
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 1999 – 2003

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, March 15, 2002

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. With the permission of the House, we will revert to Papers and Notices.

PAPERS

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

1. Report on the Social Investment Fund for the Quarter ended December 31, 2001.
2. Report on the Public Enterprise Investment Fund for the Quarter ended December 31, 2001.

Hon. R. St.C. TOPPIN: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Barbados National Standards Institution for the year April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001.

NOTICES

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following:

1. A Resolution to approve the vesting in the National Housing Corporation of parcels of land at Alleyne's Land, Bush Hall, St. Michael for the execution of a pilot project in respect of the Urban Renewal Programme.

Mr. SPEAKER: When the Suspension was taken yesterday, the House was in Committee of Supply, to that we will now revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, you will recall that during the course of my speech on the Second Reading of the Bill before the Chamber, I tried to lay out, at that time, the nexus between the Ministry of Physical Development and the Environment and national development and the role that it will play in Barbados' further development.

Sustainable economic development presents tremendous challenges, particularly to small island developing states. In Barbados, we made the determination many years ago that our human capital, first of all, is one of the major elements in which we must invest, if we are to have sustained economic development. We have also determined that part of the investment in that human capital involves the maintenance and universal access to health care and a health care system, which will remain the envy of all in the Caribbean. Despite the challenges that may have been happening in health care and the criticisms that Barbadians have been making, only prove that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is still the premier health care institution in the Caribbean. Also, Sir, that the standard of the health services in Barbados generally, is second to none, I would say not only in the Caribbean but in the wider region of the Americas, except the United States and Canada.

In addition to investing in our human capital by way of maintenance of health care and by way of continuous training programmes, we have also determined that if Barbados is to achieve stable and sustained economic development over the long-term, there must be other components. We must invest in education and the EduTech Programme is part of that long-term investment where we are seeking to make to ensure that Barbados citizens are at the cutting edge of technology. We must continue to ensure that we maintain the high standards of needed and relative

skills, to ensure that our people will be able to provide the kind of skills and services that the emerging international economy needs and for which we will be prepared in a globalized market.

There is yet a final component to development and it is that on which this Ministry is predicated. It is the whole issue of how we are going to define our physical space, how we deal with our built and natural environment, how we preserve that which is ours historically, and how do we preserve and maintain that which is ours culturally. Sir, that is part of the role which falls to this newly defined Ministry of Physical Development and Environment.

It was in October of last year that I, again, took the oath of office and took up this new portfolio, which allows me to give leadership to the Coastal Zone Management Unit which, as you know, Mr. Chairman, is responsible for the protection of Barbados' coastline and marine environment. I will take responsibility shortly for the energy sector. Under this Ministry, falls the Environmental Engineering Division and I am going through this, Sir, in this serial way, because people always seem to remember the Ministry of Environment, but they are not clear of what its constituent members and elements are and, the role which we play in the interdisciplinary activities that must take place at the level of Government, Ministries and national growth and development.

Sir, falling under this umbrella also, is the Environmental Engineering Division, which has the responsibility, as its name suggests, for environmental engineering, for the monitoring of air quality, water quality, matters relating to pollution, chemicals and for all those issues for which technical skills and protection of the environment is required.

The Caves of Barbados which is the Government company responsible for Harrison's Cave and the Environmental Special Project Unit, which is charged with the responsibility of carrying out a number of projects:

1. The redevelopment of the Harrison Cave Project.
2. The exploration and development of other caves in Barbados.
3. The responsibility for the development of a marine park and a marine management authority.
4. The national botanical gardens.
5. The Beautify Barbados 2000 project.
6. The National Conservation Commission which, as everyone knows, is responsible for the maintenance of parks, beaches and other natural areas. In fact, it has expanded its role from what its traditional activities have been to the

development and maintenance of recreational and other spaces at national sites, such as beaches and within communities.

7. The Environmental Unit, which is charged with policy development and with our relationship with international bodies and entities. It is through that department, that we formulate our major national policy initiatives and environment and with which we interface with the international community and get into our multi lateral arrangements, treaties and so on.
8. Then, there is the Physical Department: the Public Investment Unit and the Town Planning Department.

So that together, Sir, when all of the Departments of the Ministry are taken as a collective entity, or as a whole, it falls to us to ensure that Barbados' physical development now on the mid-term and in the long-term is orderly, and not ad hoc, that it is sustainable, that we develop policies and programmes which guarantee the use and enjoyment of our lands, not only for present generations but for future generations and which ensure that environmental considerations are taken into physical planning decision, so that we do not over exploit the very resources on which we depend for revenue generation in tourism, and on which we depend for a way of life as an island people.

10.10 a.m.

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Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: It is left to us to determine what Barbados will look like in the long run and what kind of physical state we want to shape. What will our national settlement policy be? Where do we locate areas of industrial activity? How do we determine what is necessary to remain in agricultural production? How much of our land should remain pristine and virgin? How much construction and of what type should we allow? What kind of building should we allow on the island's coastline? What is it paid to build so that our coastline development and security are not jeopardized?

Sir, the issue of physical planning speaks not only to the shaping and moulding of a country and allowing a style of architecture to develop that is distinctly our own but it speaks to the broader issue of what it is, what statements do we want to make about ourselves as a people when future generations look back on the work we are doing today, and what we want Barbados to look like.

The role physical planning has played in the development of projects in the national development is easy to demonstrate. Sir, can you imagine Barbados without the Deep Water Harbour? Look at the role that project which was planned back in the '50s and developed

in the early '60s has played and continues to play in the national economy. We are now moving to a further stage of development to the Deep Water Harbour by extending the Cruise Terminal and the construction of a new pier. This is one structure that has helped to shape Barbados' physical landscape and its economy 40 and 50 years subsequent to the date of the conceptualisation of the project.

The ABC Highway which was criticised at the conception period and called a "Tom Adams" white elephant has today open up the interior of Barbados to a level of development, communications, construction and commercial activity which is causing Barbados to take off and to do well when the economies of our Caribbean brothers and sisters are flagging badly.

This is part of what this Ministry is seeking to do by determining, approving and guaranteeing the proper implementation of projects. We are attempting now to make decisions about Barbados' short, mid and long-term development and to ensure that the kind of mobility that Barbados has enjoyed as a small island developing state and as a country which has no vast natural resources continues to take place in a structured and orderly fashion so that all of us can look back and be proud of the work which is going on.

Therefore, this Ministry will seek to ensure the orderly physical development of the country. It will take environmental considerations into mind when planning our physical development. It will guarantee access to land for all Barbadians. We will seek to ensure the rational utilisation of Barbados' land space. We will try to guarantee consistency and application of the rules relating to physical planning and town planning by balancing complementary and competing land uses.

We will seek to ensure that project management in Barbados is administered and implemented in a structured way which would guarantee the smooth implementation of projects so that resources are not wasted, whether they are financial resources or human resources, and that projects are completed in a timely manner with as much mitigation of whatever adverse impact they are in the implementation of the project.

Our main thrust will be to ensure that Barbados' economy continues to develop in a way that will benefit all our citizens and that economic growth and development are sustained based on sensitive use of this country's land space. We would seek to carry out these multiple roles; the role that is developmental, the role that is protected and the role that is investment oriented through the various departments that comprise this Ministry of Physical Development and the Environment.

Sir, I want to look at the role the Town Planning Department is playing in the country's development. This Department is perhaps the busiest Government Department. It enjoys tremendous public attention. Every construction application should - and members of the Opposition should learn this - first be run through and apply for in the Town Planning Department so that we can have oversight on all construction projects as the Law requires whether they be massive west coast properties, kiosks, shacks or vending stalls. We want all our citizens, even those who are doing extensions to their homes, to be aware that there is a role for the Town Planning Department and we expect members of this House to follow those rules carefully.

Sir, during the course of the day I will make several interventions but I want to turn now to the Town Planning Department to look at a number of issues relative to that Department. This Department was established in the 1960s at which time there were no strict rules for planning applications for construction in Barbados.

10.20 a.m.

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Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Sir, over time, as it has become apparent that our physical land space had to be protected, and the need for the orderly development of our physical planning and space has become more important in national planning. Generally, the role of the Town Planning Department has assumed greater and greater responsibility. The Town Planning Department has tried to ensure that there are well-structured development proposals and approvals of such applications.

Sir, I want to share with this Chamber some ideas what we at the Town Planning Department do and the kinds of volumes which pass through the Department. Over the course of this year, the Department is going to be responsible for the preparation of the physical development plan; for control development of Barbados' land space; for monitoring development activities and related development construction and projects, and for the enforcement of planning decisions.

We expect that during the course of this Financial Year, the Town Planning Department will spend some \$4.6 million of the entire budget of the Ministry of Physical Development and Environment and that for this year is

\$45 460 157. Of course, Sir, you will be aware that this figure does not include the US\$24 million which constitutes the IADB loan for the coastal infrastructural project.

Mr. Chairman, construction in Barbados is booming and even though the economy is experiencing a slow down - and nobody is seeking to deny that - there continues to be large numbers of planning applications coming before the Town Planning Department.

Sir, in 1994, Town Planning Applications numbered about 2 000. Over the last few years, a number of applications were made:

YEAR NO. OF APPLICATIONS

1997 2,624

1998 2,910

1999 2,870

2000 2,886

2001 3,054

Sir, that gives us some idea of the phenomenal growth in development and construction applications that came before the Town Planning Department for consideration. Last year, 3,051 were processed; 2,790 were given permission; 256 were refused and six applications were withdrawn. Mr. Chairman, that gives you some idea of the sheer volume of what the Town Planning Department has to deal with.

Sir, in order to function more effectively over the course of the year, we are cognizant that this Department is at the heart of national development. If every single structure which is put up in Barbados has to be processed, then one would appreciate that this Department is at the hub of economic activity. All the job creations through construction and building; any development proposals first have to be approved by this Department. All of the major projects, some of which are becoming increasingly complex, all have their birth and genesis in the planning process at the level of the Town Planning Department. Therefore we recognise it is critical to ensure proper service delivery to the public which we serve.

Sir, I am pleased to report that over the last year, that is preceding my taking up the mantle there, the Town Planning Department has tried and has successfully ensured that 65 per cent of building applications which came before it are approved within 90 days. Sometimes there are delays, there is no denying that, and there are some applications which no matter how one tries, do get bottlenecked in the system.

Sir, because of the various implications for development that construction projects or the larger constructions projects can have, there is now a requirement

that Town Planning applications must not only be processed by that Department but they must have oversight by the Ministry of Public Works to determine whether there is adequate road system for the nature of the development that will take place. Can the road sustain the weight of the vehicle, if it is a commercial enterprise that will be accessing or leaving the site? What is the traffic flow like in the area generally? Suppose you are building a supermarket, a mall, or a Price Smart, as we have already seen, and that one single structure at Green Hill has significantly affected traffic flow in that area. There are some nights when you cannot get near the Roundabout no matter from what direction you are coming. Therefore, the Town Planning Department has to consult with the Ministry of Public Transport.

We also have to consult with the Barbados Water Authority (BWA) to determine the area that the construction will take place. Is it in Zone One where there is limited type of activity? If outside of Zone One is there adequate water access and water supply? Is it a coastal development? Sir, last year the Coastal Zone Management Unit reviewed 71 applications for coastal sites in Barbados. Sir, depending on if the land is within an agricultural belt or there is an application for a change of use from agriculture to commercial, to residential or other things, then the application will also have to go to the Ministry of Agriculture. Therefore, the review of a Town Planning application is not a mono-disciplinary activity requiring only the oversight of persons trained in planning; it involves the interaction of a multiplicity of skills of people with myriad of talents and interests in the overall national development before Town Planning is put in a position to give its approval.

During the course of this year, therefore, the Town Planning Department will be increasing the number of professional staff who review applications. Already advertisements are being placed in the Press to try to recruit people with the necessary professional skills. A number of staff have been away on training and during the course of this financial year several of them will return and take up their posts to assist in expediting the planning process.

The Town Planning Department will move into its new headquarters at Block C, the Garrison. Sir, this is critical because part of the very practical challenge which it faces is that the housing for the Town Planning Department is not good. There is not adequate storage space for files. Files are therefore misplaced, more difficult to track and to keep records of. They are much more difficult to monitor, to document, to minute, et cetera, so that with the new space, there will be adequate facilities, not only to serve the public but for proper storage of all our files.

The Town Planning Department, during the course of this financial year, will benefit from an upgrading of its

Information Technology network to enable it to store all files on computer. This will allow for the easy tracking of files by all members of the Department. It will allow us to be able to key in and track information easily and ultimately. When the system is functioning at its best, it will allow members of the public who have an interest in a file or an application, to access the Town Planning Department - clearly they will not have access to all of the files - and see an update or status report of the processing of their particular application.

Sir, if we are to have fast physical development, if we are to perform with alacrity to development applications and be able to get people's investments from the stage of conceptualisation to implementation as quickly as possible, then all of these processes are going to be central to the speeding up of the whole planning process.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes to conclude.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: In those two minutes I wish to speak to one of the methodologies that the Town Planning Department has sought since 1993 to put in place for the processing of applications, and that is the environmental impact assessment.

10.30 a.m.

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Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: In 1993 the environment impact assessment came into Barbados' planning process as part of the tools that we use in reviewing applications. It a critical tool if we are to determine its use for the planning process and if we are to be able to determine which application to approve, which application would have a potential harm to the environment, if harm can be mitigated and what those mitigated measures should be.

We will continue in the Town & Country Planning Department during the course of this year to use an environment impact assessment as a means of reviewing planning applications to ensure that no harm is caused to our environment and by extension to our economy.

Sir, when I come to speak again, I will go on to speak on the role of the Town & Country Planning Department and the entire role that the Ministry is playing in our overall economic development.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on Head 31 and to say from the outset that in order for the Minister of Physical Development and Environment to carry out the proposed policies of her Ministry she first

has to support me when I say that for Barbados to go forward they will have to first announce a land use policy.

Mr. Chairman, in order for us to properly allocate the land resources of Barbados we must have a land use policy and we must not continue to make pronouncements when no one knows the places that will be developed.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I really do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member as I do not think it will make a difference. There is a Barbados Physical Development Plan which guided the Democratic Labour Party Administration before us, and which is now guiding this Administration as well. I will speak to that later although I do not know if the Honourable Member will gain anything even if he listens.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I am glad that the Honourable Member realises that nothing from that side can change what I am going to say.

Sir, whether we have a 1994 developmental plan or not, anyone who understands what is going on in Barbados will recognise that many things have changed and what we have been using in 1994 cannot be relevant to what is happening in 2002. For example, there is no doubt that a large portion of land not catered for in the 1994 developmental plan is now the subject of much discussion today, and many projects not planned for are now being executed.

Sir, in 1994 there was no discussion of Andrews being the only factory to grind sugar cane in Barbados. If we are going to make these major decisions, one of the first things we have to do is to have a proper land use policy. Anybody who feels he can continue to make policy for this country based on the 1994 developmental plan would be fooling himself. When we get a proper land use policy, we can then discuss these projects.

Sir, the number of golf courses slated now for Barbados would not have been accounted for in the 1994 Physical Developmental Plan and you are going to find more and more applications for people requesting approval to build golf courses and other major tourism projects that were not planned. Also, Sir, community tourism as it now stands would not have been allocated for in the Physical Development Plan of 1994.

Sir, we continue to keep the Town & Country Planning Department at the Garrison in a building that could be better used for tourism purposes instead of putting the department in a suitable building elsewhere when everybody knows that because of the way the building was constructed, two years from now, even after repairing the building, the Town & Country Planning Department will

have environmental problems, as has been happening in the previous building.

Sir, what is required in this situation is not sweet talk, but foresight. It is not enough to change the name from the Town Planning to Town & Country Planning Department because the physical development of Barbados is now essential and that Department must be moved to a location in order to relate to development as it now stands in Barbados.

Sir, the Garrison was suitable when it was Town Planning, but we have moved away from that stage. The focal point of development is now in the north of Barbados. Anyone who understands what is going on in the north of Barbados will recognise that this office must be accessible to the north of Barbados as well as to the St. Michael and Christ Church areas.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I am not only talking about how one will get to the Garrison, but there is a major environmental problem with those buildings as it relates to workers, so we cannot look only at accessibility. We also have to look at the conditions and environment in which these people work.

10.40 a.m.

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Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I could not see that they have the difficulty with the building which currently housed the Town and Country Planning Department. The new building has been gutted and totally refurbished and properly refitted. I do not anticipate that the problems that existed from the falling ceiling and the moisture will continue in the new building. In fact, the staff has had an opportunity to choose how they want that building laid out. They have gone into the building and have seen it and are very happy with the facilities.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you are making a speech now. Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, if the staff had an option to choose between two things they would choose the better of the two things. If they had an option to be somewhere else, they would have gone somewhere else.

I want the Ministry of Physical Development to understand how to use our resources and allocate space in a small country like Barbados. Heritage tourism is important and if the building is creating environmental problems, we need to put some of our best workers in a suitable location

so that they can perform better. The days of taking a Government department and putting it in a building and asking them to remain there must stop.

Town and Country Planning Department is too important a department for us to just play around with the Department. I must admit it was not the Minister who started it but the truth is, the time has come for a change. The Minister must admit that the major development that is occurring in the country is occurring in the north of the country and the future development of the country will continue to be the north of the country because that is where land is available. The Town and Country Planning Department should be centrally located so that everyone can have easy access to this Department.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I want to see the Town and Country Planning Department in a location that every Barbadian can have easy access to it. It is not for me to decide this.

I must congratulate the Town and Country Planning Department for being able to complete over 65 per cent of the outstanding work in a 90-day period. The conditions they work under and the outdated equipment they have to use, I am sure that if they can complete 65 per cent of the outstanding work, the only thing that is preventing them from doing a 100 per cent of work is that Government has not allocated the necessary funds to ensure that Department gets the modern equipment that is needed. We must recognise that an important department like the Town and Country Planning Department should be given the necessary resources in order to function effectively.

Sir, it all right to say we do not need a land use policy, but if we do not have a land use policy laid before this Parliament very soon, we would have an agriculture industry by name only because no land will be available.

I have said before that globalization is a new rule for foreigners to export to Barbados while diminishing the potential of our local farmers. It is clear to me that we have foolishly accepted policies dedicated by outsiders for their own interest. We believe that everything that is done outside of Barbados we must accept. I am saying that our development must be for Barbadians first. If we believe that we do not need a land use policy we will always have problems.

Sir, there is a connection between proper land use policy and the taxes we pay. I have said to this Parliament that we have to be proactive and not reactive. I do not believe that the land taxes of a poor man should be determined by the value of the building next to his land. There are some people who come from overseas and build

huge buildings next to a poor man because it is their intention to own the poor man's land. I have already given this Parliament the solution to the problem and it has not yet been implemented. I believe in order to solve that problem, we must stop taxing site value and only tax the improved value minus the site value.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, if you have a piece of land next to a man who is building a house for \$40 million, because he is building a house for \$40 million that should not influence the taxes you should pay on your piece of land. The only thing that should influence the taxes on your piece of land is what you build on your land.

I am calling on the Government to recognise that we have to stop making land too expensive to Barbadians because that is what has happened in this country since 1994. We have allowed globalization, through the investment of foreigners, to influence to high cost of taxes to Barbadians. I am saying that the way to correct that is by removing the tax on the site value so that if you have a piece of land located next to the richest man in the world, your land taxes would not be influenced by what he builds on his land. I hope that Barbadians read into that and take the necessary action.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I have repeated that about 20 times already in this House. Is this the first time you are hearing it? I will repeat it for your sake seeing that you were my teacher and now I am your teacher.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, in order to stop foreigners from coming to Barbados and dictating the price of land in this country, we must remove land taxes from the site value. If anything, let the cost be on the improved value minus the site value. If you study that you will understand the point I am making. The only reason why Barbadians sell their land is because of the increased cost of land tax. The fellows with money know what to do to force a poor person to sell his land. They do what they do by building huge properties near the poor people so that the poor people's land taxes will increase. When the poor people cannot pay the land tax, they will be forced to sell their land to the rich people.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am saying that we must put policies in place. Between 1994-2002, there have been very enlightened policies coming from this side that the Government has ignored. If we had

not ignored those policies, Barbados would be in a better position.

Sir, when I realised the rate at which the cost of land was going up in Barbados, I came to this House and asked Government to compulsorily acquire large portions of land in Barbados, and they did not do it. They did not do it the way I suggested. They put it in a land bank.

I also asked the Government to recognise that the people of Barbados would want house spots and they should use the same concept that they use in the village instead of acquiring new land. I ask them to acquire lands around districts so that you can expand the districts instead of acquiring virgin land to implement the concept. I said that they should expand the existing roads in the new land and do not charge the residents of that area that would be owning those house spots. If they had previously lived on the land the Government would have put in the amenities and the residents would not have been charged for such amenities.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, save him from himself before I lambast him. I do not like Mugabe. A man that has a housing policy worse than Mugabe interfering with me every time I speak.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would prefer you to use parliamentary language.

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, you mean lambasting. I withdraw that, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I am saying that if those things were accepted and enlightened people had pushed those policies, this country would have been better off today.

The problem in Barbados is that we see physical development only for the rich and famous. We do not recognise that physical development must also include the masses. If we start with physical development as it relates to poor people, then we will be better off.

I am saying that the top down policy being dictated by this Government must be changed and that we revert to the policy that was founded up to 1994 as the bottom up policy. The bottom up policy has worked well for Barbados.

I thank you.

10.50 a.m.

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: We have moved away from it and because we have moved away from it, Sir, our physical infrastructure has improved but it has improved for "too few". I am not about a "too few" government. I am about improving the lot of the masses, and people have to understand that when the lot of the masses is improved, the middle class and the upper class will improve also.

We tend to believe that once we give it to the rich, it will filter down. Foolishness! It will blow away, because the truth is no matter how much money you give to the top, it does not mean that their spending capacity will increase. When you give it to the poor the spending capacity of the poor will increase and it will filter up to the doctors and lawyers and get back where it came from originally. At least, it would have passed through the hands of the masses.

I am surprised that an Honourable Member from rural Barbados would not understand that, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I am saying, Sir, that we have to understand that physical development, as I said before, is not development only for the rich but it must be seen as development that can improve the lot of the masses. I find it extremely difficult that someone from St. Lucy, an agriculturalist, could have land that is in agriculture and he has a section of land that everybody knows is not suitable for growing anything, but he finds it difficult to get that piece of land approved so that he can have a wholly owned family structure with the necessary buildings on that piece of land.

Sir, it is not the officials in the Town and Country Planning that we must blame but it is a lack of a proper land use policy in Barbados. The truth is that we cannot continue to ask people living on the sea-rock to continue to keep land as agricultural while people in the Bulkeley area are allowed to build condominiums. The only reason that can happen is because we do not have a proper land use policy.

The first thing everybody will do when they submit a plan and it is not approved is to blame the people within the Town and Country Planning Department, which is unfair. The blame must go where it has to go and, that is, with the people who make the policy. The Minister of Agriculture, if nobody else, should have been the first person in this House calling for a proper land use policy because in order

for the Ministry of Agriculture to function properly it must first know the lands available to it. It is time that the Minister of Agriculture stops making people believe that sea-rock land is good agricultural land and that land in Bulkeley is not good for agriculture. Until he calls for a proper land use policy I am only tempted to believe that is what he believes.

I am also saying that we have to understand that physical development in Barbados must also come with proper roads. We have a lot of developments in Bridgetown but everything is a bottleneck, every road leading into Bridgetown creates a bottleneck, and it creates stress and confusion for the Barbadian public, and we do not even realise that by creating stress and confusion we are interfering with the productivity of our own citizens.

Sir, Barbadians must have a free flow to their jobs because if we want the maximum output from our workers we must create that atmosphere, but we are not creating it. Maybe it has to do with the way the country has been constructed from the beginning, but I would say to the Minister of Public Works it is his call now and obviously he is going to get the criticism because he has to find a way to solve that particular problem. You cannot continue to blame the travelling public of Barbados for everything if your Ministry, and not necessarily the present Minister, but you are the man in the chair, so you have to take the lashes.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, we have to realise that because of the bottleneck that is being created in Barbados, we are not only creating stress for Barbadians but we have to understand that there is a direct and indirect relationship between Barbadians and plant life. A lot of us forget that we breathe in what the plants breathe out and what we breathe out they take in. That is the point I want to end on, because I am not surprised sometimes to see that our agriculture and other plant life in Barbados is not as healthy as it used to be and it all has to do with stress.

I thank you.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make my first intervention under this Head to speak specifically to program 144 - Town and Country Planning and, time permitting, to look at one or two other Heads. Sir, the \$3.6 million being allocated to this most essential function within our system of government is more than value for money.

As the Honourable Minister has indicated, the work of the Town and Country Planning Department is essential for ensuring the orderly and progressive development of land in both the urban and rural areas and, of course, the preservation of, an improvement even, of various

amenities. It is perhaps even more critical, given the fact that for an island the size of ours, we just cannot afford to get it wrong. We cannot even afford to experiment, to go by trial and error, in the hopes that one day we may get it right.

We are not only small, Sir, but we have a very fragile environment. The interdependency of the various aspects of our ecosystem are very fundamental. The impact of agriculture is direct and immediate on tourism, particularly as it affects the coastal resources, the quality of our sand, beaches and so on.

We, therefore, Sir, have each and every day to ensure that the work of the various departments in Government and more specifically the Ministry of Physical Development and even more specifically the work of the Town Planning Department get the job done. We have to balance a number of competing interests each and every day.

Our economic development will continue to depend on the fullest possible commercial exploitation of our agricultural resources such as they are and equally so, or more so on our development of our tourism potential, our potential in international business, information technology as well as manufacturing.

Who knows, Sir, what new productive sector not yet contemplated this island will have to accommodate 50 years down the road? Let us not forget, Sir, that even at the point of our independence when institutions which we take for granted today - the Town Planning Department and various other institutions in this country, both in the public sector and in the private sector - were created to serve an economy and a society very different from that which we have today, we had a very fledgling tourism industry, but not as pervasive as it is, both in terms of physical and economic impact. We had an economy which was essentially an agricultural economy.

The Deep Water Harbour was built primarily to accommodate over 200 000 tonnes of sugar which we exported out of Barbados every year. The fact that cruise tourism came after that was only because the resources having been created for one purpose we were able to leverage them for another purpose. We did not have to contemplate having new cruise facilities while, at the same time dealing with cargo facilities. We can go on with examples.

The reality is that this Department is at the cutting edge of development. Sir, one can expect, therefore, that in this cauldron of competing interests conflict of purpose and of objective will continue to rise in temperature. You can only expect the cauldron to grow hotter and hotter because

in this small area of diverse multiple uses when you seek to please one sector, you will displease another.

If you determine that a piece of land should remain in agriculture, you will displease the commercial retail interests that want to build a mall, someone else that wants to build a golf course, someone that believes it should be for a park for aesthetic and recreational purposes, and we could go on.

The fact of the matter is that it is not often understood and appreciated that this department has to deal with the whole range of national interests. We have housing. We have to look to house our people not only today based on our population size, but we have to look towards the future. We have to cater for housing not only for the young, but for the elderly. We have an aging population and therefore the types of structures and locations will have to take into account these issues.

We have, Sir, to continue to do our planning to accommodate various community services, our schools, our hospitals, our fire stations, our police stations and our national parks. We have as well, Sir, to preserve forever the capacity for Barbados to be involved in agriculture. At the end of the day, land which is taken out of agriculture remains out of agriculture. You cannot easily convert it from being an office complex to being an agricultural field once again but, at the same time, you cannot stand still if you want to go forward. Also, Sir, we have to take account of the fact that the changing state of technology in agriculture, as in other fields, will make it possible for us to do more with less.

In the case of Barbados' agriculture, there are certain areas of land in Barbados which, because of the nature of our rainfall and in the absence of irrigation available from water wells makes agriculture marginal if not improbable. I would not say impossible, because if there is a period in which the weather changes and there is a ten-year period of rain, then agriculture will thrive, but there are areas in Barbados where there is irrigation water available and clearly we need to build our agricultural capacity around those areas.

Other areas in which the sun will burn every day and make it possible to grow a yam, a potato, a carrot we would perhaps be wasting time and national potential for the development of other areas. That is the kind of balance which this department has to face everyday and we as a country, Sir, also have to provide facilities for retail shopping, both for our locals as well as for our visitors.

11.05 a.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Sir, the fact that the facades of Bridgetown have been able to be improved during the last decade and the contribution of the duty-free sector, cannot be underestimated. The duty-free sector, as a component of retail, allows us to have a larger customer base than the constraints of population size currently dictate.

It therefore allows us, as Barbadians, to be able to enjoy a higher level of ambiance and ecstatic attraction in our city, or other areas of shopping, but also, Sir, we have to make a determination first and foremost that certainly for me, Bridgetown as a commercial entity must never be made non viable. It must never be allowed to die, Sir, and we have other areas of commerce which are like that and therefore, from a planning perspective, it is important that when we consider new alternative shopping areas, for example, that we take account of the imbedded investment.

Sir, by imbedded investment, I am not talking of investment by big businesses only, but if Bridgetown were to be emptied tomorrow, what will happen to the thriving trade which is done a Saturday morning, outside of the Cheapside market, or outside of this Parliament by way of the through traffic, people selling vegetables, dry goods, fermented and spirited beverages and things of that sort. So Bridgetown must not die, but we must provide opportunities for expanding, entry by new entrance and retail business in other locations.

We have also the competing business of industry. One of the greatest challenges we have always faced and, indeed, I must applaud the officers who have managed this mechanism over the years, but there is a need to make sure that we can have industrial development, but recognising that the principal source of our drinking water, or the only source really, is from extraction from underground aquifers, Sir, then we have to be concerned about waste disposal.

There are certain types of heavy and dirty industrial activity which other countries can afford to do and dump their chemicals, hither, thither and yon, which we, notwithstanding how many jobs it can bring, or how much money it may bring, cannot afford to undertake. Sir, the simple reason that after a few years of plenty, when our water is totally polluted and unusable, then the rest of us will begin to die and the business will go as well.

Of course, Sir, there is the big ongoing conflict with respect to tourism. There are some persons who would want us to go forward by way of economic development, but who would also want, for their own personal comforts, to be able to have an open beach with some trees outside every bus stop, their door and everywhere. As far as I am concerned, we can and we have been able to be successful in developing our tourism product by way of recognising that visitors to our shores want to have their hotel on or

near the beach. Also, that Barbadian citizens like to go to the beach, even persons like I, who do not go the beach very often, like to know that we have the right and opportunity whenever the strange urge may hit us.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: This Government, Sir, will and has the charge for the responsibility to balance these competing interests in development. We, for example, will never tolerate the exclusion of Barbadians from access to all of our beaches. There will be no private beaches in Barbados, or from any other aspects of their natural heritage through the denial of their access to the beach, in terms of beach access or actually able to traverse the beaches. Neither, Sir, will we stifle the development of Barbados, by letting valuable economic resources lie idle, so that persons who are already comfortable in life, are able to sit and gaze at them in their emptiness and beautiful, desolate splendour.

Our concern, also, has to be for those persons who will be able to have an opportunity to participate in our economy through employment generated in tourism. An acre of land, developed for a hotel, tourism purposes, generates significantly greater employment than that same acre, and revenues to the Government and development for the country, than that same acre of land going idle, or going as a house, or going as an office building. Therefore, Sir, that is an important consideration.

Sir, as I said, it is a matter of having a judicious blend of the policy, so that the 90 beach accesses around the island, this Government has not only ensured that they are maintained, but you will see in the programme being presented to further the discussion by the Minister of Physical Development, that there is an active and aggressive strategy for the further development of those beach facilities.

We are not just giving an access by opening a slit in the facade of buildings which hide the beach, we are not just opening a path for you to squeeze through, not even broad shoulders, but sideways, but we are insisting on minimum standards for beach access. We have developed major parks with car parking facilities, bathroom facilities, lifeguard facilities at various spots around the island but also, Barbadians must recognise that they too, need to appreciate that sense of balance. We can neither have all parks, nor all hotels, and I am satisfied, Sir, that the Administration here is setting about on that course.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like you to finish at this point.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Sir, on the 34 kilometres of coastline from Enterprise to Heywoods, and the 34 accesses such as they exist, are being enhanced and developed for the benefit of Barbadians.

I will return, Sir, to deal with other aspects of this Head, but I want to salute the Minister and her team for the guidance and leadership they have given to us in this important aspect of our national development.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I wish to thank the Honourable Member for Christ Church East for that excellent intervention which really did give a very clear view of completing and complimentary land uses, and the whole resolution of those interests, in relation to national development.

I wish to speak to some of the issues raised by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy before we allow the air to remain clouded. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy suggested that there was not an existing land use policy. The Physical Development Plan, which I indicated was a 1994 plan, was my error. In fact, it is a 1998 plan which articulates land use policies very clearly. I am just going to run quickly through the Table of Contents for the benefit of the House but, more particularly, for the benefit of the public who may not be aware of the details of the National Physical Development Plan.

The National Physical Development Plan is a substantial document of several hundred pages.

11.15 a.m.

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Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: This is the National Physical Development Plan of Barbados 1998. We are in the process of doing a new physical plan which is currently in draft and expect to have it before this Honourable Chamber for discussion sometime in the summer of this year.

We have gone out to all of the public hearings that have been necessary and we are currently reviewing the plan for the inclusion of wind energy sites at Lamberts, St. Lucy, Upper Salmon, St. Lucy and Bissex Hill, St. Joseph. There are some amendments to parcels of land at Speightstown to be designated as recreational space, a national heritage conservation area and a parcel of land at Kendal Hill for commercial purposes. Once those amendments are concluded, and we do a further review we will be back before the Chamber for discussion and debate.

The National Physical Development Plan articulates in its beginning strategic purposes. It talks about the growth and management of agricultural preservation. It

speaks to housing, social and community services, cultural heritage, the environment, economic development, land use policies, centres and mixed use corridors, shopping centres, tourism, predominately residential areas, institutional areas, employment areas, special industries, resource extractions, natural resource reserves, golf courses, rural villages, rural settlements, agriculture, the Barbados system of parks and open spaces, national infrastructure, the community plans for Bridgetown, Speightstown, Oistins, Holetown and Six Roads and the National Park Plant. Therefore, it is not true as the Honourable Member has been suggesting in a most misleading way, that there is no national use policy.

This development plan, or any other development plan, will not speak to any particular single project and so it would not say that Liz Thompson has built a house in Prior Park. Clearly, this is a global strategic plan. It is a policy framework and guideline. It is a policy plan that speaks to the broad policy areas and to areas of all kinds of physical development in Barbados.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy kept alluding and suggesting by implication that there is no adequate access to lands for Barbadians. Barbados has approximately 160 000 acres of land. The Town Planning Department views this land space as roughly 90 000 lots, with 40 000 acres being reserved for agricultural production; sugar and non-sugar, 656 lots are West Coast lots, and 421 are coastal lots in the south of Barbados.

In 1988 to 1994, Barbados experienced its most busiest period for the transfer of lands to non-nationals. I am going to repeat that. There is a perception that this Administration has embarked on an exchange of land and is allowing land in Barbados to get out of the hands of nationals and go to foreigners. The evidence shows that the most extensive transfer of lands to non-nationals in Barbados took place between the years 1988 and 1994 under a Democratic Labour Party Government. So this notion that the present Government is letting land get out of the control of Barbadians, particularly black Barbadians, and going to foreigners, is entirely false.

That was the findings given in a report in 1998 by the Committee established by the House of Assembly which was sat on by Mr. B. M. Taitt, who, thankfully is no longer in this Chamber, and Mr. D. St.E. Kellman, who is currently in this Chamber. So the information I am disclosing today, although he is speaking to the contrary, is known to him.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman. I want this to be entered into the record because that is the reason why I do not sit on anymore committees. When that Report was written, I was ill. I was called by a member of this Table to deal with that Report and I said to that member to let it be known that I disagree with the

Report but that was never put in the Report. That is why I will never sit on any more committees formed by this House.

Asides.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I cannot allow that. What he meant is that he made a phone call to someone...

Asides.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: There was no formal...

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I am challenging...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Come on, be orderly. What are you saying?

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. I am challenging the Honourable Member to produce the Report where I signed on the line.

Asides.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, you would have to rule on this. This document to which I speak is called "House of Assembly, Report of Select Committee on Ownership of Land Interests in Barbados by Non-nationals including CARICOM Nationals". If the Honourable Member says that he disagrees with it and nobody recorded that, then he is challenging all of the processes and the integrity of this Chamber; okay.

The membership of the Committee, which was established in April of 1998 by this Chamber because of issues relative to land was His Honour I. A Roett, M.P. Chairman, Sir Henry Forde, M.P., Mr. Branford Mayhew Taitt, M.P., - fortunately sent home to rest - Sir Harold St. John, M.P., Dr. Richard Christopher Haynes, M.P., who still has a strong national voice in this country, the Honourable R. C. Eastmond, M.P., and Mr. Denis St. Elmo Kellman, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who is still a member of this House. No signatures were required and there is no Minority Report from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. This comes forward as a document of the House and he cannot challenge it in this way, not now, not four years later, he cannot do it.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Quiet please!

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I am extremely grateful to the Honourable Member for pointing out that the Report had not been signed by any member of the Committee which means that it cannot be a report, and it cannot be quoted from in this House because in order for it to be a report, the members of the Committee would have had to sign it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not so.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: This Report is dated December 18, 1998 with the recommendations, and signed by the Honourable Ishmael A. Roett, M.P. as Chairman on behalf of the entire membership and noting no dissenting judgement, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I was making the point...

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I have been in this House for 15 years and sat on many joint select and other committees of Parliament. It is a standing requirement in this House that all members of the Committee should sign the reports of standing committees. I certainly have signed all where I delivered a minority report with others and those persons have had to sign theirs as well.

That has nothing to do with laying the report and it would be grossly unfair if the records of this House did not reflect the fact that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy refused to sign the Report. Not only that, I believe the Honourable Member for St. Lucy went as far thereafter to take a decision not to sit on any further joint select committees.

The point, therefore, is that as a matter of procedure, their record should reflect whether the Honourable Member for St. Lucy signed the Report or not. That is the challenge that was made. Nobody is saying that there is no such Report, but it would be grossly unfair if any member would be required to subscribe to the views of a report which he did not sign.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy has challenged the Honourable Member for St. James South and this House to produce a report which he signed. That is what has been raised. It has nothing to do with the merits of the Report. All the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is asking is that the signed Report be produced. That is what is being requested.

11.25 a.m.

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Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Sir, if a report is made in any committee, if in fact there is an argument even in a rum shop, and there is a strong dissent, that person indicates his dissent. When it is a formal process to which your name is to be attached, such as a committee of this House, signed by the Chairman, if you disagree with it, you file a minority report. This is a 1998 Report, it is now 2002. He cannot challenge it now. What is this, because he does not like what is in it because it does not suit his argument, he is now challenging the integrity of the process?

Asides.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: It is a reflection on the Speaker because essentially what he is saying is that the Speaker is a liar and that the Speaker did not give him due process to voice his defence.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, this Report was made a document of the House. He had the opportunity to refute what was in it. He did not.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. That is not true; on many occasions I did.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am ruling that it is all right to proceed in that manner.

Asides.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: The largest transfer of land to non-nationals in this country took place between the years 1988 and 1994 and, in fact, amounted to 1 246. Sir, let us understand what is happening here. Of the 90 000 lots, 20 000 lots belong to Bajans living overseas; 1 000 lots have overseas addresses, so these could belong to non-nationals. The view has been that Government can do something about the transfer of land to non-nationals, and we have. This Administration has said that foreign companies cannot buy lands in Barbados. This Administration has not permitted, as has happened in other countries, the whole concept of economic citizenship. "I got a dollar I can buy a passport and citizen in a country" that is not allowed in Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has got two minutes to wind up.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Therefore, we have taken several steps to ensure that land remains in the hand on Barbadians but it is critical for us to understand that...

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On point of order, Sir. I have just been told that this Administration has passed a law prohibiting foreign companies from buying lands in Barbados. I would like to find out when that law was passed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Proceed, the Honourable Member for St. James South.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Thank you, Sir. I was making the point, I did not say that legislation having passed, I said we have indicated this was not permitted and budgetary measures have been announced in respect of this.

Sir, one of the things we must recognise in people is that every time land passes to people - there are two limbs to it. First of all, a lot of land has been transferred from one non-national to another at some spectacular prices but when a Barbadian is offered money for land, he or she can always say "No" to the prospective purchaser.

Sir, you have indicated that there are only two minutes pertaining to me but I have a lot of information on land, land ownership and housing, therefore, I want to come back and make another intervention which will put some of the information before the House.

Sir, a lot is being talked about the ownership of land and the impression is being fed by the Opposition that Barbadians are not having adequate access to land in Barbados. Sir, this is not true. When I come back I want to speak, not only to what the facts are, but I do perceive that is a problem the Government is going to have to address and I will speak frankly to the problem as I perceive it.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I think this debate could perhaps be characterised as the most contentious during this Estimates, largely because it has been peppered by some dramatic inaccuracies which I do not think should remain on the records largely because not only are they sensational, but they will, to my mind, damage the Government itself.

Any allegation that this Government has passed legislation to stop foreign companies from buying land is absolute nonsense and coming from a Minister of the Crown...

Aside.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is your point of order?

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: The Honourable Member is misleading the House when he said that I said legislation had been passed. If the record was reviewed, it would show that was not the language I used. I said that the Government had taken measures, but did not say that legislation had been passed to that effect. They are now setting up a false premise and knocking it down.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, the peppering of inaccuracies continue because there is no other basis on which a Government, in a free democracy, can stop a foreign company from purchasing land other than by law. A minister has no power to stop anybody from buying any land and none of you has any powers that do not flow from law. Therefore, that is an absurd inaccuracy. It is complete nonsense and, as I said, coming from a Minister of the Crown, it belies an ignorance of the power of Ministers. In fact, quite the opposite is the case. It is only in the past few months this Government has started to recognise the concerns that were consistently raised, both by the Opposition and by other sensible people in Barbados, about the trends in relation to the foreign ownership of land. From the DLP's 1999 Manifesto, the matter was raised. It was raised from 1999 because it was very clear, not only from what we said in our Manifesto but the very gentleman who was put as the Commissioner to hear objections to the Physical Development Plan in another capacity as Ombudsman of Barbados, wrote a report in which, despite all of the syrupy expressions by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East about beach accesses, very strongly condemned successive Governments of Barbados for denying the people of this country the opportunity to have access to beaches. He took photographs of a number of areas in the West and South Coast in Barbados where foreigners and Barbadians had put boulders and have done all manner of things to stop Barbadians from accessing beaches. Not much has happened since then despite all the talk.

The 35 beach accesses were not done in the last year. Many of them were there from the time I was a child on the West Coast and some of them are beach accesses that only one individual at a time can pass, so that if when one starts to walk down the beach access and sees somebody else coming in the other direction, that person has to turn around and go back.

11.35 a.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: There are some like that in Prospect in St. James and throughout the West Coast of Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. James South once raised it as a concern that she personally had, but it was not a concern of her Government. She, in fact, said that the Government was being negligent in a number of areas

like the problem of black own businesses in Barbados and the foreign ownership of land.

The same Minister now gets up in a new incarnation to give the impression that all of a sudden the Government which she was lambasting from the Back Bench when she was not in the Cabinet, has suddenly developed a new policy that has cured all the problems of foreign ownership of land. Sir, I cannot take that kind of hypocrisy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you have to withdraw that remark.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I withdraw the remark. It is unparliamentary and I apologise, Sir. I cannot accept that approach to public administration. Sir, the first words written in the Report of the Select Committee are:

"The Committee was not able to establish with any high degree of accuracy the total number of lots or percentage of land owned by non nationals."

Sir, that was not at the end but they were the first words written in the Report. I cannot reflect negatively on the Report as a parliamentarian but if the public says that this document is not worth the paper it is written on, they would be correct because this Report was quickly finished to accommodate a Budget in which the question of foreign ownership of land was addressed...

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member as a parliamentarian should know better than to impute improper motives to either the person who chaired the meeting, or the members of the Committee. To suggest that it was quickly finished to accommodate some particular interest is to impute improper motives to the members of the Committee.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, it was conveniently completed.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. It is equally as bad to say that it was conveniently completed and as Leader of the Opposition he should know better than that. The Honourable Member for St. John himself just said that as a parliamentarian he cannot reflect negatively on the Report far less reflect on the motives of the persons who served on the Committee.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, it was remarkably completed to coincide with the announcement of new policies to cover the question of foreign ownership of land.

Sir, despite all the talk about the period in which land was bought by foreigners, that is not the fundamental

issue because it is an area on which we can come to common agreement as Barbadians.

I am not schizophrenic or paranoid and I do not think the vast majority of Barbadians who have raised concerns about this, including those of the social partnership, one of whom recently said that a committee of the social partnership has now finally been established to address concerns in relation to the foreign ownership of land in Barbados. It is against that background that I believe what the Honourable Member for St. James South said is inaccurate and it does not bear recognition simply to prove an absurd point.

I am not reflecting on members of the Committee or the Chairman. I recall vividly at that time that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy refused to sign the Report and despite the fact that he refused to sign it, the Report was nonetheless forwarded for consideration. This is part of the history of this Parliament. Therefore, when Honourable Members try to give the impression that somebody is trying to reflect on the Report that they agreed with, it is wrong. If the Honourable Member did not see the Report and he did not concur in the recommendations, he has no obligation to write a minority report. Nowhere in the Laws or procedure do you have to write a minority report.

If I, as a member, do not attend any meetings of a committee, when the report is brought to me at the end, I have the right to determine whether I am going to sign it or not. I do not have to write a minority report.

Sir, there are number of reasons why you do not have to write a minority report. First of all, the transcript of the proceedings is available so the public can go back and see what position was taken on a particular issue. If you do not think at the end of day that it is an issue on which you need to take a minority position, you can let the matter rest and let the report proceed. Basically, that is what transpired in these circumstances.

Sir, this question of foreign ownership of land is going to continue to be plagued by the kind of scenario we had in here today because the Government will not accept than when persons other than the Opposition, including public officers in Barbados, were raising concerns about this issue, we are accused of being paranoid and schizophrenic about foreign ownership of land.

The Government itself on one hand said that the Democratic Labour Party allowed foreigners in Barbados to own land on the West Coast and, on the other hand, some members of the Government said it is not true to say that foreigners own a lot of land on the West Coast. Sir, there are two conflicting views.

We know what the Government's constraints are under WTO. We cannot pass new Aliens Landholding legislation but what Government did was to pass a law to restrict the transfer of land by international business companies. Sir, international business companies are not the only kind of foreign owned company we have in Barbados.

We have locally incorporated companies, charities, non profit companies and public companies that are all foreign owned. All the Government did was avoid a situation where people were using international business companies to avoid the payment of property transfer tax and they put certain restrictions in place that required the companies to make certain declarations prior to allowing the transfer of any land.

Far from being able to introduce Aliens Landholding legislation, those countries which have that legislation will have to remove it.

11.45 a.m.

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Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: There is no basis in a globalization environment where values have been broken down for a country to put in place restrictions on individual foreign companies for purchasing land. What you can do is in relation to your land use policy and your physical environment, is to identify an area of land in your country for heritage purchases, and it cannot be sold to foreigners. That is a perfectly legitimate policy, and as long as it does not seek to make the whole country a heritage site or something absurd like that, you can do it.

Our Manifesto in 1999, said that certain areas of land in Barbados should be earmarked for lease only to foreigners. You can designate that land as land that is special to Barbados, whether on the basis of its ecological configuration, heritage or whatever reason, and you might be able to get around the provisions of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, Protocol 23, the Rights of Establishment Provisions and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Most Favoured Nations principles. It is a very basic matter.

If the Government has a policy for dealing with the foreign ownership of land, tell us what it is. There has not been a single policy introduced in Barbados other than a rum shop on the West Coast, John Moore's shop, which would indicate to Barbadians that anything is being done to address their concerns about foreign ownership of land in this country.

Even if past Governments were guilty, it is something that this generation has to deal with, and some

of us have children here who are already in a position to own land. If you have land in Gall Hill, St. John, next to a National Housing Corporation Development, which was selling the spots at \$5.00 per square foot, next door to that development a private developer is selling the land at \$14 per square foot, that tells you that there is a problem in relation to land value in Barbados.

Sir, when you look at the types of people who are making deposits on that land, those persons that are being given the oceanfront views and so on, it will give you an extent to which the land value market in Barbados has changed.

We are not saying that the Government has all the powers to deal with it because we understand the constraints, but to turn the debate around to give the impression that this is a Democratic Labour Party problem, I believe that we are here about solutions and a way forward for Barbados.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have been in here for eleven years, in both Chambers, and I believe that the way in which politicians treat the issues colour the public's perception as to what level of trust they can put in politicians.

The reality is that Honourable Member of the Opposition leads a Party that presided over comprehensive sale of land to foreigners in this country. The Honourable Member leads a Party which when in Government, contrary to the recommendations from the officers in the Town and Country Planning Department, allowed the development to take place at Mullins, St. Peter, when the Chief Town Planner of the day indicated that no such development should take place. The Party which he leads, sat down and countered that recommendation for foreigners to develop land on the same Mullins beach in St. Peter.

Mr. Chairman, when I talk about the level of trust and social capital that politicians bring to themselves and to the public, you will understand what I mean and I am very sad. To date in this debate, at least we have not gone down that road, but this morning there has been a departure. I want to speak to this issue.

Sir, even on the issue of filing minor reports, I have asked for the formal records of this Chamber to be produced. It is a bad thing to have a short memory. In 1992, under a Democratic Labour Party Administration, there was a Joint Select Committee on Sexual Offences and there were a number of us who disagreed with what the Report was stating. Do you know what we did, Mr. Chairman? We signed a Minority Report and we did not have to send that Minority Report. We just filed it.

The most amazing thing is, I will not cast any imputations on motives this morning but I would let the facts hang out for those who will to draw their own conclusions who were the members who agreed to that Minority Report. They were M. A. King, Q.C.; M. P. H. Lewis; A. Straughn; M. A. Mottley; and D. J. H. Thompson - the same D. J. H. Thompson who got up in here today and said that you do not have to file a minority report.

If you have a difficulty with a recommendation of a document that is going to be laid, not only in this Chamber, it is standard practice that you have your views reflected in a Minority Report. Mr. Chairman, enough of that.

Mr. Chairman, I want to speak on the issue of land. I am of the firm belief that if the Democratic Labour Party was serious about applying solutions to the issue of land, given the finite size of Barbados, then they would be engaging in this matter constructively and not divisively. I am of the view that the Democratic Labour Party has only taken up this issue to be a decisive issue in a country of finite size, knowing full well that their pattern of behaviour in presiding over the distribution of land to non nationals exceeded that of this Government's.

I am one of those Barbadians and it has nothing to do with Party, Mr. Chairman. I am concerned about land in this country and I am concerned for two reasons. I am concerned that in a society where the majority of the population has no large access to capital; where the majority of the population, a century ago, were ex-slaves; where they had no access to capital in any meaningful way, especially from the present commercial bank, that land remains the most tangible asset by which they could have a stake in this country and that land remains the basis on which you start to gather and accumulate wealth for the future generations.

The hallmark of this country in the 20th century in the social and political revolution that we have in the last 70 years, has been the extent to which we have held faithful to two premises, Mr. Chairman.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, access to an education to uplift yourself and your families and access to ownership to land in this country.

I believe, as the Right Honourable Prime Minister stated in the Second Reading speech, that the objective of keeping Barbados and making it a vibrant property-owning democracy is the basis on which this Government operates in terms of improving the quality of life of Barbadians.

Sir, the only way you can remove people from poverty forever, is by giving them access to capital so that they can endure. I have always learned from my grandfather that land does not spoil. When I speak to the Democratic Labour Party failing to engage on this issue constructively, I speak to them failing to put forward comprehensive solutions.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition was right about one thing, that under the common framework of rules across the world, there is going to be a difficulty in having legislation that discriminates against countries while favouring other countries in terms of the benefits conferred.

The Prime Minister has spoken about this and this Government has tried to do a number of things. I do believe that the ultimate solution lies in the hands of the individual who is the owner of the land.

Mr. Chairman, you cannot go to London and buy freehold land easily. The majority of land sold in London is leasehold because if you want to build wealth from generation to generation, you create a stake in the land such that there is a reversion of the ownership interest. That reversion of the ownership interest can allow people to exploit economically that land on more than one occasion.

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Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Let me be clear on this, because I feel strongly about this. When you sell land freehold, it is gone from you forever. You get a lump sum, and that is it. We have a concept in Barbados that leasehold is a two year lease, a five year lease, even a 10 or 15-year lease, but we have to get into the habit of looking at long leases. We have to get into the habit of understanding that instead of selling somebody freehold that we sell a 50, 70 or 90-year lease. What that means is that one or two generations from you, or if you enter into it young, it might even be you, you have the use of the land revert to you to be able to exploit for a fee again.

I am saying that the Anglican Church, or no church in Barbados, or the Credit Union Movement which must be about building capital to alter the imbalance of economic power in this country, have a right selling land freehold in this country if we are going to change the status of economic relations in this country. I believe that in respect of individuals, the answer in respect of foreign ownership of land is not to legislate, because we cannot, but it is for Barbadians who want to treat to foreigners to do that in the context of leasehold arrangements as opposed to selling the outright interest in the land by way of freehold. What it does is to ensure that you have a basis for capital to grow and accumulate from generation to generation.

Mr. Chairman, I honestly believe that these are the kinds of solutions we must be talking about at a national level to educate publicly those who might not be aware of all of their options. I honestly believe that it is not something the Government can legislate because of the international trade obligations to which we have adhered, but it is something we can use moral suasion to encourage Barbadians, particularly indigenous Barbadian institutions, black or white, to engage in to ensure that there is an accumulation of wealth from generation to generation.

I also want to address the issue, Mr. Chairman, of the price of land in this country. This Government took a deliberate stance, and only this morning I gave notice of a Resolution pertaining to Alleyne's Land in here as part of the Urban Pilot Project, that Government would allow the tenant to pay the first \$2.50 a square foot and Government would subsidize the difference between \$2.50 and the fair market value of the land.

Mr. Chairman, we have been watching what is going on in Zimbabwe, and I want to salute the media for the kind of coverage they have carried on radio, television and in the newspapers on what has been happening in Zimbabwe. We do not realise that in the 1980 Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, and in the recent amendment for the subsidy for urban tenancies, that we have effected a redistribution of land in this country that no other country that is an ex-colony has succeeded in as well as we have; and not an ounce of blood has dropped.

Between the ten cents a square foot, we have enfranchised thousands of black Barbadians who now own or are on their way to owning, if they do not already own, substantial wall structures in this country. Mr. Chairman, I have marked myself and my career in public life by one index. I have never said it publicly, but I will do it today. I have one index by which I mark myself in my representation of the people of St. Michael North East and that is that by the time I leave public life as many people as possible in my constituency should be owning their own houses and lands.

I do not want National Housing Corporation to build any rental units because I believe that people's relationship to the land and to the country changes when it is a relationship of ownership. I believe people have a different perception of themselves and of their families. I believe that what was premised by those people who fought before us in the 20th century for equity in this country was that if you give a man or a woman the dignity of ownership of land then they can provide for themselves, and if you educate them, then they need not rely on anyone for information.

Sir, I believe this Government has been faithful to the premise of providing funds for the Barbados Mortgage

Finance Corporation so that loans can be had at 6 per cent when the rest of Bridgetown is lending at 9 per cent, 60 per cent higher.

Mr. Chairman, we have done a lot of things as a Government but the most enduring policy for the people of St. Michael was the extent to which we changed their characteristics and relationship to land in this country. I am not one of those who believes that Bajans do not want to buy beach land because I feel that Barbadians should be able to buy whatever land they want in this country and by the same token sell if they want, but should understand that Government cannot anchor into legislative action which would result in sanctions being taken against the Government.

Therefore, I genuinely believe from my heart that we need to engage in dialogue and to start talking about how Barbadians can accumulate wealth from generation to generation and the method that I know best legal in law. You know, the same British people will only sell leasehold in London but come to Barbados and buy freehold. Now tell me who is bright and who is foolish?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I think at this point you should finish.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, as you wish, because I have said what I had to say. I beg the Opposition that this is not a matter that should divide us and as Leader of the Opposition I keep telling him that he and I are of post-Independence Barbados in terms of our education and in terms of our values. I think this is a matter that should unite us all because we are defending the national interest of this country.

The point I am making is that I believe that this is the kind of constructive national dialogue that can advance the interest of thousands of Barbadians and I look forward to participating on a national level on this issue, especially for the churches, the credit unions and all Barbadians, black or white, who believe in accumulating wealth for the next generation.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I am amazed at the efforts of the Honourable Member for St. John to try to discredit what I was saying. He spoke to the Report and I want to return to the Report. The Honourable Member read a line but only read part of it and that is the danger of giving the public part of the information and I want to return to the full sentence, Sir, not just part of it.

"The Committee was not able to establish with any high degree of accuracy the total number of lots or percentage area of land owned by non-nationals."

He stopped there and if that was what it said therefore the information was of no consequence and highly inaccurate, but it went on to say.

"... nevertheless much credible evidence was received on the issue."

Who were the people who gave evidence? It was the people in this country who had access to the information: the Commissioner of Land Taxes, the Registrar of Titles, the Deputy Solicitor General, the Chief Accountant, the Chief Land Surveyor, the Chief Town Planner, the Deputy Commissioner of Inland Revenue, the Manager of the Exchange Control and the Chief Property Manager for the Ministry of Housing. These are the people who had all of the access to all of the records in relationship to land ownership so that when the Committee said that it was not able to give the exact number it was saying that it cannot fit them to the last house that is owned by non-nationals. A lot of credible evidence was given before the Committee.

Let me read the rest of what they said, Sir, so that it does not put anything in doubt and people will not get up and read part of the sentence.

"The Commissioner of Land Tax gave evidence that for the purposes of land tax the roll listed 90 000 parcels of land (of which 656 touch the West Coast and 421 lots touch the South Coast) but this figure would not necessarily correspond to the number of interests (as more than one interest can exist simultaneously) or the number of owners (as one person can own more than one lot). There was now no land tax differential between foreign and local ownership."

It went on:

"The Registrar of Titles informed the Committee that non-national transfers of land from 1988 to 1997 amounted to 1 246."

I am skipping now, Sir:

"The Committee notes that the number of 62 in the five-month period of December 1997 to April, 1998 did not seem to be any large increase, as the lowest total in the ten-year period 1988-1997 was 70 (in 1988) and the final total was 154 (in 1990)."

Sir, this is credible detail which shows the extent to which this issue is reality or fiction. I am not seeking to say something that is untrue when I say that the largest number happened pre-1994. The records are clear. The issue is what are we going to do about it as a Government. When I speak of Government here I am not speaking only in the context of a Barbados Labour Party Administration because at some point a long time from now the

Democratic Labour Party will return to Government and will also have to face this challenge and it is going to affect us all.

Some Honourable Members might have wives and properties overseas but there are those of us who are going to live here and do not plan to leave. We are 100% Bajans. The question therefore...

Aside.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: No. I am not speaking about him. You know very well I am speaking about you and your house in St. Lucia just finished building.

Now, that is not the level at which I want to pitch this debate. I was purporting then to go on to the other point which the Leader of the Opposition made. He said that I had indicated that legislation had been passed, but I never said any such thing. He put that up as a false premise to try to knock it down to try to make me appear dishonest when in fact I had not said it. What is important is that he then came back and said that he knew that the international climate prevented us from passing such legislation.

So the question before the Government is, and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East has spoken about the macro policy framework in a very clear way, given the international climate which prevents us from passing legislation, what mechanism can the Government over the course of the last few years put in place to guarantee access of land to Barbadians?

I want to go through some of the measures. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East spoke to two of them already, 6 per cent which is a low interest rate to first time property owners, \$2.50 per square foot subsidization for land in tenancies. The 100 per cent mortgage has given the opportunity to all Barbadians for whom it would be difficult to accumulate large capital and substantial sums but who are good salt of the earth Barbadians and who, given the opportunity, would faithfully pay their mortgages month after month. They are persons who, given the amount they are working for, may not be able to accumulate the 10 per cent deposit on a property; but if you give them a 100 per cent mortgage so that they know that they can buy a property, they are so grateful for the opportunity that month after month they are happy to go straight and pay their mortgage or have it taken out of their salary.

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Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Sir, the advent of the 100 per cent mortgage, under this Administration has been a critical measure by which the Government has allowed large numbers of Barbadians to have access to land and property. I want to speak in detail to some of the construction that has gone on over the last few years in relation to housing development in the Government sector, and some of the measures the Government has put in place.

Sir, earlier we spoke of the land bank of 1 000 acres, so a large track of land is reserved for Barbadians who want to own, either a lot to build their own house, or have a house built for them through a Government agency, or Government access in conjunction with private enterprise. It is not true, what the Honourable Member for St. John said, that we were not thinking of the issue of land ownership in Barbados. It was cognizant of the issue of land ownership, and rising land prices, that the Government embarked on a deliberate policy of trying to make housing accessible, and ensuring that large tracts of land remain available for purchase, by the average Barbadian citizen who cannot compete with some of the prices being asked by the private sector.

We had 24 lots built at Maynards, 44 at the London Bourne Towers, 28 at Deane Town, 20 at Flat Rock, 6 at Bonnetts, 12 at Bush Hall and 24 at Country Road. There have been two quads at Flat Rock and Brighton and 56 high rise apartments at the corner of Country Road and White Park Road.

In Stage 1 of the Settlement 2000 project, which was secured by a \$50 million bond guaranteed by the Government, there are 285 houses and 993 lots. In Phase 2, there are 115 houses and 770 lots. There have already been developed: 200 lots at Mount Brevitor, Bakers, Cottage, Groves, Orange Hill, Husbands and West Terrace Heights in the constituency of St. James South, at Briar Hall and at Simmons Road in Christ Church. Fifty-nine houses at Gall Hall, Christ Church and Gall Hall, St. John with 110 lots sold and 135 lots between Arch Hall, Blackmans and Lower Burnie.

Sir, these are all land measures to guarantee that the average Barbadian, a civil servant buying a house for the first time, a person who is a janitor, maid and whatever level of society in Barbados, who wants a first time house, the Government has put measures in place to ensure that you have access to it.

When we came to Government in 1994, the General Workers' Fund, which is used for alterations to wooden houses, the purchase of land and a house, or repairs to a house, the amount of loan, at that time, was \$416 345 89, in 1993-1994.

In the financial year 2000-2001, under this Administration, the Fund was topped up where the amount loaned out to people for this kind of activity, was \$742 431.19. From the year 1993-2000, a seven-year period, it went from \$400 000, less than \$0.5 million to \$7 million in loans. Sir, that money represents a substantial improvement to the quality of life for the average Barbadian. For example, a person who did not have a water toilet before now has one. A person who lived in wood before is now living in a wall house. A person whose kitchen floor may have been dropping through, is now walking on tiles. These are not just figures that have no relevance, Sir, so when he says that we have not been concerned to provide adequate housing for the masses and the wider public, it is not factual. It is time the Press stops running with this notion that land is being just swallowed up by foreigners, and Barbadians are being excluded from land.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute to conclude.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Thank you.

The Barbados National Bank under this Administration opened a window particularly for the use of people who are living in tenancies, for the construction and repair of properties. Sir, I will end by giving this figure and then come back again. It is interesting to observe that the Barbados Mortgage Finance is a Government institution and utilises monies put in by the Government and that institution represents 30 per cent of the mortgage market.

In 1994, the Barbados Mortgage Finance gave loans of \$4 620 000. We ensured, Sir, that persons who sought to borrow from the Barbados Mortgage Finance, could get loans for houses valued up to \$230 000. What is significant, Sir, is not just the ceiling, so it means you can build a house from \$10 000, if you could get a proper house built from that \$230 000. It is not only the ceiling that is important, it is the amount loaned out after the period 1994 and I am going to give the figure for the financial year.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. I do not think you should give the figure now. Your time is up and I believe you can come back a second time.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Yes, Sir, just let me put this on record, \$31 475, a substantial increase over the 1994 period.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I just want to start from where the Honourable Member for St. James South left off. She was making the point when she sat that the Barbados Mortgage Finance, over the last six or more years, has performed creditably to all Barbadians. In fact, in the year 2001-2002 the mortgage company gave over

282 persons loans to a maximum of \$31.4 million. This is an increase from in the year 1994 when they loaned only \$4.6 million.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. James South spoke about the General Workers' Loan Fund. We have loaned out a tremendous amount of funds in this country to Barbadians not only buying houses, but also to repair their homes and the records are here for all Honourable Members to see. I do not intend to speak too much on this Head at this time, because we will come back later to look at housing, but I want to make the wider point that a lot has been said about the sale of land to foreigners, but the Government has not sold a single piece of land to any foreigner.

12.20 p.m.

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Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Over the last six years Government has protected Barbadians from non-nationals who wanted to unfair them. The Honourable Member for St. John mentioned the John Moore Bar. When the owner of that Bar was being unfaired and had to move from that location, this Government intervened and purchased that location and is now leasing that spot to him.

Mr. Chairman, we also intervened on numerous occasions to provide access to beaches in the St. James and Christ Church areas for all Barbadians. I want to make a further point that from the time the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was a member on the Board of the National Housing Corporation (NHC), it only sold land to first-time homeowners. That is the record.

Most Barbadians invest in land because they do not own shares in banks and do not buy mutual funds. The focus of this Government is to ensure that Barbadians own their own land and home, but whenever the Honourable Member for St. Lucy gets up, he tries to compare Barbados to the Zimbabwe situation, which is nonsense, because Barbadians own the land.

If one looks at the home ownership, which is approximately 85 000 in Barbados, one will see that more than 90 per cent of them are Barbadians. Barbadians can get loans in Barbados to buy house and land. In my second reading speech I have shown that there is excess liquidity in the banking system of more than \$404 million over last year, so persons can find loans to repair their homes, to build homes and to buy lots.

I want to compliment the Chief Town Planner and his Department for producing a very fine document which shows that in one financial year they have approved more than 2 672 applications. The officers work under very

cramped conditions and the Department does not have enough staff to enforce the Regulations to ensure that people abide by the permission they get, so one has to compliment the staff of that Department for working under strained conditions to produce this level of approval. I have always believed that if there is only one department in Government, that can make or break a Government it is the Town Planning Department.

I have said repeatedly that the Town Planning Department must be properly staffed and properly equipped with up-to-date machinery and equipment, because as I have pointed out in the Second Reading speech, they have approved 2 592 lots. These figures also show that people prefer to live in the St. Michael area where 501 approvals were given last year, and this is followed by Christ Church with 270, and then St. Philip, St. George, St. James, St. Peter and St. Lucy.

I was told by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that the average number of houses constructed in any one year is about 1 000, so if we want to stimulate employment in this country, especially in the construction industry, and create an atmosphere of buoyancy, then the Town Planning Department is that agency to help because over the last year they approved 1 756 lots. If one assumes that more than half of these people will build their homes in this financial year, or in a two-year period, one would see that over \$50 million is spent on housing per year in this country.

We are told that the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company lends about 30 per cent of the mortgages amounting to \$31 million, mostly to the lower end of the market, so one can assume that over \$100 million is spent on housing in any one year, so the Town Planning Department has to be well equipped so that it can police to make sure that persons do not infringe the law.

In recent times a number of persons have been squatting which shows that people would want to have land. People are squatting not only on Government land, but on private land, and the majority of these squatters are non-nationals.

I think that the Town Planning Act needs to be changed to give the Chief Town Planner wider powers to enforce notices. When the Town Planner gives these enforcement notices, persons have 28 days to reply and a person can reply after the 28 days and it could take almost four years before any action is taken. The Chief Town Planner should have enough power to be able to enforce that notice within the stipulated period of the 28 days after he asks persons to move who have put up structures illegally. I think that is where the Act needs to be strengthened to give him wider power.

Asides.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: After the 28 days, the person could apply and if he does not move in the 28 days, then his attorney can also apply but it is not enforced in 28 days.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has got one minute.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: I am also of the view, Mr. Chairman, that there is a need for us to look carefully at all the regulations governing land use and the Town Planner's regulation.

When the Town Planning Department goes into its new accommodation in Block C, we are hoping to equip it not only with new provisions, but with proper equipment to ensure the officers can provide law and order to building in the country, so a lot of funds are provided for them in this financial year.

I thank you.

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head and to point out that earlier this morning I was in discussion in this House where I stated that I did not sign the Report, neither did I agree to it.

I want to inform this House that Report was laid on Friday December 18, 1998. When one looks at the persons who attended that Sitting, no where in this House of Assembly Report, which happens to be the official Report, can one see the name of Denis Kellman listed there as being present. I believe that was the only day since 1994 that I have been absent from this House, apart from when I was travelling on Government's business. Sir, at page 19 of the said Report the Honourable Sir Harold St. John spoke on the laying of the Report, and I quote:

"Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the Report of the Select Committee on the ownership of land interest in Barbados by non-nationals including Caribbean nationals. This Report has been signed by six members of the Committee. Mr. D. St.E. Kellman, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, does not support the Report with respect to recommendation No. 10. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, although he has not signed the Report, has indicated that he is in favour of the contents of the Report."

Sir, I said that to say this; when this Report was prepared, you will not find my signature on it. When the final Report was prepared I was not notified. When I was

called about the Report I remember making the comment about the Report to the person who called me - and I will not identify that person because, at this point in time, it does not make sense in identifying that person. I said I was in total disagreement with the findings. That day the gentleman told me they wanted to lay the Report and I said to him that I disagree with it and not to call my name as in agreement.

Sir, I was surprised to hear many Members of this House saying I had agreed to the Report. When I agree with something, I am man enough to sign it but when I disagree, Mr. Chairman, I do not want people to come in this House and give the impression that I had agreed with something when I have disagreed. It does not speak well to my character, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: You know that well. Mr. Speaker, I even went further and made a promise that I will not sit on any more committees, because I felt that if I disagreed and had reported that I had disagreed, and then the Report can be laid and the impression given that I have agreed with the content, then it would only be fair for me to withdraw myself from any more sittings of the committees. Sir, that is why I cannot understand why a Member would get up today and give the impression that I have said one thing and yet agreed to something else. It is not fair and I am tired from having to carry the baggage of other people.

Mr. Chairman, I have always called for a proper land use policy in Barbados and I think any Honourable Member who understands the particular people in Barbados will understand that if we do not have a proper land use policy, we are going to be affecting the growth of Barbados. I sat and listened to all those Ministers on the Front Bench who have spoken. They got up and quoted brilliantly the number of house lots that had been allocated to Barbadians. In their quoting, Sir, would you believe the two areas in Barbados they did not quote - St. Lucy and St. Philip. If they had a proper land use policy, there is no way that they could have been quoting house lots in Barbados and not allocating lots to St. Lucy and St. Philip. Sir, one would have expected that the two parishes one would have house lots for the citizens of Barbados would have been St. Lucy and St. Philip. This shows that we need to correct a particular problem and do so quickly.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is saying that we have not done anything in St. Lucy or St. Philip. We have begun to do house lots in Mount Prior, St. Lucy, Church Village and Rices, St. Philip.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, the use of the English language is a funny thing. The Honourable Member said

they are creating which means they are not ready, are not available, and are not lots as yet.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: No, when you want to correct me, it has to be correct. Nobody in here can carry me to St. Lucy and identify a house lot and tell me that they are numbered lots. Until the Honourable Member can do that he cannot talk to me about house lots. What is more disgraceful is that one would have heard the Honourable Member for St. George North speak about house lots in St. Lucy. No one would believe those house lots were there since 1994. Now they are speaking about 35 house lots which were available and left there by the DLP for the people of St. Lucy and up to 2002, they are now glorifying them.

Sir, I had taken the Minister of Housing on a site visit and had identified where we can have house lots. By the way, Sir, not one single piece of land that I had shown the Minister of Housing can canes be planted on. Yet, since that site visit, the Minister has been able to go all over Barbados and interfere with agricultural land, even though I had shown him a lot of land in St. Lucy that could easily be used for housing without interfering with agricultural land. The Minister admitted on the site visit that you are not just talking about it in Parliament but actually doing it by going on this site visit. Sir, up to now, even though the Minister has agreed that they are very much suitable for housing lots, no action has been taken.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Ah, that is what you call proper rural development and that is where I will allow you to have your rural policy based on that.

Sir, may I remind this Parliament that the lots I had identified to the Minister were not even near the area that I would like to see for an airport. Therefore, that cannot be an excuse in this Parliament.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: No way. That is not true, Sir.

Sir, we have to understand that I am one of those persons who believe that the biggest problem facing Barbadians now is not the need to have housing lots on the sea coast, it is the ability to get onto the beach. Sir, there is a particular cost for living on the sea coast of Barbados and, therefore, I would not encourage any Barbadian to want to live on the sea coast. A particular type of material has to be used and even where people are not close to the

sea coast, one can still find himself with these peculiar problems.

Mr. Chairman, if Barbadians, in their opinion, feel they want to own land on the sea coast and want to get rid of it, that is their right to do so.

12.40 p.m.

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: It is wrong for anyone to give the impression that Barbadians should not be entitled to the land by the sea.

Mr. Chairman, we have to understand that if there is the necessary beach access, Barbadians will not complain about land on the sea coast. People should not be allowed to come here, own land on the sea coast and behave as if they are entitled to the entire sea coast of Barbados.

Sir, under the Land Acquisition Act of Barbados the Government has a right to dictate where beach access should be.

Sir, I own a property on the beach in St. Lucy and the officials at the National Conservation Commission will tell you that I have already said to them that they have the right to use it as beach access for everyone. In the '70s before I owned the land, I used to traverse that land to get to the beach, and I honestly believe that I should not stop people from getting to the beach, because the same way I wanted to get to the beach and used that access, all people in the area should be able to use it as well. Sir, this is a principle that I adhere to. I am part of St. Lucy and I feel if I own land that everyone in St. Lucy and Barbados has a right to use it.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I have told the National Conservation Commission that whenever they are ready, I am prepared to let them do the necessary pathway to the beach so that everybody can have access to the beach.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The correct way would be to write the Ministry of Housing and give the land to the Crown so that we can then pass it over to National Conservation Commission. I think this is the best way for the Honourable Member to approach the matter.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I do not agree with anything done by the Ministry of Housing and Lands. If I give them beach access to land, the next thing I know, there will be a compulsory acquisition resolution in here to get the land and it will go to the wrong people. The

same thing I am trying to protect myself from, the opposite will occur.

Sir, I prefer to deal with the National Conservation Commission because at least they operate in the interest of the masses of people in Barbados.

I do not trust the Ministry of Housing for this simple reason. I have heard the Ministry of Housing accusing small contractors in this country of not being efficient. When I look at the records of the small contractors, I cannot see the evidence, so I have no intention of allowing the National Housing Corporation or the Ministry of Housing and Lands have control over anything to do with the masses of people in Barbados because that same Department took 1 000 acres of land since 1994, allowed the land to increase in price, and is selling it to poor people now that prices have gone up.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one more minute.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I have no confidence in that Department because they kept the land and now are about to fleece poor people by selling the land to them at a high price. If they are generous, they will do exactly what I have said. They should put in the amenities and sell the land to poor people at the price which they bought the land because if they were doing it in a district that already existed, they would not charge for the amenities.

Sir, I thank you.

On the motion of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, seconded by Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, Mr. Chairman reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 1.45 p.m.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 1.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended the House accordingly.

12.48 p.m.

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RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is resumed. When the Suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply and to that it will now revert, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is in Committee of Supply.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak this afternoon to support this Head which was so ably presented by the first Minister of Physical Development in Barbados. Since taking up the mantle as head of this Ministry, the Minister has shown that great creativity in this Ministry.

Mr. Chairman, this morning I heard the Honourable Member for St. Lucy in his first presentation speak about the land use policy in Barbados. I also heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church East speaking about a blend of things in policies and, from time to time, I heard the Minister responsible for Physical Development speaking about what would have happened if the Sandy Lane Plantation was not taken out of agriculture and a new hotel built there, and what the hotel meant to Barbados in terms of foreign exchange and job creation.

Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Transport and Works is involved in the physical infrastructure of Barbados. The Ministry is responsible for an efficient road network service, drainage systems and the maintenance of government buildings.

I would like to speak about land being taken out of agriculture in order to further develop the infrastructure of Barbados. I remember in 1970, approximately 30 acres of land was taken out of agriculture and a motor track was built in the area of Bushy Park, St. Philip. I also remember that race track attracted many people from overseas and in that way Barbados was known to people overseas.

Recently, the remaining 300 acres of the Bushy Park estate was approved for a facility. Last night I saw on the news that ground had been broken for the development of a facility at that same location which would include a golf course, hotel and apartments. I do believe that this facility would attract people to Barbados that would be bringing foreign exchange to Barbados and it would also create employment for Barbadians.

I heard that people were complaining about dust, noise and smoke. We know that there will be some inconveniences, but the project is going to be beneficial to

those same people, if not directly, their children will benefit from the project.

The Ministry of Transport and Works in tandem with this Ministry and we are responsible for granting permission for motor sports organisations to use the roads for rallying and we are concerned about this. There are many people in Barbados who do not like motor sports and they are very concerned about the roads being blocked off, especially on Sundays when they want to go about their daily activity. Whenever there are activities of this sort of sport, I receive complaints and this is a concern to the Ministry. Sir, we have to strike a balance because motor sports is a growing sport in this country. I believe it has a following second only to cricket. I will have to look at doing something to help this sport.

Mr. Chairman, we also have the concern of what we call the IRC, the (illegal racing club of Barbados). In my area, the Clermont area, between the hours of 1.00 a.m. and 2.00 a.m. you can hear the cars racing and residents complain about it. This activity also happens in Christ Church and St. Philip. We have to try to help these people by finding a home for this sport.

There are applications from two organisations who are seeking permission to get two pieces of land removed from agriculture in order to build facilities for this sport. The areas located at Vacluse, St. Thomas and Sayes, Christ Church. If permission is granted, I do believe it will be beneficial to Barbados. One of the organisations has plans which would include other sporting facilities at these locations.

Last year there was an activity called a carnival in Vacluse which attracted competitors from all over the world. Recently Michelle Bouton, a champion race driver, was in Barbados. I understand that she had an audience with the Minister of Sports and the Minister of Tourism and they discussed things pertaining to motor sports in Barbados.

1.55 p.m.

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Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: These tracks we are talking about, one particular organisation is asking to have 100 acres taken out of agriculture and the other one is asking for 46 acres to put into motor sports in Barbados. I believe that we in Barbados can benefit tremendously from it. The ones who are looking at the area in Christ Church have mentioned that they would be looking at putting up a facility which can seat about the same numbers as are seated in Trinidad. Over 25 000 people can use the facility at Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad. In Barbados, I believe we can seat about 12 000. Even in Antigua and St. Lucia,

they are going in the same direction and I know that Grenada also has such a facility.

We are looking in a direction where we can expect from this area large amounts of foreign exchange. Because of what happened last year, Barbados has a great amount of exposure in an English motor sports magazine and it was prominently featured during carnival here last year.

I understand that this year the carnival is getting off the ground about April or May with the same kind of activity that took place last year. The Canary Islands are recipients of such ratings but the problem with them is that they do not have the amount of airlift that we in Barbados have. I understand that the organisers, if they can get the facilities in Barbados, would gladly move much of this activity into Barbados. Mr. Chairman, I would hope that the applications would be looked at and if they meet the criteria, that things would be in place to make sure that Barbados too benefits from such.

Mr. Chairman, you have motioned to me that I have one or two minutes left. This is my first intervention and when I return I will tie in the road infrastructure with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport.

I thank you.

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL: I rise to make a contribution to these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, 2002-03 and I am going to be speaking on matters related to Town and Country Planning. I am very glad to see that resources have been allocated to the Town and Country Planning Department. I know for quite some time there were problems associated with this Department and on several occasions in the past I have called this Department and sometimes it took me as long as a week to find out what was happening with regard to plans that were submitted to that Department.

I would also say that this Department has also frustrated many a local person as well because it has retarded investment which would have had implications for foreign exchange as well as for employment. However, what has been on my mind for quite some time is the fact that this Department has refused permission so far to develop a significant parcel of land in Christ Church West Central which is in Kendal Hill for residential housing development and this, in itself, is extremely puzzling to me when, as far as I am concerned, one of the major problems facing Barbados is land ownership, the lack of proper housing facilities in some cases. Knowing that this is one of the major problems facing this country, I think that the Town Planning Division should be sensible or sensitive enough to recognise the fact that when it comes to developing housing projects, you have to look at these things in a very serious way.

This project is in the Kendal Hill area which I had anticipated would have been an extension to the Kendal Hill district and the surrounding areas. I was hoping that many persons from within those districts and the surrounding areas would have been able to get pieces of land in this particular development, which is approximately 25 acres, and which obviously could accommodate 200 to 250 housing options.

This development is, as far as I am concerned, right for residential purposes but for some reason the Town and Country Planning Division is claiming that this should be better used for industrial purposes. When Government has land, when Government has acquired land for housing purposes, I do not see why these types of developments should be turned down.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I do not want to interrupt my friend and colleague but just to set the record accurate. The refusal of the Chief Town Planner in respect of this parcel of land does not arise out of an arbitrary decision on his part, but the land to which the Honourable Member is speaking really is designated for commercial use under the Physical Development Plan 1998 which we are currently reviewing and that is why it was refused because it is within the commercial belt.

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL: I recognise that. As far as I am concerned, Mr. Chairman, the Town Planner has the privilege or the right to change or make adjustments to any of these things. I can remember I got on to the Prime Minister and I asked him for his assistance in this matter and I will tell you something, so far I have been very disappointed because he has not even called me back, nor even discussed it with me. I, myself, am very disappointed about that.

I am also very surprised to see the lack of support I have had from the Minister of Housing and Lands because he understands the position when it comes to housing in this country. I have made many attempts to discuss it and people just simply walk away, and these are things that I do not appreciate. There are many people, not only in my constituency, but once you recognise that in Christ Church South, in Christ Church West, in Christ Church West Central and Christ Church East Central there are very few pieces of land which could be developed, this was a good opportunity for those poor constituencies in Christ Church to have a plot of 25 acres of land being developed for housing purposes.

So far, I have had in excess of 1 000 applications for these lands and it is really frustrating to me when in the first instance I was told, "you can get this land developed for residential purposes". Then, all of a sudden, I am not getting the support from some of the persons I mentioned earlier on. I am a bit annoyed and I would hope to have a

discussion with some of these players very soon so that this situation could be rectified. People in Barbados need house spots, especially poor and middle income people and it is important especially to persons who are getting under \$3 000 a month to be able to get these spots which, in most cases, are sold at about \$6.00 a square foot by Government.

When one looks at land not too far above this particular area, you will find that land is being sold at \$14 and \$15 a square foot and I think that anytime the people in those poor constituencies in Christ Church have a situation where 25 acres of land may be the only piece of land which they may get a chance to buy part, it should be developed.

I think the Town Planner for that Division should be a bit more sensitive to what is happening in Barbados. I understand that up to now there are over 8 000 people who have made applications for housing options in this country, and it is important that we try to satisfy the needs of as many of these people as possible.

I would like to commend the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company for the fact that it has loaned or given mortgages to over 30 per cent of the householders in recent times. I am one of these persons who feel that the banks have not done well enough in terms of trying to assist many of these poor people and middle-class people to own land and to get mortgages.

I am also a bit surprised that up to now the interest rates have not fallen sufficiently when, in the last eight months, the Central Bank declared that the lending rates would have dropped. I still think that people in Barbados are paying too big an interest for mortgage loans when you look at people in North America paying 2.5 per cent and 4.5 per cent for mortgages. People in Barbados are paying something like 9 per cent, which is really something substantial.

Before you pay that 9 per cent, you have all sorts of fees to pay like commitment fees, even insurance, because they say that the loans have to be insured, all types of petty fees which make it very difficult for people generally, even if you are getting a personal loan when you think you are getting a loan at about 9 per cent, in actual fact, when all these things are added, you are virtually paying 15 per cent.

These banks have been asking people to pay loans, not on a reducing balance, but on the basis of compound interest, and I think these banks are not trying to help small people.

2.10 p.m.

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His Honour J. M. EDGHILL: Frankly, I think the Barbados National Bank should be out front in reducing the interest rates on mortgages and loans and then the other commercial banks will follow.

Sir, regarding the Town Planning Division, I think the Chief Town Planner, or that Division, should look at giving permission for the land to be expanded around existing areas. In the past, two decades ago, we were getting housing developments coming up all in various districts where people from all over the island would get a spot and there was no type of unity. In fact very often a man living next door to you, would not even know your name, only if you are some popular or eminent person. As a result of that, there was no real cohesion and community spirit within these types of developments.

I am hoping that, in future, the Town Planning Department should give priority to these expanding districts so that there will be a better sense of community minded people with developments taking place within these communities which, in itself, is good for Barbados.

It is said also that many of these districts in the past, especially in the poor areas which have not had that type of cohesive society, have developed many young boys and girls who have had a history of deviancy. This is something that we cannot afford to allow to expand in this country, because all of us will suffer in the end. I am hoping that in the not too distant future to get a meeting with the various players involved, so that this matter pertaining to land in Kendall Hill will be resolved to the benefit of the people in the area. I am looking forward some time within the next two weeks to get this matter trashed out and this would make me happy.

I think on that I would thank you, Mr. Chairman, and that I will come back another time.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Chairman, I want to begin my short presentation by commending the Honourable Member for St. James South, the Minister of Physical Development, for the mastery of her presentations so far. I think she has been able to do this with a familiarity of subject the beliefs that in the mere six months that she has had responsibility for this particular portfolio. Indeed, Sir, you would think that she was the Minister responsible for Physical Development from 1994 the way she speaks on this topic.

I want to begin on the premise that the sea coast and fishing rocks of Barbados belong to all Barbadians and to say too, Sir, that Barbadians have a right to go to any beach of their choice. Those familiar words "da beach is mine" now resonate through Barbados as though they were to an anthem - I would not want to say the National Anthem, but people say this and sing this with a sense of ownership

when it comes to our beaches. I think, Sir, that we as a Government have a duty to safeguard all areas of our sea coasts.

It appears to me, Sir, as though these sea coast areas are being gradually closed off from us, by some very selfish landowners. I had this experience in my constituency near Ragged Point. I have to say that on this particular matter and, indeed, most other matters involving access to our beaches, that this Government is aggressively working to protect the people's land, because that is what I consider the coastline of Barbados to be. Mr. Chairman, any Government that is worth its salt, will ensure that the land on the coastline of Barbados and the beaches remain in the hands of the Barbadian people.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that when certain landowners in this country take up their conveyances and they read a part of that conveyance that says, "abutting and bounding to the foreshore" that sends the wrong message where many of them seem to think that even the sea rock, because you say, "abutting to the foreshore", belongs to them and they have the authority to stop any boy, any man, any woman who wants to sit on those sea rocks and throw a line out in the sea, simply because it says, "abutting to the foreshore". They go up to the end of it and some of them would even want to claim the sand itself, as theirs.

I have to say that this gives the impression that some of us are indeed being sidelined when it comes to access to the beach. This point has often been made before, not necessarily by non nationals, but by our own Barbadians, who own the land that abuts to the foreshore. Sir, about two weekends ago, I was speaking to a white Barbadian couple who told me of an instance when they were actually on a beach, alongside a well-known hotel in Barbados and they were asked to leave.

Mr. Chairman, that says a lot because it was not necessarily anything to do with race but something to do with "da beach ent yours". Sir, I can safely say that this particular Government and Governments before, would have made it crystal clear that even today, if that had to happen to any Barbadian with commonsense, they would not leave, or they would not do what that couple did. Sir, we have instilled in our people the way it should be, and given them a sense of ownership of our beaches, and access to the fishing rocks and cliffs. I want to say something about this since a part of Ragged Point that is so well known, was put in the media in relation to the cliff, and you know that access to the cliffs is a must for Barbadians.

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Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: I do not think that any landowner should put a fence right up to the cliff face and prohibit the ability of people to go and stand on the cliff. I believe that whenever a landowner puts up a fence on the cliff, there should be enough pathway for people to pass. I think we use about 30 feet. Too many of these landowners tend to think that as long as you say "abutting and abounding" right up, it means right up and they can put their fence right up to the very edge and if someone wants to walk on that cliff, they will drop over. That has been the attitude of too many landowners.

Mr. Chairman, twice in St. Philip I attempted to go on the beach, and strange enough these were areas I traverse as a boy to go down to the beach - I think that is a word use in here by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy this morning and I can use it too - and I could not get down there anymore because a different kind of landowner has come in and has said that if it used to happen in the past, it cannot happen now.

As a Barbadian I sometimes share that feeling that I am getting cut off from the sea because of some of these unscrupulous landowners. That used to be a west coast and south coast problem but it seems as though it is now becoming an east coast problem, particularly where these two landowners are concerned.

Mr. Chairman, I have to put a caveat here because I do not want to give the impression at all that we are stifling or that we must stifle all potential development on the beaches. After all we must have hotels, guest houses and restaurants, but very often these are located virtually on the seaside.

Asides.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Chairman, owners of restaurants and guest houses on the beach must not block access to the beaches and prevent Barbadians from going on them because having them there does not mean that the beach itself should become out of bounds to Barbadians.

Mr. Chairman, some of us said some very harsh things on the Floor of this House when Port St. Charles was being developed but if we look now we will see the benefits which Government is gaining from that particular development through property transfer tax. Port St. Charles is producing millions of dollars to Barbados. It has also enhanced what is now a striving development.

Once upon a time, the only thing that used to be on that plot of land were three or four cows. That is why I said that we need to have development but we have to control things like beach access and the two of them should go hand in hand. It does not mean that because you put something there, then it is out of bounds to all Barbadians.

Mr. Chairman, I want to commend the Honourable Member for St. James South for the mastery of her subject matter so far which has been excellent.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a little contribution to this debate after hearing Honourable Members speak on those matters which concern the physical development of Barbados. I want to begin by saying that any Government of Barbados has to be consistent, especially in these matters concerning the planning process. It cannot be approbating and reprobatng at the same time.

Barbados is one of the smallest countries in the world and, despite 50 years of good family planning, it is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. That is all the more reason why the physical development planning of this country has to be consistent. It does not mean that it has to be rigid because, in my opinion, your physical development master plan, as has happens in Barbados, must be reviewed from time to time and in that reviewing process cognisance has to be taken of other unplanned physical developments which have taken place.

In our lifetime, we have already seen many shifts in the late 20th century and in these very early years of the 21st century.

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Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, there are people alive in Barbados, including myself, who can remember when we had Pelican Island, but there are at least two generations since the disappearance of Pelican Island into the Deep Water Harbour Development who have no knowledge of it, and will never have any knowledge of it. There are people alive today who remember Oistins Town in a way that only will exist in paintings and photographs and so we have seen these shifts.

There are people who live at Enterprise who, in their life time, actually saw the formation of what is now known as Miami Beach. That was unplanned physical development on account of poor coastal and other engineering disasters. I cannot put it any differently than that. There are certain tidal cyclical movements in our coastal and zone water around Barbados which brings about these physical changes from time to time.

Sir, when I was a child, the water splashed up on the Esplanade. Today, it is perhaps one of the best kept secrets in this country that one of the most spectacular beaches runs from the Hilton Hotel right down to the Pierhead - broad, white fine sand beach - that was not there when I was 12 years old.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom commented upon that two weeks ago.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, even in this connection.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: The point was being made by a Caribbean Head on the matter of pension that those, having lived in England for many years and who come back to settle in various Caribbean islands, in most of these islands there are reciprocal arrangements where they can get their English-earned pensions. When those who remain living in Britain get increases in the pension after retiring, those increases do not enure to those who live in those other countries.

Baroness Amos pointed out to Prime Minister Tony Blair that Barbados was the exception and one voice in the Caribbean was heard to ask why was Barbados the exception? Why was Barbados being treated so specially? Sir, at that point I had to intervene and say, "Excuse me, there is no special favour to Barbados. Twenty-five years ago when I was Minister in charge of social security matters, I negotiated that reciprocal arrangement and we were farseeing enough then in the Barbados Labour Party's Administration to make sure that those increments would have enured to Barbadians."

Sir, before I could have finished speaking, Prime Minister Blair said to me, "Billie, you were a Minister 25 years ago?" I said, "Yes, P.M., I was." He said, "well, you must have begun when you were a girl?" I thought I could be cute enough to say that there are some who still feel that I am a girl and that is how it arises from the comments the Leader of the Opposition was making. Sir, I do not wish to digress any further. I must come back to this matter because it is a matter on which I have some feeling.

Sir, for physical development to be orderly in a country as small and as densely populated as ours, there has to be a plan and we do have a physical development plan which undergoes review from time to time. The review must take into consideration all kinds of planned and unplanned developments that go on but, Sir, we cannot be constantly picking, in an arbitrary and ad hoc fashion, at that plan, at the whim or fancy of property developers, a politician or an ordinary land owner. Sir, in the legal profession, we have a saying that special pleadings always lead to bad law and if, at the whims and fancy of everybody who wants to develop property, whether it be

residential, industrial, recreational or whatever, the Town Planning Department is being harassed into moving away from what it knows is in the best overall interest, then we are going to have some disasters - and I have seen some disasters in my time.

Sir, for many years, I live at the Risk Road. Husbands was up above it. Many years ago, there was a big Scout Jamboree in Barbados and the land was cleared for the camp site. In clearing that land, a water course which was there for generations and hundreds of years before us was blocked and so necessarily when the rains fell, they had to find a way down. Therefore, the people at the lower level at the Risk Road were flooded out, in the very early 1970s, in an unprecedented fashion. It happened at Weston as well and it does happen from time to time.

Sir, I am very pleased to see that the Gully Eco-System Management Project is receiving a certain amount of priority in these Estimates under the Head of Physical Development and Environment. The gullies play a very important role in the eco-system of Barbados particularly in matters relating to drainage. The West and South Coast are a series of coral stone terraces. Sometimes people abuse these gullies by using them as dumping sites. The gullies are part of our water system as well. In some parts there is almost a natural dam. In other parts, during the rainy season, the water runs like rivers. In places like St. Thomas there are many springs. This is where the join between the coral stone terraces in Barbados and the oceanic upfront on the East Coast come together. Sir, but where that join occurs there were occlusions and this is where the caves of Barbados, and there are several, some developed and some not developed. At least Harrison's Cave is the most developed that we know but there are many other caves in that general area where one can see the join, where one can actually see the movement of water. When one goes into Harrison's Cave and looks for it, if he knows what he is looking for, he can see it. It goes back to a time when Barbados was virtually two islands; where there was the coral stone terraces on the West and South coasts and the oceanic upfront on the East Coast, and what is known as the St. George Valley, from which we still mine the best coral stone in Barbados, was water. Over the eons as it rose, we then had the fertile St. George Valley which is the bread basket of Barbados. We have underground springs in Barbados. We have very little surface water; in fact nearly nothing now that the Constitutional and Indian Rivers have gone. We have near no lakes nor rivers but we do have springs.

Sir, when I was a child what is called Paradise now was usually referred to as Fresh Water Bay, where one could sit on the beach, even now and dig into the sand a little, and fresh water comes up. Therefore all of these and many other considerations have to be taken into account

when we are planning. We are seeing things happening now and not recognising them.

There is a place in Christ Church called Sandy Beach - very popular, nice hotel, sizeable Trinidadian investment - and it is only now, at this stage of my life, that I understand why it is called Sandy Beach. The beach has tripled in its width. There is a sand bar outside of the Sandy Beach which is getting so high now that even at high tide the water cannot get over it.

Mr. Chairman, that is a very serious thing because what is happening is that Little Bay - and for those who do not know where Little Bay is; as soon as one turns into St. Lawrence Gap, that little bay before reaching Pisces Restaurant was Little Bay. Twenty years ago when people were dining at the Pisces Restaurant, the water was splashing up onto the restaurant, but now there is a big wide beach there. Sir, Little Bay is being starved and turning into a sandy beach because the water cannot get over the sand bar that is formed off Sandy Beach. There are more serious repercussions because across the river, behind the houses that people cannot see is a little swamp known as Little Swamp - and most people in Barbados do not know of its existence.

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Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: The swamp will stagnate and die if you do not get that interaction between the sea water and the swamp water. The same thing is happening at Graeme Hall Swamp. We know of the longstanding argument about the sleuth gate where hoteliers complain about the water on the beach, but if the water in the swamp is not oxygenated, you will get fish kills such as the one we have been seeing from time to time in Graeme Hall Swamp.

Sir, Graeme Hall Swamp is very important because it is virtually the only piece of wetland left in this island where mangroves will grow, and these mangroves are important because this is where pot fish breeds. When we see these catches becoming scarce from time to time, there is always a reason for it. We have to be careful not to butt mother nature and go against God's creative grain because, in the end, we will pay a price for it.

I remember when the Spring Garden Highway was swamp. It was also a shooting swamp and it is now a highway and only a few mangroves are left there now. I remember as a child being frightened to venture into the beach at Brightons because there was so much sea moss on the beach and in the water, but we do not see that now. Of course, the tourists like pristine water but the absence of

these things have severe implications for the survival of a little island like ours.

Barbados is the most easterly of the Caribbean islands. We are the first landfall out of the Atlantic and the reefs around Barbados protect us because this is a flat island. Naturally speaking, there are many minuses and that is why, in our physical development planning, we have to be careful not only in respect of the development that we deliberately plan but even in the way that we deal with the natural unplanned development and the unplanned development which are wrought by human kind.

Mr. Chairman, human beings, just by being, are very destructive. It took a number of years for the people who look after Harrison's Cave to work out why it was that the Cave was getting sick. It was simply because human beings were down inside the Cave breathing. Like any other living thing, we were told that for a few weeks of the year human beings cannot go down there so that the Cave can breathe.

We take this beautiful environment, the true natural resource we have for granted. Mr. Chairman, we have to be more careful about these matters than we have been.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one more minute.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I am sorry that my time has run out. I hope I will get another opportunity to speak to these matters because I did wish to make some comments on housing development and the way in which you are going to have a certain cohort in the population which will have to have rental accommodation available to them and others will need access to church and market.

I want to speak about the way in which you have to think in your physical development plan of communities because you just should not put up a housing estate here or a road there but we have to think in the context of building a community.

Sir, I have gone over my time and I hope I will be able to come back and speak to this in the context of that part of Barbados which I know best, the City of Bridgetown.

Sir, I am obliged to you.

Hon. Sir HAROLD ST. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for the opportunity to say a few words on this very important Head. I have listened to many debates on land use policy and planning in Barbados over the course of the years, and it has always amazed me that despite the fact that we have had Town Planning from 1959 to 2002, that there is a remarkable lack of knowledge in Barbados by

citizens and by some representatives on what is the Town Planning Law.

Sir, if more attention was paid to the planning process, how development plans are made in Barbados and how land is moved from one use to another use, many of the problems people speak about would be understood and appreciated.

It is my firm belief that contributing to the problem we have today is the fact that the process for informing the development plan and amending the existing development plan has been too slow. I am told, for instance, that a new plan has been formulated since 1998. We are now in the year 2002, yet still this House, which is an integral part of the process of approving that development plan, has not yet had the opportunity to have a holistic debate on the new plan.

Through my own investigation, I have some understanding of what the new plan would look like. The new plan is not radically different from what was there before and it will not be different in the future because we are still dealing with the 109 000 acres of land in Barbados which has been subject to planning control since 1959. We still have the settlement areas that long ago were identified as being likely to occur because of the physical characteristics of the land and the historical pattern of settlement and particularly the road system.

Sir, the ABC and its impact upon development was envisaged long ago.

2.50 p.m.

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Hon. Sir HAROLD ST. JOHN: All of that was envisaged when the ABC Highway was flat. As a matter of fact, the ABC Highway was a consequence to a large extent of the plans arising out of the Greater Bridgetown Development Plan in the early 1960s. Therefore, there was the linkage of that area with the South Coast and the West Coast.

Having regards to this matter, I must take issue with a number of points that have been periodically raised. I do not think it is that area of Town and Country Planning that we should be worrying about. I think what we should be worrying about in Town and Country Planning is the existing regulations which, in my opinion, are unduly restrictive of a more intensive development of the land so that an existing subdivision can bring a greater number of people into that subdivision. I think that is what wants revising.

Sir, I have repeatedly said over the course of the last ten years that I am of the opinion that there are existing subdivision permissions in Barbados, if fully utilised, which will satisfy all of the desires of the people in Barbados to own their own unit. That is my view, Sir.

I want to go further and reiterate that this Government is to be congratulated for its bold effort to remedy the alleged demand of 10 000 to 12 000 house spots in Barbados by the acquisition of no less than 900-1 000 acres of land. Sir, at a low intensive development of 10-12 house spots per acre, over 3 000 square feet will give you at least 10 000-12 000 house spots.

What we should be focussing on is why it is that the Government, through the land acquisition procedure which went through this House over the course of the last 10 years, that we are not subdividing that land at a speed which would satisfy the alleged demand of 10 000 to 12 000 houses. Why is it that we cannot get it done?

What machinery is lacking? What personnel is lacking? A lot of people do not understand that there are a lot of limitations to politicians. Politicians may think that they have power but the politicians do not execute their policies. However good a policy you can have and however good law you can pass in a Parliament, unless the implementation of the Law is carried out with the same spirit of enthusiasm as it is to create the Law, you are not going to get anywhere.

We must do a rigorous analysis of what are the constraints to bring it to reality, the policy that is envisaged and foreshadowed by the acquisition of 900 acres of that. That is what we must do. We must get that into effect.

Another thing I think the Government must be congratulated for is the recognition, as the Prime Minister said, that in a country like Barbados, the Government has only a supervisory and a relatively limited role in bringing to the public all of the housing solutions. Private enterprise, NGOs and others have an important role to play. In the context of Barbados, people like the Church who owns a lot of land seem to underestimate their role.

The Honourable Member for St. John is in a very fortunate position because in his constituency the Church owns a lot of land. The question is, how is it from the pulpit we have so much criticism, just before the By-election about land, when the very Church has a lot of land, seemingly does little with it to alleviate some of the problems that we have in this country.

As a matter of fact, at the seat of the head of the Anglican Church there in Collymore Rock. There is a lot of land with an old building on it. Why is it not developed? I know it is not going to be sold for 50 cents a square foot.

The basic position is, there are solutions to be had but it needs a combined effort. This problem is a problem that has been going on since 1946 when the Housing Authority was first formed, the question of how one brings enough houses to satisfy the demand. We had a tax incentive scheme at one stage whereby developers were to be encouraged to move from being simple land developers into providing a complete product. I remember the days in here Honourable Members pointing out that if you wanted to buy a motor car you do not buy the parts and put the car together, you bought a complete car. Owning a house is probably the most important decision a man makes in his life. To purchase a motor car is an important decision that you make in life. Of course, buying a house is also important.

In this country we must have an institutional framework to provide a total solution. Unfortunately, in the construction industry in Barbados, we have not yet produced enough people who would do a total job. Over the course of the years the Urban Development Commission was created in the early 1960s to develop Greater Bridgetown to Cave Hill, Wanstead, West Terrace, Oxnard and Husbands, and that was abolished after it had fulfilled its purpose.

However, it taught Barbadians that it was possible to have a holistic development, not only to subdivision, but buildings, and a number of models were produced. We later developed the areas of Wanstead, Husbands and Oxnard. Paralleled to that, we developed companies like The Ideal Homes and a few other holistic developments.

The Government in the late 1970s and 1980s, in order to bring more of them into operation, gave a tax incentive. The tax incentive was that if you produced a house of a certain value, the tax rate was reduced from 40 per cent for house builders to 12 per cent.

I think the Government must look at that again. We are not going to get big developers to deal with that because they have now picked on a new thing. They can now build apartments for sale with exorbitant profits because of the demand by other people abroad for houses in Barbados. They can charge \$400 or \$500 a square foot and get away with it. I hope that it is reflected in the income tax collections. I also hope that there is an understanding in Barbados that however much we talk about the great values of land in Barbados, that a review of these Estimates will show something.

3.00 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Sir HAROLD ST. JOHN: I do not feel that land in Barbados makes the contribution to taxation that it should.

When I think of the fact that taxes on property, that is the totality of taxes, land tax and everything, only contribute \$115 million out of \$1.7 billion in taxes, I say to myself how is the community getting the benefit of these fantastic values that exist in relation to land ownership and things of that kind. That wants investigating. That is why we must see the importance of planning. By a mere stroke of the pen and writing approved fantastic changes in values can occur on a piece of land in Barbados. That is something we have to look at.

I am not one of those who believe that Barbados should not, in relation to land that has a premium value, seek to get the best benefit of it because if God had put oil in it, we would have exploited it. If God had put gold in it, we would have exploited it. The fact of the matter is that for a narrow area of sea coast land in Barbados and some inside land there are people in the world who believe that it is development and are willing to pay a price for it.

I do not believe that selling it to them is inconsistent with satisfying the needs of Barbadians because, as I have said before, we have enough available subdivided land that, properly administered and properly utilised by the public and the private sector, can satisfy the alleged demand of 10 000 houses a year.

Sir, the last thing I would like to say because I want to put it in this context because I have been through this debate many times before and I can say, faithfully that by acquisition the Government by providing the Mortgage Finance - and that is a remarkable story because when one looks at what is happening in mortgage finance one can see something. It is believed, as I understand it, that we need 1 000 new houses a year. That is between the public and the private sector and this is what is happening. The Housing Authority has relegated itself to a position in which 200 houses are a monumental task for them.

I have been in here long enough to know that when men such as the much criticised former member for St. James used to be able to get up in here and say that the Housing Authority built 300 houses last year, today we have a situation. Today we have a situation with mortgage loans disbursed by the Mortgage Finance. It is one of the great institutions that has been created by the Democratic Labour Party but it never reached its zenith until the Barbados Labour Party came in.

In 1994, it disbursed 69 loans and that moved to 103 in 1995, 138 in 1996, 154 in 1997, 100 in 1998, 142 in 1999 and then 368 in 2000 and in 2001, it was 382. Those loans are not granted to people to take the money and place it somewhere else because the terms of the loan are that you only get the money after you have started and can demonstrate that the money is being spent for the purpose.

In addition, we had the Housing Credit. This is another great institution that I was part of fighting the IADB to put the original capital sum because the IADB did not want to give Barbados anything and we had to devise a scheme to say that we would have a revolving fund and that it was not being administered by the Housing Authority but being administered by other institutions. That organisation has performed exceptionally well so that we have those two institutions together with another very important institution in Barbados, the Credit Union Movement. We have the financial institutions to disburse the money without being dependent on the banks. What we do not have, are the reputable builders. I want to say more frustration arises among my constituents from builders who take deposits and then run away. You cannot find them.

Between the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Housing they should have a Construction Act in Barbados and the quality and the standard should be laid down because other countries have had to put that in place. From the point of view of physical control and standards, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Works. From the point of view of other areas, that is the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing.

I look forward to the day when a combination of an inter-ministerial committee between the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Housing will get to work and come to Parliament with a proper comprehensive Bill to control these people. That is the position and to sum up, we have land available now and we have the finance available now, what we need to do is to make sure that that land and that finance is married with the human resource personnel and the institutional framework so that we can produce a total product to satisfy the legitimate demand of these people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I am glad that reference was made in this debate by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to the Physical Development Plan because I well recall that that document was circulated in draft and that hearings were supposed to be held by a Commissioner appointed to hear the objections. That, I think was since 1999 and since then nothing else has been heard, but we see letters in the newspapers by a former Town Planner, agriculturalists and others who have been asking what is the state of that draft Physical Development Plan.

The Minister referred to the 1998 Plan, but I think it is important to know what has happened because even though the changes were not far reaching as proposed, they were still matters over which this Parliament should have some discussion, particularly in the agricultural sector. I feel that that is where the most significant adjustment...

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of elucidation, Sir. I do not think that the Honourable Member was in his seat but in an earlier intervention I did say that hearings on the new Physical Development Plan had, in fact, been held, that there were a few matters that were under review such as energy locations that were being considered at St. Lucy and so on, and that we expected that sometime around summer or just before we broke for summer the new PDP would in fact come to Parliament for consideration. Just to assist the Honourable Member, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I agree that work has obviously been done on it and I think it should be quickly. I did not like the concept of using the Ombudsman as the Commissioner, largely because he has already expressed some views in relation to the Physical Development Plan. Not that that should disqualify him, but the real problem is that, for example, if someone wanted to object to the length of time it had taken to get the Plan done and felt that it was the responsibility of a civil servant to do it, it would be a conflict of interest to raise that matter before the Ombudsman. Therefore, I believe that in future Government should avoid appointing somebody like the Ombudsman as the Commissioner to hear the objections to the Physical Development Plan. That is not strictly relevant and not something for which the Minister is responsible.

The point is that clearly agricultural policy is going to be relevant and I think the Minister of Agriculture has been very negligent in failing to make the point that central to his agricultural policy must be a very strong land use policy. I keep trying to explain to the Minister, not in a partisan way but I am trying to explain it as best I can that unless the people who plant sugar now, and those who are going to plant it in the future, are of the view that the land on which they are planting sugar is not, by the stroke of a pen as the Honourable Member for Christ Church mentioned, going to be taken out of sugar for other purposes, then they are not going to plant sugar because the difference in returns between planting sugar in Barbados and keeping land in bush is significant.

What you have to do is to mobilise. To put five or six acres of land in sugar production is more costly than if you left the land in bush. I think the Honourable Member for St. Philip South needs to take that point very seriously to ensure that central to his agri-policy is a constant repetition of the Government's land use policy and a more integrated approach between the goals of agricultural production and the objectives of the Physical Development Plan.

I say this in the most charitable way to the Minister because I know that in 1993 there were people who were hoping that the sugar industry would collapse and that all the persons who were speculating over golf courses and villas would be able to come in and identify the most

attractive areas in Barbados for those purposes and that having shut down the sugar industry, the sugar debts would be absorbed by the taxpayers of Barbados since they were locked up in the BNB and we would start a new chapter cleaning off all the debts of the sugar industry and allowing people to walk away from it essentially scot-free.

I think you need to be conscious of that aspect of our social development in planning your agricultural policy and I urge the Minister and plead with him, to take a more active interest in this question of physical development. I have noticed, for example, that a very large area of arable land in St. John has been taken out of production for a chicken farm. Of course, I saw the response of the Town Planner to that matter and perhaps that is strictly speaking within the law and I have no quarrel with that, but I was extremely concerned when I saw acres of land, the top soil, being removed to provide for chicken pens in an area that I did not feel myself, nor did my constituents, as suitable for that kind of activity.

3.15 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I believe that the Ministry of Agriculture must have a much more active role in determining the direction of land use policy, particularly in agricultural areas in Barbados. The second concern I have is the Scotland District and what the Minister can tell us about the development of the Scotland District, because you have an almost contradictory policy in place.

The Special Development Area legislation has identified the Scotland District as an area for physical development for which a person would receive tax concessions and so on. Sir, I can only speak to those who live in my constituency because I know it from personal experience. There are people living in parts of the Scotland District who are not able to get Town Planning permission to construct houses on areas of land their families have owned for a long time, and, in some cases areas where chattel houses once existed, have become dilapidated or removed from the site and then later on the owners are not able to establish that this land was used for residential purposes. There are the areas of College Bottom, Foster Hall, parts of St. Margaret's in Glenburnie in St. John which this has become a major concern.

I believe the Minister of Physical Development, now that this Ministry has been identified, needs to take a look at College Savannah in St. John which is land owned by the Codrington Trust, the Anglican Church, which as I have said already, to my mind is a planning disaster. Houses have been constructed on what is essentially a plantation tenantry area, in a very haphazard manner, making it very difficult for the Ministry of Public Works

and the Water Authority at one time to put down water mains and to put, now, other physical amenities including roads and so on, and I believe that people are still constructing houses.

This is a tenantry where about six or seven years ago, the late Sir Neville Osbourne and his agents in the Trust, were still walking down there and pointing out to people, as he did in the old days, that this is your lot and, Sir, by the next week, they were getting the Town Planning permission to construct a wall house, not to put a chattel house on it, but to construct a wall house. When you explained to the Trust that what they were doing were creating problems, they will argue that they only allowed them to put on a wall back. Then, within a couple of months an entire structure was there with some houses looking out to the sea and some looking towards the main road.

I believe the Rural Development Commission should be mandated to go into that area. I am certain that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South is very familiar with the area, and I would recommend to the Rural Development Commission and the Town Planning Department should go into those areas to see what could be done. They should try to salvage them. Even though we operate in a democratic and free market society, I believe the Government needs to offer assistance to the Trust to try and develop that land in a manner that suits our development goals.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South yesterday talked about domestic tourism in the United States and so on, but constantly, there are requests by Barbadians to rent beach houses for retreats or for a weekend and that kind of thing. I get calls from football teams all over Barbados who want to hold a weekend retreat. I assume they are going there to boost team morale and do other things in Martin's Bay, Bath or whatever, and there are hardly enough of those beach houses to go around.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I believe we need to earmark on the East Coast and promote the development of those beach houses for Barbadians. I believe it can also create jobs and it can develop a new area of tourism, say foreign exchange, for people who do not want to travel but want to stay in Barbados and take their vacation in Consett Bay, Bath, Glenburnie, Bathsheba or somewhere on the East Coast.

Years ago, those areas were almost exclusively utilised by white Barbadians or reasonably well off, upper middle-class, black Barbadians. Maybe, people would pool together. I remember in the days of Culpepper, you would

find three and four families staying up there in all those other small beach houses on the East Coast which were sometimes available, but there are not enough of them. I believe that more can be done to develop that aspect of our inland tourism. I would urge that the areas I have identified are suitable.

The Government had also announced some months ago, maybe it is as far back as when the policy letter to the IADB was prepared, that it would be bringing to Parliament a new Town Planning Bill which would identify new procedures for Town Planning applications and new approaches to physical planning in Barbados. I would like to find out if that is still the case, or whether the Government is going to maintain the current structure of a new Town Planning Act that was promised at that time, and some new procedures relative to how Town Planning permission will be granted and so on.

Some of these can be done by Orders, under the Town Planning Act. I believe some of them will also need amendments to the Town Planning Act. They should be done in such a way as to introduce greater transparency in Town Planning decisions.

In the United Kingdom, there is a whole area of law and there are lawyers who are exclusively retained to deal with Town Planning decisions, of various planning authorities, in relation to all kinds of applications. People get very excited about where you are going to locate a highway, or when you are going to convert a football field into residential housing and so on. They use the courts and tribunals to put their positions, and there is a more aggressive and transparent approach to Town Planning applications.

I do not think that, in terms of modern Governments, there are that many countries in the developed world in which the final decision can rest with a Minister of Government, for a variety of reasons. I certainly would not want it to rest with me, the point being that there will be more transparent processes put in place and, I believe, to safeguard Governments from arbitrary decision, and also to encourage Ministers to consult more widely and to have greater input from a wider variety of persons. Therefore, you need to develop some legislation that would encourage a more open and fair system in relation to Town Planning applications.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South talked about a lot of existing development in Barbados and the question of using the physical land space more creatively. There are many developments that have taken place in tenancies in Barbados, where tenantry roads have been built. Very often, you have tenantry roads starting from a main road, and travelling a long distance before they reach the first house. I believe that is the same for

many of our main roads where an attempt could be made to place more houses, especially in relation to those tenantry roads where you put in the physical investment, you need to encourage the owners of the land, on either side of those tenantry roads, to start using some of that land for the building of new houses.

I can think of Claybury Tenantry, in St. Joseph and Pool, in St. John. There is an excellent road at Pool but one side of it has all canes. The other side is houses. You could probably add another 30 houses on the other side where you would not have to put in any new infrastructure so you are not taking a large area of land out of agricultural production. I believe you will be saving the developer and the Government, if the Government acquired the land, from having to put in any additional infrastructure. I believe those creative means must be looked at to increase the land available for housing in this country, without seeking to cut up new agricultural land, where it is not necessary.

3.25 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL: Mr. Chairman, I rise to continue this discussion on physical development. I think the Ministers of the various ministries have to be very careful when projects, especially community projects, are being implemented. Before these projects are implemented, I think it is very important that the Member of Parliament for the area as well as certain influential people in the community should be told exactly what is happening so that they can have some sort of stake how these projects should be implemented.

I have been fairly quiet for quite some time in connection with a particular situation which has developed in Gall Hill, Christ Church. Gall Hill is part of the constituency of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, but since he is in the Chair this afternoon, and since I am very close to that community, I feel I have a right to represent the people there.

About five years ago, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central and I had a meeting which was centred around what we should do for the people of Gall Hill, Christ Church because there was a bit of wealth, and there was a lot of talk about the people in the area are bad and things of that nature.

A project was conceptualised which was to assist at least 11 small businessmen in the area so that they would be able to sell their products and so on, and we anticipated that these people would have been supported by the people within the area as well as the surrounding areas. In 1999, we had a change in the Minister and that Club Randall

Project was built, but before it was opened, almost every worker on that compound was from some part of St. Philip, and not one person from Gall Hill was given a job, not even as a cleaner or a gardener.

Secondly, I would have thought that if there were 11 shops that the people in Gall Hill should get virtually every shop. As a matter of fact, I told the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central that the people from Gall Hill should get the shops and that I do not really want any. As far as I can remember, only four persons from Gall Hill got shops and, as a result of the attitude of the workers on that project, the people of Gall Hill were turned off.

Asides.

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL: I do not care what you all are talking. I am telling you the facts.

Asides.

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL: This building is virtually a white elephant now because the people of Gall Hill feel that the building was not built for them. I am suggesting that in future, before these projects are being implemented, there should be some dialogue between the Member of Parliament, Ministers and certain important people in the areas so that we would not get this type of situation occurring again. In recent times, as many as five or six persons have moved out from this building and it is going to take some time to convince the people of Gall Hill that the project was really for them.

Mr. Chairman, recently, the Pride of Gall Hill Club, of which I am President, wrote a number of letters to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development asking for permission to use the upstairs part of the facility to hold club meetings and for educational purposes but up to now we have not received a single letter or telephone call saying that they have received our letters. Furthermore, the situation there has worsen because about 20 years ago a road was put in the middle of a piece of land which was used as a playing field by the Gall Hill footballers and netballers, and they have had to use the Foundation School pasture for many years.

In 1994 when we were canvassing, and the aim was to win an election, the people in Gall Hill were told that as long as this Government wins the election, a pasture would be made available to them. That is eight years ago. Up to now, there has been some type of little work done in the area but the fact remains that right now the people of Gall Hill and the surrounding areas do not have any sort of playing facility. Very often they have to go as far as the airport, Maxwell Hill and sometimes at the Foundation School when it is available for them to play their sports. I am telling you that this sort of situation is not good. I think

the people in Gall Hill have been given a very bad deal by some Ministers in this Government and I am asking the Ministry of Housing and Lands to do something about it urgently.

I understand that the aim is to buy or acquire some land from a property owner in the district that is bordering Gall Hill and Cane Vale so that the people in this area will have a good playing field. People do not recognise that Gall Hill is a very influential area and that some of the people who play football, netball and so on for Gall Hill live in areas like Silver Hill, Oistins, Maxwell Hill, St. Lawrence and Silver Sands.

People view the Pride of Gall Hill as a Christ Church thing, and I think it is very unfair to see the sort of deal that the people of Gall Hill have been given in recent times, so I am hoping that before the bell rings next time, that Gall Hill will have a good playing facility with a good pavilion so that the young people could play their sports.

This matter has me real vex, however, I plan to cool down a bit because if I ...

Asides.

3.35 p.m.

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His Honour J. M. EDGHILL: I think it is important that kiosks be constructed on the Highway, especially in the Kendal Hill area where so many people use that road. There are so many persons in the district who have been asking if they can be given permission to operate kiosks in that vicinity. I am working on it and am hoping that the relevant Minister will be able to do something for me for the people of Christ Church West Central, and for the people of Christ Church generally.

Sir, another matter which has been somewhat frustrating is that of the many people visiting the various Government agencies to get small sums of money. Sir, sometimes the amount of problems and red tape that these persons have to go through sometimes turn them off. As a matter of fact, I know of cases where guys, dressed in baggy pants, visit these places and people feel they should not be there because of their dress. Sir, that is how the youngsters are dressing and we have to accept them for who they are. I think it is important that some of these persons who have good ideas should be given capital. In some cases, these persons only need approximately \$6 000 or \$7 000. They cannot go to the commercial banks because they do not have any security. I think it is really too much red tape. I have sent many people to organisations like both the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission and

a lot of them have not been successful. Sir, these are persons who are genuinely interested in doing business and I personally feel that some sort of risk capital should be made available to these youngsters instead of we, in this Parliament, criticising them. It is time we give them a chance. Sir, I hope some Members on our side will come to their senses and recognise it is very important that we help the poor small man.

Mr. Chairman, on that subject I will take my seat and probably come back to talk to another matter later on. I thank you.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to take the opportunity during this intervention to respond to some of the issues that were raised in respect to beach accesses. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, in an earlier intervention, also spoke to the issue of land at Kendal Hill. If the Honourable Member wishes to have a meeting to discuss the broad policy framework and to see how, in fact, he can be accommodated, if at all, he can. Sir, we must, in fact, realise that we are following a physical development plan which designates land use and we cannot, simply because a Member of Parliament wants it, remove land from under the structure of the physical development plan and apply it to the use of that particular Member of Parliament.

Sir, I understand there is, indeed, a demand for housing in Barbados and if we cannot have housing on that location we will try, as far as possible, to accommodate lands that are designated for residential development within such close proximity to Kendal Hill. The agents of the Ministry of Physical Development and the Environment will remain willing to meet with him, any other Member of Parliament, public or private sector agency, to discuss the ordered and orderly development of our physical planning and project development in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, specifically on the issue of beach access. I know that this is highly emotional and emotive issue. Just to say access to beach excites all kinds of feelings and Members of the Chamber today have spoken at length about the matter. This Government has made strong statements that it is not our intention to have or to allow the privatisation of any beach land in Barbados and that wherever persons seek to block access to the beaches, or to wrongfully take over public beach land that are not their own private property, we will take the strongest steps necessary to stop that encroachment and that breach of the public's rights. The beach lands in Barbados are part of the national patrimony and we will not allow persons who believe that they have a superior right, for whatever reason, to take advantage of the broader Barbadian public.

Sir, as early as 1995, under this Administration, the Minister responsible for Town and Country Planning, one O.S. Arthur who might be known by people in this Chamber, brought a statutory instrument, No. 21 of 1995, which is cited as the Town and Country Planning Development (Amendment) Order, 1995. What this amendment sought to do was to deal with the whole matter of beach encroachment by properties owners. Section 5 specifically says:

“No gate, wall, or other means of enclosure shall be

erected closer than 10 feet from the edge of a coastal cliff ...”

Mr. Chairman, 10 feet in this instance refers to the land-most uppercut of the cliff. Therefore the legislative instrument is here which protects the wider Barbadian public. The intention is that insofar as the coastline allows, there must always be available to the wider public the ability to walk freely along the beaches and to use those beaches.

Sir, where beach land accretes, there are persons who are now seeking to appropriate it to their own use and shortly this Parliament will have the opportunity to review legislation which is going to seek to correct those persons who are appropriating accreted beach land and describing them as their private properties; lands that have accreted either by natural cyclical changes, other coastal work or by construction such as the groyning that has gone on in either north or south of the particular beachfront property which has resulted in the accretion.

Sir, the legislative framework is clear: “Past regulations require that along sandy beaches all buildings should be set back 30 metres or some 100 feet from the high watermark. In the case of coastal cliffs, construction must be set back 10 metres of 30 feet from the cliff edge. Where the cliff is undercut by weathering and/or erosion, the set back distance is measured from the most landward undercut portion of the cliff.”

Sir, it is clear why we must seek to put such stringent measures in place. Let us not fool ourselves. The Town Planning Department has not renege on its responsibilities or was tardy in implementation of the regulations in respect of this matter. Wherever we are aware of any breaches that have taken place, where it is drawn to our attention that there has been an encroachment, the Town Planning Department has acted swiftly whether as in the case of a wall, as was the case at Mullins, St. Peter, where some developers had gone ahead and erected a wall without the permission of the Town Planning Department. As you all know, it came down.

In fact, only two weeks ago the Permanent Secretary who has responsibility for physical development, other officials from the Ministry and I went along the South and West Coast to a number of properties, where persons were in breach of the regulations. Sir, we had to make some very hard decisions where people’s nice patios which stretched right out to the sea blocking access to the average Barbadian using the beach; people decorating in beautiful fashion and ignoring Town Planning regulations because they are determined that they are to enjoy the beachfront and nobody else is to; that they are to treat it as their private domain, it has to come down.

3.45 p.m.

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Hon. Miss. H. E. THOMPSON: Over the course of the next few weeks, these property owners will be receiving all the appropriate notices. Where construction is ongoing, the Town Planner will serve notice to stop. There are those persons who, despite getting enforcement notices from Town Planning, will continue to build and then plea with us to let it remain because they have spent a lot of money. Sir, we are not taking on those pleadings. Either you comply with the Law or you will face the full penalty for breach of the regulation.

Sir, members need not fear that we are in anyway colluding with would-be developers or property owners to deprive the average Barbadian of what is their natural birthright. In fact, during the course of this financial year, the National Conservation Commission, together with the Ministry of Housing, will develop a large number of beach accesses on the South and West Coast.

Specifically, the area opposite the Vista Cinema will be developed for pedestrian access to the beach; west of Woodville Apartments will be developed for vehicular access to the beach; east of the Windsor Arms will be developed into a pedestrian access; west of Windsor Arms will be developed for pedestrian access; near Coconut Court Hotel will be developed for pedestrian access and close to the Bridgetown Fish Market a pedestrian access is being developed.

On the West Coast, at Gibbes and north of Cobblers Cove, will be vehicular access. At Fryers Well in St. Lucy there will be a pedestrian access; at Paradise Beach near Esso will be a vehicular access. On the South Coast at Crane Beach there will be a vehicular access; at Ragged Point there will be a vehicular access and at a site to be determined and in the area north of Cyrus Shop in the constituency of St. James South, an area well known to the Honourable Member for St. James North, which is one of the few remaining open windows to the sea on the West Coast.

Asides.

Hon. Miss. H. E. THOMPSON: It is a small area and a lot of people pull up their boats and jet skis at night and we believe it can be sensibly developed to constitute a perfect open window to the sea and create beauty and recreation in St. James.

All of these are under consideration and during the course of the financial year we will approach the various property owners to do the necessary negotiations for the property acquisition. Clearly, some will come on stream before others as the negotiations are completed because some may be more difficult than others.

In addition to that, Sir, the Physical Development Plan at Section 2.5.4 makes definite provision and speaks specifically from a policy perspective to the issue of access to the beach and views to the sea. This matter is very much in our planning framework. The protection of the coastline guaranteeing access and free use to the Barbadian citizen is very much part of the planning of the Ministry of Physical Development because we are cognisant of the cultural moorings of the country, what citizens desire and the fact that people do not want to feel alienated from this part of the national patrimony.

Apart from the beach access, during the course of the year we will be constructing a number of new beach facilities at Silver Sands and at Brownes Beach, Bay Street in St. Michael. As you know, Brownes Beach is highly used by a number of Barbadians and elderly people go there early in the morning to enjoy a sea bath, and some of them organise breakfast after they have had a sea bath. There will be changing rooms, washrooms and other facilities in order to give the public more comfort when using the beach because when people go to beach often there is nowhere to wash the sand off their feet.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South has persuaded me that at Foul Bay in St. Philip, and we should have a similar beach facility to be used by local residents as well as tourists. This is another area where changing facilities and washrooms will be developed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: the Honourable Member has one more minute.

Hon. Miss. H. E. THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I wish to say in the minute remaining that harsh criticism is made of the Chief Town Planner.

Asides.

Hon. Miss. H. E. THOMPSON: The Honourable Member for St. James North is using the Barbadian vernacular and saying that he is a "proper boy," but I would

say that he is a "proper young man". Sir, he was working at the Ministry of Health as a planner when I first came to Government and we are pleased to have his skill in our Ministry. He does try to sensibly administer the rules in relation to town planning and to stick to regulations.

There are times, I concede, when he does not have the flexibility of the Minister to respond to changes in the economy or to respond to changing developmental needs because he is guided by the strict rules of town planning regulations and by the Physical Development Plan to which he adheres. He tries as best he can to administer those rules within a framework where he is sensitive to social and cultural considerations. He ensures that all our citizens try to adhere to the Law whether they come from urban centres, rural enclaves or the gold coast of Barbados, as it is called sometimes.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, I enter the debate at this time to make what I hope will be a valuable contribution to this important debate on the work of the Town Planning Office. I want at the outset to join Honourable Members in recognizing the strategic, an important role played by the Ministry of Physical Development and Planning, in the economic development process.

Mr. Chairman, physical planning issues sit at the core of our economic development. It has implications for agricultural development, tourism development, development of financial services, sports, education, housing and the list goes on.

3.55 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Hon. A. P. WOOD: We need to be very appreciative of the work done by the Town and Country Planning office and in particular The Chief Town Planner.

I want to address the issue of land use policy and its importance to agriculture and how this Government in a very structured and coordinating way has gone about identifying what we consider as a reasonable amount of land to further our agricultural development in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. John, not in a partisan way, speaks loudly to the land use policy and its implications for agricultural development.

The Honourable Member for St. James South reminded us that the Physical Development Plan is nearing completion, that is the review of the 1994 Plan. I want to remind this Honourable House that the Ministry of

Agriculture officials have played a very important role in the designing of a new physical development plan.

I would like to take my honourable colleagues to page 36 of the Economic and Financial Statements, 2002-2003, as was presented by the Prime Minister on August 8, 2001, when a statement was made by the Head of this Administration in respect of the land use policy.

The statement said that the land use policy, as articulated in our new Physical Development Plan, requires the 31 000 hectares be reserved for agriculture, that is about 77 acres of land. Sugar and cotton 11 000 hectares; vegetables 1 500 hectares; food crops 1 200 hectares; fruit 1 000 hectares, grassland 10 000 hectares and conservation 6 300 hectares. Such a land use policy will enable us to assure ourselves of future security and enable the sector to take advantage of local and export market opportunities.

Sir, we had a very explicit statement which was presented by the Honourable Prime Minister in respect of the land use policy as it relates to agricultural development.

I hope that having reminded this Honourable House of a commitment of the Government that we could put to rest this myth that the Minister of Agriculture and the Ministry of Agriculture have not been defending the interest of the sector with respect of the use of land in Barbados. I am not going to be naive and think that the interest and the business of the Government have to be conducted in any rigid way.

There are applications before the Town and Country Planning office which would not necessitate or otherwise require us to make slight alterations in the way we have set plans for ourselves in respect of the use of land in Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. James South and the Chief Town Planner, to a lesser extent, because he has to be guided by the Law, must have some measure of flexibility in respect of how they make the determinations in respect of the use of land. That is not to say that we should not set targets and try to hold to them in respect of how land is used.

Mr. Chairman, let me refer to another comment made by the Honourable Member for St. John. It has to do with the plans for the use of the Scotland District. This is a very important area of Barbados and it takes up one-seventh of the land mass of Barbados. The Government expends on an annual basis considerable resources in respect to the budget of the Soil Conservation Unit that is responsible for the stabilisation work there. We are determined that having made heavy investments in that area in the area of stabilisation, we need to be able to get returns in the area of agriculture, and we need to maximise the agricultural production capacity of that area.

We at the Ministry of Agriculture have recently finalised the drafting of an agricultural plan for the Scotland District. We have gone ahead and operationalised the landless project and most of the available land is in the Scotland District. We are taking the opportunity in the agricultural plan for the Scotland District to build on the important work that has already been done with respect to the land for the landless project. Very shortly I will be in a position to come to the public to provide details of the agricultural development plans for the Scotland District.

Sir, we are determined to make the most of the production in the Scotland District. That area extends into St. John, and the Honourable Member for St. John will get a chance at some stage to have his say on how those lands in St. John will be used for agricultural purposes.

The Honourable Member for St. John also made the point in respect of the use of areas that lie along tenantry roads which might be constructed or rehabilitated. The point he was trying to make was that in cases where you had long stretches of roads to upgrade those roads, the Government could consider constructing some houses. There may not be any houses there as yet, and you may have to travel long distances before you get to the first set of houses along the route.

Some Members on this side are of that view and I must say that the Honourable Member for St. George North, who has a passion for housing development, is of that view as well.

I need to issue a word of caution. The Honourable Member for St. John was very careful when he said in cases where we will not be making a heavy claim on agricultural land, we could consider allowing such lands to be taken out of agriculture and use for housing construction. While I would want to agree with him, once we are talking about a small amount of land which lie alongside these upgraded stretches of road, I do not think that we should be fooling ourselves in thinking that it should, in general, be policy. I had to caution the Honourable Member for St. George North that about that already. I have spoken to the Honourable Member for St. James South, the Minister responsible for Physical Development, that we have to approach this business with some degree of caution.

With respect to parochial issues, a lot has been said today about having access to beach land and we need open areas to the sea. I have a constituency problem that I need to raise here. I brought it to the National Conservation Commission's hierarchy already.

4.05 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Sometime ago, I was at my constituency office a Saturday morning and the team from the National Conservation Commission that had visited the Crane on legitimate business to replace a worn-out, abandoned life guard station came to me asking me to intervene in a matter which, if concluded satisfactorily, would have brought tremendous benefits to my constituency.

From the time I was a youngster, we used a particular stretch of road to get to the Crane Beach. We had the good fortune of having the life guard station there for the longest while. There has been some accretion on the beach at the Crane and to my gross surprise, when I left my office and I went to the area, a family living close to the area had its lawyer on the spot and they prevented the National Conservation Commission team on its legitimate business from replacing the life guard station.

It means that all the tourists who visit the Crane and use the beach, all my constituents who go to the Crane Beach, including myself, our lives are put at more risk because the National Conservation Commission has been unable to have that life guard hut replaced close to its original position. We have had now to arrange a makeshift policy to have a life guard there without the benefit of having a station being located at the most strategic location while Government officials, and the owner of the property who is claiming that the land which lies very close to the beach is somehow part and parcel of the area he owns, try to solve the problem.

We have a situation now where the Ministry of Housing officials, the NCC officials and the person who is claiming the land belongs to him and his lawyers all working together to try to come to an amicable solution. The only people who are suffering, Mr. Chairman, are my constituents and those who stay at the hotel and those who visit. I really hope that it will not take all authorities...

Aside.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: I am not talking about the wall but I am talking about the landowner, probably with the advice of his lawyer, placing a boulder along the way so that the area is impassable to vehicular traffic and beyond that, because they cannot replace the life guard station in its original position, the only people who are really suffering would be my constituents and the visitors to the Crane Beach and those who stay at the Crane Hotel. I hope that that matter could be dealt with fairly quickly because that area serves a very public purpose and it has to be sorted out very quickly.

I want to thank the Honourable Member for St. James South for responding in the affirmative to my request for the construction of a facility at Foul Bay. Foul

Bay, once again, has been restored to its former glory days in respect of persons from within my constituency and those from further afield using it for many purposes. It is once again used as a popular picnic spot.

The Transport Board, in its wisdom, has included Foul Bay Beach as a stop as part of its scenic drive. On mornings, you can see many of my constituents and others coming up to Foul Bay to walk and swim so that it is a heavily used area. Government has taken a policy, and I am happy that I am part of that decision-making process, that beaches like Foul Bay that are heavily used, Silver Sands in Christ Church which is heavily used as well, that those areas should benefit from beach facilities because persons will be using those areas and any Government should be responsible and sensitive enough to provide proper facilities for changing and recreation.

I shall return, Sir. I thank you.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate the Honourable Member for St. James South and those various leaders and officers in the Department of Town Planning and Environment for the outstanding work they have been doing. Even though I may not be able to speak with a great authority on beaches, because we do not have a beach, it does not mean that we, the people of St. Thomas, do not use the beaches as often as others in the country. We do support all the measures for paths to lead to the beaches, for open windows to the sea and other upgrades that will benefit not only our locals but the visitors to our country.

Mr. Chairman, I want specifically to make mention of a couple of areas that I have a particular interest in but also to make mention of the project in Welchman Hall and Harrison Cave and to say that it is important that as Barbadians we volunteer our services. I have seen over the last four years in that parish locals come out to assist with the various ventures in the Heart of the Country Project. The painting of those various bins by the students at Holy Innocents and indeed the sponsorship of that organisation for the Youth with a Future Camp that runs every year and every year seems to be growing bigger and bigger. That is the kind of involvement that is necessary if we, as a people, are to continue to grow together and sell the various projects so that locals can buy in. When individuals are actively involved it gives them a better sense of understanding and a closely knit interest and involvement to be able to help that project to grow.

I have a particular concern, Mr. Chairman, with the loss of top soil, particularly in the parish of St. Thomas. I know that for centuries we grew sugar cane and the sugar cane's roots seemed to have held the soil together, but now we have mechanised the industry, a lot of what we call khus-khus grass that was put to hold up the hedgerows to

keep that soil in have been removed because the machines have to enter the fields in order to have the canes reaped. Unfortunately, we are growing less canes and the whole industry is on a decline, and every time it rains, we see rather than just ordinary water just trickling down the streets a lot of it has the top soil. It is going into the sea and into gullies and something has to be done urgently in order to arrest that problem, otherwise, we will find that in the future we will have tremendous difficulty when we want to grow other crops on that land.

I would like to call on all those technocrats, the engineers and the persons in agriculture who know better than I, to look at how that problem can be addressed. We know that the cane holes and the drains in the canefields helped a lot with that particular issue, but now that is no longer happening, I think that if we do not address it, it is going to lead to long-term difficulties.

The other issue I want to raise, Mr. Chairman, is to do with Barbadians helping to make sure that they beautify their country. We cannot only wait for the National Conservation Commission and those persons who were working to beautify Barbados and the team that will go around helping to clean the streets and MPW but we, as individuals, need to do our own part in the neighbourhoods where we live. I know that as a little girl my mother would invite us to assist her in weeding the little gutter on the road outside of our house to make sure that it was always clean and tidy. Nowadays we rely on the agencies to do it.

I think we can go a little further. Many of us have properties where we have a piece of lawn somewhere on our property and I think it is important that we plant our own little garden beds, not only for flowers because that will help enhance the whole environment, but indeed, garden beds with lettuce, beans, pigeon peas which are things that do not call for any long periods in the sun cultivating them. It just calls for spending a few moments.

Indeed, it would cut back on our import bills because we go to the supermarket and buy everything that comes from overseas and we forget that we can be industrious in our own little country. We grumble when we go to the hawkers on a Saturday morning to do our purchasing in the market and we grumble when we have to buy a pint of peas for \$10. We grumble when a head of lettuce is for \$2. We can play our part in helping our country to keep that foreign exchange in as well as teach our children how to be industrious. Self reliance is very important. That helps to enhance the environment. Many of us as people in the political arena are going to have to encourage locals to start beautifying their districts. By that, I mean some kind of competition for the most beautiful gardens, whether it be a kitchen garden, or a flower garden, or a garden with herbs. I think that, too, would help to make those environments more aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Chairman, growing our own vegetables and fruits and herbs it cuts back on our health bills as well. Many of us are eating fruits and vegetables and we do not know how they have been prepared so that we ingest a lot of pesticides and other pollutants that are not good for the system and the food is not as nutritious as we would like it to be because it is what I call forced ripe. They do things with the food to help it to ripen quicker and therefore we are ingesting all of that and I think that part is also significant to our developing as a good nation.

I also want to talk about illegal dumping. In the same way that Barbadians can comply with the instructions when they travel in Canada and the USA, keeping their tissues in their pockets, their cigarette boxes in their cars and doing all the things they have to do, unfortunately, in Barbados it is convenient for most of them to throw them out through the window. We keep grumbling about illegal dumping on the streets and in the gullies but when you look at the garbage or the refuse that we see on the roads, it is no poor person who takes it up and drops it off on the road to Belle Gully, no person who puts it on the highway. These are people who have cars and vehicles who do it. I think it is so wrong. How can we train our children what is right but then they observe us doing the wrong? We cannot expect them to develop and do the correct thing.

I have seen, Mr. Chairman, a lot of wrong things happening. All of a sudden we are filling in a number of depressions, gullies. We are cutting down trees helter-skelter without the necessary permission and when you look at it, most of the dumping that is taking place is in the gullies or the watercourses. We have seen the difficulties that occurred in Weston and other districts in the northern part of the country some time in August 1995. If that has not taught us many lessons then we are slow learners.

I think it is important when such actions occur that locals make it their business to make contact with the Drainage Unit and the Town Planning Department to express their concerns. If they have permission and Town Planning says it is all right, fine, but more often than not, it is not the correct thing and to be filling up with not just mould but with galvanise sheets and pieces of wood and old cars is definitely wrong.

We need to keep our gullies clear. We know of the advantages of having gullies, nature trails and so on and it is integral to the whole exercise. I am happy about the plans the Physical Development Department has for the upgrading of the gullies and ensuring that locals as well - because many people talk about tourists all the time but as a small child we roamed all the gullies in St. Thomas and sometimes we went into St. Andrew into Springvale and Cane Garden. That was a form of learning and a form of excitement and recreational thrust and I think it is important that we create more of that kind of product to be

able to let our locals enjoy it as well as help it to bring the necessary foreign exchange into our country.

4.20 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the other comment I would like to make before I take my seat, even though it may not be a project under the heading of the Physical Development Department, it is to do more so with culture but it helps to enhance the whole environment and make Barbados more ecstatically appreciated.

Sir, we know that Rock Hall, St. Thomas is the first freedom village and there is history behind Rock Hall. Under the other Administration, there would have been two or more festivals that ran for one day, but it is not the thinking of this Government to just have a festival for one day out of 365 days in a whole year, and then be finished. Therefore, we have short-term and long-term plans for Rock Hall. This is because we need to look at our national heritage. We need to look at where we have come from in the past and see how we can keep relics and structures that others can come to follow the history.

As a result of that village, Mr. Chairman, the Rock Hall Freedom Village project will be coming. We are at the stage of making contact with locals in the area by consulting with them to find out their ideas and their needs. We need to put a landmark in the area to ensure that locals, tourists and others get an opportunity to understand what it is all about.

Mr. Chairman, it will not stop there, but we intend to acquire properties where there is a gully that persons could go through the trail. This has advantages not only for the visitors but the locals, especially the people in Rock Hall where they can become tour guides. They can have their own kiosks where they can sell souvenirs, food and other educational products for the advancement of everybody. As I said, Mr. Chairman, we are not to foist it on the locals but we have plans to consult with them to make sure that they also buy into the project that will be theirs.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, again, I want to thank the officers who are working in the Ministry of the Environment, especially in the last year, 2001. They were very effective in their jobs where they have been working in close association with all other agencies to ensure that Barbados is kept clean. Indeed, we have heard about rats in a number of areas and we have a mammoth task to ensure that when our children and people learn the wrong that we put systems in place to unlearn it and to teach them the right thing.

The Ministry of Education is going to continue to work in close association with the Ministry of the Environment, with planting trees and beautifying the schools' environment, and all the various activities we know are necessary for our people to walk with their heads held in pride and to know that they are Barbadians who will ensure that they help to preserve the environment for many centuries to come.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, in entering this debate again, I recognise that under the Coastal Management Unit, there will be some work to be done at Six Men's and the Judge Gap. I am saying that the work cannot stop at the Judge Gap but it must continue along the Kellmans Road going to Shermans and also at Clinkets. Anyone who knows the particular area would recognise that the road where it now stands is being undermined, and that some necessary coastal work has to be completed in that particular area, otherwise there will not be any access to Moon Town. You would appreciate, Sir, that would have a particular problem to St. Lucy, as you enter from that particular end.

I am also saying that the Fish Market at Half Moon Fort cannot continue to remain at that particular location. It is outdated and needs to be relocated to the west of the present site. The present site should remain the base because of the historical value. Previously, it was a school and many people will not know that, but we need to maintain that, along with the building to the south which used to be the Fort House. All those historical relics must be kept intact.

I am also saying that the jetty which was located in the Half Moon Fort area should be replaced because there is a need for it. As I speak, Sir, there is a lovely beach at Half Moon Fort, but we need to do the corrective work to make sure that it is not only a short-term beach but it is a long-term beach which will enhance the tourism development that is going on in that particular area of St. Lucy.

I have said already, Sir, that as it relates to Fryers Well, I am prepared to give away the access. I have no problem with that but at the same time, pedestrians cannot travel to the one at Maycock's and that must be included so that the people who live in the areas of Maycock's and Crab Hill can have access to Maycock's Beach, which happens to be one of the best beaches in Barbados.

Sir, because of the development in the area, if we do not do something immediately, we might create a particular problem, and the people in the Maycock's, Broomefield, Trents and Nesfield areas would not have access to Maycock's Beach. I think, Sir, that before the development

continues, we should put that in our plans. I am asking the NCC to include Maycock's.

I have also written to the NCC and they have done some work at Stroud Bay but that work needs to be completed. Many people are not aware of that, and the Honourable Member for St. George North knows well what I speak of, but if the work is done and a proper road is constructed at Stroud Bay, that road can go right down to Stroud Bay and you can have a turnaround at the beach. Maybe, you might be able to encourage fishermen, once again, to utilise that beach for their fishing exploits. Sir, if we are going to look at total development, we must also recognise that St. Lucy is part of Barbados and it must be included in any future development.

We heard a lot of talk about how many houses were built by the Barbados Labour Party and that between 1986 and 1994, there were not many built by the Democratic Labour Party. The truth is that sometimes people have to understand that different political parties have different policies. Sir, whereas the Barbados Labour Party might be interested in completed houses, the Democratic Labour Party at the time was about expanding communities and allowing Barbadians to keep that community knitted among themselves. Sir, that is why when one looks at the situation, one would have recognised that even though they did not build many units or houses, they sold a large number of house spots which allowed Barbadians to have their friends come and help construct those houses so that we were able to reduce the cost of housing to the individual.

Mr. Chairman, that is the policy that must be practised in Barbados because, the truth is, that the National Housing Corporation built many houses and when one looks at the cost of those houses, if the houses were built by the individuals, they would have been able to get a house and a car at the same cost. The high prices charged by the National Housing Corporation deprived Barbadians of having a house and a car at the same time.

I am saying that the Minister of Finance must look into this, and make sure that the National Housing Corporation be mandated to provide house lots and get out of the business of providing completed houses. The truth is, they are depriving Barbadians of their rightful position in Barbados, where they should have the capacity to have a house and a car at the same time, or have a completed house and be able to furnish it with the same amount of money.

The National Housing Corporation is now the biggest speculator of land in Barbados, and they have used that against the masses of people in this country. Sir, until we do something about that, we are not going to satisfy the wants of the masses of people in Barbados.

4.30 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I am saying that if anyone owns land on that stretch from Archer's Bay right up to Cove Bay in St. Lucy, they cannot do any building on it, so I am asking the Ministry of Housing and Lands to bring the necessary land acquisition to acquire that land because it does not make sense for anyone to say they own the land and cannot do anything with it.

I am saying that if the development plan says that there is to be a national park of Barbados that the land must be owned by the Crown and not individual citizens because it is of no help to the citizens, so the Government should compensate the people for their land.

I am also saying that the land should be developed so that it forms part of our tourism project, plant and product. The project I speak of is a project that will run from Archer's Bay in St. Lucy right up to St. Philip where we will be able to develop nature trails along that particular line.

The other point I want to make came home fully to me this week while I was at home. I live around many trees in Welches Terrace, St. Thomas and the monkeys know that I have fruit trees and they come and pick my mangoes, but I have no objection to that. When we debated the amendment to the Cruelty to Animals Bill in this House I suggested that instead of the National Conversation Commission just planting and beautifying Barbados with normal plants in their beautification programme 2000 that they need to recognise that we have to provide food for the monkeys also. If we are going to be serious about doing a project in Barbados we need to plant some fruit trees in the gullies of Barbados so that the monkeys can be fed.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: You do not have to tell the monkeys that the fruit trees are for them. You have to tell the human beings that the fruit trees are planted in the gullies for the monkeys not for them.

I am saying that we cannot continue to give people the impression that they can be cruel to animals and that they should eliminate them from Barbados. We should have a structured programme in the gullies of Barbados to grow fruit trees to look after the birds and the monkeys of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: The Minister of Public Works and Transport can behave as he likes. The truth is we have to make provision for them.

I am also saying that it is a good idea to provide mortgages for the people of Barbados at low interest rates. However, when the interest rate was lower recently, the loan limit was increased and this is the point we must consider. If Government want to make provision for the masses of people of Barbados to get mortgages, they cannot increase the loan limit to \$250 000. This is encouraging the same people who can go to any commercial bank in Barbados and get a loan to go to the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company thus depriving the masses of people of Barbados of having an avenue to the Barbados Mortgage Finance. Sir, this is a conflict of policy.

We are lending more money now than before but when you put it on a comparative basis, the masses have been deprived of funding that was once there for them, so we cannot only look at the amount of money lent, we have to look at the amount of money lent according to the particular sector. I am saying that you cannot remove people from the banks in Broad Street and bring them over to the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company and then brag about the money available for mortgages in Barbados.

We also have to recognise that we must build roads to our beaches because once roads are built by Government to these beaches we are not going to have a long-term problem but if we just go and say that this is a beach access and put a little track sooner rather than later that track will disappear, development will go up and people will be deprived of the opportunity to travel on those roads so beach access in the year 2002 must be seen as developmental, not complementary.

If we do not provide beach access for the masses of people in Barbados, we are going to create conflict within Barbados because Barbadians not are prepared any longer to sit back and allow people to come from other places who do not understand how we got here and how we develop to get the best of everything knowing full well that they worked very hard to develop Barbados and then see themselves as second class citizens in Barbados. The older folks would allow that but the young people are not going to allow people to come here and dictate to them, so politicians with their ears to the ground would understand what I speak of. That was done to our foreparents previously and they accepted that as a way of life, but the young people of today will not accept it. I am hoping that the Minister would understand that there must be public access in the Maycock's area as it leads to Maycock's Beach considering the terrain as it relates to St. Lucy where there are not many beaches. We must fully utilise the available ones there and make sure that there are accesses to them.

I also look forward to the park coming to Checker Hall. We have already identified a location because we must also make provision for the youngsters among us because people believe that a park is something that you just go and build and that is all, but a park creates camaraderie at an early stage in a child's life and teaches people how to mingle and do things together. That is why I will always say that the best thing that has ever happened to Barbados is when we had community life and the worse thing that has ever happened to Barbados is when we divorce ourselves from the community life because all of a sudden we have gotten so great and aloft that we tend to look down on the people we grew up with.

Those of us who have progressed in life must understand that we need to go and give something back to the communities we grew up in because if we do not do that, we will have communities without leaders. Some people feel that when they go back to the community they are degrading themselves. That is foolishness. What they do not understand is that when they go back to the community they were part of earlier, that they are helping to build bonds within the community and give those people a role model. What they do instead is to leave "the boys on the block" with no guidance and then expect them to lead themselves.

When we were growing up, the senior folks would have been under the lights playing dominoes with us and we could not even use a curse word because we would get a slap around our heads but now the youngsters are supposed to stand "on the block" and guide themselves. Mr. Chairman, we have to understand that life cannot be about selfishness only, it has to be about giving and caring.

Mr. Chairman, I can retire from giving back now because I have been giving a lot. Other people in the community must understand that it cannot be a "too-few" to give back but that all of us must give back. We must all understand that when we are giving back we are giving back because a foundation was laid for us by others before, and that is the foundation we should follow and encourage others to follow, but we are all being selfish and everything is for ourselves and we just do not care about others.

I thank you.

4.40 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

On the motion of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, seconded by Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the SPEAKER and asked leave to sit again.

SUSPENSION

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 5.55 p.m.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 5.55 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: When this House first took the suspension it was in Committee of Supply, to that it shall so revert. Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr D. C. CARTER resumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is now in Committee of Supply. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, as I said at the end of my first intervention, I will come back and look at how the Ministry of Public Works and Transport has added to the infrastructure of this country. It has as its mission, "The Attainment and Maintenance of an Efficient, Safe and Reliable Infrastructure in the Country."

For this Financial Year 2002 to 2003, the Ministry will be spending approximately \$58 million on its road programmes. Of this, \$33 316 847 will be devoted to the category of highway construction and maintenance and \$10 million in the category of highway rehabilitation for project, residential roads and the Scotland District, together usually referred to as Government's Four-Year Maintenance Programme. This Programme got underway in April, 2000, and we are now winding down on the second phrase that is, the end of this second year of this programme.

This Programme addresses rehabilitation and repairs to many roads which have been severely damaged as a result of the heavy loads being carried by these large vehicles using the roads of Barbados and also with the large numbers of vehicles, as a whole, which now number approximately 96 000 vehicles. In the first year, 2000 to 2001, it involved approximately 13 residential roads, 14 major corridors and 7 road in the Scotland District. Sir, some of the residential roads done in the first year as we continue to build on the infrastructure of this country were: Stanmore Terrace, Retreat Terrace, in the constituency of St. Michael North West, Gemswick, St. Philip, Foul Bay, Kew Land, Spring Farm, Grand View Heights, Welches,

St. Thomas and Bryan Road. The work on Bullens was suspended.

The Road Rehabilitation Programme under Special Projects, such roads were: the John Beckles Drive, River Road, Collymore Rock, Halls Road, Bay Street, Jemmotts Lane, parts of the ABC Highway, Speightstown By-pass; Constitution Road, Leadvale, St. Elizabeth Village, Church Village/Ebenezer and Jackson Main Road.

In the Scotland District, we did work at: Turners' Hall, Spring Vale, Morgan Lewis One and Two, Dark Hole, Boscobelle, and Glenburnie. We awarded a contract to C.O. Williams Construction Company in respect of road works in Mile-and-a-Quarter, St. Peter and again, on part of the ABC Highway in the area of the Clyde Walcott Roundabout.

The Rayside Construction Company was also contracted to do a number of works for the Ministry and Jemmotts Lane and Leadvale were two of the projects that were rehabilitated by the Rayside Construction Company. As I said, Sir, the Ministry is involved in helping in the physical development of Barbados and will continue to do so in this financial year.

Sir, in phrase 2 we also did many residential roads in Friendship Terrace, Goodland Gardens, and the Church Hill Development. For some time now, the Honourable Attorney-General was asking that we do something to that road at Friendship Terrace. We went in and completed that road for her and the good people of the constituency of St. Michael North East. Edghill Heights was also done, Boscobelle Nos. 1 and 2, Church Hill Development, Ruby Development, Douglas Development, Ealing Park South, Bagatelle Terrace, Redmans, St. George, Dash Valley, St. George, Windsor is in progress now, Cane Vale Crescent, Glebe Land Development, St. George, Coverley Terrace, Edgecliff Gardens, and Edey's Village. Sir, the Rehabilitation Programme will include: Lower Parks, parts of Ruby, Buttals, et cetera. We will continue to work also in the Scotland District.

Sir, at this present moment, we are doing some work in the constituency of St. Philip North where the road at Vineyard was severely damaged. It has just mud as its base. Sir, only this week, we have started a programme which will last for about 14 weeks and we have taken the opportunity to do it now in the dry season. Sir, the Member for St. Philip North was asking for this road for a long time now and he said he was very ashamed to go into the area unless this road was done. I walked the area with him, met the residents and we had a meeting just last week. He is quite happy to know that things are underway. This is a road that is going to cost some money. We are going to spend approximately \$800,000.

Sir, Cole's Road has to be rehabilitated. We are storing materials there in order to begin work there and therefore I am quite happy that the good people of St. Philip will be happy with the performance of their representatives. Also the road at Supers, St. Philip, a road leading into Fortesque and Ocean City, has been falling apart. Sir, again we are doing some work there. The Ministry of Works has built a temporary road and has paved it in order that work can continue there.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Sir, that road at Supers is actually in the constituency of St. John.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Sir, the Honourable Member for St. John has said it is half and half, so I guess he will half praise me and the Member for St. Philip North will half praise me, therefore, I am getting somewhere today.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Sir, for this year's programme, 2002 - 2003, as we continue the development of this country, we are looking...

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on point of order. The Minister is implying that St. Lucy is not part of Barbados and I would like his to apologise for that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order. Carry on Mr. Minister.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Sir, in this year's programme, we have a number of residential roads as well as a number of major roads. We are looking at Pegwell Gardens, Maxwell Plains, and Windsor, St. George. We have just completed for the Member of St. Thomas the works at Duke's Tenantry. Sir, I remember during the By-election there was a lot of talk by the Members of the Other Side, especially the Member for St. Lucy, about Duke's Tenantry. Now Duke's Tenantry is completely finished and the people are very happy with it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has got one minute. The guillotine comes down at 6 o'clock.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: We are looking at Locust Hall Terrace, Checker Hall, St. Lucy. Checker Hall is being worked on. I will say that the Member for St. Lucy did not put the effort into it in order to get it done but we had to go in there and made sure that we did some work for the people of St. Lucy.

Sir, also Barrow's Road, Arthur Seat, Christie Village, Pentecostal Road, St. Peter, Fairfield Cross Road, Deacon's Road, Goodland Road, Wavell Avenue, Seclusion, Roxy Avenue, and Vineyard. In the Rehabilitation Programme, we will also be looking at Kirton's Phase 2, Six Roads, St. John's Church, District 'C' Phase 2, Rose Hill, Eastbourne and Well House, Dayrells, Newton, President Kennedy Drive, Vineyards Phase One, and the Turnpike at Halton. Also at the area of the Water Street School we are doing work with the sidewalk. Also an area outside the Lester Vaughn School.

Sir, my time has run out but this is just an idea of the works that we will be doing this year. If time permits this afternoon, I will continue on the Programme. I am obliged to you, Sir.

5.10 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Chairman, I want to make another intervention. I want to say a few words on the Town & Country Planning Department. Sir, I think that any method to speed up application at the Town & Country Planning Department would be extremely welcomed by one and all. Very often, time is of the essence where these applications are concerned and nothing can be more frustrating to a would-be house owner or developer than the delays experienced at Town & Country Planning Department.

Sir, I look forward to the day when there are more experienced officers at the Town & Country Planning Department to work on a particular application from the beginning to end. In other words, when the application comes in, one particular officer would be able to follow it through every stage and take it to completion especially application for places like Durant's or Bushy Park.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to say that in my estimation the Town & Country Planning Department is one of the most necessary and meaningful departments in Government. Sir, if you look at Culloden Road or Bank Hall, houses were practically built on the road when there were not rules and regulation about the distance your house could be from the roadway, and you see what the Town & Country Planning Department has been able to prevent over the years.

In some of these areas, there is no room for the expansion of the road. In some instances, as you drive along, you can put out your hand and touch the hand of someone at a window in their house because the house is so close to the road. Sir, imagine what would continue to happen if there were no Town & Country Planning Department.

Sir, I know that efforts are being made to speed up the application process by computerising the entire system but, in spite of that, there are delays. We have to realise that these delays keep back the infrastructural development of the country and we cannot have a department like this characterised by delays.

If someone has money, he is willing to invest in Barbados and permission is not granted in time that person could decide to do something else with his money and we could lose that particular investment.

Sir, by and large, the Town & Country Planning Department has been fair and sound in its decisions up to now. This point was made by the Honourable Member for St. James South. I know that a decision may be made that a particular applicant does not like but very often when the reason is given and an explanation is made why the decision was not made in the applicant's favour he agrees that the decision has sound reasoning behind it. Regardless of what is said about the Town & Country Planning Department, we have to admit that the decisions are fair.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot be opposed to the Town & Country Planning Department for refusing to allow people to build septic tanks and soakaways in our water zones. We cannot be annoyed by such decisions because they are trying to avoid contamination of our water supply. There must be laws regulating this regardless of how emotional we get about the matter, and we have to admit that there must be rules and regulations in place about these things. In this regard we should appreciate rather than criticise what the Town & Country Planning Department is doing for this country.

For instance, the situation at the Belle Pumping Station - the Belle Pumping Station supplies about 35 per cent or one third of this country's water supply. If the Town & Country Planning Department is trying to avoid contamination of one third of the water supply, it means they are trying to avoid putting one third of this country's water supply at risk, and we must appreciate the work they are doing.

I believe any person who argues that you should be allowed to build without rules or regulations is absurd. I do not think we can blame the Town & Country Planning Department for reserving our best agricultural land for agricultural purposes either. I know that in some instances they have reduced the size of certain plantations like Neils and Rowans and have put houses on them, but some of the land is kept back for agricultural purposes.

5.20 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Very often Town and Country Planning is faced with a dilemma. Where will the people live if we do not free up somewhere for them to live?

If you look at places like Kingsland, Ruby Park and Union Park, those areas were plantations. If you ask yourself the question after looking at these developments, where would you put those people if you did not free up some of those lands? I would keep some for agriculture but on the other hand I would want to know where the people were going to live.

Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate the work the Town and Country Planning Department is doing even though we might criticise it from time to time, but I think it is performing work that is an absolute necessity for the people of this country.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, I will thank you for giving me this opportunity after sitting here for a while.

I would like to congratulate the Ministry of Physical Development for the assistance they have given the constituency of St. Michael North West over the past few months. I would like to deal with some matters that are parochial and some engaging the Ministry of the Environment and the Town and Country Planning Department.

One of the issues is the Pile Bay area. We are still awaiting the outcome of the study which was done to resite the terminal at Pile Bay.

There is a matter relating to the windows to the sea. There is a window at Brighton and the residents of the area and many Barbadians are concerned whether or not this open area is likely to be blocked at a later date. I think all of us who travel that area would admit that it is indeed a beautiful view looking into the sea and the Bridgetown Harbour. I have been told that the Coastal Zone is monitoring any building likely to take place at Pile Bay.

I would like to know what is the decision in the resiting of the terminal at Spring Garden and the possibility of what is likely to happen with the open area to the sea at Pile Bay?

Sir, within recent years, Brighton has become a commercial area and the residents are faced with an increased number of heavy vehicles in that area. I met with the residents and they expressed their grievances regarding the difficulty encountered in trying to cross the road in order to get to the beach and their residences on the Brighton beach.

Among the recommendations is the reopening of the access road at the far end of Brighton so that it could be used by the businesses which are located there. We will be submitting some recommendations to the Town and Country Planning Department and hope that at least some of these commendations will be taken into consideration.

Over the years there has been an increase in activity at Brighton. There is also the activity of the heavy duty equipment and vehicles in the area which makes it difficult for the residents and they are urgently requesting that some consideration be given to their concerns.

Sir, there is another area of concern which was forwarded to the Minister of Public Works for lights to be installed at Brighton and the Spring Garden Highway. I have been told that the installation of lights in that area depends on the approval of the Town and Country Planning Department. I am, therefore, making a request that this matter be given the urgent attention of that Department because it is extremely difficult for pedestrians to cross the road, particularly in the afternoon.

Sir, subsequent to the drownings at Brighton, a request for a coast guard station was made for that location and we have been told by the National Conservation Commission (NCC) that approval is required from the Town and Country Planning Department. Since we have representatives from both the Town and Country Planning Department and the NCC here today, I hope that approval will be granted.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: I want to raise a matter of concern as it relates to Subprogramme 368 (Environment Engineering Division) and the need for us to address the few local environmental issues.

I want to congratulate the Ministry responsible for the environment for the way it has been able to have Barbados well respected internationally. We are involved with all the major environmental initiatives and the way we protect our climate by way of our involvement in the ozone protection programmes. Sir, it is at the level of the ground where the air meets the ground that the Environmental Engineering Unit comes into play.

Sir, it is well known that Barbados has seen an alarming number of asthma cases. More people seem to be complaining of sinus congestion and other respiratory related matters and one cannot, even in the absence of hard scientific data, disconnect the issue of air pollution from these discomforts that people experience.

5.30 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Clearly, Sir, one cannot even in the absence of hard scientific data disconnect the issue of air pollution from these discomforts that people experience. I want to speak or raise a concern that I have and to urge the Unit in pursuing its environmental policy to deal with some of the very direct, obvious but persistent menaces.

Sir, today I had reason to be away from the Chamber briefly and I experienced what several of our motorists driving our 96 000 vehicles experience from time to time, the problem of driving behind a large diesel vehicle which has been improperly serviced - it is a matter of service and care - and your vision is impaired because of the billows of black smoke, and your lungs are assaulted by the various noxious fumes and other not fully combusted compounds which are a product of that.

Sir, in an island of our size, between the Ministry of Public Works and the Environmental Engineering Unit and the Ministry of Physical Development that should not be a difficult problem to resolve. We have, Sir, problems of dust. We get dust from the Sahara but we also get dust from regular construction but, more particularly, the lack of responsibility on the part of some economic units as the vehicle I mentioned. It is a simple matter that truck owners, bus owners and other large vehicle owners in pursuit of their own economic ambitions could not be bothered by the discomfort of other persons out there.

Similarly, Sir, we have quarries, an essential operation, the locations are carefully chosen and approved and where they are not the appropriate enforcement orders are given, but it is the day by day operation where in many instances enough care, due care and attention is not paid. I can mention districts around the island where quarries which are near to residents cause undue and unnecessary discomfort. We are not talking about a one-off construction project, we are not talking about the intolerance which has developed where individual citizens would not on a temporary basis yield to some discomfort to allow for the road works to go on or for a building to be constructed. We are talking about the pursuit of long-term economic interests and the need to ensure that operators of certain facilities known to cause discomfort and pollution discharge their corporate responsibilities.

We have another problem, Sir, persons who in one business or another whether they be laundries or other entities requiring heat and steam burn very heavy fuels, bunker oil, for example, and we can think of the situation with the Louis Lynch School which over the last 20 years has been in a situation of experiencing the most obnoxious and disgusting fumes and particles in the air that anyone could want.

We could think of even matters of more recent vintage, Sir, where residents in Frere Pilgrim, Boarded Hall and Lower Greys, areas that you know well, your constituency and part of it, the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. George South, those residents have had to face the most vile, most obnoxious and the most uncomfortable sort of air to breathe over the last few months. It would appear that the smell we now get is very similar to that which used to be experienced years ago when you were on Pebbles Beach just west of the MOBIL asphalt plant at the time. It is one thing, Sir, to make a decision to go to Pebbles Beach, or to Accra, or further down to Brownes Beach. You could have decided that you would only go to Pebbles Beach for an hour. How will you decide not to go home?

Therefore, Sir, it falls to the responsibility of this Unit for which this Parliament is approving resources to ensure that the balance between having these essential facilities - they must be located on the island and they must function - but it is important that we not only grant permission but that we also ensure that they discharge their responsibility not to minimise but to eliminate unnecessary discomforts.

We know, Sir, that plants of various kinds are operated all over the world and that for every pollution nuisance there is a technological solution. Therefore, Sir, it is important for us to ensure under this Head that the discomfort caused by various forms of air pollution is avoided. It is not just a matter of comfort because we are not talking about whether you can relax or not. We are talking about health and therefore the pressure which has been placed on our health system and the cost, loss of productive hours by persons whose asthma, shortness of breath, sinusitis which might have been triggered by one of these air pollutants, is something of a practical environmental nature which, in addition to our very wonderful international cooperation efforts and our leadership at the international level even going to the ozone, is very important, but we also need to take care of the air a little closer to the ground.

I would, therefore, want to urge on the corporate community that they recognise that in the pursuit of their legitimate economic aspirations for profit making that they also recognise that they have corporate responsibility to avoid polluting the air that we breathe. For those corporate actors who are not so minded to be responsible, then this watchdog agency needs to step in and ensure that we can all enjoy the highest quality life possible, particularly, Sir, the persons in your constituency and you are not able to speak in this debate so I have to speak for you, but those residents of Boarded Hall, Frere Pilgrim, Lower Greys who have had to deal with a most vile and obnoxious but persistent odour morning, evening, noon and night. They have no choice because it is at their homes.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, it falls to me in these closing minutes of the debate on Government's finances for the financial year 2002-03 to thank all members who spoke in the debate generally and under this Head as a whole. I think that apart from the Honourable Member for St. John creating some excitement earlier in the day that we have had generally a good debate and he did himself manage to make some good points after he had recovered from the smarting from the fact that it was in fact a previous administration which had done more harm to the ownership of land in Barbados.

I do not mean to be contentious in these closing minutes. I want in the time remaining to me, which is really very little now, to speak to a few of the policy initiatives I did not have an opportunity to speak to and there are yet many more that I will not get an opportunity to speak to and then just say some final words of closure.

If I may return, Sir, to issues raised earlier in the day by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central who spoke to a number of sporting activities which could possibly come out of applications before the Town Planning Department. I just wish to give some facts and flesh to that information.

There is at this time currently before the Town Planning Department three applications under consideration for golf course development. One is at Bushy Park in St. Philip, the second at Lancaster in St. James and the third at the Ridge in Christ Church. A second application has been raised with me but I would have to confess that I am not aware whether or not the formal application has yet been made. It is for the development of a new polo field and I believe one of the sites being considered if not in fact the site is also in St. Thomas.

You will recall that earlier in the week when I made my Second Reading speech I did indicate that there were, in fact, several applications in for the development of Vacluse and the surrounding areas. In addition to the application for the polo field, there is an application in for the development of a dirt track for racing at Vacluse and an application for development of a multi-sports complex at Searles in Christ Church. That facility, if approved, will involve a cricket pitch, a football field and I believe netball and volleyball fields, and a properly developed race track, hotels and conference facilities.

If these planning applications currently before us were to be approved, we would be creating a new niche for sports tourism and increasing the revenue enhancing potential of Barbados by putting on the ground a number of new initiatives which are likely to attract foreign visitors, foreign and local investment, create new jobs and add

considerably to the diversification of the tourism product, giving both local and foreign persons who are sports enthusiasts a greater opportunity to see a new range of sports and in different settings.

The timing of the application for the cricket pitch is of particular interest, given the World Cup scheduled for 2007 and whether or not we would be able to have in Barbados grounds appropriate for the playing of various games.

Outside of that, there are some other activities to which I wanted to turn. I want to make the point before I do that while persons may put in applications and press us for approval, they may write Ministers and bombard Ministers to speak to the Minister responsible for Town Planning so that they can get an approval, I wish to issue a warning to all of these developers that they must in fact not seek to subvert the planning process by bringing ministerial colleagues to beg me to give approval. What they must do is to go through all the chains and channels of the planning process. It is only when they do that, that we will be willing to give full consideration to their applications.

In this regard, Sir, especially where these applications involve removing large parcels of land from agricultural production, alienating it from residential or other commercial use, very serious consideration has to be given to the economic and social impact of the decisions made in respect to these land applications. In this regard, these developers must therefore be willing to go through the Environmental Impact Assessment process as a prerequisite to making the Town Planning decision. They feel that they can pull a big foot move on us. They come and tell you, "give me a conditional planning permission and then I will do the EIA. I do not want to spend any money unless I have a conditional approval."

What would that conditional approval be based on? We can only determine what conditionalities to put in place, how to constrain the nature of the development, what would be the appropriate uses of the land and the potential social and other fall-out if, in fact, the Environmental Impact Assessment is done first. So if these people have large amounts of money to develop and to put into development projects, they must understand that part of that money first has to go to the EIA process and they must stop trying to get around it.

5.45 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Sir, while I sit in this Chair, they will have to follow the process. I trust that will be a sufficient warning for those who are trying to subvert the planning process by all sorts of means.

I want to pass very quickly, Sir, to some of the other initiatives which I hope to mention because they converge with a lot of the discussions which we have had to date. In particular, I want to inform the Honourable Members that, in an effort to make our beaches safer for tourists and locals, new life guard towers will be placed at Royal Pavilion, Almond Beach, Silver Sands and Worthing which are very popular beach sites.

Similarly at Worthing, we will be putting up kiosks for people to be used for the vending of food or crafts. Similar kiosks will be placed at the Three Houses Park, in very much the same way as we have them at Batts Rock now, where people who have picnics can have sheltered accommodation, access to water and so on. We will be going into new areas, with the NCC, to put garbage separation projects at Rockley, Folkestone, Enterprise and Brandon's.

Barbadian are now becoming more sensitive to waste disposal issues. Persons are crying out for waste separation and recycling, and the NCC is going to be one of the Government agencies, under this Ministry, which will take the initiative of putting waste separation facilities in place at various beach sites. As you know, the four beaches we have identified are Brandon's, Enterprise, Folkestone and Rockley, are all extremely popular. We are going to use these pilot projects to determine what the response of the project will be, the nature of the success we will have in the implementation of this programme and what educational and other measures we are going to have to take in order to make the project more effective, and accepted by the public.

There are two other things on which I want to speak. Our cultural heritage is of great importance. We heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael East speak with great eloquence to some of the very famous buildings which are not now recognised in Barbados. This House has enjoyed debates on both sides, over the George Washington site and its redevelopment. Sir, during the course of the next financial year, the Town Planning Department and the Barbados National Trust will undertake an exercise which has not happened since 1984 and that is some considerable time ago.

Sir, that project will aim to look at all the listed building and the buildings that have particular cultural and architectural significance. We will try to determine where they are, but what is more important, the fact that a building is listed, sometimes frequently stops developers, because they feel they cannot have it knocked down, they cannot make alterations and the cost of reinstatement, exactly as it is, will be too high.

One of the things we will seek to do, Sir, is to develop a criteria which shows why a particular building is

listed. A building may be listed because of the person who was its occupant, Tyrol Cot, for instance. A building may be listed because it is one of the few buildings in Barbados to have Jacobean architecture, as in St. Nicholas Abbey. A building might be listed because of the particular detail to the windows, the roof, the facade or some other detail inside. Therefore, we will classify why buildings are listed so that if you want to make alterations, but only the windows are of a particular architectural interest, then you will know that you can make alterations to the building, but you must preserve the windows.

Sir, that will not only assist developers, it certainly will help us to keep track of what makes our own architecture interesting and noteworthy, and for Barbadians to know, with some specificity, where are these buildings of particular and peculiar interests. One of the initiatives also to be undertaken by the Town Planning Department this year, which I think is of great importance, is the production of a handbook for use by the general public.

I am deeply concerned, Sir, about the fact that when we speak with architects and engineers, while Town Planning is a critical point of interface with them, for them and their clients, very few of these agencies keep in their offices or personal possession, the Town Planning Act, the Town Planning Regulations or the Physical Development Plan. Hence, they are likely to make applications that are in entire breach of all the regulations and then, they do not understand why it is their application has not been approved.

Therefore, we feel that it is necessary to help to guide all members of the public, such as professional architects and engineers, or even Miss Smith in Haynesville, who might want to build a house, what are the rules and regulations they need to follow, what they need to put in place, what are the do's and don'ts. It is critical that this information which affects building and project development in Barbados, should be reduced to a language which is simple, condensed and put all in one place that any person can come and pick up the information and say: "Ah yes, okay, if I am building on the coast, I have to go back 100 feet from the high water mark". This is the kind of information we need to get out there to the public.

I believe that even though some politicians may be misguided, if the fellows at Deacons had that information, they would be inclined to do the right thing. Some people do the wrong thing simply out of ignorance. As you know, Sir, in our system, ignorance of the law is no excuse. Therefore, we are going to ensure that this information is widely available and disseminated, so that it is in the hands of everybody, who will seek to make any kind of construction or other physical development.

Sir, part of what I think we need to do is to sensitise and educate the public. Barbadians tend not queue, but go overseas and fit in. We do have the potential to do the right thing when we are educated and sensitised. Hence, part of what we will do over the course of the financial year, is to sensitise the public to physical planning and environmental rules generally, and into the sensitive use of our lands, water, gullies and communities.

You will therefore see, Sir, an enhanced schools' education programme. You will see the introduction of the Minister's Environmental Award of Excellence, because we believe that we should look around and pick out the individual or the entities who meet certain criteria for environmental excellence, or for managing the environmental resources, or using their environmental resources in such a way that the environment is enhanced, rather than degraded and so, as I said, we will introduce the Minister's Environmental Award of Excellence.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has four minutes to conclude.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Thank you.

You will see new environmental partnerships emerge as we seek to work with NGOs, other entities in the public sector, entities in the private sector and social organisations. Sir, far too often, when we are seeking or create a ground swell of information toward any particular area, we do not involve the Church, though the Church has many members all over Barbados and the Church could be a powerful lobby for the dissemination of information, so we will seek to create new partnerships in the protection and enhancement of Barbados' environment.

Sir, we will also introduce more community projects and marine clean-ups. The NCC will continue to use the media for dissemination of information which is of use to the public. It has reintroduced its own newsletter, "Grassroots", which I think is a critical tool for informing the public. As far as I am aware, it is available free of cost to the public.

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Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: If you want environmental information such as what to do, and what not to do, or if you want to learn more about plants, how the Ministry functions, on the National Conservation Commission itself and how environmental agencies of Government can help you to help our environment, then you should try to get a copy of Grassroots.

The Environmental Special Project Unit already has its information on a newsletter called "Community Use" which is very popular. Some kind person used to drop it off in my mail box and ensure that I get a copy of it regularly before October of last year. I know it is very popular in Vault Road, Welchman Hall, Allen View and surrounding areas in the constituency of St. Thomas. This newsletter will continue to be a source of information to the public especially in relation to Harrison's Cave and related issues.

Mr. Chairman, I deeply regret that we did not get the opportunity to go to a discussion on Harrison's Cave today but the media will be greatly utilised in the dissemination of information to the public.

I know that all Members of Parliament will now bullrush me one time but I want to make this public. We have a fund available for community projects within constituencies. I have drafted a letter which would be sent out to all Members of Parliament, including my colleagues on the Other Side, inviting them to become more involved in community projects.

Asides.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I am suggesting that they tap businesses in their constituencies and help them work with the Beautified Barbados 2000 Project. Mr. Chairman, there is a sum of money available within the Ministry that people who want funds to do environmental projects at the community level can access, but I must caution them. It is not a slush fund and it is not a fund for them to send their chief canvasser to get funds to help people pay their electric bills and so on. It is a fund for people who have legitimate community projects where we can monitor the expenditure to determine that it is going toward the source for which it was accessed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you must come to a stop. Make your last statement.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I wish, Sir, to assure all Honourable Members that insofar as the Ministry of Physical Development and Environment is the custodian of our physical, natural and cultural heritage that it is in safe hands and that we will do our utmost to ensure that our physical and environmental planning takes place in a structured way and in a way that is cognisant of the wishes of the public of Barbados to ensure that they are not alienated from the use and utilisation of land.

I am much obliged to you and beg that Head 31 stand part.

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

The question that Head 31 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 10 - GOVERNOR-GENERAL

\$1 152 466

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 10 stand part.

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

The question that Head 10 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 11 - JUDICIARY

\$214 690

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 11 stand part.

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

The question that Head 11 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 12 - PARLIAMENT

\$6 467 607

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 12 stand part.

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

The question that Head 12 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 13 - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

\$53 947 609

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 13 as amended stand part.

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

The question that Head 13, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 14 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE

\$48 171 090

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 14 as amended stand part.

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

The question that Head 14, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE

\$6 144 128

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 15 as amended stand part.

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

The question that Head 15 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 16 - MINISTRY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

\$7 499 527

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 16 as amended stand part.

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

The question that Head 16, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 17 - OMBUDSMAN

\$278 017

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 17 stand part.

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

The question that Head 17 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 18 - AUDIT

\$520 675

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to move that Head 18 stand part.

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

The question that Head 18 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 20

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

\$7 346 234

Hon. R. St.C. TOPPIN: I beg to move that Head 20 stand part.

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

The question that Head 20 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 22 - MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

\$26 112 568

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: I beg to move that Head 22, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 22, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 23 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH

\$224 425 898

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to move that Head 23, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 23, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 24 - MINISTRY OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

\$76 085 931

Hon. H. F. ASHLEY: I beg to move that Head 24 stand part.

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

The question that Head 24 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 25 - MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

\$38 175 802

Hon. A. P. WOOD: I beg to move that Head 25, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 25, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 27 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT (Recommitted)

\$83 024 325

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to move that Head 27, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 27, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 28 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (Recommitted)

\$23 199 998

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to move that Head 28, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 28, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 29 - DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

\$251 228

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to move that Head 29 stand part.

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

The question that Head 29 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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HEAD 30 - ATTORNEY GENERAL - \$56 525 682

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to move that Head 30, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 30, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 31 - Ministry of Physical Development and Environment (Recommitted) - \$39 991 944

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to move that Head 31, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 31, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 32 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN TRADE - \$34 540 362

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to move that Head 32, as amended, stand part.

The question that Head 32, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT - \$80 598 958

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 37, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 37, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 38 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - \$35 064 515

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 38 stand part.

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

The question that Head 38 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 43 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS - \$262 760 054

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 43, as amended, stand part.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 43, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD NO. 44 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITIES - \$27 091 470

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 44, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 44, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 50 - GENERAL POST OFFICE - \$10 843 879

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 50, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 50, as amended, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 1 - 3 were called and passed.

The Schedule was made the Schedule to the Bill.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one money Bill (with amendment) in Committee of Supply to His HONOUR, the SPEAKER. Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Bill was read a first, second and third time and passed and cited as the Appropriation Act, 2002.

PAPERS

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Financial Statements of the Barbados Mortgage Finance Limited for the year December 31, 1999 and December 31, 2000.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES (Recommitted)

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give

notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$10 803 455 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. 17, 2001-2002, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

OBITUARY SPEECHES - (recommitted)

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the late Colonel Herbert Alleyne Dowding, a former Member of this Honourable Chamber, passed this life on February 17, 2002. He was born July 14, 1913 at Orange Hill Plantation, St. Peter. We are made to understand that he was an Anglican by religion. He went to Harrison College until the age of 11. Between 1926 and 1931 he attended school at Brighton College in the United Kingdom where, in 1930, he received the Officers' Certificate A. In 1931, he returned to Barbados where he started to work at the Lower Estate Plantation. He became a planter. He was married in 1934. In 1938, he started what was then known as Green Pastures Dairy. It was eventually taken over by Detco Motors and was later called the Dayrells Dairy Farm but his particular interest as a farmer was that of dairy farming.

In 1942, he was appointed Director of Dowding Estate and Company Limited which, at that time, owned Lower Estate, Hopewell, and Cane Garden Plantations. He was also appointed as Commanding Officer in the Barbados Regiment as a Lieutenant Colonel.

He was a Member of this House between the years 1946 and 1951, and the years 1956 and 1961. I knew more of him rather than I knew him because I was a very young girl, certainly at the time when he was having his second term in this House, but I knew of him because the parish which he represented was the parish of St. George and, in those days, it was a double-member representation. From 1948 through to 1961 when he left Parliament, my father was his opponent, so to speak, and for several years in this House they both represented the parish of St. George.

He was a Member of the House and was also a Member of what was then known as the Electors' Association, which was what the Conservative Party was called at that time. My father, the late Frederick E. Miller was, of course, a Member of the Barbados Labour Party.

It has to be said of the late Colonel Dowding that in 1956 he had the rare distinction of having defeated the late Rt. Excellent Errol Barrow in the election in the said parish of St. George. There was that period when Mr. Dowding was not in the House when the late Rt. Excellent Errol Barrow and my late father together were the two representatives for the parish of St. George.

6.15 p.m.

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Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Then the late Rt. Excellent Errol Barrow lost and Mr. Dowding and Freddie Miller continued in the House until 1961. He was in 1955 awarded the MBE, Civil, for work he did after Hurricane Janet, the only hurricane which Barbados suffered in the 20th century. We hope that we will not suffer too many more of them in the 21st century. In 1964, Colonel Dowding was awarded the OBE, Military, by Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace. He was a member of the Southern District Council and in that connection the Honourable Member for Christ Church South would have known him, having been legal advisor to the Southern District Council for many years. I am sorry that the Honourable Member is not now in his place because he would have certainly spoken on this occasion. Colonel Dowding was of tremendous help to his constituents during the year when he was a parliamentary representative and at that time most of his constituents were peasant farmers of one kind or another. The Lower Estate Group of companies of which he was a director also provided much financial assistance to many of the St. George peasant farmers.

He was also involved with the Boys' Scouts and did much civic duty. He was the person who was responsible for the acquisition of what is now the headquarters of the Barbados Boys' Scouts at Hazelwood at Collymore Rock. He was also a Church Warden and member of the St. George vestry which is where he was churched on February 22 last month and later the interment was held at the Military Cemetery.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, which was an achievement, four daughters and a son.

Mr. Speaker, we wish for the record to show our appreciation for the service which the late Colonel Dowding gave to this country both as a parliamentarian and in the ordinary manner of civic duty and would wish for the relevant and suitable Resolution to be copied to the grieving widow and children.

It should not go unremarked for the record that at the time of his death the late Colonel Dowding would have been the oldest living parliamentarian. This honour will now go to another parliamentarian.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I join with the members of the Government in supporting this Resolution and extending our sympathy to the family of the late Herbert Dowding and thanking him for his service to this Parliament and to Barbados.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to place on record the deep gratitude of the people of St. George to the late Herbert Dowding who represented St. George during a very crucial period in our history. He

represented St. George in the period 1946 to 1951 and then 1956 to 1961.

The records will show that he provided valuable service to the people of St. George because he was one of the persons who helped to lay the foundation to provide piped water into the rural areas of St. George.

He is also known for the fact that he helped many small farmers in providing transportation for their canes because he was the owner of Lower Estate Factory.

It is also of note that he was a member of the Conservative group in the House at the time. He was the member of the group that opposed adult suffrage but the records will show that he did not speak in that debate. Sir, on behalf of the people of St. George, I want to express condolences to his wife and family.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I want to associate myself with the tributes paid by all Honourable Members who preceded me. About 12 years ago in Sunset Crest, I saw this elderly man every evening after 5:00 o'clock strolled his dog along Flamboyant Avenue, Sunset Crest and then up Cemetery Road to take the dog for exercise. In time I discovered that he lived along Flamboyant Avenue, that he had a cherry tree that bore cherries of a size I have never seen before and that he was a member of this Honourable House.

I found him very quiet and unassuming. He never asked me for any personal favour but he raised the concerns of the community without requesting any particular attention.

Mr. Speaker, I learnt that he was a member and director of Dowding Estates and Trading Company Limited and that he had received national honours. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West, who is not in his chair, was the person who established a friendship between Mr. Dowding and myself.

I will conclude by saying that when Mr. Dowding left this House, he would have served for 10 years and he never got one cent in pension. I want for the record to say that there is no question that despite the fact that before his death he was the oldest parliamentarian alive, he did not get one cent in money for his years' service. Between 1946 and 1951, it would have been an honour to be a Member of the House of Assembly and there was no remuneration.

I want to associate myself with the tributes paid by the Honourable Member for St. George North, the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I also want to associate myself with the comments made because when I first started to work with the sugar industry Mr. Dowding was a director of the BSIL board. I want to mention the point even though people do not know it that a lot of small farmers from the north of Barbados were able to purchase land in the Lower Estate area because of Mr. Dowding.

I also want to make the point that he used his connection between being a member of Parliament and the owner of Detco Motors to make sure that some of the masses were allowed to get vehicles. I want to make that particular point for the records this evening.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to associate this Honourable Chair with the sentiments expressed with the passing of the late Honourable Member. This House accepts the Resolution of Sympathy and so directs that this Resolution be sent to the grieving relatives.

As a mark of respect of the late Honourable Member, I now invite all Honourable Members and all present to stand and observe one minute's silence.

One minute's silence was observed by all.

6.25 p.m.

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CONGRATULATORY SPEECHES

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLAR: Mr. Speaker, the matter on the Order Paper speaks, not only to obituaries but to congratulations. I wish for the record to speak a few words of congratulations in respect of our new learned Attorney-General who on Monday of this week, as we say in our profession, "to take Silk". She was elevated to the Inner Bar and is now one of Her Majesty's Queen's Counsels.

Sir, this for her and for me and indeed, I would venture to suggest for all of us, was a matter of no small moment. The Honourable Member, who is a graduate of the London School of Economics, came back to practise at the local Bar in Barbados, was called to the Bar, having already been called to the Bar of England and Wales, 14 years ago. Sir, at that time, I am made to understand that she would have been the youngest person at the Bar and may well have exceeded her father's record as the youngest person coming to the Barbados' Bar to practise there.

The Honourable Member excelled at the private Bar, like her father before her, rather favoured the criminal law above the civil law; not that she is not versed in civil matters but I think she distinguished herself at the criminal law, and rose in the estimation of her colleagues, those at the Bar and those who sat on the Bench.

Sir, like so many before her who were lawyers, the natural progression from the practice of law to the making of the law brought her to this Honourable House 11 years ago. She also excelled in her other profession, so to speak, politics. The twinned ambitions of law and politics have allowed her to make, at a very young age, a single contribution to the life of our little island State.

The Honourable Member served in her first years in the Other Place but came to this place and went immediately to the Front Bench where she served with distinction as a Minister of Education and a Minister of Culture. It would be difficult for me to distinguish one above the other. I suspect that her natural inclination for cultural matters may have given her more joy, but what she was able to accomplish and I would particularly wish to single out the project which has now come to be known as EduTech 2000, will mark her out in the history of Barbados in years to come.

Sir, she has come to politics and to public life at a time of very dynamic and rapid change. She brings a brilliance of intellect and ongoing hunger and thirst for greater knowledge. She has skills which may not be known to all of us, Sir, which she employs. She was good at mathematics and did have an interest in linguistics, as an "A" level student at Queen's College before she went off to university. She has a great ability for extemporaneous speaking which is much admired. She in her generation, she is already, one would have to say, a legend in her own time is a model to which young women and men, not only in her constituency which is St. Michael North East but across Barbados, hold up to their children to look to her example.

In the second administration of the Barbados Labour Party, another new and early honour has come to her. She was appointed to the post of Attorney General and is the first woman, and certainly the first woman at her age, who has achieved this very high learned and esteemed position.

The observation was made last Monday morning when she was called to the Inner Bar. The post of Attorney-General is one of the very few mentioned in our Constitution. The Constitution speaks of a Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and an Attorney-General. This brings great joy to us who are women in this Chamber, and I happen to say so. I feel a great sense of pride in her achievement but that she would take Silk, again I think that she is smashing another record, perhaps, at the youngest age of anyone ever taking Silk and becoming a Queen's Counsel in Barbados.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is setting an exceedingly high bar for young men and young women who will come after her. She has embarked upon her task as an Attorney-General showing a great

appreciation of the law, certainly a maturity beyond her years and a level of judgement beyond her years. Her natural love of the law has come to her assistance and I believe I see all of the markings and early indications of someone who is going to become, perhaps, one of the most distinguished, if not the most distinguished Attorney-General in her time and one would hope in our time as well.

It is no small accomplishment. There are some among us who may think that it is an automatic thing that you become an Attorney-General and you are elevated to Queen's Counsel. Sir, as Attorney-General you are also the Leader of the Bar. I think that in the case of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, were she not in this situation where, like so many of us in here, she has taken the decision to make the sacrifice, and it is a tremendous sacrifice, particularly if you love the law and were good at the practice of it, to come to what I like to think of as higher public service. Sir, possibly if she had not taken this course, she might have achieved that accomplishment even before this time.

It is said that all good things cometh to those who endure and I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is made of that metal, the enduring kind. Perhaps, in life, in the end, that is what we have to do to endure.

I would wish, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to move the passing of a formal Resolution of the warmest and the most heartfelt congratulations to our Attorney-General upon her elevation to the Inner Bar and her becoming one of Her Majesty's learned counsel.

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Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: In many ways, the Honourable Member has followed a grandfather and a father and that is a point of no mean distinction either in this Honourable Chamber. In that case, also, she may be one of the very few to have followed a grandfather and a father into this Honourable House and to her family she clearly is bringing great distinction. I believe that it will give much pleasure to her parents and her immediate family, that they should receive a copy of the Resolution of Congratulation.

I would like to invite, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, Sir, Honourable Members to show their appreciation in the way that we do in this Chamber.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, it would be ungracious of me, if I did not join in the congratulations being offered to the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East. I would not say too much, largely because her career in politics is obviously so young and full of promise, that it might be held both against me and against her, should I either predict or fail to predict any direction that my gut feeling, or anybody else's gut feeling might suggest.

Sir, I will be simply saying I hope that the Honour which is conferred on the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, will be used by her to strengthen and also to modernise and to see the way forward in terms of justice in Barbados, not as building up on old, unnecessary and useless tradition, but perhaps in being a reformer, whom if you do not achieve all that is necessary, if you would have laid a foundation on which others, men and women, are able to build in the future.

We join in congratulating you on the Honour that has been bestowed on you and I hope that you will grow in stature with that Honour. Congratulations!

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure that, with much pride and admiration, I speak for all members of this Honourable House, in offering our most sincere congratulations. Of course, this House accepts the Resolution of Congratulation.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want simply to say that I have not often been taken by surprise in this Chamber or the Other Place, in the 11 years that I have been here, but tonight is one such occasion.

I would simply just really like to thank all Honourable Members for their kind sentiments and to say that one does not achieve things in life, without the support and strength of commitment of those with whom you work. Therefore, to my colleagues in here, I would express that gratitude on both sides, and to thank them for all of the support along the way.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

Asides.

ORDER NO. 12 RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225 THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF PARCELS OF LAND AT ALLEYNE'S LAND, BUSH HALL, ST. MICHAEL FOR EXECUTION OF A PILOT PROJECT IN RESPECT OF THE URBAN RENEWAL PROGRAMME.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution before this House seeks permission to vest 14 parcels of land, measuring 8,203 square metres at Alleyne's Land, Bush Hall, St. Michael, to facilitate the extension of the Urban Development Commission's pilot project under the Urban Renewal Programme.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that this matter had attracted the attention of the Ministry of Housing and Lands since 1997, and it is unfortunate that it has taken this long. Originally, it was only to be nine parcels of land but because of the nature of Alleyne's Land, it was found that we had to go back, time after time, to commit this land and we have finally come up with a proposal. For example, we had to look at re-measuring an estate of Miss Drayton and also we had to abandon the estate of Gwendolyn Workman.

Mr. Speaker, the Urban Development Commission pilot projects include the relocation of five tenants who reside there, the creation of lots for sale to tenants who are being relocated, the transfer of titles, the provision of foot paths and roads, the conversion of 50 pit toilets to waterborne systems and a general upgrading of the tenancies. This project is estimated to cost \$1.2 million.

Sir, as the above project proposal indicates, the vesting will not only facilitate the general upgrading of Alleyne's land, but the transfer of title to those persons who qualify to purchase under the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act. Vesting is therefore essential to the Urban Development Commission to carry out its mandate of the Urban Renewal Programme.

The survey plans of the lands are in the file and they have been approved by the Lands and Surveys Department. The Attorney-General has also certified and approved this Resolution.

With these remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to be too long on this Resolution. I just have a few questions to ask the Honourable Minister. I would like to know, Sir, if the policy used previously under the Land Acquisition Act, was used on this particular piece of land, or if the policy used in Christ Church was the one used.

6.45 p.m.

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I would like to find out from the Minister if land was taken from the poor and given to the poor and if they were given the option of money or the option of land for land. That is all I would like to ask the Minister on this particular project.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I am happy that this Resolution is finally before this Honourable Chamber. This matter has taken five years to be completed and has been a matter of great concern not only to me but to the constituents of Alleyne's Land. This Project is a companion part of the Alleyne's Land Pilot Project. The majority of this project would see over 150 parcels of land benefiting from the subsidized access to the sale of lots with the difference between the \$2.50 per square foot and the fair market value.

As in almost every tenantry across St. Michael, there were some lots that were below the size of a normal lot. Therefore, there are a number of people who have to be relocated within the context of Alleyne's Land to be able to get a decent size lot for a decent size house once the survey is completed.

Equally, there are a few people whose parents and families live in the area and who are of the area. Therefore, it is intended that these lots be sold to members of the community plus those who are being relocated within the community but this can only happen if the land is vested in the National Housing Corporation (NHC).

Mr. Speaker, this is one Resolution that has caused me to have doubts in Hebrews Chapter 11 verse 1 as to whether the take was really the operable thing. So I want to thank the Minister of Housing and Lands for bringing this Resolution here today because this means that these people can now be able to purchase the land and get on with their lives by constructing their houses and be landowners and not renting from anybody in this country once the vesting is completed and for that I am happy.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the Honourable Member spoke before I did because this is a matter she might be able to clarify in view of the Hebrews reference.

I know of one situation in which the purchaser is the spouse of the individual who would have qualified under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, but even though the person has received approval from the Urban Development Commission (UDC) and all of the other arrangements, the Attorney on the Other Side said he is carrying out an exhaustive investigation as to the entitlement of the person to purchase. This has caused a lot of problems. The person is not in a position to pay a lawyer. This is a legal aid matter that I was dealing with and the person is finding it extremely frustrating and is almost terrified that they are going to lose out both on the loan and on all of the other rights they have under the estate.

Therefore, I think it would be absurd for the Urban Development Commission (UDC) to agree to lend that person the money and then for the attorney on the other side to say that the person does not qualify when clearly the person...

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of elucidation, since I am not able to speak again, Mr. Speaker. Part of the difficulties we have had in the whole Alleyne's Land Pilot Project have, unfortunately, come from the attorney-at-law on the Other Side on behalf of the landlord. I would like to think that we can have these matters behind us and the law is clear on this matter. Therefore, I can only pledge the assistance of my office and hope that the Minister of Housing and Lands as well as the Minister of Social Transformation would do the same so that we can have this matter resolved and not having an attorney-at-law seeking to railroad what is the true and natural objective of the project.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a brief intervention on this particular Resolution. I am particularly glad to see that this Resolution has come to Parliament, albeit somewhat late, because this is one of the earlier matters which were dealt with by the Urban Development Commission (UDC) and what concerns me is more of a practitioner than as a parliamentarian.

Since I resumed my private practice, I happened to be working on the behalf of a number of persons in the St. Michael area who have been similarly affected by similar provisions which we are dealing with here in terms of their entitlement to purchase the particular lot at a price above the \$2.50.

I am a little disappointed at the slow pace in which the Urban Development Commission (UDC) and the Ministry of Housing and Lands are moving with respect to a number of these outstanding tenancies. Since the Attorney-General is looking at reform in a number of areas, and the fact that we are having a number of problems within the legal department of the Ministry of Housing and Lands, it may be time for her to examine the relocation of that particular unit within the Attorney-General's Chambers so that we can have a smoother functioning of matters pertaining to land acquisition.

It is very frustrating for practitioners to have clients coming to them on a daily or monthly basis to deal with small minor matters and not being able to help them. I would just urge the Minister to look at all of these tenancies, maybe we can have them coming to Parliament all at once, because if the delay in this particular tenancy is anything to go by, it would mean that a lot of tenants in the St. Michael area are going to be prejudiced and perhaps we might see another 10 years before this particular project

comes to fruition, notwithstanding the clear policy of Government on this particular matter.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the matter of the application of this particular tenancy has to do with the surveying of the tenancy. The Urban Development Commission (UDC) has gone ahead and done a number of tenancies in St. Michael, but I do understand the point that it has taken very long to be completed. Mr. Speaker, I think the Housing Planning Unit more so than the Legal Unit is more responsible for the application of the tenancies programme under the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

However, I give the Honourable Member the assurance that we would definitely try to speed up the process once all of the legal work has been completed and the surveying work begin because the problem lies where the line mark exists and the ownership of the land. We found the owners of the land and there are 14 parcels that we are acquiring.

With those remarks, I beg that the Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 12 – RESOLUTION TO CONSIDER THE SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE SERVICE OF BARBADOS

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, 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.

6.55 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2002

HEAD 21 - MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS - \$5 050.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is a simple matter. It is usually difficult to predict how many substitutes will be required during the course of the year. Sir, at the end of the financial year, the amount of \$5 050 is required to pay for those substitutes and I beg to move that this amount stands part.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: I beg to second that, Sir.

HEAD 23 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - \$10 803 455

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the amounts being requested are for various items in the Ministry of Health across various departments, ranging from utilities, supplies and materials to other personal emoluments and travel, but by far the biggest allocation and request is for \$9.4 million for structures under the South Coast Sewerage Project which are the remaining sums owed under Contract No. 2B for the remaining work of the Sewerage Collection System.

I believe that the Explanatory Note is fulsome and in those circumstances I beg to move that Head 23 stand part.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: I beg to second that Sir.

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

HEAD 34 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND CULTURE - \$9 919

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Chairman, the amount of

\$9 919 that is required to meet the payment for National Insurance Contributions to the end of the financial year. I beg to move that Head 34 stand part.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, the CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one money Resolution in Committee of Supply to His Honour, the SPEAKER and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, the Resolution was read a third time and agreed to and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this brings us to the end of what has been a very long week but one in which I think we managed to accomplish much of the people's business.

Sir, it would be remiss of me if I did not use this opportunity in moving the adjournment to thank all those within the precincts of Parliament who have worked

overtime and hard, to ensure that these proceedings can run smoothly on a daily basis.

Sir, we turn up here at 10.00 a.m. or 11.00 a.m. and do what we have to do but for one day to go smoothly, it requires those who are in charge of security in terms of the police and security guards; those who are responsible for feeding us and providing some form of libation; those who are required to record what we say; those who are required to service our administrative needs on the Floor of the House, as well as those who are required to clean this House daily so that we do not fall ill as a result of prolonged presences in here.

I think I am speaking on behalf of all Honourable Members when I say that when you go through in excess of over 50 hours over five days, as we have done during this week, we would want to express our gratitude and appreciation to all persons who have contributed in whatever small way to making this a reality.

Sir, this year for the first time, the Estimates would also have been broadcast from start to end and, therefore, we add to that list of those persons to whom we are grateful, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. It has meant that, obviously the reporters have felt it, for the most part, to stay outside of Parliament and report but I would say to them when they do that they miss the atmosphere of Parliament which can never be appropriately communicated via the airwaves. Therefore, it may well be to their own lost that they would not be here during the course of the proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, I indicated last week when we met that after today's Sitting, we would be breaking for Easter and therefore I am only alerting this Chamber we will be taking our Easter break at the end of today's adjournment until April 9, 2002. We hope that all persons will have an opportunity to recharge themselves over the Easter period because the work of the House looks as though there would be much required of us on our return, particularly between April and the end of June, 2002. There are a number of major Bills, some already on the Order Paper, others which have been certified and will be here shortly and may well require us to meet more than once a week at some point in that period between April and June, 2002.

With those words, Sir, I wish to thank all colleagues and those persons who have supported us and to wish everyone a very pleasant and restful Easter and wish that when we come back we will be so charged that we can work expeditiously in doing the people's work.

I beg to move that this Honourable House do now adjourn until Tuesday, April 9, 2002, at 11.00 a.m.

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

The question that the Honourable House do now adjourn until Tuesday, April 9, 2002, at 11.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

7.05 p.m.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

Prepared with the transcript; for checking against the recording and the Minutes.

EDITORIAL QUERIES

Points noted while preparing this report from the edited transcript. The text has not been altered except where stated.

Q1. Masthead. The session is not stated in the source, so no session line is printed.

Q2. Opening. The source opens without the convening sentence (Pursuant to the adjournment ... met at ...). The date is taken from the heading of the source.

Q3. Committee of Supply, Heads 28 and 29. After the take-slip at 6.05 p.m. the source repeats the passing of Head 28 (Ministry of Home Affairs) and Head 29 (Director of Public Prosecutions), which had already been recorded just before it. The first version is printed here and the repeat (about 110 words) has been left out. Please confirm.

Q4. Committee of Supply, Head 28. The two versions of Head 28 give different sums: '\$23 199 998' and '\$23 199 198'. The first is printed, as in the source. Please confirm the correct figure.

Q5. Order No. 12. Two different items carry the number 'ORDER NO. 12': the Resolution vesting land at Alleyne's Land, Bush Hall, St. Michael in the National Housing Corporation and the Resolution to consider sums of money for the service of Barbados. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Committee of Supply, Supplementary Estimates No. 17. Head 23 (Ministry of Health) is headed '\$10 803 455', the same sum the notice gives for the whole Resolution, although Heads 21 (\$5 050) and 34 (\$9 919) were also voted under it. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Committee of Supply, Head 32. No seconder is recorded for the motion that Head 32 stand part. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Speech labels. Miss B. A. Miller's name is spelt 'MILLAR' at the start of the congratulatory speeches, and Mr. R. N. Greenidge's is spelt 'GREENDIGE' on Head 37 and in the closing procedural note on the money Resolution. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly resumed on Friday, 15th March, 2002 under Mr. Speaker and reverted to Papers and

Notices. Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley laid the reports on the Social Investment Fund and the Public Enterprise Investment Fund for the quarter ended 31st December, 2001, Hon. R. St.C. Toppin laid the annual report of the Barbados National Standards Institution, and notice was given of a Resolution on land at Alleyne's Land, Bush Hall, St. Michael. The House then returned to Committee of Supply on the Estimates for 2002-03.

Debate continued on Head 31, the Ministry of Physical Development and Environment. The Minister, Hon. Miss H. E. Thompson, said the Town Planning Department would spend some \$4.6 million of the Ministry's \$45 460 157 and that planning applications had risen from about 2 000 in 1994 to 3,054 in 2001. Mr. D. St.E. Kellman called for a land use policy, and Hon. R. R. Farley spoke on the \$3.6 million for Town and Country Planning.

The sharpest exchanges concerned the Report of the Select Committee on Ownership of Land Interests in Barbados by Non-nationals. Mr. Kellman said he had disagreed with the Report but that this was never recorded; Miss Thompson read that the Report of 18th December, 1998 was signed by the Chairman, Hon. Ishmael A. Roett, with no dissent noted, and the Chairman ruled that it was a document of the House. Mr. D. J. H. Thompson argued that only a law could stop a foreign company from buying land, and withdrew an unparliamentary remark. Miss Mottley urged long leases instead of freehold sales, and Hon. G. A. Clarke said the Barbados Mortgage Finance company had lent to over 282 persons in 2001-2002.

In the afternoon Hon. R. D. Marshall, His Honour J. M. Edghill, Hon. R. N. Greenidge, Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, Hon. Sir Harold St. John, Hon. A. P. Wood, Hon. Miss C. Y. Forde and Mr. M. Z. Williams spoke on planning, beach access and housing; Sir Harold said property taxes contributed only \$115 million of \$1.7 billion in taxes. Miss Thompson closed the debate before the guillotine at 6 o'clock. Head 31 and the remaining Heads from 10 to 50 were agreed to, clauses 1 to 3 and the Schedule passed, and the Bill passed all stages as the Appropriation Act, 2002.

Mr. Greenidge laid the financial statements of the Barbados Mortgage Finance Limited, and Miss Mottley gave notice of a Resolution for \$10 803 455 under Supplementary Estimates No. 17, 2001-2002. Miss Miller moved a Resolution of sympathy on the death of Colonel Herbert Alleyne Dowding, a Member in 1946-51 and 1956-61, which other Members supported, and congratulated the Attorney-General, Miss Mottley, on her elevation to the Inner Bar.

Mr. Clarke moved the Resolution vesting 14 parcels measuring 8,203 square metres at Alleyne's Land in the National Housing Corporation; Mr. Kellman, Miss Mottley, Mr. D. J. H. Thompson and Mr. G. W. Payne spoke on the five-year delay, and it passed. In Committee

of Supply, with Mr. D. Carter in the Chair, sums under Heads 21, 23 and 34 were agreed and the Resolution passed. Miss Mottley thanked the staff for a week of over 50 hours, and the House adjourned until Tuesday, 9th April, 2002 at 11.00 a.m.