks of my entry, George had organised a seminar for the new parliamentarians to teach us parliamentary procedure. He made available to all of us whatever literature he considered would have helped us develop into proper parliamentarians. Mr. Speaker, he was the type of person who took his job so seriously as to constantly approach it with quintessential enthusiasm. Mr. Speaker, I cannot recall any other officer in any institution who can make bold to research the origins and histories of institutions with the degree of thoroughness and determination that he did.
2.10 p.m.

Indeed, I recall on one occasion in here, when a matter concerning the efficacy of our Standing Orders arose, he was able from memory, to look at similar provisions in the Standing Orders of the British Parliament, New Zealand and Australia, without reference to any source material.

On another occasion, I was reading some history at a time when there were those in this country who were wondering whether it has ever happened in the Commonwealth, that a Prime Minister came from the Other Place. He was able to tell me that in England, there was indeed a Prime Minister who had been sitting in the House of Lords in England, and what amendments were made there

to require for the law to be that a Prime Minister should be in the Lower House.

On yet another occasion, Mr. Speaker, I told him that I was fascinated with the title, “National Honour” and wanted his advice as to what was the correct status of the term, “Right Honourable”, and how did it match with that of a Knighthood. He essayed to go forth into a history of National Honours and came up with something I had never heard of called, “the Knights of the Garter”, arguing and maintaining, Mr. Speaker, that it was just those who were fortunate to be called, “the Knights of the Garter”, who could boast of having a higher pre-eminence than anybody called, ‘Right Honourable’. This was the quality scholar this Honourable House is today mourning.

I also know that he was interested in a wide range of constitutional matters, not just in the Caribbean and in the Commonwealth but even in countries like America, which followed the classic common law tradition and which are not part of the type of legal and parliamentary culture with which we in Barbados possess.

Also, in looking at how regulations in subsidiary legislation take effect and how you go about them, and having been failed very badly by the standard textbooks I was using, in lowly humility I approached George and asked him to explain the difference between a Bill subject to negative resolution, or subject to affirmative resolution, where he proved far more helpful than the textbook, and he was correct by the time I verified it by a better textbook than what I had read.

There were occasions also when I asked his advice, and would tell him that I was minded to read this book or the next book or the third book and he would say, “Sony, why not approach me before looking at the book, for I am able to help you.” This is the measure of the man.

He took enormous pride, Mr. Speaker, in reading. In many ways, those of us who encouraged persons to read, must regret that nowadays, 2000, 2001, 2002, it is very difficult to persuade a number of people in Barbados to read.

George Eustace Theodore Brancker adhered to a philosophy shared by persons like Dr. Leonard Shorey and Mr. Gladstone Holder which is, there is something about reading widely that makes the difference of a cultured person and person who is a classic barbarian savage.

George Brancker was of the view that the more you read, the more you could consider yourself without any infamy or false pride, as being either a scholar or somebody imbued with civility. While, if you did not read, you were very disadvantaged. This brings to mind a saying which

followed that the man who could read and does not read, has no advantage over the man who cannot read. I am using the man here generically to mean mankind and the male under the Interpretation Act passed by this Honourable Parliament, the female, except for when a contrary intention is expressed.

Mr. Speaker, we parliamentarians at Independence time were often at Independence time torn between the loyalty to our constituents and inclined to go to our constituencies first, or choosing to go to Government House, after 4.30 p.m. on the evening when the Official Independence Ceremony was being staged. Once we were assured that the Master of Ceremonies would have been George Eustace Theodore Brancker, then somehow, we veered away from our constituencies, came to Government House to take part in a ceremony, chaired and masterfully done by a truly outstanding scholar.

Honourable Members on this Side and that Side can only recall the wit, humour and the choice of language but would also remember that, as he practised didacticism, he was able at appropriate times during the ceremony, to either recall moments of history or make pointing remarks that led to the evening and the occasion.

On that occasion also, as persons from the different forces came to receive his or her particular honour, Honourable Members would have heard George Eustace Theodore Brancker, with typical Georgian ease in reference to Glendairy, say these words:

“And this was done this year, when Glendairy became, um, um, um, residential.”

Mr. Speaker, whenever I go abroad and interact with persons who have known George, he would have been the first Barbadian person asked for, who was associated with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. He had such a reputation that his services were in constant demand here within CARICOM and in the wider Commonwealth, when matters to do with parliamentary practice and procedure or matters to do with the reform of the Standing Orders were being discussed. I want to say that not just Barbados and CARICOM but the wider Commonwealth is today the poorer, as death has deprived George of his earthly existence.

Sir, to those who mourn and sorrow, take comfort in the enormous and wonderful example he set. As I attempt to take my seat, I must say that on that fateful Wednesday during that funeral service at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, when his son Nicholas went to the piano that the tears invited me to weep and not even the male ego could prevent them from flowing down my saddened face.

Mr. Speaker, I commend him as a truly noble and outstanding person, a person who faithfully adhered to important norms and a person whose standards were high. Before I sit, I want to say that on one occasion, I recall him expressing, quietly, his disappointment with many lawyers in the Commonwealth because many of them had failed to enlarge their store of knowledge of legal matters. He was very disappointed. He did not like the idea of a lawyer walking around ignorant. Indeed, he did not like the idea of anybody being ignorant.

We would sometimes sit here and see “The Parliamentarian” come here. If they do not come here, they would come to our offices, or some extract about how in proceedings in Canada, Australia or New Zealand, there was an interchange and the Leader had to intervene, or the Chairman of Committees had to intervene, which were all intended for our enrichment.

This noble and great son, this eminent scholar, this Clerk of Clerks will be surely missed. We meet in parliament today and somehow parliament has been proud enough to be able to assemble us here, notwithstanding the absence of one of its fundamental pillars.
2.20 p.m.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I too rise to pay tribute to the late George Brancker. As you are aware, Sir, I might be more privileged than others in this regard in that I come from a constituency from which he would have roamed. Before I came to these Chambers, I was fortunate to hear about George Brancker the lawyer more so than George Brancker the Clerk of Parliament.

There is a gentleman known to me, I cannot remember his official name – as “Patty Dukes”. As a youngster I spent many days in my step-grandfather’s shop which would have been my grandmother’s shop, and I use to hear “Patty Dukes” bragging about this young lawyer and how good this lawyer was, and he would tell us that he had the best lawyer in Barbados.

I was privileged to listen to those stories and I was also privileged to listen to a gentleman by the name of “Mr. John Springer” who is still very much alive who would tell me about the days of the three musketeers. Those three musketeers would have been the former Prime Minister of Barbados, Sir Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, Dr. Richie Haynes and Mr. George Brancker. I am told that they spent many days in St. Lucy especially in the Pie Corner and Rockfield area in which they had great times and where they enjoyed the company and the welfare of the people of St. Lucy.

I am not surprised that the Brancker family would have travelled across Barbados to the northern star to make sure

that that memory remains with the people of St. Lucy because the foundation has been laid first by the late Sir Theodore Brancker and then by the love that was shown by George Brancker for that particular constituency.

As you know, Sir, St. Clements is not the only landmark in St. Lucy that you can find that name. You can also find that name at the only roundabout we have in St. Lucy. It is not by accident that it happens to be the most beautiful and biggest roundabout in Barbados because once you have represented a constituency like that, or have any affiliation to that particular constituency, that constituency would shower its praise on you.

I am happy to see that Mr. George Brancker, even though not being a parliamentarian in his own right, had the privilege of enjoying the benefits of St. Lucy. The mere fact that he was accepted the way he has been accepted in St. Lucy shows that he had some goodness in him.

I also want to say that on my trips overseas once you mentioned Barbados the first person anybody would ask you for is the late George Brancker. Sometimes I wonder whether those members of the foreign delegations were Barbadians because one got the impression that they were more *au fait* with George Brancker than we were because they would stand you up and carry on a conversation about the man as if you were not from his country and as if you were not one who would have been in his company every Tuesday and sometimes more than that. This only shows that when you have content, that content lives on. It does not matter where you are or where you go.

I want to say that his passing will create a void within this Parliament for the simple reason if there were two persons in this Parliament that you could always judge by their body language which way the ball was going, it would have been the late George Brancker and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South because they had a way of explaining the procedures and the way the ball was turning by the way they reacted with their bodies, so we were fortunate to be in that particular company.

Growing up in St. Lucy, one got the impression that when Sir Theodore and Sir James left the political arena that the climate would have changed and that name that you kept hearing around the rum shop would have been the next name. I think that this is something we as politicians should invite somebody to study to find out why it is that people you sometimes think would be a natural follow on, sometimes distance themselves very far from doing what people will naturally expect them to do.

I have my own opinion, Sir, and I have been privileged to recognise over the last year or two, one of the reasons why

it is like that but I would prefer to leave it to the experts to explain to the rest of us why this is occurring because why it is rather strange is that it is not only a problem in the political arena but also a problem within the commercial arena. Sometimes I wonder if it is that you are too close to the action and you have an opportunity to understand the “on-goings” and the “going-ons” in that particular life.

Sir, I want to say to his family that they have nothing to worry about, that he has been able to be in Barbados and travel outside of Barbados and to create a landmark not only for them but for the rest of Barbados to follow.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, it is only on occasions like this that we in this Chamber get to pay tribute to outstanding sons of our soil. In my case, Sir, it would be remiss of me if I did not take this opportunity to pay tribute to a man who has had such a profound effect upon my political career and my professional life as it relates to this Chamber and the Other Place.

I entered the Senate in 1994 with a number of other young Senators and young Parliamentarians. At that time we were very, very green in terms of how we relate to parliamentary procedure and how we interpret many of the Rules of that Chamber, but George was always there to help us along the way in terms of building proper and decent political careers and being very knowledgeable with all of the procedures of both Chambers. He was able to impart much of that knowledge to us.

I first met George Brancker on an occasion when I was invited to the House for the first time by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East. At that time we were invited into this hall to sit in this gallery and at the time she used to refer to George as uncle George, but I never knew of her close connection with George Brancker. I had heard a lot about him in the past but I had never actually had the opportunity to meet him and, therefore, when I met him I was immediately struck by how polite and how accommodating he was to us. At that time we were not even Members of the House or even Members of the Senate. At that time, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East was in the Senate. Sir, the impression that was left with me from the beginning was one of a man who was more than polite and more than accommodating to us.

George Brancker was a very special person to all of us in this Chamber. I would always remember him as one who once pulled me aside after a Senate meeting to remark that I was going well but that I needed to temper a number of my speeches and to pick up a proper pace and be able to speak

in a manner that was much more refined. George was the type of individual who came over always as very sophisticated and aristocratic without being snobbish. 2.30 p.m.

There are not many people who are able to have the level of knowledge that George had and to be as worldly and as sophisticated as he was without coming over as being a snobbish person. He was always very precise in terms of presentation and always very polite.

It was a pleasure to share any time with George. I remember being here one evening very late with the Member for St. Michael South Central and that was a night when there was a lot of rain and we never left here until about one in the morning just sitting at George's feet and being able to hear the many stories.

Who could remark, as I once remembered him downstairs? Someone asked for a brandy with ice and George wanted to know why would anyone want to mix brandy with ice, that it would certainly spoil the drink. He referred to it as two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, how could you ever want to combine them with brandy, that you would spoil the taste. He was that type of sophisticated individual who came over to us always ready, always with a disposition to share the knowledge he had but never coming over in an imposing or vulgar manner. He was always very accommodating and very polite.

Sir, I therefore wish on behalf of myself and family to offer my condolences to George's family. I do not think that this Chamber will ever be the same without the likes of George Brancker. Death has cheated us of one of the more intellectual beings that maybe has ever walked this 166 square miles. Therefore, Sir, we regret this loss but we will go on.

On behalf of my family once again, Sir, I wish to offer my condolences to his family.

Thank you.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, when I think of the life of George Brancker, I am reminded of the frailty of man's life and I am reminded also that man cannot really plan his destiny. I remember last seeing George about a week before he died coming down the steps of Government Headquarters. I am reminded of a poem which keeps coming back to me when I look at what is happening today, especially the passing of one who is so dear to us. I remember “A Psalm of Life” which tells us that we must look at life as not of our own making but we must look at life as just a passing parade. It says to us:

“Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.”

It goes on to say:

“Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.”

Mr. Speaker, I first met George way back as a school boy coming to this Parliament on some occasions to listen to the debates and over the years coming to the debates like the Honourable Member for St. John who said that George used to command Parliament. Persons who sit in the gallery had to stand and were reminded that in the presence of a Speaker you had to stand up. George would echo those sentiments and persons sitting in the gallery could not abuse Parliament.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that in 1991 when we became the Opposition, I became the Personal Assistant to the Leader of the Opposition at that time and during that period I met and understood the man. I must say that he introduced me to the life of Parliament, the workings of the Clerks, what goes on behind Parliament. I believe that between the years 1991 and 1994 my life changed in terms of what I wanted for myself as a parliamentarian. I was not a parliamentarian then, but I knew that those were the years of preparation. I believe that those years of working in the Opposition office at the time helped to prepare me for the life of a parliamentarian and also to understand the workings of Parliament because of the knowledge of George Brancker.

I say too that George was one of those persons who worked very long, especially at night. Sometimes you would see him here well after 10.00 o'clock at night and he was always a person who was willing to share his expertise and knowledge with you. I well recall his expert knowledge in the drafting of Resolutions. I believe that when history is written about George Brancker, the Resolution which defeated the Democratic Labour Party in 1994 will stand out as a testimony of one drafter within the Commonwealth that was superb. That Resolution I speak of, and those Members who were here will recall the expert opinion and knowledge of George Brancker. I believe it is that Resolution that helped propel a new Government and a new spirit of the nation. We must salute the man for his opinion to parliamentary life, his opinion to the life of all parliamentarians because all Honourable Members have recognised the help he gave to all parliamentarians especially young parliamentarians.

I was also privileged to expose my young family to George and he was very kind to them. My two boys especially, would come here some evenings after school and

George would always give them either a pen or a pencil or some type of gift in those early years.

I must also say, Mr. Speaker, that George was not only good with children but he was very humourous and full of wit and this is very important because he knew how to make one feel good. He was a person who was not one to put you down. He gave of his best advice at all times and, therefore, I believe that history will recall the kindness of the man. History will also recall that George himself was an institution, that all Commonwealth Parliaments refer to the Clerk of the Barbados Parliament as a resource person. 2.40 p.m.

We will miss him not only because of his resourcefulness as a Clerk in Parliament but also the way in which he interacted between the Cabinet Office and Parliament. I believe that provided a link and he was able to supervise the Resolutions as they came to Parliament during that time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my sympathy to his family on his passing. They have lost a good father and friend. On behalf of the people of St. George North, I would like to express my greatest condolences and we wish that his memory would live on for a long time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. Sir HENRY FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the statements made by Honourable Members in respect of the untimely passing of the late George Eustace Theodore Brancker. I believe that the encomiums which have been expressed are more than well deserved.

I have had the privilege and honour of knowing George as a young school boy in Harrison College. I was very much his senior in age, although not in ideas or intelligence because from early at school he showed that he would have achieved great things in life.

I recall that he was always a handsome and debonair youngster who was never afraid to express his views whether among the peers of his own age or among those who were much senior in age to him.

I recall at school that his knowledge of the English language was phenomenal even at that stage. As a matter of fact, he only had one rival, Dr. Maynard, that knew as many big words as he did. They would both at lunch time challenge people to spell and give the meaning of particular words and inevitably they were in a position to make some remark when people in Modern Six or Classical Six did not follow what was going on.

George's phenomenal memory for the English language blossomed from early. It was matched equally by his knowledge of the classics. People do not often recall that he was as fluent in Latin as he was in English and many times in this House, I have gone to his office and see him reading Virgil or some of the other great Roman writers. This was matched by his interest in history. He really loved history and you could always learn from him something about the past. He was one of the few people who have read Macaulay from cover to cover. This was the nature of the man. Knowledge and learning was, for him, things that every child should appreciate. If you add to this his appreciation of the arts in general, particularly music, from the classical to modern music, you would understand that this was a rounded man and a man of great learning.

I had the honour to travel with him on at least three occasions since I was in this House. He had a great grasp for organisation and detail. Whenever he represented his country and he travelled with us parliamentarians, we felt secured that everything we wanted from the treatment at airports, our hotel accommodation, the preparation of material for our participation in the debate, all these things were well handled and we could rely on him.

Sir, I wish to recall a particular visit we made to the United Kingdom in the company of the late Reynold Weekes, Member of Parliament for St. Philip at that time, Senator Ward, George Brancker and I. You would never believe that a four-man delegation could perform as well as those delegations that came from Parliaments bigger than ourselves.

We participated in every debate that took place and every committee meeting and we found that George, at times, had proceeded to write before hand for us the draft speeches and give us proper briefs. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that was also your experience. We were always well prepared. His prodigious knowledge of parliamentary affairs showed itself shiningly on those occasions and allowed us, on the strength of his knowledge, to shine on behalf of Barbados.

I do not believe in recent years there was any other Parliament that had a Clerk of his stature. I know he had a firm attachment to the Canadian Parliament but even the Canadian parliamentarians acknowledged that George shone, and I am not surprised that his loss is felt very deeply by people in the Commonwealth in particular and in parliamentary association even outside of the Commonwealth.

I want to refer with some caution to recent events within our region. I recall the difficulties the sister Republic of Guyana faced. I had the privilege of being one of the three people chosen to seek to reconcile the differences that

were existing between the several political parties in Guyana and I want to publicly acknowledge the contribution which our late friend and colleague made with ideas. It enabled Sir Shridath Ramphael, Sir Alister McIntyre and myself to go to our task with alternatives that made it possible for us to fashion out the Headmanston Accord and led eventually to some alleviation of the constitutional and other problems facing the Republic of Guyana.

Sir, even more recently in our neighbouring Republic of Trinidad and Tobago he has, behind the scenes, been consulted by all parties. This is the respect with which he was held because it was recognised that the advice he would give would be objective even if it was not in the interest of the party who sought that advice. This is a measure of the man. Whether he was dealing with his friends, associates, persons to whom he provided services, he was always capable of giving objective advice and I think that was a tremendous quality.

2.50 p.m.

Sir, I also recall the wonderful occasions we have had with him in informal times. One could not travel to London with the late George Brancker without having a good time. He knew the best wines, the best foods, the best shows in town, the best places to go for good clothes, the best newspapers; this is the sort of man so that persons really enjoyed themselves with him.

Sir, on the three occasions that I have represented this Parliament, I have had fantastic times in going to places and learning about those places. For instance, if there was a new Member travelling with him, he would invite you to get on a London bus on any Sunday in order to learn London. This is something one would not think that, in the process, would bring pleasure and knowledge but one gets the pleasure and even in the process as well, one gets the knowledge because he, himself, was as knowledgeable about places in London and elsewhere as he was about his own Barbados or elsewhere.

Sir, the other thing I would wish to say that I have enjoyed with him tremendously was that he always found the time to go to a bookstore, or to a library, and without neglecting his duties. He was always ahead in reading whatever news there was, whether it was on political or international affairs, the law, *et cetera*. In fact, he followed whatever was going on in other Parliaments in the Commonwealth in particular.

Sir, we could see it here. Very often we wanted to know a precedent and George Brancker would, from his prodigious memory or else from his research, would be able to fill the gap for us. Sir, we regret his passing which has been very untimely. It certainly came to all of us as a shock, a totally unexpected event. Sir, although we know that death

will come to each of us someday, this was one that took, not only Parliament but even those closest to him by some surprise.

Sir, I feel that his life has been an exemplary one. It is one which his wife, children and family can feel very proud. He has served both his country and his family well. He has served his friends and his co-citizens well. I think, Sir, that he has fought the good fight and has performed extremely well.

On behalf of my wife and family, and on my own behalf, I would like to say that I feel I have lost, not merely a Clerk of Parliament, but a dear friend and colleague. I know that I am the poorer for it and I am sure his family feels his loss even more deeply. We pray that God will strengthen them particularly at this time and that he has left with them the recognition that service to the country is probably the highest achievement one can give.

I too, Sir, would like to join in the Resolution which I am sure this Parliament will pass.

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

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I too would like to add my voice to the collection to pay tribute to the late brother, George Brancker.

Sir, I believe that any man who is worth his time here on earth ought to make a major contribution to the development of our civilisation. Sir, I believe that Brother George has made a major mark in making himself an immortal being, not only in the halls of Parliament but also among his friends and the general society of Barbados.

Sir, I must say, though I had deduced from conversations that we did not hold the same philosophical objectives on how the world should be, my discussions with him had led me to conclude that he was a remarkable and unique personality, with an extremely sound intellect. I have no doubt that the records of history will reflect his contributions.

I came into contact with George Brancker during the turbulent periods of the late 1980s when he was elevated to the post of Clerk of Parliament. It was then that I was able to judge him as an individual beyond observation because I then learnt, during his discussions on the Debates Committee when he was introduced to the position, that he had a very strong asset, an intellect in which he knew how to use the constructs of the English Language to make words dance and to deliver the message with the kind of poetic lines that the common man would never even think about putting together.

I got the impression from George then, and I have still held it all along, that he had a passionate desire and I believe this came as a consequence of being born in the pre-Independence era during the colonial period. He cherished both western values and styles and believed that those values should be perpetuated and be held onto eternity and that is where we part differently, but in a very cordial and objective manner.

Sir, I always got the impression that it was a sense of intolerance for simplicity that George distanced himself from senseless conflict which usually emerged among persons who hold political differences. Sir, it made it difficult for many colleagues to determine what was his partisan view. Nobody could tell you, to date, if his orientation leans more to the left or to the right in these Chambers because he has always demonstrated fairness and objectivity in the manner in which he judged things.

There was an admirable sense in the manner in which he used the logic to justify the position and views which he had that never allowed one to deduce from the discussions that he held a partisan's view and I admired him for that but more so, my observations of George in the hallways of Parliament as he manned his responsibilities as Clerk of the House were more striking.
3.00 p.m.

He always seemed to be in control of his administrative responsibilities. At any moment, you could ask for guidance on any matter related to parliamentary procedure, and you can even extend it to the Constitution of Barbados and George would, spontaneously, identify the relevant material and explain the facts of that material, to make it relevant to your concern.

As recently as a month or so ago, an officer and I were in the library at Parliament searching for material and he was able to point us to the specific document, and the month and year in which the information was recorded in the *Official Gazette*. That was the quality of George Brancker.

Now, one can say that divine guidance has possessed such capacity to retain, but one also has to give credit to his commitment and his many nights doing research because his capacity clearly reflects that he read voluminously. We, Sir, saw that not only in his research in Parliament and his opinions on parliamentary procedure, but when discussions were held on the republican form of Government, George was able to explain the distinction between the executive form of Government, and its impact as it relates to the Westminster model which we have and the ceremonial form. He was on top of the subject matter and not in a personal manner, but very logical, fair-minded and very objective.

I saw those qualities reflecting themselves when we discussed the removal of Nelson and why the Square should be named, National Square. George Brancker had a strong rationale why these changes, that people considered to be radical and revolutionary, should be made in order to give Barbadians a sense of pride and confidence in themselves.

We have to admire him for his contribution, not only to this Parliament but to contributing to a great civilisation. He did not invent or construct anything but because of his commitment, his objectivity and those intangible virtues, which very few people judge as means of contribution and worthy of credit. Sir, there is a feeling in Barbados that if you do not have money and make any contribution to the development of this country in the form of construction, you are not making any fundamental contribution, so teachers play a secondary role to some of the big construction magnets in this country.

George Brancker's contribution to Barbados itself is a contribution to the development of our civilisation here in the Caribbean. Last year when there was political conflict in Trinidad and Tobago, one of the representatives of Trinidad and Tobago came to Barbados. I told him that the best person to seek assistance on that matter was George Brancker. It was the kind of confidence I had in him as an individual.

I said, although I recognise that he felt that the western values should be protected, I believe he did it with sincerity. I hold a completely different view of how we should channel our future ahead but I have to respect him because he was always able to justify his beliefs. As a consequence of having that kind of grounding, you never witnessed inconsistencies in positions which he took and I will salute him as an icon of western thought of great perfection.

I believe there are not only verbal aspects that led me to this conclusion but obviously, there are other verbal aspects of his life that made me understand the influence of the pre-1966 life and how much he cherished these values. I just want to make a very short contribution in that regard.

Sir, I cannot finish without making reference to the way in which he injected humour. Even when there were tensions in conversations as a result of opposing views, George Brancker had a special technique in which he entered the conversation after listening for a while and without appearing to be rude, he was able to diffuse the anger, in order to resolve the conflict between the two extreme views. He was always able to find the middle, which provided a compromise for the two involved in the heated exchanges.

Sir, in language he was well respected. His ability as an administrator was laudable. His capacity to retain and the

respect which he had for history and the value of history as it relates to the enrichment of the future, is commendable. We believe that history has no meaning and belongs to the past but George understood well, and that is why he preserved information. He also felt that information was useful to him, to the development of this Party, to the development of all the Parties in Barbados and to the House of Assembly in general, in helping to move the process here forward and to move Barbadians forward.

I am sure however, unfortunately, there is no extensive written material that was provided by him. What we have to do, as suggested before, is to compile historical records and the contribution which he made that enabled most of us to be much wiser than when we came here. I think that it would be a form of his contribution, if we can compile that information into one body to have as a record for posterity.

Sir, I indicated that I will be very short because people spoke extensively of his marvelous contribution but his life work, in my view, is worthy of honour and preservation. I want to salute George Brancker, a remarkable, noble, outstanding citizen and patriot.
3.10 p.m.

My respect and love to his family. His contribution might be a physical loss but those who have survived him can feel confident that George has made a marvellous and major contribution, not only to his parliamentary colleagues, but to all those who had the opportunity to come in contact with him.

May he rest in peace.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that I can begin by saying that, in addition to his close family and numerous friends, George Brancker was a friend of every single parliamentarian and a friend of everyone who frequented this Parliament.

I believe that one of the many persons who would have benefited from the knowledge and the wisdom of the late George Brancker would have been you yourself Mr. Speaker, in your capacity as Speaker of this Honourable Assembly. I am sure that you would not have been able to function with the ease that you function now were it not for the advice and the guidance which you received from the late George Brancker.

As I reflected on his death, Sir, it made me say to the group in which I first heard the news of his death that his death, perhaps more forcefully than any other, brings home to me the frailty of man. I remember looking at the person and reflecting that politicians even more so than any other group must always bear in mind the frailty of man.

I am sure that there are many of us in here in the last couple of years who would have gone to funerals such as Harold Blackman, Malcolm Marshall, Sir Conrad Hunte, Dame Nita Barrow and now George Brancker. On reflection, these were very prominent citizens who very often were the best in their field, and the best that they could be, and then that lesson which I think we all should learn is driven home to all of us that it is very well said that “dust we are, and to dust we shall return”.

George Brancker excelled in his chosen field. He became the Commonwealth's expert on parliamentary procedures and he did it with a love for Parliament that perhaps you will never see in another Clerk of Parliament. I recall seeing groups come to this Chamber from as far afield as England and the United States of America and I remember seeing George Brancker shepherding them through this Parliament and explaining to them the history and the background of the Barbados Parliament and as he did it you could see that there was a kind of inward satisfaction he got by doing it.

I am sure that he guided us and this Parliament on many, many tricky issues. I believe that we would have fumbled and fallen were it not for having someone like George Brancker around. I believe we were fortunate to have him as the Clerk of Parliament.

George had a memory. He could tell you the year in which virtually any amendment was made to any piece of legislation and when every high-sounding speech on any topic was made and he could send you scurrying off to Hansard and virtually telling you which page you could find the last constitutional debate and so on. By having him as Clerk as Parliament, Sir, I believe that very often he saved the day for this Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, many before me have spoken about his command of English. Indeed, Sir, George Brancker spoke the Queen's English. His English was very, very colourful but one thing which I will always say is that his accent was always Barbadian, and I am sure that whichever part of the world he was speaking that it came through very clearly that this is a Barbadian speaking. George excelled as an orator. He was often so apt with a particular turn of phrase that you often thought as you listen to him why could I not have said it that way.

I believe, Sir, that one of the benefits he had as a speaker was that he was so well steeped in the classics. I have always said that those who are steeped in the classics very often turn out to be the best speakers and often the best thinkers. George Brancker, Sir, was a voracious reader. He read virtually everything and I believe that it is because of that that he was able to speak so authoritatively on a very

wide range of topics. He had a massive vocabulary. I looked at him one day, Sir, and called him a human thesaurus.

I must also say, Mr. Speaker, that it was my habit of getting many of the newspapers, the *Times*, and so on that would come from overseas from the Secretary because I love to read them.
3.20 p.m.

When he moved to the Office of the Prime Minister, I approached the Secretary and asked for the papers. She said that you can get them only after Mr. Brancker is finished with them. He had to read those papers first and then he would put them in an envelope and send them to my office. Such was the measure of the man when it came to reading.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that all politicians should admire this giant of a man and I believe that we should admire him because it seemed to have been his motto that individuals should do what they are most comfortable with and that they should do what gives them the most inward satisfaction. Obviously, he would have allowed his very children to choose career paths for themselves which would take them wherever they wanted to go and not wherever he wanted them to go, wherever they found their love.

Mr. Speaker, I do believe, and I am sure that he did as well, that at the end of the day the ultimate in life is excelling at what you do best in your chosen field and clearly he chose a path and excelled in that. His eulogist recounted the days of scholarship at Harrison College when both Sir Lloyd Sandiford and Dr. Richie Haynes as well as George Brancker himself were the Barbados scholars from that school. Eventually, as all of us know, Dr. Haynes and Sir Lloyd ended up in active politics. George chose a parliamentary career with a difference. Clearly, Sir, listening to him speak he did not appear to be jealous of Dr. Haynes or Sir Lloyd.

This morning the Honourable Member for St. Michael North made the point that very often when she was overseas at these Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meetings people would ask for him, enquire of his health and I am sure that regardless of what we may think you are not going to get so many people from all over the world enquiring in the same way, whether it be Dr. Haynes or Sir Lloyd. They are not going to be asking them and calling them either on how to proceed politically or democratically.

There are a lot of other societies outside Barbados which would have been impacted by the work which George Brancker did. I believe that in the long run more regional and more Commonwealth people would be touched by what George Brancker did. His legacy will live on for much longer not only in Barbados but in the Commonwealth.

Sir, when you think about it, in some parts of the world which we may consider even most remote, very often you

hear people talking and asking about George Brancker. I am sure that you, Sir, know within yourself that there are people from as far as Fiji and the Cook Islands who are always asking about George Brancker, the man they admire so much.

Sir, even here in this region there are persons from Anguilla, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the Cayman Islands and I did see the Turks and Caicos Islands being represented at his funeral. Again, this was the measure of the man – not just Jamaica nor Trinidad but the ones we consider to be more remote. He would have been giving them excellent advice throughout the years and George's advice was always of top quality. If you ask me how I know this, I would simply answer by saying because of his independence of thought.

You see, Sir, George Brancker was not influenced by what someone else told him. He was not influenced by who spoke to him first or who spoke to him last. I will tell you, Sir, that George Brancker never told you what you wanted to hear. He told you what he thought the position was. That was the measure of the man. He knew the history of Barbadian politics very well. He knew the history of the politics of St. Philip in particular. I would talk to him about St. Philip and he knew that very well indeed.

Therefore, Sir, as I come to the close of this short tribute I would want to say and to extend deepest sympathy and condolences to his family and to his many friends, on my own behalf, Sir, and on behalf of the people of St. Philip North, a constituency that he knew so very well.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D.T. GILL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this Resolution. Let me first start by saying that the name of George Brancker was known to me long before I actually knew the man like the name Louis Tull and the name Rameses Caddle. These are names which were household names as our family, a big family, would discuss from time to time diverse subjects, whether it was politics, education or religion. For more than that reason not only was he a villager but his mother and my mother were great friends going back to childhood days. If for want of another reason, my older siblings were contemporaries of George, the eldest probably a year George's senior, and the second probably a year or two George's junior.

Sir, I have called some names already but those people like the Tull's, Caddle's and the Gill's all came from within a radius of about 400 to 800 yards, no more than that. It was at that time that fellows like George Brancker and my sister would have gone to an organisation called the British

Council, something I heard about but never knew and she remembers George as a child having an adult's vocabulary. 3.30 p.m.

Sir, to use the old Bajan term, he was a "bright" boy – Bajans use the term "bright" with a subtle difference from being intelligent. When you were "bright" you were a leader. My older brother refers to him affectionately as "Slammer" and when he called from Canada one of the few people he would ask for was "Slammer" so much so that when I reached this institution George Brancker enquired of my brother, Rick.

Sir, in those days the boys left Carrington's Village, took the beaten path of a gully hill, over the canal, onto Weymouth, across Harrison College's playing field and into school. This is a route well known to me and I regret today that I do not see the same numbers taking that route as 35 or 40 years ago. This was a route taken by men like the late Right Excellent Grantley Adams and those from the Ivy like Dr. Don Blackman. This route was also taken by men like the late Right Excellent Hugh Springer and his brother Charles who resided with their aunt, Florence Springer, after whom the Springer Memorial School was named, and who lived at a house a stone's throw away from the Carrington's Primary School.

Sir, George, having spent his formative years at Railway Road, would have had a strong connection with Carrington's Village, and I am proud to be associated with those links. I am also proud to be able to say that today I represent the constituency in which George Brancker was raised.

He knew when to defer and when to interject and he was a good listener. George Brancker would have been discussed at length when he left for university and when he came back from university in other institutions like the rum shop, barber shop and the mechanic shops of the areas where people discussed topics like who were Barbados scholars and men recalled with great facility who won which scholarship in which years. Those were the days when cricket was also discussed at a high level at these institutions.

Sir, the more things change the less they seem to change and we too have a bell today which summons us to the start of every session. I remember one afternoon in the dining room George Brancker saying to myself and Senator Lynch that whenever we heard the bell we should stop whatever we were doing and report to the Chamber. I smiled to myself and said, there it goes again.

Sir, George Brancker guided me in the first speech I made on a televised broadcast and he told me that I should look straight into the lens of the camera and talk my talk. It

was George Brancker who suggested that I should go to Prince Edward Island to attend a conference at a time of the year when the weather was not good because I should never allow these opportunities to pass me by. When he completed the necessary paperwork, he told me that when it comes to my time to talk at the conference, I should talk loud and make sure I represented Barbados well.

Sir, I am grateful to the late George Brancker for many things. Many evenings in the Senate, Noel Lynch and I would remain behind and George Brancker would give us the equivalent of a private coaching on what was expected of us, how we should debate and the history of Parliament. I remember he gave me more than enough information when I was doing research on the bicamerality of Parliament. George Brancker could tell you about speakers going back several years and anything that you were in doubt about, he was able to recall with the greatest of ease. I remember one of his famous sayings when an argument was without foundation. George would refer to it as being so thin an argument that not even communion could be served on such a wafer.

Sir, this was the type of man who was stoic in character and a man with great reference. I sum it up as a thesaurus of knowledge. On any occasion if you asked for the dictionary he would say, "Not being inquisitive, Dave, but is it the spelling or the meaning that you are checking?" Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George North is saying in an aside that whether it was the spelling or the meaning you were checking, you would get both from George Brancker. 3.40 p.m.

Sir, this is a man whom I will say has been a good source and guidance. This is a man to whom I have referred other people. Sir, I remember when being asked to serve on the Task Force on the Civil Service Reform, the first person I went to was George Brancker. The first thing he referred me to was the Constitution of Barbados and it was there that I picked up my compass and my chart.

Therefore, Sir, on behalf of my family and I, I would like to offer condolence to the bereaved wife and children of the late George Brancker. Sir, according to one of the great Greek philosophers, "Call no man happy, until his last days". May he rest in peace.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Thank you Mr. Speaker. If I may take just brief moments to join in support of this Resolution, in support of the tribute to the life and service of the late George Brancker and to offer personally my condolences to his surviving relatives and to offer my assurance of prayers to them in this their time of lost.

Sir, my knowledge of Mr. Brancker may not have been as intimate as most others who have spoken. My earliest memories have been observing him from the public gallery as the Presiding Officer in terms of being Clerk in this Chamber. Sir, anyone who has a love for the goings-on in the parliamentary Chamber would know well that one must often find distractions from the submissions of elected Members of the Chamber, to the extent that many of them are fulsome and perhaps not as focussed as they always ought to be.

One looking on from the public gallery would term them as wonderful distractions in the way in which the Clerk of Parliament would have conducted himself. It was evidence of a certain degree of grace and certainty. There was a purposefulness of movement. There was an attraction to the manner of hearing as well as caring. I have often observed the Clerk of Parliament had this very peculiar way of caring of the goings-on about him and if one might call them distractions, then these provided wonderful relief from the weighty submissions of Members when one comes to the public gallery to witness these proceedings.

Sir, my entrance into Parliament just a few years ago has brought me into closer contact with George Brancker and as such, was able to observe from our close relationship the fact that he had a very deep appreciation for the life of this institution. Of course, it seemed to me that he was possessed with a perception that this institution was not only rich in tradition and history, but that this Chamber was August to the point where it was almost sacred.

Sir, I think I seemed to detect that that level of appreciation seemed to suggest to him that one of his important roles was ensuring that those who came recently to this Chamber would be brought to a place where they develop their own appreciation for the almost sacred character of these precincts.

I have found Mr. Brancker to be a gentleman, to have ease of manner when dealing with people. I have personally experienced the kindness of disposition in him towards myself. I saw it in relation to others about me. He seemed always to be one who was possessed of a ready willingness to make contact and a genuineness in touching the lives of those on either side of Parliament and with total obvious impartiality in his dealings.

Sir, to the majority of us, language and the use of it is burdensome. Obviously, to George Brancker, this was not the case. He used the language with such facility and obviously with colour but always to its fullest effect. Indeed, as I sat here reflecting on the many brief conversations that I heard him speak, they were very striking in terms of not only the colour of the language and the imagery he used but the fact that he got his messages over with such brief sentences and yet, full of colour.

Sir, as I reflect on that, I thought that, perhaps, the more we prolong this period of tribute the greater danger of doing his legacy and memory some dishonour with our own humble submissions. But, of course, our sentiments must be expressed as we talk of someone to whom we had some degree of affection beyond that which is attendant to a professional or formal relationship.

His loss, of course, is one to the institution, to our country and also to our tradition, but I believe that his family could take a great deal of sense and pride in the satisfaction of the fact that his life was one of service and perhaps lived as an investment in our democratic institutions in this parliamentary culture. At the end of the day, it perhaps might be said by the majority of us that our work brought us to this place. I think perhaps it might be said of George Brancker that his was a life of service to this institution which has enriched the character of an institution which in itself, is being enriched by its very nature.

With these brief words, I would like to pay my tributes and once again, offer my sincere condolences to his family.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to take this opportunity to extend my sympathy to the family of the late George Brancker and also to express that, being a beneficiary of some of the vast ideas and knowledge of him, not only in this Honourable Chamber but having known him for many years.

Sir, probably as one of those persons here in this Chamber, I have had the privilege of meeting Mr. Brancker many years ago, even before he became the Clerk of Parliament. Sir, having had several chats with him relate the fact that he is one of those persons in Barbados who I will consider to have a vast knowledge and one which I believe can only be held within the Chambers of Parliament by those who would have met him and those who, by right, came into contact with him. As far as his knowledge and the background to his whole concept of parliamentary procedure was concerned, those who have spent many years in this Chamber and the younger ones like ourselves in terms of being new to Parliament, have benefitted from him from time to time.

Sir, I must say that we in this Chamber and all Barbadians must understand that as one of those persons who had been to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's meetings, it was at that point that I realised the Clerk of Parliament in Barbados was not just an ordinary person. Sir, having had the privilege of meeting with over 40 different

Clerks of Parliaments from several countries, I realised at that point, that during our visits to the House of Commons and our socialising, that Mr. George Brancker was well respected in the Commonwealth as one of the recognised Clerks within the Commonwealth.

Sir, I was also impressed when we met the Speaker of the House of Commons, Betty Boothroyd, the first two questions she did ask was, "How is your Clerk, Mr. Brancker?" and "How is your Deputy Prime Minister, Miss Billie Miller?" Sir, I felt very proud to see that there were so many persons from so many different countries and that Mr. Brancker, at that particular point, was seen as the adoring Clerk within the Commonwealth at that meeting.
3.50 p.m.

I must say that during my time here at Parliament, there were times when I wanted to find out about the procedure of the House and Mr. Brancker took me aside and pointed out what was taking place. As a new person in Parliament, one is curious about the Standing Orders because sometimes certain Standing Orders were set aside and you wondered why and in the short space of time that I have been in here, Mr. Brancker explained those things to me.

In terms of asking parliamentary questions, he was the person who took me under his wings and was able to explain the procedure of preparing parliamentary questions and having parliamentary questions ready. Some of those that were prepared never came before Parliament but I must honestly say that with Mr. Brancker's help, those questions were prepared.

I must also mention at this point that to the point of even selecting the person to work as my constituency assistant in the office, Mr. Brancker lent a very strong hand to me in the choice of the position of the person who is now my constituency assistant in St. Michael North West office. She applied for the job and I asked Mr. Brancker to advise me in the selection of the person for that appointment.

In my constituency office, there is a lady who spent 22 years at the Hilton Hotel as a Secretary to the General Manager. Fortunately, Mr. Brancker, said to me, "Don't let her go, Williams, don't let her go." I am extremely proud of my constituency secretary and it is because of Mr. Brancker that I can say that I have a professional person working in my office at this present time.

To that extent, I would like to say a very special, "thank you", to him and also to the family. I had the privilege of visiting his home just before I went to England as a representative of the Parliamentary Commonwealth Association. Since he was not here at the Chamber, he took

it upon himself to invite me to his home because there were certain things he wanted to tell me about, what to expect in England and what to look forward to and how to be able to deal with certain matters when I got there. I must say that almost everything that Mr. Brancker said to me came to pass.

At this point, I said I would be brief and I am not sure about my time but I want to mention one incident about my Friday morning programme, "Looking Back", of which Mr. Brancker was also a listener. I remember one Friday morning during the Estimates debates I went to CBC and did my "Looking Back" programme. Surprisingly, when I returned, Mr. Brancker was able to outline certain things to me and I thought that had Mr. Brancker been on that programme, those values would have been passed on to many Barbadians.

I would say that Barbados has lost someone whose knowledge had been held within this Chamber and was a benefit to this country, Barbados.

Thank you.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to join with the Honourable Members of this Chamber as we pay tribute to the late George Brancker. As we reminisce about him, as George Brancker, the man, George Brancker, the attorney, George Brancker, the Clerk of Parliament, I would describe the late George Brancker, Mr. Speaker, as a selfless person. I learned of the passing of George while we were at the opening of the UN Building by Kofi Annan, two weeks ago. George Brancker was of tremendous help to me personally when I first came to these Chambers in 1994 and you will remember, Sir, because we all came in together.

As you know, I was elected Deputy Speaker of the House and in that capacity, it was a given that we had to work very close with Mr. Brancker. I can say to his family that, in my estimation, George Brancker was a fair man and at no time anyone in this Chamber could associate George Brancker with a political party.

On many occasions, I had to call on Mr. Brancker for guidance when I was forced to make a ruling in this Chamber and the kind of advice he gave was always professional. At times when you had to rule against, probably a long-standing member, George Brancker did not in any way seem to favour anybody, whether you were an older Member of Parliament, or a younger Member, you were on this side or the Other Side. With that, I saw George Brancker as a professional. George Brancker would not be seen in Barbados to Barbadians as a national hero but I believe to his family, George Brancker was a hero.

Sir, in my short presentation, I want to say to his relatives that as George Brancker leaves us to go through the gates of larger life, they can be assured that George Brancker will be remembered for his contribution, not only to this Parliament, but to this country.

There are people who when they leave this earth, they are not remembered because the contribution they made was so small that nobody remembers. I would say that when Mother Theresa left this earth, the contribution she made was remembered because of its size. I am quite sure that when Nelson Mandela leaves this earth, the contribution he made would be remembered because of its size. To Mr. Brancker's grieving relatives, I say to you that George Brancker will never be forgotten because he too, has made a sizeable contribution to this country.

In closing, I would like to say just a few words from a poem on Ben Adam.
4.00 p.m.

Abu Ben Adam, may his tribe increase, awoke one night from a deep dream of peace and saw within the moonlight in his room and making it rich like a lily in bloom, an angel writing in a book of gold. Exceeding peace had made Ben Adam bold and to the presence in the room he said, "What writest thou"? The vision raised its head and with a look made an all sweet accord answered, the names of those who love the Lord. "And is mine one?" asked Ben Adam. "Nay, not so", replied the angel. Abu spoke more low but cheerily said, "Write me as one that loves his fellowmen". The angel wrote and vanished. The next night it came with a great awakening light and showed the names of those whom God had blessed and lo, Ben Adam's name led all the rest.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of St. Michael West Central, my family and on my own behalf, I want to extend heartfelt condolences to the relatives of the late George Brancker on his passing and say to them that I hope that he rests in peace.

I am obliged to you.

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: I want to take this opportunity to join with all other Honourable Members of this Honourable Chamber by associating myself with the sincerest remarks and sentiments which were expressed by them.

Sir, my fondest memory of the late Honourable George Brancker, and I deliberately used the word 'Honourable' because he was an honourable man, was on entering Parliament after my first election. I remember having a morbid idea about parliamentary procedure, that basically

was that all of the Honourable Members of the Government side would sit at one table and all the Honourable Members of the Opposition side would sit at another table downstairs when we go to lunch.

I was very tense when I went downstairs for lunch and I approached Mr. Brancker and asked him where is the Opposition table downstairs and George said to me, – quite frankly he always called me Fitzgerald – “Fitzgerald, you are a Member of this Parliament and all of us are Honourable Members of this Chamber and we all sit together at one table,” and I was very uncomfortable because mentally in my mind I could not create a block of the Opposition and Government sitting down at the same table and eating as brothers and sisters because in the political arena outside of this Honourable Chamber I have always felt that it was a war and when we get in here it would still be a war even when we were at lunch but that was cleared up by Mr. Brancker.

Sir, I am very happy that I have been given this opportunity to say a few words on behalf of my friend George, first of all, because I was out of the island but foremost because he was a member of the constituency of St. Michael South East and it would be remiss of me not to make a contribution to this gentleman at this particular time.

I will always remember Mr. Brancker first of all as an educator, particularly so as it relates to parliamentary procedure and life in this Honourable Chamber. I remember Mr. Brancker selecting me to attend the Commonwealth Parliament in London which was a very memorable experience for me. It taught me a lot about parliamentary procedure. I always saw Mr. Brancker as a friend because, despite however things go for you, he would always call you aside and counsel you and try to calm your emotion. I believe that if we check the books of English literature, we could describe Mr. Brancker as “A Man For All Seasons”. He was eloquent. He was extremely articulate and a man that you could always put your confidence and trust in.

Sir, in the finest essence of the words, I would describe Mr. Brancker as a man of class. He was a very classy person and outside of that you could also say that he was a very patriotic individual. Sir, if you needed any information on any subject as it relates to politics and to parliamentary procedure you could always ask Mr. Brancker and he would always advise you and will always give you that information.

To me, Sir, he was a gentleman and in simplistic terms he was a very good man. I am saying this because when we use the terminologies of “good” and “simple” I believe that all other Barbadians listening to these proceedings here today would have a good understanding of the person we are talking about.

Sir, I am not one to get up in this Honourable Chamber to speak about persons that I do not know anything about. If I do not know anything about you, I am not going to lie about you, and I am not going to speak about you in this Honourable Chamber. I am getting up to speak about George Brancker because I knew George Brancker. I know that he was a gentleman, he was approachable and I certainly know that he was a friend.

Finally, Sir, I would like again to use this opportunity to extend to his obvious grieving family my sincerest condolences and to wish them at this point in time all the necessary comfort they could get. In addition, I want them to hold fast to the faith and remember that God will always be on their side to guide them through this trying period.

Finally, Sir, I must conclude by letting this Chamber remember that Mr. George Brancker was a gentleman and a man of class.

I thank you very much.

Mr. D. CARTER: First, I too would like to support this Resolution before this Honourable House. Secondly, I would like to endorse all the sentiments made by the previous speakers about Mr. Brancker and, thirdly, I would like to express sympathy to the family of George Brancker on the behalf of my Christ Church East Central Branch and certainly on behalf of my family and myself.

I met Mr. Brancker officially in 1994 when I came to this House. I had known him before but we were only on speaking terms. Coming here on that first occasion Mr. Brancker would have seen the pressure exerted on my face and my body. I remember going to lunch on the first occasion and he came up to me and said, “You have got to make your maiden speech. Just remember the things you said on the political platform before you came here, make a political speech and you will get through the first hurdle”. Of course, you know when you make your maiden speech you are frightened, but I came back in here and eventually I got through.

I can say today that I feel more comfortable and as time goes on I will get better and better, so Mr. Brancker was a man I will always remember. There is a word I will remember for as long as I live. I remember going to the bar after the first day and Mr. Brancker asked me, “Are you going to take a little libation?” I said to him I was not really a drinker but to socialise I would take a little something and I remember having some coke. I realised that he was encouraging me.
4.10 p.m.

The most important thing I would remember about Mr. Brancker was parliamentary procedure. He taught me and

all the young members who came to Parliament. He cajoled and helped. What really surprised me was when I was invited to London on my first parliamentary group meeting I was in front of the group when we got out of the coach and the gentleman who met us said to me, "I am so and so." I said, "I am Duncan Carter from Barbados" and he said, "How is George?" That was the first time. Throughout those three weeks in London about 40 people asked about George Brancker. I thought that this man had to be a 'helluva of a' man.

To go further, I had a similar experience in Canada. I figured that because George studied and lived in England he obviously would know a lot of people but a similar thing happened when I was in Canada. All I can say is that I am sorry that I am not a George Brancker.

I heard previous speakers talk about his scholastic aptitude and how far he had reached. I read a lot of things about it. I can only say that all the young people who tried to emulate George would go a far way in Barbados.

George was a teacher. A few years ago I was promoted in this Parliament to become Chairman of Committees and just before taking the Chair George had an assignment in St. Lucia and he said that it would be in my interest if I go to St. Lucia with him. Obviously, he was teaching a lot of people there about parliamentary procedure and I would get a grip of things.

I always remember the day in Parliament when the Leader of the Opposition and Mr. David Simmons, the former Attorney-General, were having a legal battle and I was sitting in the Chair. They were talking above my head and when they were finished I politely said to Mr. Brancker, "You know that I am not a lawyer. I do not understand what they are saying. Would you give me some guidance on this matter?" He walked up to me and gave me a directive and I came back and ruled. The whole Parliament erupted that day.

I can say that I have spent many good days in here with Mr. Brancker. He will be sorely missed. I remember saying a foolish thing when I heard that he was dead. I said, "Not George Brancker!" I do not know why we always say that. Once again I can say to his sorrowing relatives, "Keep faith. Know that there is a God. I believe that everybody in Barbados will pray for you."

Thank you.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to make brief comments since I would want at this time to endorse the comments made by other Members of Parliament. Indeed, my tribute in recognition of the contribution of the late George Brancker will be short.

I cannot speak as many of the other members have because my stay here is brief and Mr. Brancker would have long retired. However, I have the opportunity to speak of the late George Brancker having been in the gallery of this Honourable Chamber as a young woman and observing his professional approach to the job. I always admired him and respected his style of management. As a visitor in the upstairs gallery he was so strict that I was always careful to make sure that I wore the correct clothing and that I did not peak at the newspaper or even try to write a comment from any of the Honourable Members' contribution. He was always very alert and made sure that the Rules of the House were well respected. I remember him from that particular position.

Mr. Speaker, the late George Brancker possessed excellent skills. We heard of his ability to be very articulate and of course I also know of his ability to be very witty. He was a very jovial man and as a young woman and more recently I have had the privilege of checking with him and learning from him a number of important issues to do with this Honourable Chamber as well as having some very corny little jokes with him as we chatted and drank around the dining area downstairs.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the people of Barbados have really lost an institution. We have lost a man who would have been able to give guidance not only to Honourable Members here but indeed to visitors who came to this historic site to be educated about the Parliament of Barbados.

We heard earlier from other Honourable Members about visits from school children and teachers and other students who were studying political science and so on and the kind of knowledge he shared with them to help them prepare their various research papers as well as prepare their compositions and other forms of information as they returned to their respective institutions.

We are all aware of that legacy that has been left behind by Mr. Brancker. We, in Barbados, Sir, are all richer for his outstanding contribution. I trust that his family will continue to remember him for his loving, caring and dedicated approach.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of St. Thomas, and all other Barbadians who would have in some way made direct or indirect contact with the late George Brancker, to his wife, his children and grandchildren, other relatives and friends, I would want to extend deepest sympathy. I encourage all of them to reflect on his life and his wit as they continue to thank God for his outstanding contribution not only to his family and immediate friends but indeed to his colleagues, parliamentarians, Barbados and the Commonwealth and I would say to the world.

He made that indelible mark which I hope many other Barbadians will emulate and I want in closing to ask his family and friends that they find peace and satisfaction knowing that he has given a full life of service to all perhaps sometimes even to his own detriment. However, Mr. Speaker, he did it unselfishly and that is most important.

Many of us make sacrifices but sometimes we make it to our own advantage forgetting others. Mr. Brancker was quite the opposite. He made that indelible mark unselfishly ensuring that everybody who came into contact with him left knowing a little more, feeling a little more comfortable and left wanting to share the knowledge and skills with someone else. Mr. Speaker, we find very few people who do that. We are all the richer for Mr. Brancker's contribution and we know here today that our loss here on earth is God's gain. May he rest in peace.

Thank you.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: I rise to make my contribution at this time in the obituary speeches for the late George Eustace Theodore Brancker.
4.20 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, there is no surprise that I have chosen to speak last in these Obituary Speeches for Mr. George Brancker because when I look at the order in which Members entered this Honourable Chamber, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and I would have entered this Parliament the last, so I think the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and myself should speak last when we are dealing with Obituary Speeches and that a certain order should prevail.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here for three years but it does not mean that I have not learnt a lot from George Brancker. I came here fresh from the university as a lecturer in politics with a certain degree of youthful exuberance and enthusiasm but then you quickly realise that this Chamber is an Honourable Chamber and that there are certain rules and regulations by which business in this House is governed. My experience was that you seek guidance early or else the late George Brancker would bring you in line.

Mr. Speaker, other Honourable Members spoke at length about the qualities of this man who has made Barbados extremely proud so I will not rehash those. One of the things George Brancker, the serious researcher and Clerk of Parliament would ensure is that material to advance the knowledge of any young member in this Chamber was photocopied and dispatched in a timely manner to his office.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that I have compiled all such documents sent to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural

Development for my benefit. Mr. Speaker, George Brancker did not have to do this. He could wait until we stumble to seek advice but he thought that this was an Honourable Chamber and that Members should be extremely well prepared.

Mr. Speaker, I considered George Brancker an expert in the use of the English language. This is one of the things I cannot pride myself, probably I did not read enough when I was young but I admire people who have a good command of the English language. Some Honourable Members in here have a great command of the English language but George Brancker ranks supreme in the English language out of all the people who came into this House during the last 30 years. I always make sure I position myself strategically after the close of Parliament downstairs to hear George Brancker speaking because it is one of the things that I marvel at.

Mr. Speaker, we heard an excellent tribute, full of truth, given by the former Honourable Member for St. Thomas, our esteemed Chief Justice, at the funeral service of the late George Brancker. If a man ever lived a full life, George Brancker did. He made people laugh. He took many young politicians and brought them along at a rapid pace and in so doing he made a significant contribution in the promotion and advancement of political democracy and in making this House a rich and vibrant place. George Brancker has signalled to the rest of the world, especially in the Commonwealth of nations, that there is a small Barbadian who could teach many a parliamentarian and presiding officer anywhere in the Commonwealth, the rudiments of parliamentary democracy.

There are institutions in this Barbados that we can be justly proud of and this Parliament is one of them. When historians get together to write about Parliament as a privileged institution in Barbados, George Brancker will figure prominently in those discussions.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to extend sincere condolences to the relatives of the late George Brancker on behalf of the people of St. Philip North and South, on my behalf and on behalf of my family. I want to assure them that I am a wiser man since coming up the stairs, sent here by the good people of St. Philip South, and in no small measure because of the contact I have made with George Brancker over the last three years.

His family should be well assured that he has done his utmost for this country in his chosen field and I have no doubt that the good Lord will make sure that George Brancker rest in peace.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, it is not customary to speak twice in these matters but, I believe, the

nature of the matter before the Chamber requires and merits at this point that a specially drafted Resolution be read. After I read it, I would ask that it be accepted by acclaim and be forwarded to the family.

It reads:

“WHEREAS GEORGE EUSTACE THEODORE BRANCKER, former Clerk of Parliament and of this Honourable House, passed this life on the 2nd day of January, 2002;

AND WHEREAS the late GEORGE EUSTACE THEODORE BRANCKER was from 1970-2000 Deputy Clerk of Parliament, Clerk of Parliament, Consultant to Parliament and on diverse occasions was Regional Secretary for the Caribbean, Atlantic and Latin American Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association;

AND WHEREAS the late Mr. Brancker, in his service to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, served as training advisor and resource person to many Parliaments in the region and the wider Commonwealth;

AND WHEREAS the late GEORGE EUSTACE THEODORE BRANCKER, Barbados Scholar, Barrister-at-law of the Middle Temple, Attorney-at-Law of this island and Commander of the Order of the British Empire, in the aforementioned vocations and avocations served with commitment, dedication, grace and dignity so that the several offices and institutions in which he served, including the office of Clerk of Parliament and the institution of this Parliament, were accordingly elevated;

AND WHEREAS this House is enriched by the nature of his service hereto and this Island has benefitted substantially by his contribution;

BE IT RESOLVED that this Parliament express sorrow at the passing of the former Clerk and convey to his grieving relatives and friends its sympathy at their loss.

DATED THIS 15th day of January, 2002.

SPEAKER.”

4.30 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I would like to associate this Honourable Chair with all the many sentiments that have been expressed by Honourable Members about a dear friend, Mr. George Brancker.

So many words have been said, and I am sure we can continue all evening in speaking about George. I would like to say a few words myself. The Speaker is not allowed to speak but I am sure that you will allow me on this occasion to say a few words about my friend George. Indeed, he was my teacher. I am so grateful to him for everything he has taught me. He was my mentor. To me, he was a sincere, honest, hardworking, and diligent man who sought to give of his best through his outstanding service to this Parliament that he loved so much, and to his country.

Mr. George Brancker, as all of us will agree, was a man of dignity and integrity and always it was his professional consideration and opinion which went above all else, as has been said by so many people today. He was greatly respected and was held in high esteem by all our Members of Parliament and by Members of Parliaments throughout the region and the Commonwealth.

Hardly a day passed that there was not some kind of communication from a Parliament in the region, including Trinidad and Tobago, seeking about some procedural matter. They call him from Bermuda in the North to Guyana in the South, while seeking to resolve many of the problems they had. Such was the reputation that he had. In fact, I would say that parliamentary democracy in the region owes a great deal to Mr. George Brancker. Wherever I go to conferences, as was said by the other Members, wherever I go to Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Conferences, the delegates of those many countries have always enquired of Mr. George Brancker.

I once went to Papua, New Guinea, and when I arrived there I was convinced that no one else had gone there before. We then took a plane and went to the north of the country which is a fairly remote place. When I reached there and the Minister of Health, who was our host, heard that I was from Barbados, the first person he asked about was Mr. Brancker.

Another outstanding quality of Mr. Brancker was his willingness to pass on knowledge as he read and researched them and was always willing to share his findings with Members. He organised many seminars and conferences for parliamentarians and presiding officers of the region. I do not know if many Parliamentarians are aware of it but many Presiding Officers and Clerks from the region have come to our Parliament to be trained in their respective duties by Mr. Brancker.

All of us who have worked closely with him can speak highly of his kindness, sincerity, helpfulness, cooperation, caring nature and outstanding administrative abilities, eloquence and wit, and the brilliance of his mind. His life was a life for his work for the Parliament of Barbados. His life was service to the end for Barbados.

On behalf of my constituency, St. Michael Central, my family and I, I extend my sincerest condolences to the family of Mr. George Brancker.

As a mark of respect to the passing of Mr. Brancker, I now ask all Members gathered here to stand with me and observe one minute's silence.

(The House stood for one minute silence)

Mr. SPEAKER: May he rest in peace.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Crown Proceedings (Amendment) Bill, 2002 be read a first time.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 11 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND SITUATE AT BRITTONS NEW ROAD AND FORDE'S ROAD, CHRIST CHURCH FOR THE PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT RESPECTIVELY

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution before the Honourable House seeks the approval to acquire two parcels of land at Brittons New Road, Brittons Hill, Christ Church in the constituency of Christ Church West for the provision of recreational facilities as well as housing.

The Resolution is seeking to acquire 2 576 square metres of land, the property of Mama Investment Limited at Brittons Hill, Christ Church, near the Lewis Satellite and Electronic Services Limited for recreation, and 3 511 square

metres of land, the property of Edwin and O'Brien Grant and this is situated at Forde's Roads, Clapham, Christ Church for housing.

Mr. Speaker, the plans were carried out by a Mr. Andrew Bourne of the Lands and Surveys Department and were certified on August 30, 2001. It was also recorded in that department in September. The plans, as outlined today, are available for inspection by Honourable Members. These two acquisitions are very important because they will provide housing and recreational facilities for the densely populated Bonnetts and Brittons Hill areas.

As you are aware, the Government recently constructed a small building at Bonnetts for community services but this building alone cannot provide the area with any outdoor or meaningful facility for the youngsters in the area. Therefore, the Government will seek to provide hard courts and other recreational facilities for the residents of the area. We also found that there is a need for housing in the area, especially multistoried housing. It is necessary for us to acquire the land in this area because it has been idle for a long time.

Mr. Speaker, this 35 000 square feet of land is a small area but it fits into a tenantry which has been in existence for a very long time. The architect estimated that, if properly constructed, we may be able to get between 30 and 40 units in this area, some high-rised, with adequate parking.

We, in the Ministry of Housing and the Government, have agreed that wherever possible, we will acquire land in the urban areas which has remained idle and we will construct housing units, similar to what we are doing at Bush Hall.

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

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this particular Resolution but from the outset, I want to make an observation, Sir, and that is, I recognise that we are dealing with two separate matters, yet, this Resolution was brought before this House as one. I believe, Sir, that the two parcels of land are connected but one part will be used for housing and the other part is to be used for recreational facilities.

If that is not so, Sir, this is a strange appearance and I would like to know from the Minister of Housing what he is trying to cover and if there is anything to cover. It is not usual for this Resolution to come before this Parliament in this manner as we are accustomed to dealing with this particular matter separately.

I am worried because I am observing a trend coming out of the Department of Housing and Lands which is rather strange. I want to inform this House that I am having a particular difficulty with Resolutions coming from the Ministry of Housing and Lands because sometime back, we had a constitutional amendment which I am now recognising is not the same one I debated, that is, the Urban Tenantry Amendment. I am now hearing that this amendment is far wider, even though I was told at the time that what I was saying was incorrect.

I am now learning that what I thought was being incorrect is now correct and that the amendment was not only for the urban tenantry but for all tenancies in Barbados. I would like the Minister, Sir, to clarify this particular point. When I come to this Assembly, I want to be guided that I am discussing what I think I am discussing and I do not want to have a scenario where I come discussing one thing to find out months after that I had discussed something quite different.

I think, Sir, that this is a serious breach of the parliamentary privileges and I think that this particular matter should be investigated. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South is saying that this is foolishness but I can assure you that six months from now, he will repeat this same point. It takes him long to recognise goodness.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I will not be moved from my point. Sir, I want to be assured that there is nothing wrong with this procedure. I want clarity on this particular matter because it is not a customary approach. Also, I want to be assured that representatives from the Ministry of Housing and Lands spoke to the owners of the land that they are acquiring, and that they have offered them two options:

1. An alternative piece of land, or
2. The right to get money if they do not want the land.

I want that assurance to be given to me, Sir, from the Minister of Housing and Lands, who said that there is a great demand for land in this particular area. I do not think that it is a privilege of Parliament to take land from one person to give to another person and then for that person to be out seeking a piece of land. I want to be assured by this Parliament that we are not putting anybody in a disadvantaged position, where we are taking from Peter to give Paul, and have Paul now out seeking to get what Peter did not have before.

I hope that this final point would be understood, Sir, and when the Minister gets up to wrap up, he will speak on

this particular matter with clarity. As I said, I am picking up a trend in this Parliament that I do not like.

Sir, I came to this Parliament and guaranteed the borrowing of certain funds for housing projects. Then, I came back and guaranteed with my vote for some additional funds and now I am hearing that the funds I agreed to, were larger and that the cost of the project will be smaller. I want to know if the surplus funds will be used for something else, or it will be used for the same project because I cannot understand how I could borrow \$60 000 when I only want \$50 000 for the project so I would like some explanation on these matters.

4.50 p.m.

I would also like to know from the Minister if the National Housing Corporation's policy has changed and whether the policy as it relates to the small man in the National Housing Corporation is any different from the policy as it relates to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development which by chance seems to be doing the same type of work but with different conflicts because one Ministry is telling you one thing and the other Ministry is telling you another thing.

I want to know, Sir, if the new Ministry has the capacity to get more efficiency out of its contractors and whether the National Housing Corporation (NHC), with many years of experience, cannot get better contractors to deliver the services and what is the problem because it is clear to me that there is a big problem between the National Housing Corporation (NHC) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, but it appears to me that the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is moving in the right direction.

I want to know if the Minister of Housing and Lands is now realising that what I said to him is now correct, that is, that the Ministry of Housing and Lands, through the National Housing Corporation (NHC), should be more involved in taking the money it has to buy land which would provide Barbadians with more house spots instead of getting involved in building houses which they do not have the capacity to do, using the Minister's words. If he had taken the advice, we in Barbados would have had the house spots that are needed because I have already said in this House that the problem in Barbados is not one of housing but the capacity to get house spots, so after listening to the Minister of Housing and Lands, I am now convinced that the Minister understands the final point and is now blaming the contractors when he should be blaming his Ministry.

Throughout Barbados, Mr. Speaker, there are many chattel houses leaned up, as we would say in rural Barbados, next to stone houses because the people cannot find a spot to

put that house on. I am saying again that the problem cannot be one of houses but the availability of house spots. I am saying that this Parliament should make sure that we do not vote any money in here again for the National Housing Corporation (NHC) to build houses which are rotting before they are completed, and we should empower the National Housing Corporation (NHC) to expand the number of house spots they have available for Barbadians and stop allowing the National Housing Corporation (NHC) to have rotten houses to sell to poor people.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. Sir HENRY FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think that everyone would expect me to speak on this Resolution. It is very important that the people of Christ Church West should share in the wealth of Barbados like any other constituency. I am, therefore, grateful to the Government and to the Minister for accepting my advice and acquiring these two parcels of land which happen to be located in Christ Church West. I propose to deal with them separately, although they form the subject matter of one Resolution.

I have quickly checked the Land Acquisition Act and I am satisfied, having regard to the procedures that have been so carefully followed by the Minister of Housing and Lands, that the procedures laid down in the Act for the acquisition of the parcels of land have been properly followed. The Chief Surveyor has made his survey. There have been notices under section 3 of the Land Acquisition Act, Chapter 228. There has been a notification under section 4 and the owners have been notified. I am aware that negotiations commenced with at least one owner but his figure will blow the mind of this House if I were to reveal to Honourable Members the sort of figure he wants for his parcel of land.

Asides.

Hon. Sir HENRY FORDE: Sir, I am satisfied that the procedures are followed. As a matter of fact, I would wish that Parliament's time will be saved in the future with these Resolutions if we could include in one Resolution several others that will be coming before the House, but those are formalities.

I want to talk about the piece of land that is first described. Sir, if you are on Brittons New Road and your back is towards the west, and you pass what is known as Lewis Satellite premises, this land is just to the east south east of Lewis Satellite. The land has been used for a long period of time by the young men and women in the area. A couple of weeks ago this land was the subject of a call-in programme because the police, quite rightly in my opinion, pulled down a tree house that was built without Town and Country Planning's permission and which was being used by some young men from the area, all of whom, I believe voted

for me. The fact that they voted for me, however, is never going to be an impediment in my saying that you have to go through the correct procedures.

Now, I have promised the people of Bonnetts that when the Bonnetts Housing Area was constructed, they would have been a recreational area at least for basketball for which my constituency is well noted. We have the best basketballers in Barbados and we have produced more basketballers who have made it internationally than any other area. It is true that there are other constituencies that fight us hard.

Now, Sir, there was a change of plans in that when the Government changed, I believe it was in 1986, the Democratic Labour Party decided to build an additional block at the Bonnetts area and the area that was set aside for recreational purposes disappeared, so we have been on the search for a suitable area in which to have an all purpose court for basketball, netball and mini football.

Now, it is not only the young men and women from my constituency who uses this area of land. The young men and women from the constituencies of St. Michael South and St. Michael South Central also use that area of land and the reason for that is very simple. Between the sea, if you are taking from the St. Michael South constituency right up to Rendezvous Road, and if you take the Clapham Road there is only one playing field which is at Villa Road. Knock out the Garrison because we are not allowed nowadays to use the Garrison. It is used by the Barbados Defence Force or for racing, so we have three very packed constituencies, the constituencies of St. Michael South, St. Michael South Central and Christ Church West that have no land available that we could find to provide adequate playing fields for those who want to play soccer, cricket or any sports that need an area bigger than an area for volleyball, basketball or netball. That is the reality.
5.00 p.m.

When people start to say we are not providing recreational opportunities for the youth, they must bear in mind that there are some constituencies that suffer from constraints and mine is one such constituency, and so is that of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, and to a lesser extent the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Mr. Speaker, this land is very vital. I am honouring the promise to the people in that area, to the people of Brittons Hill in seeing that this Resolution goes through, and I am calling on the National Sports Council which has had money available for some time, \$75 000 has gone through in one or two budgets to make sure that this project is completed

because they will be helping a large number of sportsmen and sportswomen not only from my constituency but from the two adjoining constituencies. That is a point I want to make, Sir.

I said that I would not condone any acts I do not believe comply with the Laws of Barbados on the part of even those who support me. I know one of the reasons why we have had some problems in that area is because there is a lack of playing facilities. I am glad that this is now going to be provided for, but I also appeal to the youth that when we have established these all-purpose courts, that they will show the same discipline that has manifested itself by Senators' Basketball Club, a court which I made sure was provided in Rockley where, although it is in a residential area, the behaviour is exceptional and you cannot have a more outstanding club than Senators. The control is left to the people themselves. There is no intervention from anyone and the neighbours participate and assist. It helps to build community spirit.

I want the young people of the Brittons Hill area to promise me that they will forego drugs, leave out those people who want to come and sell them drugs or entice them into selling drugs, get onto the playing field and make sure that we are competitive in basketball. We are available. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and myself are available to assist them in accessing scholarships. I see the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is looking at me and I will use his good offices, particularly through the Israel Lovell Foundation, to get some of the scholarships for them to Cuba and elsewhere.

Sir, that is the appeal I want to make to them. I am pleased that this is coming about. I know the Minister and I went to this site since 1999 and the Government has been trying to negotiate for an amicable settlement of the matter, and we would have preferred that there was an amicable settlement of the purchase price. We could have gone to a normal conveyance without coming to the House. That has not been possible. That has somehow delayed the project to some extent but we are now in the House and I want to say to the people from whom we acquired this, that this is the best use that it can be made of for the community, and it will be so used, Sir. That is one of my promises delivered.

The second parcel of land, the principal reason for acquiring this parcel of land really is that we have had a house fire right there in Forde's Road in a tenantry called Walcotts Tenantry next to this land less than two years ago. It was not possible for the Fire Brigade to save that house because there were no means of access, no proper road. When the Minister and his staff visited, it was agreed that we would acquire the land to provide access to a large number of tenants, very poor people, living in the back on rented

land who themselves need upgraded facilities. This was one of the primary reasons why we set out to acquire access and in the process we will be able to provide either the high-rise of which the Minister has spoken or if that is not within the budget of the National Housing Corporation, I can assure the Minister that we have people who are anxious to buy lots.

I will now answer the question raised by my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. The owners of this land do not live on it. They live somewhere else so that they do not need it for that housing purpose. On the land is one rented house but, other than that, it is one of those areas of land we are taking from the owner. That is at least my information. It is intended to be used for the purpose... Today is a very significant day in bringing the Resolution in respect to this second area of land.

I am saddened, Sir, that we have an old gentleman and his wife who have lived on some land at the entrance to Plantain Walk in Forde's Road for upwards of 50 years. I believe it is probably for more than I have been alive. They are now in their 80s and he has worked part of the land for producing cane and vegetables until he was unable to do so. He has paid his rent faithfully. They are not able to purchase the house spot and the landlord got an order from the Court. We have tried to stay that order for as long as we could.

One of the residents of the area – I am sure, Sir, although I have not asked your permission to use his name, that he would not object – Mr. Carl Crichlow, and I have gone out trying to seek to get an alternative house spot for him. We have been promised one in St. David's. We could not get one. We have also been trying to get an alternative house spot from the Crown if possible to rent and if possible we intended to use our own funds and ask people in the area to contribute. That has proved impossible.

Today I was hurt to hear that the person who owns the land and only wants to sell the land, has proceeded to get the Marshal to take down the house of these two old people. They have their belongings at the side of the road and I have been speaking since I have come into the House to the Minister for Social Transformation, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. I have been speaking to the Minister of Housing as well to see where we can find somewhere to house these two old people who have contributed much by the sweat of their brow to Barbados and to help people, including people in that very district. That is what hurts me.

Sir, I sometimes say "there but for the grace of God go I". If you are born poor and you remain poor in this country or in many countries you find that you have sometimes your very kind, people who look like you, have your shade and

pattern, who really are there to show no conscience to you. This is a typical example, so it is a sad case for me. Had we got a house spot in the Christ Church West area, or near, some of us would have pulled our pockets to move these old people. That has not been possible. Really, it is very difficult for me to accept that there are going to be open areas of land that cannot be compulsorily acquired because somebody wants to tell me they want to leave it for their great-great-grandchildren that are going to be born or live overseas.
5.10 p.m.

Sir, I cannot accept that because I have had too many of these problems. I have had a problem in Deighton's Road where a person came and threw out two old ladies in their 80s and, as a result, one of them died very soon after because her heart was broken because she lived there all her life.

Sir, this is happening too often in Barbados. I know it is difficult to balance these interests but if I had to balance the interest, I would come down on the side of the people who have lived on house spots for many years, paid their rents faithfully, but in their old age are going to be thrown off the lots.

Sir, I do not have much land left in Christ Church but wherever I see a piece of land that it is possible to house someone, I try to negotiate it for housing. I am grateful to the Minister for this. This land will be used sensibly either by way of house spots or to help people in dire need of housing.

Sir, I am working hard in Christ Church West to ensure that all of the tenancies are conveyed. There are 17 tenancies in the area of Christ Church and we have started with the assistance of the Urban Development Commission and the Ministry of Housing to convey some of the lots to the people and Government is paying anything over \$2.50 per square foot for up to 5 000 square feet of land.

I urge the Government to continue this programme. Once this programme is put into effect, you will see the transformation of the physical landscape of Barbados and, as night follows day, you will see the social transformation taking place as well as I have witnessed in the parish of St. John where I live.

The Barbados Labour Party's policy of giving the tenants the right to buy land at \$0.10 per square foot in areas like Colleton and Society has enabled those areas to be converted and transformed beyond all measure, and you can see the pride in the faces of my neighbours in St. John that has resulted from that. I want to see the same thing done in Christ Church West with 17 tenancies and within other parishes as well. It is a project that each one of us has to be serious about.

It should not be a partisan project because, we as the people's representatives, must put every effort to ensure that those who are at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder in this country has as good an opportunity to climb as each one of us has had an opportunity to climb on another ladder.

Even before the Government had a project I have been working in areas like Rockley, Sobers Land and Proverbs' tenancies to get this type of project going, and we have been having success in it.

The Minister who has responsibility for this has my wholehearted support for these types of programmes which I think are very far-sighted, and the Government should use every opportunity to educate people about these programmes.

Sir, I want to cite one case that is very heart-wrenching. When the Urban Development Commission Programme started, the Director and I went into Bonnetts and found an old gentleman living under trees with galvanise over the tree as a protection from the weather. We tried to get the old gentleman a house by building a house on the lot but his relatives ordered the house to be removed. We have now given him a house somewhere else not too far away. Sir, that is the nature of people.

Members of Parliament are criticised by the public at large, but some of the people who do less for the people who need help are their own relatives. I have proven this on numerous occasions in Christ Church West and this also applies to other constituencies. We have not been able to provide house spots, not because we are not trying, but because the relatives are not prepared to help.

I can only ask people to read the Bible and follow Christian principles on these matters. There is tremendous need for us to provide house spots and housing for a large number of people, and any measure which the Honourable Member brings to this House for whatever constituency will get my support.

Mr. Speaker, in your constituency I am sure you will be delighted to see this sort of measure. The results will not only be an improvement in the standard of people's living but improvement in the standard of behaviour and what my colleague the Honourable Member St. Michael South East calls, social transformation.

Sir, these measures, although for the acquisition of land, are part of the social engineering for which the Barbados Labour Party was founded and to which we are all dedicated.

Thank you.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this Resolution. The land is not in St. Michael South but I consider it to be because for those who are familiar with the area, there is only one road, Brittons New Road, that separates St. Michael South from Christ Church West. On one side of that street in relation to recreational facilities, this is one community because both constituencies use this piece of land.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West already cleared up the procedural matters as they relate to this Resolution and why the two parcels of land are coming in one Resolution. This is necessary in this community and the community butting and bounding this piece of land because, for a long time, we have been looking for housing solutions in this area.

Sir, if 20 people come to my constituency office on Thursday afternoon, 95 per cent come to seek housing solutions. Sir, I am sure this is the same pattern with a number of my colleagues in Parliament where people are ultimately looking for housing solutions in Barbados and we need to answer the call for housing solutions.

I have had site visits with the Minister of Housing in the areas of Reece Land, Brittons New Road and other parts of Brittons Hill and I was told that there was no land available for additional housing. The people of Reece Land and the surrounding areas are crying out for housing solutions because there is a serious need to have more houses and house spots available.

Sir, I want this principle to be followed. When the land is acquired and the houses are built, I hope they go first and foremost to the residents of those areas and the surrounding areas rather than giving them to people from outside the area. People tell me that I am wrong in this opinion but this is not what is manifested when the houses are built.
5.20 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the people of Reece Land, Brittons Hill and the Bay Land, all need housing and I would hope that when these houses are built they will go first and foremost to the residents of those areas. Sir, we have looked at other places in Reece Land, and I do understand from the Minister that the Ministry of Housing and Lands has, for a long time, been searching for land in the general area of Brittons Hill. We went on a site visit and I showed him lands which are available. The Minister of Housing can attest to the fact that we have looked at land which I understand will be acquired very soon and which will also aid in the housing solution.

Aside.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Sir, in terms of recreational facilities, one of the issues is that there are two parcels of land, one for housing and the other for recreational facilities. Sir, recreational facilities are sorely needed in that area. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West has spoken about the quality of basketball players that has been produced from that area. Sir, this is one community.

We draw too many distinctions in terms of constituency boundaries as they relate to communities. Because a road runs through the middle of a community, does not mean that the community has to be separated. Therefore, what we need to do is to get away from the simple concept that because there is a constituency boundary that it is not one community.

Sir, this is one community that needs to be held together, not only in terms of housing, but in the type of recreational and social facilities we can create for them. Therefore, what I would like to see is that, in this particular area, Brittons Hill has produced good footballers. Sir, the Bay Land has produced the best football team in Barbados but there are a number of Members who would like to claim that their constituency has produced the best footballers, including the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, but the best football team in Barbados is from the Bay Land and that is a fact, because everybody knows it.

Sir, what should happen, as the Member for Christ Church West has said, is that outside the small parks that are being provided for basketball and volleyball, there is really no expanse of lands. We do not have recreational facilities in terms of a big pasture, but we continue to produce the best football players in Barbados. Therefore, there is more than a need because this land is already being used by footballers...

Asides.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Sir, I call it "football squatting" because they go onto the land and mark out where they want to play football. Sir, I would hope that the issue of developing more recreational facilities in the area is not just a matter of only being there for recreation.

Sir, another issue is that I believe we do not seriously take the issue of how sporting facilities and the concept of sports and cultural development can contribute to our overall socio-economic development. Sir, we continue to play around with sports, but one of the issues in this area is about the number of persons that can gain sporting scholarships even outside of Barbados, and can gain professional contracts in sports. I think we have taken them for granted. Sir, I think the number of persons coming out of these areas are more than interested in going onward. Sports has already

contributed significantly to our socio-economic development. Cricket is one of the likes but there are numerous opportunities that are available to Barbadians in the line of non-traditional sports – soccer, basketball and volleyball, in which these persons can become true professionals in these sports.

Therefore, I am appealing again that in this area, apart from this land that is now being made available for recreational purposes, there are a number of other available parcels of land in that area. This is a community that has produced many outstanding national footballers and basketball players and we can go on to produce more who can become professionals. Therefore, I certainly want to add my words of endorsement for this Resolution and for the acquisition of these lands.

Sir, this is more than the people of St. Michael South and the surrounding communities can say in relation to this Resolution. These lands are sorely needed and I am sure they would be put to the best use with our endorsement.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. D. T. GILL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my words to this Resolution and I think that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South has made a slight slip up there. Currently, he can boast of having a good football team but when it goes to tradition, he has had some very lean years, for most of the footballers would have come from the St. Michael South Central area: Carrington's Village, Halls Road, Martindales Road and extending up to the Ivy. Sir, that area which is under the microscope at this moment in this Resolution deals with an area which is starved for a playing facility.
5.30 p.m

I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church West recite from time to time that when you leave the Garrison and move in an easterly direction, before you get up to Clapham, that the only playing field or area for recreation is the Valerie playing field and, Sir, I do agree. It is one area which has to serve a plethora of many diverse sports and sportsmen.

Although we are speaking about one specific area, I do not like to see a street or highway divide people from a community. Sir, Brittons Hill is a good gauge in terms of politics because three constituencies run through one district and it is good for political boundaries. You cannot separate families by a road and Brittons New Road cannot separate

the people of Bonnetts from the people of London Road or Villa Road. They are blood relatives. They school together, they eat together and they play together.

I think that years ago, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West was a President or patron of a team called, Radcliffe. Radcliffe was one of those teams which would have played cricket in the 1950s, 1960s and the early 1970s. Incidentally, Radcliffe would have celebrated 50 years last year. People like Hubert Skipper Neblett and fellows like Moody, to mention a few, are the champions of the old Radcliffe.

Sir, when that large area, east of Villa Road, extending to the bottom of Flagstaff where they played was sold, the Radcliffe players, who then played BCL, which as you know being a former cricketer, Mr. Speaker, the BCL served as the crucible for the BCA players. Sir, there used to be the end of season game between the BCA and the BCL, and it was from there that lots of players at the national level, would have emerged.

Nonetheless, Sir, Radcliffe was sold and the land was reserved for housing. The Radcliffe players, then starved for somewhere to play, had to use the Garrison as their home base which had to be shared with the fellows from Dayrells Road, Deighton and St. Matthias areas. Thereafter, the Radcliffe Team went into a state of dormancy. In recent times there was the rebirth of the Radcliffe Team. They had to play at Valerie with the Middlesex Team, which had its genesis from the St. Michael South.

I do not know if the Honourable Member for St. Michael South had made mention of that but, really and truly, Sir, they were sort of nomadic, looking for a ground. I would wish that a ground at least...

Aside.

Mr. D. T. GILL: That is not in my constituency. Radcliffe comes from the St. Michael South area.

Sir, I would wish that there is a facility in Springfield which is good enough that they could play, at least, tape ball cricket.

Nonetheless, Sir, at the moment, the area, as the Honourable Members before me said, is one rich in sport, whether it is cricket, football or basketball and that whole area has produced excellent sportsmen. The Valerie area is very overcrowded. Shortly, maybe in the next week or two, tenders would be going out for the erection of a pavilion at Valerie, which is a facility the people of St. Michael South Central would have been starved of for several years.

Sir, you would be able to at least target one area for one sport at one given point of the year. Right now,

everyone from the entire area has to come to Valerie to play football, cricket and basketball. Thanks to the National Conservation Commission, there has just been the setting up of a children's play area and a park which will soon be opened.

Sir, I am also pleased to see that there would be provision for housing units at the same time. Again, I can only speak of the Bonnetts area for housing and that is by no means enough to serve an area which represents three constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of development has gone on in that area and one must not forget the Bonnetts Resource Centre which is not too far away from the area proposed for this development and that centre caters primarily to the performing arts where the members of local societies and clubs meet for annual meetings and activities of that nature.

Sir, there is still a need for – the people from under the hill, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West would describe them – the people from the most distal end of St. Michael South Central and the people from the most eastern end of St. Michael South, for somewhere to have recreational activities. I do agree that this area which is under debate at the moment, is the most ideal location for such an activity.

Mr. Speaker, in recent times, there has been an upsurge in the interest of sport in those communities, which have been served with flood lighting in the interest of sport. It makes no sense in looking back and saying that 10 or 20 years ago, we did not have it, but you made do with what you had.

The areas of Ellerton, Valerie, St. Giles and Pinelands are areas where there is great interest in night sports, be it football or cricket.

Sir, we sing the praises and pat ourselves on our backs, but there is one thing we must be mindful of and remind our constituents about, that is, it takes hundreds of thousands of dollars to develop these areas and they must take care of them. It takes just a callous person or a small group of persons who are not disciplined, to bring the whole facility into disrepair, be it, vandalism or otherwise. Whenever we put in these facilities, we must be very careful to influence the persons using these facilities to care them because they cost money.

Sir, every Saturday, at least the first four or five months of the year, I spend with young people at sports, including football. I have seen the Honourable Member for St. George North bring his children to play football. I have seen the Honourable Member for Christ Church West getting involved in these sporting activities. Football for the juniors

serves a rather important purpose. I would wish that greater interest is taken for these young people and shift the location of the football to one centralised area. It is not in my constituency, but I would wish to see the Park, Weymouth and Harrison College areas reserved for very young footballers, ages 17, 19 and 21.

Make no bones about it, Sir, football is the sport of the masses. It is one of the cheapest sports to play as opposed to cricket, where we spend millions of dollars. We know we are not getting the return on the investment in cricket when we look back 15, 20 or 30 years ago, where not a fraction of what is being spent on cricket now, was spent then. Sir, we were reaping the sweets regionally and internationally.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, could I advise you, Sir, just to get back in the interest of time, to the Resolution, please.

Mr. D. T. GILL: Yes, Sir.

Sir, when this area is developed and put under flood lights, it will open the opportunity for young people to play football, which would redound to the success of the children from that area.

5.40 p.m.

With respect to the junior footballers, the Under 17, Under 19 and Under 21 who do not have such a facility, one would see an improvement within a short period of time and those who have eyes to see would see in a short space of time that football is growing in Barbados. It may not be at a level which we would like but it will be able to rub shoulders with others in terms of the success and the return of the investment.

Mr. Speaker, I am most obliged to you and I commend this Resolution to this House because I am indeed grateful to see that this area which is just to the south of my constituency is being developed in such a way.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all Honourable Members who have spoken on this Resolution. A question was asked if there is a demand for lots or houses. I think I can say that there is a demand for both lots and houses but as one Honourable Member has said, the demand for lots does not help in any way to solve the completion of a housing solution because we have found on many occasions that persons may have a lot but will prefer a house.

In other words, a person may have bought a lot a number of years ago but they cannot put a house on it because of the mortgage arrangement and we have found that

there are a number of people who are saying to us that they will prefer to sell the lot and buy a house and land which we are now facilitating. There are a number of persons who are doing just that so we have found the solution is for housing and that is why we are building the density high-rise solution.

On the other question of eviction, only yesterday we at the Ministry of Housing and Lands looked at a number of cases where persons have been given final notices. There are a number of cases where the court has given final notices to persons and we will take care of a few of those at the Lower Burney's site. We have earmarked over 30 lots for those persons who were given final notices by the court.

Just before the Christmas holiday, we acquired land at Bay Street from London Bourne. Today, we have acquired land at Brittons Hill and over the last year or so we have acquired a number of recreational facilities in the St. Michael's area, so the Government is conscious of the fact that we need to acquire playing facilities for housing developments.

Mr. Speaker, there is also the question of the contractors. We have made the point that there are a number of contractors who are doing very good work but there are still a few contractors who need to do better than they are currently doing.

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

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

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ORDER NO. 13 – RESOLUTION TO CONSIDER THE GRANT OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE SERVICE OF BARBADOS

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. G. A. CLARKE, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply.

- 13 (a) RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$1 057 567 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 2001-2002 AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 10 2001-2002 WHICH FORM THE SCHEDULE TO THIS RESOLUTION AND THAT THE EXPLANATORY NOTES TO HEAD 23 AND HEAD 26 BE AMENDED AS SHOWN IN THE SCHEDULE II.

HEAD 23 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – \$1 027 985

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to move that the supplementary sum as requested under Head 23 be provided. The sum of \$1 027 985 is required to meet the cost of operating the HIV/AIDS Reference Unit and Testing Laboratory which has been recently established to provide enhanced care and treatment for persons infected with HIV/ AIDS.

In fact, provision is made for the acquisition of two pieces of equipment known as flow cytometers. I am told that the Hospital would have had one piece for the last 10 years but that this is now proven to be inadequate given the Government's commitment to provide the anti-retroviral treatment to all persons who have HIV and to persons with AIDS whose CD4 and viral load count are below a certain level.

In the circumstances, as a commitment given by Government and stated as part of the five-year programme which was announced in the year 2000 as our response to be able to stem the spread of the HIV/AIDS in Barbados, it is of necessity that we provide the Hospital with the capacity to provide that level of treatment. Now, I understand that the acquisition of these laboratory resources are imperative and that in the circumstances it will allow the hospital to be able to do both the CD4 count as well as a viral load count which in effect monitors the progression of the disease.

This Chamber, Sir, has been treated very recently to a substantive and extensive debate on the matter but, suffice it to say, that in the context of our being part of a region where our incident rate is 2.2 per cent, second only to Sahara, Africa where it is 8.8 per cent, it is of critical importance that we be able to put in place the anti-retroviral treatment which is recognised as largely successful in stemming the progression of HIV to full-blown AIDS and in some instances has been able to prolong the life of those with full-blown AIDS beyond that which would normally be expected without that treatment.
5.50 p.m.

It also means that source of income and means will no longer be a determinant as to who can survive once the disease is contracted. Currently, only those persons with the visible means of being able to pay for that treatment can get it easily but with this laboratory resource being put on the ground it means that all persons that have been recommended by their doctors, all persons with HIV and those with AIDS below a certain CD4 level count will have now free access to these drugs. This is a progressive step and one we hope will go a long way in stemming the problem of the expansion of the disease within Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, with those few words, I beg to move that Head 23 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 28 – MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS – \$29 581.41

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, these sums as requested are relatively simple. On the retirement of the former Attorney-General and on my appointment to the post, there was a general restructuring not only of Cabinet Ministers, but the allocation of Permanent Secretaries and the Ministry of Home Affairs received its own dedicated Permanent Secretary.

When the Estimates were voted for last March there would not have been a sum provided for the payment of salaries, National Insurance, travel, utilities or a whole host of other arrangements occasioned by the re-designation of staff and the redeployment of staff. This is a relatively small sum but it is to ensure that we can pay what would be outstanding before the end of the financial year.

I beg to move that Head 28 stand part.

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

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Explanatory Note to Head 23 as reflected in Schedule 2 of the document circulated be the Explanatory Note as amended.

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

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Explanatory Note to Head 26 under sub-program 6EX25 as stated in Schedule 2 as circulated be the amended Explanatory Note to that particular programme in Head 26.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, Mr. Chairman reported to his Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Money Resolution in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Resolution was read a first and second time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do adjourn until Tuesday, January 29th at 11.00 a.m.

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

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

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