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# THE

## House of Assembly Debates

### (OFFICIAL REPORT)

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FIRST SESSION 1999 – 2004

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#### HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

*Tuesday, June 25, 2002*

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.00 a.m. on Tuesday, June 25, 2002.

#### PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, B.A., Dip. Ed. (Speaker)  
His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P. (Deputy Speaker)  
Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.) (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Civil Service)  
Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.) (Leader of the Opposition)  
Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A. (Oxon.)  
Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)  
Mr. G. W. PAYNE  
Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., 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. (Ministry 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)  
Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Minister of Physical Development and Environment)  
Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs) (Leader of the House)  
Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS  
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 Economic Development, Industry and International Business)  
Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P. (Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

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

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is now in session.

#### MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Minutes of Tuesday, June 18, 2002.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of Tuesday, June 18, 2002 be confirmed subject to any omissions, corrections and/or observations.

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

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

## PAPERS

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

1. Protocol Four of the Social Partnership 2001-2004.
2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Morris D. Lee) Order, 2002.

## SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now the order of the day.

RE-COMMITTAL OF CONGRATULATORY  
SPEECHES

Mr. SPEAKER: At this point, with the House's permission, we will now recommit to congratulatory speeches.

CONGRATULATORY SPEECHES  
THE QUEEN'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, today, the second oldest Parliament in the Commonwealth, outside of Britain, has the honour to join with other peoples of the Commonwealth in congratulating Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her Golden Jubilee on the Throne.

There was a previous Elizabethan age that was characterised by the exploits, some famous, some infamous, of a number of Englishmen some of which, particularly the works of Shakespeare, will live on as long as there is a mankind.

I do feel that it would be true to say the second Queen Elizabeth would have established her own Elizabethan age, not on the strength of the accomplishments of her subjects, but on the strength of her own accomplishments in a period of monumental change.

Today, this House of Assembly associates itself with the remarks of the warmest possible congratulations for her fifty outstanding years of dedicated and devoted service to Britain, the Commonwealth and to humanity. Her Majesty's reign has witnessed numerous fundamental changes, both in the United Kingdom and in the wider world.

In a world of frenetic and often incomprehensible change, it is now generally accepted that Her Majesty remained always a symbol of stability and the best traditional values, always undaunted but equally always resolutely committed to the service of all of the people of a unique, multinational, multicultural, multiethnic Commonwealth of Nations. That selfless commitment to service has been the source of the great respect and affection which the people of Britain, the people of the wider Commonwealth and the people of the entire world have shown Her Majesty.

It should be the cause of great satisfaction to all of us that the relationship between the Head of State and the people of the Commonwealth has grown and has strengthened throughout the years. At the centre of that ever-growing strength, Mr. Speaker, the Sovereign has been the major unifying force, giving us a shared sense of vision, purpose and endeavour.

Above all, it is a tribute to Her Majesty's dedication and commitment to service as well as her ability to adapt to changing times, that today she remains as popular as when she ascended the Throne and perhaps, might well be one of the most popular Sovereigns ever, in the history of any Monarchy.

Indeed, that the Monarchy as an institution has survived at all, is in no small measure due to her astute leadership and her character. Her Majesty has adapted the Monarchy successfully in the changing times, in an atmosphere where iconoclasm and only scant regard for traditional values are often given primacy above enduring faith in both institutions and individuals.

In 1952, when the Queen came to the Throne, Britain reigned over more than 50 colonies. Today, most of those former colonies, including Barbados, are independent States with the Queen as Head of State, and many of these States are also members of the Commonwealth of which the Queen is also the Head.

In the history of governance, she will be remembered for having presided over the dismemberment of an Empire, but equally for having presided over its replacement with a Commonwealth, which may stand as the most enduring association of nations ever invented by man. The Queen's role as Head of the Commonwealth carries no formal responsibilities but has great symbolic significance and has helped to underline the sense of the Commonwealth as a family of nations.

At the start of the new millennium the Commonwealth, with fifty-four member countries, can claim to represent nearly one-third of the world's population and

more than one-quarter of its States. The creation and maintenance of an enduring sense of stability and continuity in the Commonwealth is no small feat and one of which she can be justly proud because she has helped to create an institution, which based in its governance, is the perfect microcosm of the global society in its entirety.

Our country, Barbados, has had a long tradition and unbroken association with the Monarchy, dating back to British Settlement in 1627. History would have shown, Mr. Speaker, that early Barbadians were prepared to go to war to maintain the Monarchy in Barbados. History may also have to show, Sir, that Barbadians of another age, while not necessarily prepared to go to war, are also prepared to go to great lengths to make sure that the Monarchy is maintained in this country because we are a society, despite our independence, in which royalist instincts still run deep.

During her reign, we had the pleasure of numerous visits from Her Majesty and the people of this country treasure many happy memories of those State occasions. There are many alive who will always remember the investiture at the Garrison Savannah of our only living National Hero, the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers.

I would have come to know Her Majesty through my attendance at Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings. I had always been impressed, not only by her grasp of matters pertaining to governance but by her deep and abiding affection for her people in the Commonwealth and especially her people in Barbados.

Those of us who have followed the recent Jubilee celebrations in London, would have come to the conclusion that not only is there a renaissance in respect for the Monarchy, but also that the respect and affection for the Queen has grown stronger and deeper.

She is said to have a deep and abiding faith in the Lord. The Archbishop of Canterbury at the Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee at St. Paul's Cathedral, said and I quote:

"... And from your elevated and noble position, how greatly have you served! Yours was a vocation which you did not seek; it was a task to which you were anointed. It came to you at an age when few people are ready to assume burdens of responsibility, even far lighter ones. It was, as you have publicly acknowledged, required of you, not just by your people but by God."

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II continues to enjoy the deep affection and respect of the people of this country. I do feel that this House has a duty to acknowledge and appreciate the role played by Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh in the fifty years of Her

Majesty's reign as our Head of State. It would, therefore, be appropriate that on this occasion this House should move an appropriate Resolution to acknowledge this most auspicious occasion.

11.20 a.m.

Therefore, I beg to move that the following Resolution be now passed to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God, Queen of Barbados and of Her Other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth:

We, the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly of Barbados, deeming it our humble duty, have the honour to convey to Your Majesty our warmest and most sincere congratulations on the occasion of the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Your Majesty's accession to the Throne.

Your Majesty's devotion to duty, personal example and deep interest in the affairs of the countries of the Commonwealth have contributed greatly to the feelings of affection and profound respect which the people of Barbados bear towards Your Majesty.

We wish Your Majesty continuing good health and long life.

God save the Queen!

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, it is my pleasant duty at this short, almost ceremonious Sitting of the House to second the Resolution moved by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter to congratulate and mark the Golden Jubilee of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, Head of State and Head of the Commonwealth.

In all of my 40 years, Sir, although I could not characterise myself as a monarchist, I believe that it is important for countries to have symbols of their nationhood and for them to determine what symbols of their nationhood they best elevate. The people of the United Kingdom and the colonies have elevated Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family to almost the apex of the traditions and what might be characterised as unique about their political system. This has afforded her the opportunity of reigning for 50 years entirely undisturbed by criticisms, by wars around the world, even when her own country is at war, and undisturbed essentially by the vagaries of electoral politics by the public mood and opinion. That an individual in this day and age has been able to survive that in the way Her Majesty has done is a phenomenal feat.

Sir, despite whatever reservations people may express about the concept of the monarchical system which is not unique to the United Kingdom – African societies have had

it, Eastern societies have had it, other parts of the world have had it, not the New World but in a sense, the Old World – despite all of those changes and despite all of the ruptures and the evolving political systems, by and large Queen Elizabeth has survived and has been able to endure with great stability. She has held the traditions of her family and what it symbolises to the British people in very high esteem. This leads one to the conclusion that it is not just the office that often matters but it is very much the persons who hold office and the manner in which they carry out their public duties. I think that is important in relation to the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and we must recognise that aspects of our own character and personality have been able to survive those major changes.

With her as Head of the Commonwealth, the institution was able to gain respect and continues to play a very vital and important role by linking countries not so much by their past history but by their shared goals without interference from the Head of the institution. It is very important to note that under her leadership and without her being meddling and intrusive, the Commonwealth has been able to pursue whatever agenda has the greatest sway at different times in our political history, its mission and its role.

*Asides.*

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Those countries other than the colonies are almost in ascendancy now but she would have also reigned, when it was at one of its lowest points, over a country that would have at one point been beset by racism in which, as the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter said, the empire when she inherited it was almost dissolved or was being dissolved by processes over which she had no control. I believe it is interesting to note that even though the economic and international political fortunes of the country in which she resides permanently have changed, over that time very little of this has impacted negatively on the stature of the Monarchy.

I believe, Sir, having experienced all of those changes, and having held the Monarchy at the apex of their political system, and having enjoyed 50 years of rule by one individual that may provide some lessons to countries like Barbados, not that we must follow that model, but that we must recognise that inherent in that model, there are some lessons we can learn about respect for tradition, for authority, for the office which people hold and even for the personalities that hold that office by virtue of the fact that having held it they have brought great honour, not just to themselves, but to others.

We also need to understand that because of how we feel in Barbados about the traditions that we have inherited

that it is also possible for us to change some of those traditions without affecting in any way the character and the stature of the Monarchy to which we paid obeisance over the past 300 years. In other words, having gone through all of those changes that have happened in the rest of the Commonwealth, it is perfectly legitimate for societies like the Barbadian society to change without doing damage to the system from which we inherited many of the traditions that we currently enjoy.

I would also agree that one of the most impressive and memorable occasions arising out of her visits to Barbados, which even when it is shown on television now obviously causes great emotions and great feelings of passion, was the knighting of our only living National Hero, Sir Garfield Sobers at the Garrison Savannah.  
11.30 a.m.

I was not there but I am certain those persons who were there who relive the experience when they see it on television and those who were not there but see it for the first time, must feel a sense of emotion about such a distinguished honour being conferred upon him at the Garrison Savannah, Barbados. I believe that he, as has been said before, is always mindful that honour was bestowed upon him in public before thousands of Barbadians and, as a result, he has always felt himself, both in his personal life and otherwise, accountable to those persons who gave their support on that occasion.

Mr. Speaker, I join with the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter in seconding the Resolution in congratulating Her Majesty the Queen, on the attainment of her Fiftieth Anniversary, in wishing that the celebrations of this event are successful but more than anything else, with the hope that as long as she remains as Head of the Commonwealth, that entity, in particular, will play an important role in safeguarding and promoting the rights of States like Barbados, to participate fully in matters that we think are of greatest concern to us, placed on the international agenda, with their support and with their respect.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I join in seconding this Resolution in congratulating Her Majesty.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that the Resolution just passed be sent to the Honourable Senate with the following message.

“At the One Hundredth and Second Meeting of the Honourable the House of Assembly, held on 25th June, 2002, the following address was approved:

TO:

Her Majesty Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God, Queen of Barbados and of Her Other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth.

We, the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly of Barbados, deeming it our humble duty, have the honour to convey to Your Majesty our warmest and most sincere congratulations on the occasion of the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Your Majesty's accession to the Throne.

Your Majesty's devotion to duty, personal example, and deep interest in the affairs of the countries of the Commonwealth have contributed greatly to the feelings of affection and profound respect which the people of Barbados bear towards Your Majesty.

We wish Your Majesty continuing good health and long life.

Wherefore, the Honourable the House of Assembly desires the concurrence of the Honourable the Senate in the Address as suits the convenience of the Honourable the Senate and further desires that the

Address, if concurred in, be submitted to His Excellency the Governor-General respectfully requesting that His Excellency transmits the Address to Her Majesty.”

Dated the 25th day of June, 2002.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government's Business for the day.

This Sitting was deliberately designed in order to pay Tribute to Her Majesty, the Queen and, therefore, it is not the wish of Government to dilute the focus that we would wish to have at this Sitting from the Tribute that this, the second oldest Parliament in the Commonwealth outside of Britain, has paid to Her Majesty on that tremendous achievement and accomplishment.

Therefore, to that extent, it should, in fact, be recorded as a Special Sitting of this Honourable House.

With those words, Sir, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 2nd July, at 11.00 a.m.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to second that, Sir.

*The question that the Honourable House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 2nd July, 2002, at 11.00 a.m. was put and agreed to, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.*

11.45 a.m.

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**THOMPSON, Mr. D. J. H. (St. John)**