
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 1999 – 2003

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.15 a.m. on Tuesday, April 08, 2003.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, G.C.M. B.A., Dip. Ed., (Speaker)
His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J. P., (Deputy Speaker)
Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.(Hons.) (Leader of the Opposition)
Hon. Sir Harold St. JOHN, K.A., Q.C., LL.B.
Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A. (Oxon).
Dr. the Hon. Richard L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc.(Econ.)
Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, B.C.H., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)
Mr. G. W. PAYNE, LL.B.
Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A.(Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., J.P. (Minister of Labour and Social Security,
Mr. D. CARTER (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Minister of Housing and Lands)
Hon. R. D. MARSHALL, (Minister of Public Works and Transport)
Hon. H. F. LASHLEY, (Minister of Social Transformation)
Hon. R. St.C. TOPPIN, LL.B., (Minister of Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Business Development)
Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN
Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Minister of Physical Development and Environment)
Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, LL.B. (Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs)(Leader of the House)
Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS
Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.

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

Home Affairs)

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

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

International Transport)

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

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

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

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, April 1, 2003.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, April 1, 2003 be confirmed subject to any omissions, corrections and/or observations.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that, Sir.
Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, then let those Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to report to this Honourable House that I am in receipt, from the Accountant-General, of the Accounts and Statements for the months of November and December 2002.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER No. 7

LAND TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2003

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: This amendment to the Land Tax Act is to ensure that there is clarity in the legislation in respect of a provision which is intended to provide some relief to pensioners concerning the payment of land tax.

You would recall, Sir, that the terms of the situation such as it stand, that measures were introduced into this Parliament to provide for several rates of tax in respect of land tax. This aspect of Government's taxation is an important contributor to the revenue of Barbados and it is spread pretty evenly across all sectors and to a wide range of individuals.

In accordance with the records of the Land Tax Department, there are some 94 457 parcels of land on their register. For an island which in terms of its total size, 166 square miles, that translates into 106 464 acres of land which is indeed a remarkable number of individual parcels. That land covers agricultural, commercial, residential and other uses such as rights of way, roads, parks et cetera.

That over 106 000 acres of land comprise some 59 362 acres which is listed as agricultural land, 11 469 which is listed as commercial land, 32 213 acres which is listed as residential and 3 430 acres is listed under the other usage, such as roads, rights of ways, cemeteries and schools.

The diversity of use of land would have been the factor which would have informed this rate structure for land tax such as it is. That structure provides for a payment of 0.1 per cent on land for residential purposes up to a value of \$350 000. It further provides that on the excess of the improved value greater than \$350 000, but not exceeding \$850 000, that the rate should be 0.65 per cent. It provides as well for those properties with an improved value greater than \$850 000 that the rate of tax be 0.75 per cent and on the improved value of every other parcel of

land on which there is a building other than a residence is generally at 0.65 per cent.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Of course, the site value of unimproved land is 0.6 per cent.

Sir, there was a provision, this is under section 62(B) of the Land Tax Act, Cap. 78A, which made special arrangements for pensioners and also dealt with a special rate for hotels. That section indicated that a pensioner or a hotel would pay a special rate of tax on certain conditions. In the case of a hotel they had to be a hotel within the meaning of section 2 of the Hotel Aids Act and in respect of a pensioner, in terms of the way the legislation prior to this amendment is currently crafted, it simply indicates the need for the pensioner to be living in the residence which is the subject of the special concession. That concessionary rate is at the rate of 0.6 per cent.

Sir, what has arisen is that there has been some confusion in terms of what or who exactly is a pensioner. The Government's intention in introducing the last amendment to this legislation was to have a pensioner to mean a person who has attained the age of 60 years. The legislation, however, was not explicit and what has occurred is that a number of persons under the age of 60 who were for one reason or the other are in receipt of pensions were therefore able to find themselves caught up in this provision which was intended to recognise the fact that pensioners generally speaking are operating on reduced incomes and therefore they were the subject most suitable for a concession concerning the rate of land tax. So this amendment is intended to add clarity and certainty to the Government's intention by way of implementing the last published rates of land tax and to ensure that it is clear that a pensioner in the legislation relates to someone who has attained the age of 60.

I should make it clear that in addition to this particular concession there are further mechanisms in place to deal with relief of land tax to other individuals, both pensioners and non-pensioners, who find themselves in straitened circumstances and who from a point of view of hardship may not be in a position to pay the tax.

There is a mechanism which is actively in use. The Land Tax Relief Board meets on a regular basis and considers at each and every meeting a single item on the agenda. That single item is applications for tax relief. So persons whatever may be their personal circumstances are able to apply to this independent, objective Board which is able to review their circumstances and make recommendations. I should tell you, Sir, that their work has been quite impressive. During the last financial year the Land Tax Department has indicated that there were some 5

148 cases which were reviewed by the Land Tax Relief Board.

11.25 a.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: This involved a total claim for the relief of \$1.475 million in taxes. Having reviewed the circumstances in those claims, the Board found it possible to be able to grant \$1.2 million in tax relief to those individuals who were in circumstances of hardship, leaving some \$250 000 to be paid between those 5 148 cases which were heard and examined.

Therefore, the land Tax Department and the Government, through the collection of land tax, not only sought to ensure that across the wide range of land interest, owning 94 457 parcels of land in agriculture, commerce, residential, et cetera, that not only was there an effort to ensure that the rate is reasonable but there are mechanisms in place to provide specific relief for groups, through the Land Tax Relief Board, to such persons as pensioners, persons in the hotel sector and in agriculture, while recognising the importance of land in those cases.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment to this legislation is to add clarity and to ensure there is certainty and predictability under the law, ensuring that we are all very clear on the exact legal definition of a pensioner for the purposes of this legislation.

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

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that this legislation has created a lot of interest within the country as far back as 1994. This was one of the promises given to the public of Barbados. That is, that land taxes, in some cases, would have been abolished.

Mr. Speaker, we are now at a stage where we have recognised that even the pensioners of Barbados are crying out because of this imposition. It is no doubt that the tax reforms of the early 1990s were supposed to be put in place, not only to seek clarity, but to simplify the whole taxation system of Barbados.

What one has now seen and recognised is that instead of that being done, one is now getting more confused with the system as it relates to land taxes. When one speaks to land taxes, one cannot ignore the fact that there are land taxes but also transfer taxes which would have increased the imposition on the sellers of land in Barbados.

Sir, we must ask ourselves, have we achieved what we have set about to do? I would answer honestly, no. What we have seen is a situation where owning property has now become a liability in Barbados. Sir, surely our forefathers and the leaders before us would have recognised that one of the most important things to any Barbadian, is the right to own a piece of the rock. What we have been able to see lately is that in situations where people were proud to have owned land, that land has now become a liability. We do not mind it being a liability but what we have to worry about is how high a liability is it. Take for example, the owner of a piece of land along the West Coast or beach line, providing it is not in the national park areas of Barbados, would recognise the value of that land could easily be appreciated, not by any amendment by Government but by something done by external forces. In other words, if one owns land on the West Coast, someone can come and build alongside of yours. The mere fact that person can erect a building alongside of yours, then invites someone else to build next to theirs, automatically pushes up the value of the land of the person who was there first.

I am saying that cannot be fair. We need to find a more justifiable system. We need to find a system that deals with the building instead of with the land. If we are saying that everybody in Barbados should be entitled to own a piece of the rock of Barbados, we cannot allow external forces to influence the value of that piece of land.

If someone wants to build a \$64 million house or if someone wants to bulldoze a \$8 million house and rebuild another for \$40 million, then that person should not influence the value of the land next to them. The emphasis has to be on the house and not on the land.

We have to recognise we are living in changing times and that there are people who would set about to use money to achieve whatever they want Barbados Union of Teachers whenever they do that, it should not impact on the masses of people in Barbados.

If it is the policy of Government to attract foreign exchange by the sale of land, that is the policy of Government but Government must make sure that it is not done at the expense of the people who own land nearby to those persons who can use the largesse to dictate what they want.

What one would find is that grandparents who own land but might not be able to build on it at that time, will not be able to keep that land. What would happen is that someone else who has money would be able to come and purchase that land. Whereas, if what I am saying is allowed to happen, that grandparent could keep that land for a child who has some degree of potential later in life, to develop that land into a commercial entity.

Sir, in the same way that investors from outside could use capital to influence the amount of land they can get on the West Coast or the type of property they can put up, it is for Government to make sure they also protect the interest of the people by making sure the imposition does not impact on the masses in the same way it impacts on those who influence the policy.

Sir, I would hope that this would be studied and not put on a back burner. I would also hope that the merits of the discussion would be taken because in this Parliament many persons pretend that they do not understand what I am saying and then six months after, what I have said is sneaked in and implemented under a disguise. I do not have a problem with that once it is in the interest of the masses of Barbados but at least, under the Intellectual Property Act, that cannot be done without first quoting the source and maybe I have to register my rights. Too often, I have seen that brilliant ideas are given in this Parliament, they are ignored but then are sneaked through the back-door.

Mr. Speaker, we, in Parliament, should not be complaining or changing anything as it relates to pensions. When one gets to the age of being able to be called a pensioner, it is a recognition that person would have worked for a period of time in their life and would have worked hard, like my Honourable friend on the Back Bench. Age cannot be the lone factor. It has to be tied into the contribution of the person and the capacity of the person to work. If we tie it down to an age limit of 60, we are going to deprive many persons, who, because of certain disposition, would find themselves in a position where they cannot relate to this amendment which would have an effect upon their lives.

I am asking the Honourable Member for Christ Church East to recognise that though 60 might be the age of retirement, that consideration must be given to the fact that there are many medical reasons why someone might retired earlier than age 60.

11.35 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The truth is that we need to recognise that land is not the problem because in the 1960s the Democratic Labour Party recognised that secondary education was needed to move people forward and in the year 2000 land must be given to people as the next step to empower the masses and for them to acknowledge themselves as true sons of the soil. Sir, the changes must be made now and they must impact on the lives of people because it is from the Democratic Labour Party that people expect to see these progressive changes.

Sir, we should not come to Parliament to argue whether people over the age of 60 or retired persons get a tax rebate. There should be a system in place where we need not worry about this. I will continue to make the charge that the leaders of the Caribbean need to understand that Government cannot be same as in the 1990s. In the same way that trade is changing, tax reform must also change since they both go hand in hand.

We also need to recognise that this is a consuming society and we must stop punishing those who produce. Sir, we punish people who produce but we want to compensate the people who use up foreign exchange. Sir, Barbados is not as productive as it used to be and we need to find ways to change it sooner rather than later because the world is not waiting for us nor can we use the excuse that we are a small country and we have to follow the rest of the world.

Sir, if that was true, the Democratic Labour Party would not have fought the IMF in the early 1990s.

Asides.

Mr. D. StE. KELLMAN: Yes, we fought the IMF and we were so successful that many countries in the world now want to implement the same ideas and are using the system used in the early 1990s as the example to follow in the world.

Sir, it took this Government over ten years and they still have not understood the programme which must be implemented so the Democratic Labour Party must be given the opportunity to implement the programme and to better the lives of the masses.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is not about employment but about land tax and any Government that can brag about 30 000 jobs which seem to be external and not internal cannot brag about reducing employment. The Government might be able to brag about creating jobs but it needs to impact on the lives of Barbadians and not on the lives of external people. This Government has been successful in putting programmes in place that has truly affected the lives of external people in a positive way but the locals cannot feel the same impact.

Sir, we need not worry about whether a pensioner is someone over age 60 or whether a pensioner is someone who has retired because this is too small a point to use parliamentary time to debate. The important thing is that the person would have given full service to their country and that is what is important.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. R. R FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to conclude this short second reading. I want to respond to a few matters raised by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. He is clearly out of step with the reality of life today or indeed at any other time in the history of man. Sir, not even in Iraq would his statement that owing property has now become a liability be correct because when the hostilities are over in Iraq, the land will be there.

Every Barbadian, except the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, who is a land owner and proudly proclaims himself as being out of a landholding tradition, knows that owning land in Barbados is an asset and not a liability. His sentiments were, in a very eerie way, reminiscent of the sentiments of the Democratic Labour Party of which he spoke this morning as a leader. Sir, it was speech that showed leadership and conviction but the sentiments were an unfortunate reminder of the position that the Democratic Labour Party took on the matter of empowering Barbadians to own land.

Sir, the Party of which he proclaims himself as being the only true leader, objected vociferously to the notion of what was embodied in the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act. It was the previous Honourable Member for St. John who offered free legal representation to plantation owners should the Government touch their lands.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, having not learnt that mistakes are not intended to be repeated, has gone down the same line and in a matter of a simple amendment to add clarity to the legislation, has once again frowned on the aspirations of ordinary Barbadians to be like him and to own parcels of land in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that all of the assertions can be torn to shred by the fact that this Government has recognised its role and through its intervention in the property market, it has not only made thousands of parcels of land available to ordinary Barbadians but has also provided substantial housing.

11.45 a.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, the record of this party is clear. Sir, going back to the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act in the 1980s, in which over 4 000 lots in plantation tenancies were conveyed to owners. If you take a trip in the country and visit any village, for example, Woodland, that you would have visited in the 1960s and 1970s, where there were no roads or utilities in these areas. The Honourable Member for St. George South used his voice in this Parliament to lobby for the people in that constituency. Woodland was a village was in existence for over 100 years and the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act

people are now able to own their land and improve their homes.

Sir, that village did not have a good road for over 100 years until this administration of the Barbados Labour Party and the Honourable Member for St. George South a road was put in that village. If you look at the improvement of the housing in that area and compare it to 30 years ago, you will see the difference that tenure of land makes in Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Sir, the land was sold at ten cents per square foot and it still sticks in the political craw of the Democratic Labour Party. It was a morsel that they could not swallow. However, the people who benefited from that programme have swallowed and improved their lots.

Sir, I must remind the Honourable Members that in this present term the Barbados Labour Party was able to address the matter of non-plantation tenancies where \$2.50 per square foot was charged for land. This is an innovative programme. This administration recognised that many people in the tenancies may not be able to pay higher prices for land. It also recognised that landlords have rights too and that they should not be disadvantaged by way of the purchase of land. Therefore, after a fair process of evaluation, the Government pays the difference in price.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. He said that the Government has been fair to the landlords. The Honourable Member made the statement that the Government pays a fair price for the land. However, what the Honourable Member did not say is that the Government did not give those landlords who wanted land in exchange for the land sold to the tenants, land in lieu of money.

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would not be deflected by that intervention. The fact is, the Honourable Member sought to use this debate to perpetuate a level of inaccuracy and read it into the records of this Parliament as it relates to the importance and the intuitive commonsense approach that owning property is not a liability. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy and his comrades...

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by saying that I said that owning property is a liability. I never said that owning property is a liability.

Asides.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: I said that they have now created an atmosphere where they are now allowing property to be a liability. If you follow the logic of that, you would understand the point that is being made.

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Sir, the records would show that the Honourable Member said that owing property has now become a liability.

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Sir, I am concerned about that level of bad advice which the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is touting to the people of his constituency. I want to urge the people of St. Lucy to reject the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and his approach to owning land. I want to urge the people of St. Lucy to buy land and to benefit ...

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression that he now has to tell the people of St. Lucy the importance of land.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, this Government in clear recognition of this matter of the importance of land, contrary to the assertion of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, has implemented several programmes. We have been very aggressive in our pursuit of these policies. Our record is clear in the last administration, in this administration and in the fullness of time we will recap for such persons like the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who have difficulty concerning the powers of recall.

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: The Honourable Member also sought to make the point that they are persons under the age of 60 who may have peculiar difficulties and that this amendment will not address those matters.

Sir, the vast majority of our pensioners are pensioners because they have reached a full age. In my introduction, I mentioned the work of the Land Tax Relief Board. This Board covered 5 148 cases during the financial year 2002/2003. Therefore, for those persons who may have difficulty, their cases would be addressed.

Sir, we all know that we would also have persons who have no difficulty because they are in special cases of employment which would allow them to be able to retire at

an early age, be labeled a pensioner, get the benefit of the tax deduction and still are in full-time employment.

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: The intention of the amendment and the intention of the relief are not to address those privileged persons. The intention of the relief is to address persons who are genuine pensioners having reached full age and all other persons can be granted relief by way of the Land Tax Relief Board.

I want to urge the Honourable Member to pay closer attention to the Government's policies. I do not expect him to support us but I would urge him not give such poor advice to his constituents who require his guidance. Thankfully, thousands of Barbadians are aware of the work of the Government and what it meant by owning their land.

11.55 a.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

Further, Sir, the National Housing Corporation, in recent times, has recognised that for long standing tenants in its estates, in Parish Land, for example, and in the Bay Land, that the National Housing Corporation is itself where people have been renting the land for ten years and 20 years, they have already mailed out letters to them, putting the offer of the purchase of the land.

They recognise that notwithstanding that there is a stable relationship between landlord and tenant, that there are certain economic and social benefits that cannot properly flow to the tenant until they are in full possession of the land, by way of ownership.

So that while they face no danger of being evicted from the land because it is owned by the Government, they also were not able to obtain long term mortgages from the bank for construction of wall houses. They were not able to use the property as collateral to educate their children, send them to do masters degrees overseas and things of that nature, they were not able to finance the repair and maintenance, and generally speaking, Sir, the process of empowerment, by way of making sure that these 94 000 plus parcels of land, which are registered under the Land Tax Department, really represent significant broad based and diversified ownership. The Government has played its part, Sir, and we will continue to do so to empower the people of Barbados.

We will also ensure, Sir, that our policy, as far as taxes on land, strikes a judicial balance between ensuring that persons who own property in Barbados pay their fair

share towards the financing required to provide services, roads, et cetera but also that it recognises that special consideration has to be given, first of all to persons living in their own residences, and more particularly, old-age pensioners, as well as that some concessions may need to be granted, in order to stimulate economic activity in particular areas. That, basically, Sir, is the drift of our policy on taxation of land.

You will recall, Sir, that this administration has, on several occasions, in order to mitigate the rate of increase of tax payable on land in Barbados, because of the increased valuation, has reduced the rate. If the Government had not reduce the rates of land tax in Barbados, on the several occasions that we have done so since 1994, persons would have been paying considerable more land tax. The reality is that as the Government as well as private individuals, improve the amenities in the area, the roads, lights, the beautification, the improvements in the structure of the houses, clearly, the value of the property increases, both the land and the house.

Sir, this Government, rather than sitting and smiling and taking in that large pool of money has significantly cut the rates. So that even with an improved valuation which occurs every triennially, we are able to ensure that the actual number of dollars being taken, particularly out of this small individual living in his own house, that this continues to be a very modest level. And that, Sir, has been the record of the Government.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is clearly the one person in Barbados who is out of touch with reality, starting, from his understanding of how the land tax structure works to the matter of whether owning land in Barbados is a liability or an asset.

I would hope that by the conclusion of my remarks this morning, he would have been brought to Christian understanding and would have found his way, Sir, to the path of enlightenment in this matter.

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

Hon. R.D. MARSHALL: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

On the motion of Hon. R.R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. R.D. MARSHALL, the House resolved itself into Committee on the Bill, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is in Committee.

Clauses 1, 2, inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. R. R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. R.D. MARSHALL, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motion of Hon. REGINALD R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. R.D. MARSHALL, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Land Tax (Amendment) Act, 2003.

ORDER NO. 4 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LEASE UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP.225 TO THE BARBADOS DIABETES FOUNDATION OF THE PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE AT LOWER COLLYMORE ROCK IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING A DIABETES CENTRE

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before this House seeks permission to lease 209 square metres or 21 624.69 square feet of crown land at Enmore, Collymore Rock, St. Michael for the establishment of a diabetes centre.

Mr. Speaker, the Diabetes Foundation has been formed and is registered in Barbados with a mandate to enhance patient education, train health professionals, promote research, create a database for diabetics and ultimately, improve diabetic care on the island and throughout the region, especially in the English speaking Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, there was a time when I thought that only old people had diabetes. One would always hear, especially in the countryside that this old person has 'sugar'. This is not so today. In fact, diabetes is on the increase and according to statistics it is really a lifestyle related disease.

Recent studies have shown that, especially in the Caribbean region, that 8 per cent and 10 per cent of the adult population in 1994 had diabetics. It has increased over time to more than 18 per cent of the adult population.

12.05 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Statistics have also shown that a high incident of amputation resulted from diabetes. For example, in 1989 an estimated 103 lower limb amputations due to gangrene were done. As a consequence, Barbados has acquired the reputation as the amputation capital of the world.

Studies have also shown that diabetes can be controlled. However, a number of persons in their 40s are now recognising for the first time that they have the disease. Therefore, it is important that we establish a diabetic centre in Barbados to help care for the needs. In fact, a diabetic working group which was established at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital recognised that there is a need for a structure in which patients can attend the clinic within a modern setting. The Barbados Diabetes Foundation is trying its best to establish such a centre at the old Enmore Centre.

Finance for the construction of such a centre has been granted by a London Trust Fund and preliminary funds for the centre has been drawn up. It should be noted that when the land at Enmore was originally surveyed, it was found to be only 15 000 square feet. However, the Foundation has asked us to review that and that is one of the reasons why it has taken this long, so we are asking that this 22 000 square metres of land be leased to them instead of the original 15 000 square feet because they want to not only set up a building but also to provide parking for their various clients.

The lease will be for 25 years with an option to renew for a further 25 years. The rent to be charged would be \$100 per annum but can be renewed every five years. At the expiration of the lease all improvements become the property of the Crown for nil consideration. The Diabetes Foundation of Barbados will be responsible for the rates and taxes and any outgoings associated with the use of the property. The Foundation would also be responsible for insuring the property.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this Resolution is in order. The Attorney-General has certified the legislation for its introduction into Parliament. I believe that all Honourable Members will indeed support this very important Resolution to lease this property to the Barbados Diabetes Foundation.

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

Hon. R. St.C. TOPPIN: I beg to second that.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, let me say first of all that I give my full support to the work of the Barbados Diabetes Foundation and believe that any assistance direct or otherwise that is given to that

Foundation by the people of Barbados is going to be significantly appreciated. A building is one part of the process, but I am sure that recognising the crisis that Barbados faces in relation to other incidence of chronic diseases such as diabetes, that a lot more can and should be done by Government.

I am extremely concerned, as I move around Barbados, about the large number of diabetics in this country who are finding it increasingly difficult not just to access medication - that is one part of it, there are problems with the Drug Service and there are problems in accessing medication - but almost impossible to maintain the diet which their physician recommends to them to deal with this particular disease. That is why it does not surprise me when the Minister acknowledges that Barbados is the amputation capital of the world because to my mind we are simply not coping effectively with the challenge of chronic diseases in Barbados such as diabetes.

I was very happy recently to discover that a branch of the Barbados Diabetes Foundation has been formed in St. John and that they are active now in working with the community as a whole. By and large you may find that the large majority of people who are involved in it are people who are already diagnosed with diabetes. I think that it is also important to focus...

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, protect me from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, let us hear the Honourable Member, please.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He needs an insulin shot to calm him down from that frenzy he is in, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The vast majority of the members in that branch are diabetics, people who are already on the verge in some cases of having to have amputations or people who faced very serious challenges in coping with the disease. Their focus, quite rightly so, is on younger people, on their lifestyles, on the need for exercise and on the need for focussing much more on their diet. However, none of that would be achieved if the items that are prescribed for diabetics in Barbados are so costly or if the value-added tax is so punitive on them that they are unable to cope.

We can give every Association in Barbados a building and offer many other forms of tangible assistance all of which are desirable and welcome, but unless we start to deal with the challenges that individuals face as persons

who have chronic diseases in Barbados and help them in the process of improving their diet and changing their lifestyles, then at the end of the day we are going to be spending millions of dollars through our health care system in providing tertiary health care for them in Barbados and even in some cases financing procedures outside of Barbados to save their lives. So we must not be penny wise and pound foolish.

While I give 100 per cent support to any efforts to help the Barbados Diabetes Foundation, I believe we also need to focus on the large number of persons who are not going to be involved in that formal activity who only have contact with their physician and who find it extremely difficult to cope with the expense associated with maintaining a healthy diet in buying the vegetables and the other items that they need to consume to ensure that their health remains good. This is something I think we need to focus on.

12.15 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: This is another occasion when we see the non Governmental sectors adding value to the work that is being done by the Government. We see the Government encouraging and supporting yet another non Governmental Organisation. This is proof positive of the vibrancy of our participatory democracy in Barbados. This is collaborative alliance that we see and particularly in the area of health. We are seeing it with the Heart Foundation of Barbados; the Cancer Society of Barbados; The Lupus Support Group, et cetera. Wherever the civil society is prepared to come together to help itself, the Government is there at first call to lend assistance, and substantial assistance.

When we look at the schedule and see that the lease is one for 25 years with an option to renew for a further 25 years and that the rent is \$100 per annum, and at the expiration of the lease, all the improvements should become the property of the Crown for more consideration, we understand that this is a substantial contribution the Government is making. That is as it should be.

What pleases me perhaps more than anything else about the matter before the House, is that it is speaking to an increasing self-awareness and the need for self-care amongst Barbadians. I very much endorse the comments made by the Honourable Minister who introduced the matter and by the Leader of the Opposition but I want to go further and say that we are at a stage where self-awareness and self-care occurring now, are only the very beginning.

I wish to appeal to the Diabetes Foundation in respect of this centre which it is going to put in place, that,

as a major focus, it would take preventive measures. The majority of the members of the Diabetes Foundation, if not all I would venture to suggest, are people who themselves are diabetic.

The Right Honourable Minister who introduced this matter is quite correct when he said that there is an alarming increase in the incidents of diabetes, not only in the adult population in Barbados but also in the juvenile population. I am impressed at the number of 6 or 8 years olds who can inject themselves with insulin. I remember a time when giving insulin was a very painful process, a thick needle but now it is a thin one, and can be administered in a second.

Mr. Speaker, I would wish that the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education - because we have a School Meals Department feeding programme at the primary level - would look very carefully at what we feed our children. The school feeding programme helps to inculcate eating habits that last for a life time. Parents need to be looking more carefully at what they are giving their children to eat in the homes and outside.

This issue was in very high profile this weekend by the Nation Publishing Company. Again, they are to be congratulated on their continuing effort to raise consciousness among Barbadians about appropriate lifestyle behaviors in their annual Health Extravaganza. It is so successful that it is being attended every year by thousands. There was a lot of discussion in the public's domain about the rise in obesity among Barbadians. Diabetes is a horrible disease. I think there is hardly a family in Barbados who is untouched by it in one way or another.

I have four brothers, three of them are serious diabetics. Therefore, I regard myself as a person who is at high risk for diabetes. I am struggling - I do not always succeed - to behave in my lifestyle as though it is something which I have to attend to now and take preventative measures to either prolong or obviate the possibility of I becoming a diabetic also.

Professor Henry Frazer is doing remarkable research on the chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, et cetera, which affect the lives of Barbadians. Professor Frazer has a very distinctive way of putting it when he speaks of the nutrition and diet related issues to diabetes. He suggests that our plates should be as colourful as possible with red, green and orange vegetables. And he is correct. It is true that in Barbados these things are costly but I see it as a matter of relativity. I see people spend as much money or more than they would have spent in buying a pound of tomatoes or a pumpkin on what we call the empty calories. There is a generation in Barbados that people refer to as the 'corn curl generation.'

People have to become selective on what they spend their money on and to prioritise their shopping basket. There is hardly a person or family who does not have access to an area where they could plant some kind of vegetable. I see pumpkin vines growing all over people's fences, in gutters, in the byways and highways in Barbados. Therefore, people can help themselves a lot more and must be willing to help themselves more by planting their own herbs and vegetables that will make a difference to how soon one might contract diabetes or to the possibility that one might never contract diabetes.

I hope that the Diabetes Foundation, through this centre, would mount a public education programme. We need now to be constantly hammering this into the heads of Barbadians by using television, radio, newspapers, et cetera. These are the things that we need to be reinforcing every day so that when persons go shopping, they would think twice when they set out to purchase something that is of little or no nutritional value and would make the right decision about what to eat.

We have an eating pattern in Barbados which encourages us to put sometimes a number of carbohydrates on the plate at one meal. This is deadly. We are eating animal fat in larger quantities than is good for us. I look at some plates and think that is a heart attack on a plate looking at me.

Yesterday I ate in a very nice vegetarian restaurant at the bottom of Free Hill, Black Rock, and my plate was as colourful as an Easter kite, as it should. Somehow we have to get this across to Barbadians. We have to start at the beginning because the damage begins at an early time.

The horrible thing about diabetes is that it is not only a disease associated with the pancreas but one which attacks other organs of the body.

12.25 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: Sir, diabetes attacks the kidneys, the liver, the eyes and other organs of the body and it really is a terrible disease.

The Minister was right when he said that we have a bad reputation in respect of amputations. There is a ward at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital filled with people who have had amputations of one kind or another and the majority of them were occasioned by diabetes.

I want to appeal to the Diabetes Foundation, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, particularly the School Meals Department and the Nutrition Centre to

begin a crash programme of education because this disease is at epidemic status in Barbados.

I would like to see a programme in the schools which is ongoing with the assistance of the Government Information Service and every entity which could be helpful in this regard to educate Barbadians about diabetes and the other companion diseases like hypertension and heart diseases. Today, we are speaking specifically about diabetes and there is the need for the programme to begin with the preventative measures we can take as well as to exercise and the self care. The effort should be untiring and relentless until it is second nature to Barbadians.

Sir, this does not mean that you cannot eat sweets or carbohydrates but it is how we combine our foods, the quantity eaten and the frequency with which we eat. It is better to eat three or four small meals a day than one giganteum meal which is not very colourful.

When we travel among the Creole islands in the Caribbean like St. Lucia, St. Vincent or Trinidad, their everyday plates tend to be more colourful than ours with callaloo and vegetables. In February this year we were in Trinidad for the Intersessional meeting which took place at the Crown Plaza Hotel across from the Port which has a restaurant named the 'Breakfast Shed'. This restaurant is where the port workers eat and the Barbados delegation ate there as well. The Prime Minister, poor fellow, had to eat with the Heads of Government but the other delegations went across the road and ate at the Breakfast Shed.

Sir, the price was right and the food was right. There would be a handful of watercress on every plate and the ordinary hard-working port workers and stevedores eat there. There was also a lot of blue crab with callaloo and every part of the dish came on small dishes. We sat on benches around tables in stalls and the plates were always brightly coloured.

Sir, in Barbados we must have macaroni pie, fried sweet potato, potato salad smothered with mayonnaise and being a Bajan there must also be rice and peas. These are four carbohydrates on one plate which might only be decorated with one leaf of lettuce with a teaspoon of coleslaw laden with mayonnaise and you cannot see the carrot.

Sir, we have to begin to change our eating habits because in effect, we are digging our graves with a table fork. Most people in Barbados by the age of 55 have either one sign or another of diabetes. This disease despoils your entire life once it has been contracted. It also requires quite costly medicine for the control of the disease which must be taken on a daily basis. The adult onset diabetes which inflicts Barbadians, once it is detected early enough and

once people are determined to be disciplined about it can be brought under control without resort to drugs.

This calls for proper diet and exercise because exercise burns up the glucose in the muscle. Sir, even gentle exercise like walking around the house or yard is very helpful for people with diabetes.

12.35 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: Sir, I know an old man, age 79, who was at the stage of where he would have gone on the dialysis machine. His daughter, who is a nurse, has him on a regime programme which brought him back from a stage where he needs little or no medication. Sir, by eating five small meals a day, eating the right foods, the right combination of foods and exercise have contributed to bringing him back to a healthy state. Sir, we need to be educated about our diet. We need to understand the importance of nutrition.

Mr. Speaker, the contribution that the Government is making to the work of the Diabetes Foundation of Barbados is a good one but the onus is on the Government and the Foundation to make it work for the benefit, not only for the narrow membership of the Foundation but for the good health of all Barbadians is the top priority.

I wish the Foundation well and I hope that they will not be any roadblocks because this is at an epidemic stage in Barbados. Younger people are now presenting diabetes. This diabetes was once thought to be a disease of old age but that is not the case. I see people who are in the 30s and 40s age groups who tell me that they have been diagnosed with diabetes.

Sir, last week a doctor said that diabetes is a secret and silent disease and that there are a number of Barbadians who are walking around with diabetes and do not know that they are diabetics.

I give my support to this Resolution and hope that I will help to bring about that dramatic change in our lifestyle as Barbadians, which is now a matter of urgency.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I rise to speak on this Resolution. It is interesting when you speak on matters and how they tie together.

Sir, earlier I said that Barbados is becoming a consuming society and that we need to be more a producing society. That statement was made in a different context but it can be related to this particular matter. In

other words we need to produce more rather than to consume a lot of imported goods. Sir, if we can get Barbados back to the stage of producing what we consume then we would avoid the canned foods that we import.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of people criticise the young people for wearing big clothes and the type of underpants that they wear. The youngsters understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and yet the public of Barbados criticise them about their underpants. I do not agree that they should wear their underpants down under their behinds.

Asides.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, they are people who wear very tight clothes and they do not realise the damage that they can cause themselves. Sometimes you see people sitting with their legs crossed and they believe that sitting like that is being graceful. In fact, what they are doing is blocking your blood circulation.

Asides.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, we have to be careful how we criticise people.

Our biggest problem in Barbados is the shoes that we wear. The majority of shoes that are imported into Barbados are not imported for black people. These shoes are imported for white people who have small feet.

Asides.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: The majority of shoes that are imported in Barbados are imported from countries that do not have people with big feet. However, we try to fit into these small shoes and by doing this we create health problem by wearing shoes that burn our feet and then we complain that the shoes are burning a little.

Asides.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, years ago there was an idea that there should be a shoe factory in Barbados. It was such an excellent idea that we did not understand the foresight of having a shoe factory in Barbados. If we had a shoe factory in Barbados we would be able to custom make shoes to suit our population.

Asides.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, we should have recognised the importance of a shoe factory 42 years ago and put a shoe factory in place to solve the problems that are now confronting us. Mr. Speaker, when people are

being criticised for having ideas, do not criticise them but deal with the ideas.

Government must recognise that there are certain NGOs that are helping the country and do not see them as doing things in their interest. We also have to look at the opportunity cost of our actions. We must recognise that organisations like the Barbados Cancer Society, the Cancer Support Services, the Heart Foundation and the organisations in the health centre who help this Government to reduce the national health bill.

12.45 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

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

The Government must understand the importance of these organisations and instead of leasing properties to them, must empower them so that they can use the properties they have to help expand the resources they have by having something in their hands so that they can use as a negotiating tool to increase the resources of the various organisations, which can also compel the members to be part thereof and to expand the services provided by these organisations.

I am saying, Sir, that this particular Resolution we are dealing with, is a part of social engineering as I see it from This Side and it is about time the Government recognises that this part of social engineering and move away from the lease aspect, as if they are doing the Diabetes Foundation a favour and recognise that they are not doing this foundation a favour, but the foundation doing them a favour and move a step higher.

Sir, at this stage of development, we cannot see organisations like this coming to beg favours of the Government but we must recognise that these are organisations which are reducing the bill of the Government and we must do everything to encourage them.

They are just as productive as any productive organisation in Barbados. When we speak about social engineering, the Government really need to climb up a couple more steps because they are really at the bottom rung. They need to understand the importance and relationships of these organisations and instead of creating a dependency syndrome by these NGOs, they need to make them very independent and not have them rely on the Government as if they are begging the Government a favour.

These NGOs are only helping the Government and that point must be made and it must be registered. These

organisations are not like the ones such as the Lawn Tennis Association where you want to lease, although these sporting organisations also play a role in the development of health. We have to understand that we are at a critical stage and we must understand what is social transformation and what is social engineering. So I am calling of the Minister of Housing to recognise that we need not discuss anything about leasing.

Another point that I want to make, Sir, is the point about parking space and I was very glad because when I look at the land area, I was a bit surprise at the land area that was being allocated to this foundation. I felt that a foundation like this, should be given enough land that it could have a proper car park and a proper area where they could get involved in commercial activities to defray their cost. I am hoping that when we look at it, we would make these organisations happy. Sir, these are what you would call proper NGOs and we must treat them in like form.

Sir, it is interesting to hear the speech of the Honourable Member for the City. It was very enlightening and it fits in very well for the reforms that I have been asking for in this Parliament for a long time. Sir, you cannot tell a consumer whose disposable income is limited that he or she has to go to the fresh farm market to buy vegetables at a high price, when that person feel that they could easily go and purchase a can of vegetables, called mixed vegetables, and they can get all the vegetables in one can for \$1.99

Sir, what we need is to understand the importance of farming in Barbados and to understand the importance of fresh produce in Barbados. This is why I have always said, and I will continue to make this point, Barbados is a consuming society and consuming from the wrong end, because we consume from outside but we need to push it to be a consuming society from inside, including our shores because we need also, not only to put the farmers in our healthy lifestyles, but we also need to put the fishermen.

Sir, if we do that, we would not have to be here arguing whether to rent, lease or to give the Diabetes Foundation of Barbados land because there would be no need to do such.

What we need to so, Sir, is to understand that our health problems are tied up in our economic problems and that the reforms that we need to bring to this country will impact and create a better life for all, not only the farmers, not only the fishermen, but also the vendors.

Asides.

Mr. D.St.E. KELLMAN: This is a better life for all with a true meaning, not a false meaning. A better life for all and not just a slogan.

Sir, what I speak of now is a programme and not a slogan, so if I say a better life for all, I am talking about a programme and not a slogan.

Asides.

Mr. D.St.E. KELLMAN: Yes, because I am a black man.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that we have to understand that it is the whole social and economic programme that has gone before us, that has created the health problem for us and we must find a way to ease the tension and pressure.

Asides.

Mr. D.St.E. KELLMAN: Check the figures of 1994 and compare them from 1994 to 1999 and you would understand that since 1994, there have been more unhealthy people.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that we have to understand the message and we have to implement the message. Sir, for the simple reason that we must get a better and more productive country. If we want a better and more productive country, we have to reform and we have to change everything we are doing in the way we want it done. We must stop following outsiders and we must develop our own programmes.

Sir, I will continue to make this point that I cannot accept and will never accept that the only way we can do things that are new is when we are copying. If we are copying, it cannot be new. We must be able to create our own ideas, implement them and allow people to follow us.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I too want to support the Resolution before us for the Diabetes Foundation and the property that is being offered to them by lease at Lower Collymore Rock.

I also want to congratulate all those non-governmental organisations which have been working over the years to ensure that the health and prosperity of Barbadian continue to be on the rise.

Mr. Speaker, I support much of what was said by the Honourable Member for the City. I just want to go a little further to say that every year in Barbados there is such a high percentage of amputations at the QEH, much of it is as a result of diabetes that has been impacting on the lives of many Barbadians.

It is, Sir, a measure of concern and I think that the education which is being recommended for Barbadians

about diabetes, and indeed about a number of other diseases that impact on us, should be encouraged.

Mr. Speaker, the School Meals Department does its planning for the menus with the guidance and support from the National Nutrition Centre. What really is of concern, Sir, is that we in Barbados seem to be developing a society of individuals who love to eat. As a result of the eating, every time you go to the polyclinic and you see babies, the parents are feeding them out of packages. When we go to bus stand we see it and even in the churches, every time you look at little children, they are eating. I really do not understand what is responsible for encouraging all the eating. What I do know, Sir, that enough exercise and proper planning is not taking place with what our people eat. The junk food is really taking a toll on us.

I am speaking with particular reference to the school because too many people are now at the entrance of the school, selling anything and everything in a package. Our children have the spending power because our parents seem to give them a lot of money and therefore they are buying before school begins and during the break periods.

Aside.

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE: Schools are also selling too much of the wrong things at lunch time, to the detriment of children participating in the meals which are being prepared by the School Meals Department that I consider to be extremely nutritious, even if they are not as appetising.

12.55 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Praise is due to those individuals who for many decades have been calling on Barbadians to grow local foods and to eat well. We must not forget the late Mrs Carmeta Fraser who always talked about eating well neither can we forget Mrs. Marion Harte. I did not ask for your permission, Sir, but it is a widely known fact that Mrs. Harte is on the radio on mornings encouraging and educating Barbadians about meals that they should use to help to promote their health.

Therefore, I wish to encourage Barbadians to eat better foods such as cabbage and rice and spinach cakes but more particularly to grow the foods they consume. There are various juices that can be made from local fruits which I am sure will help our children who are the biggest consumers of the junk food and who buy foods through the fast food window. I think it is about time that we do a lot more education on health especially through the Government Information Service, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and the rest of the media. The Nation Newspaper is doing this because we saw what took

place just two days ago in Queen's Park. That is now an annual event that I am sure has impacted tremendously on the lives of Barbadians.

I know that there is a need for more education to take place in the rural communities in particular, in the school halls, in the pavilions and in the churches to be able to reach those members of the public who are in dire need of further education not only about diabetes but indeed about their health in general. I am very concerned about how diabetes has taken a toll on our people and the way in which their appearance has changed. Most important for me is the aspect of the amputations that leave our citizens in a very sad state as they have no one to look after them and who then have to have the wheelchairs and all of that. Diabetes is really a very debilitating disease.

Mr. Speaker, because of the constraint of time I would just like to say that we need get our children more actively involved in physical education. Putting them in a corner to play on a computer or to play the various games for four or five hours a day without moving or to just put them into a bus and get them off to school is not enough. They need to do a little more running, a little more skipping and a little more jumping to prepare their bodies. They need as well to use more of the local and more nutritious foods in their diet to ensure that they can stave off some of the diseases that will impact on them.

So with those comments I wish to congratulate the Barbados Diabetes Foundation, the organisers as well as those individuals who volunteer their services. I want to encourage more Barbadians to work with the Barbados Diabetes Foundation so that it can then filter into the rest of the society so that the educational aspects are broadened as time goes on.

I thank you.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m. today.

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

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 2.00 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

1.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I commence by making a pronouncement which I believe not only reflect my own opinion but the opinion of many people when I start by saying that for many years now officialdom - I use the word officialdom for want of a better word - forever insist that there are just 20 000 diabetics in Barbados. In my view, that is a gross underestimate.

If you were paying attention to the contributions made by all Honourable Members who have so far spoken, you must appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that Honourable Members from their perspective as people who interact with many people and as members who are people of this world, are no doubt painfully aware of a problem in Barbados which, in the words of some Honourable Members, has reached crisis proportions.

Mr. Speaker, so serious is this problem of diabetes that many a young doctor of Barbadian extraction is doing research upon research into this thing called diabetes. In addition, increasingly more and more medical personnel are getting on board in this battle against diabetes.

Mr. Speaker, if in a given five-year period 200 doctors graduate and in excess of 140 of them show a direct interest in diabetes, that by itself is clear proof that from their perspective as professionals they understand that this problem is grave and want to treat it.

Mr. Speaker, we are into an era where there is no question that there is such a thing as a list of lifestyle diseases of which diabetes is one. Indeed, I make bold to say of which diabetes is the major one. Mr. Speaker, the reasons for my support for this Resolution will be easy to appreciate based on what I am about to say and based on what I have already said. The thing about a lifestyle disease is that if tackled and approached from the right angle it is very much often a preventable disease. I will repeat that. In almost every case where a particular ailment or disease is a lifestyle disease it is largely preventable. There are obviously exceptions.

There is no question that many an unfortunate person has been born predisposed to diabetes based on hereditary or genetic factors, but then there are those whose way of life contributes heavily. That is why I was impressed with all of the contributions that were made. The contribution by the Honourable Member for the City stands out because from a layman perspective she looked at it from a very practical angle and gave this Honourable House the benefit of her experience as a person of this work, as a former health minister.

This whole thing means that in the context of what we are calling a lifestyle disease, we in Barbados have to wake up. I have already mention that a substantial percentage of modern day medical practitioners are either

prepared to specialise in diabetes or to give it a lot of their attention. I am also prepared to say that a lot of us have to take stock of ourselves. You still get the comments on the road: 'Jenny looking real good, she getting fat' and 'Harry getting big man.' Mr. Speaker, that old-fashioned approach to defining wellness in terms of size has to end and we in Barbados have to look at our diet.

I was speaking to a Barbadian who left here when he was 14 who came back recently. He told me that he could not understand why macaroni and cheese is as popular today as it is. He said when he left Barbados and went overseas when he was 14, rice and peas probably, but he was wondering if the macaroni side of the diet backed up by the cheese was not the perfect combination for ill-health. He was horrified that we in Barbados appear addicted to it.

Speaking about the concept of addiction, it seems that many a diabetic actually crave sweet things.

2.05 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: If that person is ill from diabetes and is craving the very things that make that person ill, then it means that illness is magnified. Mr. Speaker, if the diabetic understands and knows that he is ill and should not use sweets, fats, et cetera, but still continues to do so, we have then to wonder if, in many respects, there is not a psychological component bordering on obsession or on a form of addiction.

In any event where persons have illnesses which on their own they find hard to deal with, they need medical treatment and also a support system.

This Resolution at hand is for a lease in favour of the Barbados Diabetic Foundation. The Diabetic Foundation - and may it grow big and develop itself into chapters - is an association that stands at the apex along with the medical profession of attempts to educate about diabetes.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Diabetic Foundation is well and truly placed to help diabetics. If some of these persons continue to lead lifestyles and to use diets that are inimical to them, then people like themselves, could show them the way or could offer support and must be encouraged to work with them.

I remember many years ago there was a gentleman from the Honourable Member for St. John's constituency, a fireman, had founded an organisation for diabetics. They got together and looked at ways and means by which they could help each other. In the context where the diabetic is going to be under pressure to eat the wrong things, then a

support system that will help the diabetic is absolutely essential. If doctor "A" tells the diabetic not to use fats or sweets and, either the diabetic continues to crave the fats or sweets or feels pressured when going out to lunch or dinner, then I am in favour of a group of persons of the same experience, working with the diabetic to help that person to curb their inclination to use foods which are not good.

Mr. Speaker, there is a very sad phenomenon in Barbados of very young people developing diabetes. It is an amazing thing where large numbers of persons under the age of 35 are already diabetic and though on medication, their lifestyle continues to commend itself to a further deterioration of their health. Sir, the whole of Barbados is going to have to be mobilise to help this class of people. I believe a figure of 20 000 persons as diabetics is a low figure for it might be tripled that.

Mr. Speaker, also in addition to medication and to diet, exercise is important. Sir, only yesterday I was asked the question if I was aware of the amount of amputations that are done in Barbados on a yearly basis, or if I was aware of the fact that Barbados was nicknamed the amputation capital of the world.

I had the experience of speaking to some medical people and asking them whether these amputations were necessary. They were of the view that they would have done their utmost to have avoided amputations but that in many instances, amputations were necessary to prolong the lives of the amputee. Mr. Speaker, sadly enough, within the last 96 hours, two persons under the age of 50 had amputations and, at that rate, we have a serious problem.

Mr. Speaker, I turn now to exercise. I am not a medical person but every medical practitioner who addresses this issue of exercise, insists that part of the effective therapy for diabetes is regular exercise. If exercise is part of the regimen, then it means that we should do what the doctor orders and should exercise. Sir, I wonder if exercise and necessary diets would necessarily work before the onset of diabetes. I suspect they would even though there is the odd person who is not fat but is still diabetic. Experience has shown how some slim persons who are diabetic and who did not abuse foods, would have been diabetic through hereditary or other genetic factors.

Diabetic is so deeply ingrained in the Barbadian person that there are categories of those who inherit it. There are those who are insulin-dependent. Luckily there are strides and advances in the metropolitan world that suggest there might very well find improved treatment for Type One diabetes, but perhaps the more prevalent type is the Type Two diabetes which develops in persons for over 40 years old.

Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Member for the City has correctly said, this disease leads to renal failure. As the blood vessels become destroyed, it sometimes leads to the development of hypertension. This is a serious thing and is something which we cannot talk too much about in this country.

I believe that part of the solution lies in enhanced public education, one that would not just occur at macro level but one that would permeate the schools and the homes. There is many a well-meaning parent in Barbados who is blissfully unaware as to what is a proper diet. There is many a well meaning parent that feel a proper diet means a lot of food. There are many a well meaning parent who thinks a proper diet means lots of rice and peas with a lot of fried foods.

We, therefore, have to penetrate the home and get people responsible for cooking to understand that the long term health of our country can be compromised if diet and foods are so prepared as to make people sick.

I do not think it has yet penetrated the consciousness of our people in Barbados that what one eats can actually get one sick. Some persons know that and accept that but it is highly probable that in a country where we define wellness in our own way that people have different definitions to good foods. There are some who feel a lot of starch is good or a lot of protein is a recipe for good health.

Mr. Speaker, I would think the Diabetics Association of Barbados owes this country a lot and we, in turn, owe the Diabetic Association a lot. The Diabetic Association of Barbados owes this country a further duty to enhance public education, designed to get as far as the schools and in the homes. This society owes the Diabetic Association a place because they can so develop programmes of greater and meaningful support for diabetics.

I am saying that if a diabetic understands that he is a diabetic and his situation is formalise through lack of exercise, through poor diet and would aggravate his problem, then if an active member of the Diabetic Association can use peer pressure and education to get that person out of the problem. It is possible that a member of the Diabetes Association was doing well by dieting, exercising, going to the doctor often, checking blood sugar levels, et cetera, can actually through an example, be a more powerful influence in the lie of a diabetic who wants to get well, than a person who does not live the experience.

The expert psychologists and others are finding that where persons have a serious problem and want to do something about it, to work together in group therapy sessions, then the results are really remarkable.

2.15 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND: Very often expert psychologists are finding that people who have the same problem and want to do something about it to work together in group therapy sessions, the results are remarkable.

I cannot agree with the view that we are going out of our way to do the Diabetes Foundation a favour but I am of the view that we are not doing enough for them. At the same time, I think that the Foundation should actively consider setting up more chapters throughout the breadth of Barbados. The Foundation must have a strong relationship with the Ministry of Health and every polyclinic. There should be coordinated meetings with technical people working under the Chief Medical Officer whose duty it should be to interact with the Diabetes Foundation and we need to give the organisation as much encouragement as possible.

The Foundation should also work closely with the media because it is better placed nationally and the Diabetes Foundation must have frequent interaction with the media to let it help them in carrying the message of the seriousness of this disease.

I never properly understood diabetes until the Honourable Member for St. James South five years ago repeatedly both in this Parliament and outside mentioned this problem of diabetes and hypertension. I want to thank the Honourable Member for St. James South unknown to whom I have made adjustment to my own lifestyle for having educated me about the dangers of this disease.

It is unfortunate where an infant is born with Type One diabetes. Sir, such a person, born that way is truly unfortunate. However, information out of the United Kingdom shows that there are expecting to find a proper cure for Type One but there are not sure that a proper cure for Type Two will be found immediately.

Sir, there are those who will tell you that they find it very difficult to have access to the greens and vegetables of this world. I think this matter should engage the attention of the Diabetes Foundation and it must see itself as walking hand in hand with every citizen of this country in dealing with a matter which we have to seek to arrest now.

We are told that there is no cure for diabetes at this stage and certainly it can be arrested meaning that although you can now administer an injection or pill that a patient can keep blood sugar level at a certain stage as to lead an ordinary productive life.

In addition to what the Honourable Member for the City said that it attacks your liver and kidney, like hypertension, it also destroys blood vessels.

I see the Diabetes Foundation as playing a role in education, offering a role of empathy and education. In instances where persons who are diabetic are still drinking strong, the Diabetes Foundation can help these persons find a way of life by which they turn their back on their drinking and such like.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Honourable Member for St. George North for bringing this Bill and I also thank the Honourable Member for St. James South who has not yet spoken for playing a pivotal role in educating Barbadians in life threatening diseases.

Sir, I thank you for your patience and I urge all Barbadians to get on board, eat healthy and follow doctors' orders.

I thank you.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I begin by endorsing many of the sentiments expressed by Honourable Members who have spoken previously in this debate and particularly those sentiments expressed by the Honourable Member for the City and the Honourable Member for St. James North.

I want to congratulate and commend the Diabetes Foundation for the outstanding job they have done so far in Barbados to deal with this dreaded disease. I also want to commend the Government and the Minister for being able to lease this land to the foundation as a means of Government support for them to carry on this outstanding job.

The work of this foundation is well known across the country because of the high incidences of diabetes within the society. In my own case, like the Honourable Member for the City, I have a genetic predisposition to possibly contracting this disease because both my parents are diabetics and it is important that I observe the type of lifestyle that should help to prevent the onset of this disease. This particular action by the Government and the encouragement in the way in which they have leased this land to the Diabetes Foundation for 25 years speaks more broadly to the concept of self-help and to the growth and continued existence of the NGO movement within the society.

2.25 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Sir, this is practice that must be encouraged in our society, the concept of self help, people seeking to do whatever they can instead of depending on the government for everything. Government has been very accommodating to the NGO community, exemplified by the annual subventions to these organisations in an effort to keep them active.

Sir, the NGO community is becoming a fundamental part of the government's activities in our society. I think that it is important that more NGOs be encouraged to come on board and the existing ones need to grow. This move by Government is certainly a fine example, along with the annual subventions, to help these examples to take their place as we continue to seek the best methods of managing the affairs of our people.

The Honourable Member for St. John spoke of the problems in our society, particularly a society that seems to consume things that only fuel our bad habits. My focus is on what the Minister spoke about regarding our lifestyle and the health of our nation.

The Honourable Member for St. John said that the Diabetes Association was formed in St. John. We know why it was formed there because the people of St. John want to get 'Sweet Cakes' out of that parish.

Asides.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: It amazes me that there are so many silent killers in our society. I am also surprised that we have not done more as a community to encourage the concept of changing our lifestyles to healthy lifestyles in order to prevent some of these diseases.

Sir, it seems to me that only when people are close to death, in terms of a heart attack or some other ailment associated with diabetes, it is the first time that they begin to think seriously about their diet.

I commend the Nation Newspaper and the other organisers who recently staged their annual 'Healthy Lifestyle Extravaganza'. It is a very positive move but we need to do more to raise the consciousness of Barbadians as it relates to their lifestyles and their health. This awareness is needed more than once a year.

Sir, a lot more needs to be done to encourage the change to a healthy lifestyle in all Barbadians. The Government and the various agencies need to do more, particularly the media, to help Barbadians understand the issue of a healthy lifestyle.

Sir, three Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Sports immediately spring to mind when we discuss health. The debate must focus more on improving the health of the

people and the prevention of health rather than focus so much on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I believe that is necessary to have a proper hospital but at the same time if we are able to change the attitudes of Barbadians in terms of their health, I believe that we would have less people in the hospital to deal with.

I do not understand why more public debates are not focusing more on the concept of prevention. I believe that the media needs to play a more critical role in how we deal with the lifestyle in Barbados and the health of our nation.

Sir, there should be promotions on radio, television and the print media. Where are the exercise, health and diet tips that can come through the use of the mass media. I am appalled that every night at prime time I see on television, just before the news, there is a window between the programme Days of Our Lives and the news. We seek to utilise that air time by filling it with old calypsos from the Pick of the Crop Finals back in the 1970s. As a matter of fact, Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation does not even show a complete song for you to determine whether or not it is a promotion of culture.

Sir, this prime viewing time, when people are waiting for the news, and this time can be used more effectively to seek to deal with issues that should come to the fore in Barbados than wasting it. I want to send a message to Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation to stop wasting the people of Barbados' time and money by filling in prime time with singers like Luther Vandross and a lot of crap.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, withdraw the word crap and use another word.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: I withdraw that word, Sir. I am going to use the word nonsense.

Asides.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Sir, a promotion can be used giving health tips or concepts relating to the environment. I believe that the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Sports could have some simple promotions produced by the Government Information Service to fill those slots rather than filling that prime viewing time with things that have absolutely no relevance to our society or improving the livelihood of our people.

I believe that it would go a long way in helping to change people's attitudes. I do the Ministry of Education is doing a lot to change the concept of school children in terms of a healthy lifestyle. However, as they become adults, it is necessary to continue the education process formally and informally.

2.35 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. N. A. LYNCH:

Therefore, Sir, it is important that particular time is used, not the way in which we use it now, but to help to promote the things that are good, sound and wholesome for the development of this society.

In that regard, Sir, I am appealing to them, through the print media, the radio, where a lot of time we fill with things that we do not need, that prime listening time and viewing time, can be focussed on their own contribution to the development of our society, through things like the health tips and whatever.

I am surprised at how little people know about exercise and things that they need to do that promotes healthy living among people. A person like myself who was an athlete or whatever, would have learnt some things. Sir, everybody does not have to get up at 5.00 a.m. and go running some place but simple tips, in terms of how you eat and what time you eat, if you should eat late. If you took a stroll up and down the block in front of your house, it cannot take any more than three minutes, up one side and down the other side, makes a big difference.

For example, people eat and go to sleep. People eat and sit and that kind of thing and there are some very simple routines that you easily follow which will change your body composition. The way in which your body reacts to certain things are so simple and can be done through the mass media. I am saying, Sir, that all these tips are available.

Sir, people are not going to take the time out to read now, because a lot of people do not like reading. I am saying that if we could just have a number of these tips made available to our people on an ongoing basis through the media that is there for us, we could do a lot more.

Sir, I know that CBC does something, I saw it recently in a programme called the "Silent Killers" in which they talk a lot about hypertension, diabetes and heart attacks and the like and they focus on this issue of stress. It is a good move. They are going in the right direction but I also feel that they need to go beyond that by being able to create a number of other things.

In terms, Sir, of a wider approach though, the health of our nation is the wealth of our nation. The only way we can have a wealthy nation, is if we have a healthy nation. I know people say it all the time. They give it a lot of lip service but I do not think that we go beyond.

Our approach, for example, to HIV/AIDS in terms of the protection of the most productive members of our society, is a wonderful approach. Our approach to the seat belts and seat belt laws because I believe in the seat belt laws, you are really protecting people against themselves. Unless you become a projectile in an accident, in seat belt in your car protects you. I really does not protect the person that you hit.

Sir, sometimes you have to protect people against themselves and what we have done under a lot of these laws is seek to protect our nation. We have done some work in terms of tobacco smoke and the like and I think we need to go a lot further than that, but in the issues as they relate to the health of the nation, we need to go way beyond where we have gone now.

We do not do enough in Barbados about things in Barbados like dust which is hazardous to the health of this nation. We do not do enough to control noise in our society. These are all things that are fundamentally important to creating a more healthy nation.

Sir, we could deal with the issue of diabetes but not things like dust and noise. Sir, if you have ever gone into the QEH an evening and you went into any of those wards are on the side towards Martindales Road, the noise is unbelievable. I do not know how any sick person could ever survive in any of those wards because the noise is unbelievable. I am saying that we need to do a lot more in this society to deal with issues like noise and dust.

Sir, people step in the road in front of your car where there is no pedestrian crossing. In Barbados people cross the road anywhere. There is something in the USA call jaywalking and you can be arrested by the police for it. I have never seen anybody yet hit by a car and the human being got up and the car was damaged and had to be put in the workshop. People do step in front of your car in the middle of the road because we do not observe any of the issues related to traffic laws, as it relates to pedestrians, bicycles and the like. What we are doing is going to kill some of the most productive members of our society.

Sir, these are the issues that need to be dealt with in terms of the Ministry of Health and some other ministries, as they relate to the wealth of our nation. There is another extension to it. The issues of dust, jaywalking and noise is very important to us as a tourism destination.

You are inviting people to your country who are already familiar with those practices in the exterior. The issue of being able to create the best product cannot only be the focus of having good hotels and nice beaches, but it must also relate as well to some of these health issues that are fundamental to being able to enhance the overall product of Barbados.

Sir, we have the power in our grasp to help in the fight in these matters. In particular in terms of diabetes, I think, Sir, apart from what the Diabetes Foundation is doing, I think we have, according to a number of agencies under these ministries, the power to deal with the issues and we need to take many more proactive steps.

I want again, Sir, to comment the Minister and the Ministry for the wonderful work through this wonderful initiative, in terms of being able to lease this land to the Diabetes Foundation. I want also want again to congratulate the Diabetes Foundation for the work that they have been doing and to implore them to continue in the fight against diabetes.

I want to urge all Barbadians to get on board in this fight. It is a very serious battle that we need to protect the more productive people in our society. I want, Sir, to commend them and to give my wholehearted support to this Resolution.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my wholehearted support to the facilitation of the Diabetes Foundation, which is being done by initiative before this House today. Before I speak on the matter of diabetes and the chronic diseases, Sir, I should like to turn to two of the issues raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South who just spoke and very articulately as well.

The issue of noise and dust are both matters which the Ministry of Physical Development and the Environment is addressing. You will recall, Sir, some weeks ago, that a society for the reduction or the prevention of noise pollution in Barbados was launched. I was asked to deliver the feature address and I was able at the time to tell them that the Ministry of Physical Development is acutely aware of the challenge of noise pollution as a societal problem in every social strata, whether it is people in housing area playing stereo systems that cause the walls to vibrate and the little old ladies to go mad, whether it is ZR vans, whether it is people blowing their horns outside of the hospital, we are acutely aware of the many manifestations of noise pollution in the society.

Sir, we have drafted a policy paper which we are actively working on, to bring before the Cabinet for its approval, so that noise pollution legislation can be drafted. It is a problem which several agencies and ministries are going to have to deal with because noise pollution exist at the level of the work place, in which case, it is a problem that the Ministry of Labour will have to address. It exists as a criminal activity and, therefore, the police have to work harder in relation to enforcement. It exists at the level of the environment and it exists at the level of health because

noise pollution can effect adversely on health. So it is a multifaceted problem which requires a multidimensional and multisectorial approach.

Similarly, we are now doing through the environmental engineering department, air quality monitoring at a number of sites in Barbados to determine what the level of our national air quality is so that if decisions need to be made about the reduction of a particular matter in the atmosphere, then we could take those decisions based on sound information.

Sir, this is just to apprise the House of what the Ministry is doing, since the issues were raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Sir, I think the year is either 2010 or 2020 but I am sure that the World Health Organisation has identified that by that period, whether it is 2010 or 2020 I do not now recall exactly, based on current trends, more persons in the world will die from chronic diseases: diabetes, cancer, hypertension and cardiovascular stroke, than all the people who have died in the world wars put together, including this latest war in Iraq.

I want to repeat this, the world health statistics tell us that more average, ordinary citizens in communities all over the world will die from chronic diseases than have died as a result of war and related activity.

Sir, that is a staggering statistic when you think of the large numbers of people that have succumb to war over the years. In Barbados, we are not escaping. As Barbados has moved from a agrarian type society to a move developed and sophisticated lifestyle as we have moved away from eating traditional foods, like breadfruit and salt fish, yam and dumplings and sweet potatoes, to eating processed foods, refined flours, refined foods with lots of preservatives and chemicals, fast foods, meats and so on that are produced rapidly by hormones and not natural growth, we have seen commensurate with this lifestyle change, a high rise in what is called the lifestyle diseases.

Sir, it is not just diabetes, it is cancer, it is strokes and it is hypertension. Before, the pattern was that these diseases occurred in the age group of 50 and over, then, somewhere I think perhaps around the 1980s we started to see that the bulge started occurring at an earlier age. The line where the parameter was drawn for the emergence of these diseases, rather than 50, started coming down to 45 and then to 40.

Sir, within the last ten or so years, the most recent trend has been that there are people in their early 20s and teenagers and pubescence young people who are all suffering from diabetes. It is amazing, the number of young children, in the primary school level who have to be given

insulin injection or are on diabetes medication. Children have to learn to inject themselves at a very early age when they are in school environment because the teachers cannot do it for them. They have to learn to do it themselves.

Sir, it is really becoming very frightening when we understand what the implications for diabetes are for the individual, for the society, for families and for national productivity level.

People say to you, as we like to say in Barbados, 'I got a little sugar'. There is not such thing, Sir, as a little sugar unless you are talking about a woman.

Asides.

Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON: When you are speaking of having sugar in the context of diabetes, you are really talking about having a very serious disease which is incurable but which can be controlled, and which, if you are not careful, will cause you to have serious organ damage or to lose your life.

But what does it mean, Sir, to have a little sugar. Diabetes means that your sight will be affected. Diabetes means that you have to be very careful in the care and treatment of your digits: your toes, your fingers but particularly, the toes. You cannot get a nail 'juck'. You cannot let a piece of galvanise or any little piece of metal 'huck' your toe, or your heel. You should not be walking around with sandals or barefooted. You should always be wearing proper fitting shoes. Some people for style, especially women, Sir, like to wear their shoes a little too tight. The store did not have the right size so they bought the half size under. They tell you it will stretch. You cannot be doing things like that. Proper shoe care and proper foot care is critical.

Sir, we are in a society where our men do not go for pedicures. A lot of our men and women, Sir, do not care their feet, do not care their toe nails, do not look after their toes. People develop cracks between their toes and they do not even know and things like that speak grave danger for the diabetic.

Diabetes means not only risks to the digits and the limbs and as the Honourable Member for St. James North spoke frankly that we are amputation capital of the world, doing approximately 150 lower limb amputations every year and that was the figure when I was Minister of Health. I believe that if proper surveys were now done that the figures would be higher because I have not been Minister of Health for nearly five years and the pattern was trending upward, not downward, so I do not think it has remained stable.

Diabetes means that you are at risk of degenerative eye disease. Diabetes means that there are days when you have general malaise and just do not feel like going along. Diabetes impact your organs: the kidneys, liver function and so on.

Diabetes, Sir, and this is the one that people least talk about, also affect sexual function. It is one of the consequences and systems that are least talked about. In men, it effects the erectile function and in women, it causes frequent yeast infections which, either reduces the capacity to have sex at all, or to enjoy sex.

Sir, when people say, I have a little sugar, there is nothing little about sugar. It is a major problem and I spoke indeed to the implications for the individual, the days off work, the inability to eat and drink as you wish, the moderation in lifestyle that you have to affect, particularly if you are not a person with tremendous self discipline.

The fact, Sir, that if you check with the insurance companies and the NIS, the statistics would bear out that substantial numbers of persons have to take time off from work, every year, as a result of diabetes and its complications and as a result of the other chronic diseases.

Asides.

Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON: I am told that there were 200 amputees in the year 2002 but I indicated, I knew it. Sir, I stopped being Minister of Health in 1999 and the pattern up to then was 150 amputations per year, and was increasing, I knew it had to be higher. I am now told that in 2002, there were 200 lower limb amputations.

Now that is a serious matter because part of the implications of diabetes, Sir, is that the number of people who present as disabled become disabled as a result of diabetic complications. Whether it is loss of eye sight or loss of part of a foot, or loss of a whole foot, whether it is a lower limb amputation or an upper limb amputation, or they take off a toe or two, many of the people in Barbados who are disabled, particularly those who become disabled as adults, are disabled as a direct consequence of diabetes complications.

Sir, not only is it impacting on the Social Security Scheme, the National Insurance Scheme and the pay out from the National Insurance Scheme, and there was a time, Sir, when I used to have the figures, I must confess that not being Minister of Health, I am not able to track the trend but I was able in 1999 to say what amount of money came out of the National Insurance Scheme to support persons who had to take time off or who were becoming disabled, as a result of diabetes.

It has implications for national productivity. It has implications for family. When one member of the family is working and the sole bread winner is taken down by this disease, it has implications for the quality of life for the family. It has implications for the central pride and self worth of the individual. There is nothing sweet about having sugar.

2.55 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. Miss E. H. THOMPSON: The honourable Members who have spoken before me have made the point, and rightly so, that the incidences of diabetes in the population can be reduced by maintaining healthy lifestyles and that diabetes itself, where the person already has the disease, can be controlled in some instances, even without medication but with careful monitoring, if the person is very disciplined as a result of effecting lifestyle changes.

I must admit that is something to which I feel strongly about because all my life - and I know he does not hide it, neither would he be embarrassed about my saying it - my father has been diabetic. I have had to watch the battle he had to wage to protect his toes and his feet. He has to be very careful about what he eats at Christmas. When all of us are eating black cakes and enjoying whatever there is on the table, he can only sniff the black cake and walk away. This must have taken him tremendous discipline to do that. He controls his diabetes through diet.

Sir, some years ago the fact that I knew that in a number of years I would have turned 40 years and would have started getting into the high-risk group for the prevalence for this disease, drove me to a lifestyle change. I was, at the time, a size 20 and had weighed 200 pounds. I am now a size 12, which, as a result takes discipline.

I made the point that if I can do it, then other number of the public can do too. Yes, it does mean that when one is at the party and everybody is eating the pones and cakes one might only be able to take a thin slice, no fatter than a piece of paper. It means that when the food smell good, that person needs to walk outside. It is all about discipline.

Many people will tell you that when I am at functions, I do not have drinks with sugar. I will tell the waiter, and some of them know me well, that they would bring me what I drink - a glass of soda water with a slice of lime or a dash of Angostura bitters. You will find that the first day one drinks that, it takes so badly but within weeks, one would have adjusted to the taste. It is about making the adjustments. I wake up six days a week and go to the gym and workout. I monitor my diet carefully.

Sir, I make the point that a person can say life is short and therefore he or she has to eat and drink everything but with that is a quality of life that is so horrible that every day one prays to the Lord to take them off the earth. While I was Minister of Health, I have seen people suffering as a result of the ravages of this disease.

We, therefore, need to effect a national change in our attitudes to foods. Sire, I need to make the point that the public sector care of diabetics is excellent. The primary health care system where we have treated people with chronic diseases is an excellent health care system. In fact, I believe the public health care system, although a person might have a long wait in the polyclinic, could offer much more comprehensive educational package for the diabetic and the chronic disease sufferer than in the private sector.

We have to move from concentrating our efforts in the tertiary section. We have to move from concentrating over monies where we do the amputations and eye surgeries, et cetera, and concentrate more funding in the primary health care service, where we begin to move at reduction and control of the disease. At the tertiary level the interventions are far too late and sometimes are not able to save the life or limb of the individual. The focus must, therefore, be on preventive care and preventive initiatives at the level of the community.

In this regard, it is critical that the Government should work with the Diabetes Foundation of Barbados and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in the treatment of chronic diseases, to ensure that the disease is reduced further. I also believe it is time for us to have a mass public education campaign in respect of these matters. People need to understand the connection between what they eat, how they live, whether they exercise or not.

In regards to exercise, people do not have to buy expensive gym membership. All they have to do is wake up early on mornings and walk vigorously on the beach or on the road, or use the stairways instead of the escalator. Keeping active is the key. We need to get our population to understand they have to go the way in which we have reintroduced more of our traditional foods rather than foods that are highly processed and refined in sugars. We have to be conscious of the impact of our lifestyles and our diet on our whole state of health and well-being.

What then Sir, is the way forward? I believe it is public educating, seeking to effect attitudinal change at the individual level, working with the NGO community, particularly those involved in the fight and seek to involve not only the NGOs, who traditionally target these population. The truth is that in many instances, people do not pay attention to the work of the Barbados Cancer Society or the Diabetes Foundation of Barbados until themselves or somebody close to them have contracted the

disease. It is only at that time that they start to listen to the information and the message but then it is too late.

Sir, when I was Minister of Health, I remembered writing to all the Heads of the Churches denominations, asking them to set up lifestyle programmes and health programmes at the churches, whether it was having lectures, letting person from the polyclinics come in and talk to them, et cetera, since they have captive audiences in their congregation and since the role of the church is not just seeking of the soul and spirituality and the road to heaven, as God's representative, the church has to take care of man here on earth. Caring for man is caring for his physical health.

Churches have to reach out more to their congregations and to provide more social support network for them. Part of the care of the individual that I am asking our churches to exercise, is to help people to realise that churches have large numbers of young people and that is critical for them to reach out and to saturate them with such information.

As Minister of Health, one of the things I did was to have community health fairs, where we went into communities and set up and took the information. We invariably went into housing areas and low income areas and took the information to the communities where it matters.

Sir, a lot of men do not go to polyclinics or to doctors. Men will complain only to themselves. Sometimes family member would not know if men are sick because men say nothing about their sickness. Therefore, we have to try to reach people wherever they are because they would not always come into the system.

As Minister of Health, one of the other things that I have done, and I believe it is an initiative that has died, I, therefore, would not wish to say that anybody should follow me but I set up a council dealing with chronic diseases. It was set up as a decision of the Cabinet and the committee was mandated to develop a policy paper for the treatment of chronic diseases and also the prevention and reduction of chronic diseases in Barbados.

I cannot say what has happened to it but I do know that while nothing appears to have happened - and I know that the Ministry of Health has been very busy with a number of issues - the reality is that the chronic diseases in Barbados are getting worse and 60 per cent of the Drug Service Budget - \$26 million, after administration costs are deducted - is going towards the treatment of chronic diseases.

3.05 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Hon. H. E. THOMPSON: The reality is that chronic diseases in Barbados are getting and 60 per cent of the drug service budget or \$26 million goes to the treatment of these diseases.

At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, nearly 60 per cent of their budget goes to the treatment of chronic diseases. We need to be cognisant that the burden of chronic diseases is not only having an effect on productivity, families, individuals and the wider society but our health care costs are spiralling as a result of the burden of treating these particular diseases and it is true to say that of all the chronic diseases, diabetes is the most prevalent.

Sir, I would love to see the day when we have a rehabilitation centre in Barbados because of the number of persons disabled because of strokes, who lose limbs, who are the victims of violent crimes, those injured in motor vehicle accident and Barbados is ripe for the development of such a centre. We cannot get money for those type of initiatives unless we come to grips with what chronic diseases are doing to the population and the health budget. I am advocating that we control the cost of treating the chronic diseases by reducing the incidences of these diseases in the population.

The matter of chronic diseases is a tragedy because almost everyone who gets diabetes, has a stroke or hypertension could have prevented it. Sir, there will always be persons who have eaten carefully, exercised and did all the right things and still suffer from the disease because life is not fair. We know of persons who have had heart attacks in the gym while they are working out but the vast majority of people struck down by chronic diseases happen as a result of their sedentary existence and bad eating habits. We need to get the message to the public that the prevention of the chronic diseases is something that each of us, as individuals can strongly influence if not directly control.

Sir, the Government has to invite new stakeholders whether NGOs or civil society to assist us with the fight of these diseases. The Diabetes Foundation has done tremendous work and will continue to do so and Government must act as a facilitator of health and well-being by creating for these institutions the environment and framework that allows them to effectively reach out to the public because they do tremendous work with very little resources.

Sir, Barbados is an aging society and more and more people are becoming pensioners who are unable to work to contribute to the tax pool and the payment of National Insurance. Younger people already have to fight with AIDS the prevalence of which is also a cause for concern and

when this small cohort of young people have to carry the tax pool, national insurance and other social services for the benefit of the wider of society, they are under tripple attack because it is a reducing number to begin with, a number already inflicted by AIDS and a number now affected increasing by the burden of chronic diseases.

The implication of the chronic diseases for Barbados given its demographic profile is one that all of us should be concerned about.

I am pleased to give support to this initiative which is a very important one and hope that the Ministry of Health will pursue many more such activities.

Sir, I am much obliged to you.

Mr. M.Z. WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this Resolution before this Chamber. We are aware that within recent years the lifestyles of Barbadians have changed considerably in relation to their eating habits and the actual day to day deportment as far as the society is concerned.

Sir, I have friends who have passed away because they were diabetic and some who are still alive who have diabetes. People talk about losing a limb when one is diabetic but a young man who worked with me did not lose a limb but he lost his eyesight. This was painful for us, his friends because, Peter Harding, had made a substantial contribution to this Party which I belong to.

3.15 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Mr. M.Z. WILLIAMS: Unfortunately, I believe that a lot of this has to do with our eating habits. Many years ago, you will find the older folks ate a lot of vegetables and ground provision. However, in recent times the average Barbadian is eating a lot of synthetic foods which have very little nutritional value. Sir, some people are now eating certain synthetic foods as tonics and they believe that by using tonics to improve their health that they are doing themselves good.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about diabetes we have to start by looking at our small children. I believe that we should start at the primary school level and look at the kinds of bad eating habits that we are encouraging our children in. We allow our children to buy a lot of snacks at school. If we check the ingredients of these snacks, we will find that we are encouraging them to eat a lot of synthetic foods which will affect them at a later stage of life. We should correct this habit now.

Mr. Speaker, it is said that children who eat Corn Curls are hyper. However, it goes beyond that. I would suggest that as parents we should take time out to read the ingredients in these packages of snacks which are put on sale across Barbados and which we allow our children to use.

We have to start checking for this disease at a very early stage. We have a situation in Barbados where a lot of children in schools refuse to participate in physical education and as a result, there is a complete neglect of the body care.

Mr. Speaker, some people say that they have to put on weight because they do not want anyone to say that they are too thin. I believe that you can maintain your body weight. I have maintained my body weight of 130 pounds for many years and as a result of this. Barbadians do not seem to understand the benefits of the sea.

For example, if we look at the people who have spent a lot of time swimming and exercising on the beach, we would discover the healthy condition of their bodies. Many of us spend a lot of time and money in the gym doing aerobics and dancercise classes. However, when they attend these classes, do they maintain their diets after?

I know someone who walks with a friend from the roundabout at Simpsons Motors to Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and when they reach Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation the friend was very embarrassed because as soon as that friend reaches the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation's yard he would order a ridiculous pizza. Sir, what was the sense of walking for exercise then eating a pizza? It does not make sense spending money in the gym and not understanding the importance of keeping our body fit.

Sir, one of the fastest selling items on any menu in a restaurant is macaroni. I know this for a fact because I did a study with a gentleman who owns a restaurant and he explained why macaroni sells quickly. He said that it is easy to prepare. He also said Barbadians feel that eating a portion of macaroni, potato chips and a drink make up a complete meal. In the long run you are creating a problem for yourself because you would have been building up a lot of unwanted calories which could have been avoided.

Mr. Speaker, in almost every home in Barbados someone is suffering from diabetes. This is a situation that we have to be careful of because we could have a complete society of diabetics which would cost the country a lot of money to control that disease.

Sir, I wonder how many schools in Barbados allow the children to participate in water sports. Water sports seem to be a thing of the past. Very few schools in

Barbados participate in water sports. I remember as a young boy, several schools participated in water sports.

Mr. Speaker, there are many swimming clubs in Barbados but with very small memberships. However, this can be corrected if the schools will introduce their students to swimming and the exercise of swimming. It is known that swimming is a complete form of exercise and that could augur well for the complete control and maintenance of the body.

I am not against anyone going to aerobics but I can boast of the benefits of the sea and we do not have to spend any money to go to the sea. The sea is free and we allow visitors to come from overseas and enjoy the facilities of our beaches. Our beaches are for each and every one of us to use. I recommend swimming to everyone and you will realise the benefits of the sea.

3.25 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker, Barbados is rated number two in the world as far as longevity is concerned. When you look at those people who have lived to the age of 103, 104 and 105, you have to ask yourself what they were eating or what they were doing that they were able to live to that long age.

I know of a person who is now going into her 103rd year. Surprisingly, one of the remedies for her long life, she is in one of the homes in Barbados, is that she still takes a sip of brandy every day. For some reason, this seems to be her medicine. She smoked to a particular point of her life. I have heard many people talk about smoking. Yes, smoking is a bad habit and I am guilty of it, but I am one of the people who believe personally that if you allow your body to be overruled, then you cannot pull it back. There are people who smoke but they do not take care of their bodies. One of my remedies for smoking is that I do not go to bed at nights unless I drink at least a pint of milk. If you go to my car now you would see that I have a bottle of honey in my car. The reason for that is that smoking is not a good thing for me to be doing but I am also providing myself with the remedy so that at least somewhere along the line I am not giving myself all of the nicotine from the cigarette, but I am protecting myself to live a little longer and to do the things which I am doing.

Asides.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: What I am saying to the younger Honourable Members in this Chamber, since I am senior to most of them, is that if they want to live long and they want to enjoy life up to the standard I am at and still functioning as one would expect me to function, that they

have to do the things that are right from young. You cannot come and do something and get out of wind doing it and complain that you are at fault because you did not prepare the wicket down the road. If you prepare the wicket then it is obvious that when you start to bat you would bat comfortably and your breathing will be accurate and you will feel comfortable with the job which you have just done.

Speaking from experience, Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about people who are suffering with diabetes in Barbados. As I said in my opening remarks the disease is in my family and I have known people who have died as a result of the disease. As a country we can vest all of the land in Barbados in the Barbados Diabetes Foundation, but if we do not practise good health, then eventually all that we have done would not amount to anything. So we have to understand fully that there are things that can be put in place from early in order to control anything that is likely to happen to you.

In the Barbadian lifestyle, people sit in front of their television with snack boxes and snacks. They get up the next morning and tell you that they feel heavy or they feel sick. But during the time they should have been giving themselves some relaxation, they were stuffing themselves with things that they should not be using. I am one who believes that you do not have to sleep, but as long as you can give yourself a rest for three or four hours without moving and give yourself the freeness of your mind... People believe that you have to sleep in order to say you are resting. That is not true. You can sit in this Honourable Chamber here in a quite relax manner not...

Asides.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: The Honourable Member for the City said that is not true because in here somewhere along the line you might not be able to because of the interference and the interruptions.

A relaxed body develops your mental thoughts and makes you feel comfortable. So when one says to you that you are not getting the amount of sleep that you ought to get, one must understand fully that you may not be getting the right amount of sleep but that you will be getting the amount of rest that the body requires. So when one sits in front of the television and do what I just mentioned, one must understand fully that there is no need to do that because you can sit in front of the television and still relax watching your television. I believe that there are many things in Barbados that can make the average person feel comfortable mentally because as long as you feel comfortable mentally that is what I consider to be a healthy body.

People do not seem to understand the art of driving. I am not talking about driving in a backup of traffic, I am talking about driving while understanding fully the conditions and driving with due care and attention. Driving is also a form of relaxation, but Barbadians find themselves in a situation where they now allow themselves to become vex on the roads. People are vexed because of this and because of that and it comes out in their driving on the roads in Barbados, but because the situation is tense, they should never allow themselves to be like that. They become so because they have not trained their bodies and their minds for better understanding.

Mr. Speaker, people must understand fully that they cannot wait until they get too fat then to want to reduce because when they start to reduce, people are going to start pointing fingers at them and say that something is wrong with them. They should not allow themselves to become too thin either. I have seen people who went into the gym and trained to get muscles and instead of getting muscles they got fat. I have also seen people who were fat who went into the gym and reduce to the point that they had to come out of the gym to put back on the weight.

Mr. Speaker, it does not make sense to give yourself all of that work when there are natural things about life. I am very touched about this because these are things that I have lived and I will share them with everybody. People do not understand the importance of giving themselves what I would consider to be the average two baths a day. There are people in Barbados who figure within themselves that they do not have time to bathe and they are only going to bathe the next morning when they have to go to work, so they go to bed without bathing after doing so many things during the day. You cannot be treating your body properly when you go to bed without bathing. The most important thing about a man's body is cleanliness. If your body is not clean then your mind cannot be clean. You have to clean your body in order that you can have a clean mind.

Barbadians must understand fully that they can deal with the symptoms of being a diabetic by living a lifestyle that is different from the one that they are living now. The lifestyles that Barbadians are living now are lifestyles that would take them right into the funeral parlour. I was talking, Mr. Speaker, to a gentleman at one of the funeral homes a couple of days ago and you would be surprised to know the number of Barbadians who are of the opinion that tomorrow is theirs and have already started to book space like if they are going overseas. Now if you are living a comfortable life, I am not saying that something cannot happen to you, yes you make preparation... One of the important things to know is that when you put your head down at night you are feeling comfortable and fit. You can slip away, that is the truth. The important thing is for your mind to be comfortable because as long as your mind is comfortable, then it is obvious that your body will get up

the next morning extremely comfortable. So I am saying to Barbadians that they have to change their lifestyles.

Barbadians have to understand that the lifestyle which they have adopted within recent times, that the television is the answer to it... They use their vehicles without understanding how they should be used. There is no reason for you to be driving in traffic and getting angry. You can get up a morning at 5 o'clock and go for a drive or you can wait until late at night when everybody has gone off the road and have a long drive and feel just as relaxed. Barbadians have adopted a lifestyle and as a result of adopting that lifestyle they are neglecting their bodies.

Mr. Speaker, all of us have a duty to look after our bodies. We need to put the physical education programmes back into the primary schools and we need to watch what our children are eating in terms of snacks. We need to be able to give our children the opportunity to understand fully the seriousness of being healthy. As long as we pass this type of information on to our children in another 10, 12 or 15 years, the problem of diabetes in Barbados might be reduced.

So I am asking parents to introduce the things that were once part of Barbados to their children and we would see a better and more healthy Barbados.

I thank you.

Hon. R. R. TOPPIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a relatively brief intervention in this Debate today. Since the Honourable Member who normally says this is not here, I would say that I only need three minutes today to make my point.

I fully support, Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before the Parliament at this time. I think that this Government has, over the years, certainly thrown its full support behind the issue of health. It has been said that had it not been for some perhaps unfortunate and some obnoxious interventions by some areas of the medical profession, Barbados perhaps today could have had a national health service. I think the Government therefore can be proud of its record in the area of health.

Mr. Speaker, there is only so much any government or any non-governmental organisation can do. Largely, we as individuals are in control of our own destiny and I think that, with some obvious exceptions, we determine the state of our health. There are some things that are hereditary and some things that are caused by factors that are obviously beyond our control but, by and large, the state of our health depends on the choices that we as individuals make and largely depends on what we choose to eat.

We as Barbadians eat too much and we eat too much junk. There are some people who believe that they must have four or five scoops of ice-cream or two and three chocolate bars after every meals. That clearly is a strong determinant to decreasing our health.

There is also the position, Mr. Speaker, that life is at a very fast pace. Even the most intellectual among us simply choose to opt for a snack and move on rather than to take the time to eat something proper. We also need to ignore some of the advice and the pressure we get from people, particularly some of the older members of our society, who would tell you at times when you object to what you are being given to eat or what you are being served, for example, let us say gravy, that a little grease is good for you. They tell you things like, they grew up all through the years eating it and nothing happened to them so why should something happen to you. You really have, Mr. Speaker, to resist that type of advice.

Another point I want to make is that we need to spend a bit more time reading the labels on the things we buy. People go into the stores and supermarkets and just pick up things without reading the labels on what they are buying, therefore they do not know what the labels say. I am going to make two points in this connection. Barbados has a very elaborate set of standards and legislation, a lot of which deals with the issue of labelling. We pick up things in the supermarket that have expired or we see things that have expired but we do not bother to pursue the matter further by making the necessary complaint. We pick up things that are in foreign languages. How can a diabetic know that he or she is buying something that is nutritious or that will not affect them adversely when the content is written in a foreign language? Those of us who are sufficiently careful to read the label do not bother to make any objection to the powers that be to ensure that the defects can be corrected. Therefore, we tend to let these things slide and we therefore put our health and the health of the entire nation at risk.

It is also necessary at times, Mr. Speaker, to seek professional advice before you proceed to buy items at various locations. I remember last year, at the beginning of the year, - I have a set of tests done every year, I have not done them this year - I was told that my cholesterol was a little up, not dangerously high, but it was a little on the cause for concern. I immediately sought the assistance of a dietician to learn about what I had to eat because my diet had to change. It was amazing to know that you can see something as absurd as a statement on items that expressively says no cholesterol but yet it has five per cent saturated fat. Mr. Speaker, you may or may not know but saturated fat is the major determinant in the level of your cholesterol and the level of cholesterol that any item contains, but we see various items on the supermarket shelves with statements saying no cholesterol, but yet they

have five, six or ten per cent saturated fat on the content of the label; a manifest and patent inaccuracy. Therefore, we as individuals need sometimes before we proceed to purchase items to take a step back and get some professional advice on how we should proceed in terms of what we buy.

I heard the point being made in here today more than once that there is this need for a sort of a sacrifice in terms of what you eat if you are to be eating properly and so on. Really and truly, Mr. Speaker, as I learnt from the dietician on that day, there is no real great sacrifice necessary to be made to enjoy what you eat because I remember saying to her not to bother to tell me that I have to eat a whole set of raw vegetables and a whole set of this and that which I am not going to enjoy because it means that my cholesterol is going to continue to go up because I am not going to stick to it, so she has to give me a package that I was going to enjoy eating. There are many little things that you can eat and drink and totally enjoy that are very good for your health. Therefore, there is very little reason for anybody in this society not to be able to enjoy the best of what they can eat.

Many people do not know the nutritional value in a tin of sardines, but a tin of sardines is one of the most nutritious things you can possibly eat. Oat bran cornflakes is also full of nutrition and very enjoyable. There is a lot of bread being sold in this society that has no sugar and no, what we called, contaminants, and they taste very good. There is diet butter, low calorie cheese and soya milk. You can start to eat all of these things tomorrow and you would not, certainly I did not, feel any change in your desire to eat and your health would improve. What you eat is very important in how the state of your health remains.

I heard a lot of talk about exercising, but the truth is no matter how much exercise you do or no matter how many times you go to the gym, if you do not change the quantity and the quality of your diet, the exercise is not going to do anything good for you. The reverse might be true that in fact you might be able to burn off what you eat a bit with the exercise and it might still work but certainly the other way does not obtain. So there is a lot that we can do by way of eating which is the important ingredient to ensure that we have perfect control of our health.

Barbadians also need to open their minds to other sources of information and treatment that they can access whether it is in relation to diabetes or whatever else. I think Barbadians are way too close-minded about the best information and the best treatments available to them. They are too conventional in their outlook and they tend to turn at all times to modern practitioners for assistance when they have various ailments and conditions.

3.45 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. R. St.C. TOPPIN: Mr. Speaker, I think that over the years, we have not been able to recognise the tremendous worth in natural herbs and that connotation with what is incorrectly referred to as the alternative practitioner, tends to display a very snobbish attitude towards them. The truth is that persons who were practising these techniques were practising and dispensing this medication and treatment before persons we now see as doctors.

Sir, we need to open our minds. There is a lot of wonderful work being done by these "alternative practitioners" and these persons who deal with the natural herbs, et cetera. I am not saying that modern medicine does not work. It does in most cases. There is the view, of course, that in the use of modern medicine that sickness "A" is cured while in the process "B" is damaged. Therefore, sometimes one needs relief from the ailment "A" and sometimes would have to use the modern medicine to get that relief. The truth is that in terms of one's long term health, it is better to resort to those persons who are engaged in alternative medicine.

Sir, one might sometimes hear from a modern practitioner that diabetes is incurable. I know of a person who had diabetes, who no longer has it because of the alternative treatment he got from these practitioners. I also know of a person who had cancer and was told that there was no cure for that cancer. That person resorted to alternative medicine and is now cured. That is an incontrovertible fact. I would not name that person on the Floor of this House but can do so privately.

Therefore, there are reflexologists and such like persons, who do a tremendous amount of good work but we spurn them because they cannot produce that certificate from a recognised institution and are, therefore, called quacks, et cetera.

I think the time might well be coming when the list of persons we can access for treatments and who can be recognised to provide a reputable quality of service, perhaps, in my view, needs to be expanded to include these persons who function in this society in such a very meaningful and positive way.

Mr. Speaker, it is important because there are times when a person gets effective medical treatment from these alternative practitioners, for which they are paid but when it comes to the issue of claiming one's insurance, due to the fact that these persons are not qualified medical practitioners, insurance cannot be claimed. That can act as a deterrent to some people who would want to seek this alternative treatment.

I think these alternative practitioners do wonderful work and persons who are afflicted with diabetes can, in fact, turn to them. I am quite sure they would be surprised at the result.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I support this Resolution.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all Honourable Member who have spoken on this Resolution. I want to thank those all persons who have been in the forefront of fighting the cause, to help Barbadians to understand the dangers of diabetes as a disease.

I would like to single out Doctor Livvy Forde for his work in the field; Doctor Oscar Jordan, who has led the foundation admirably and has written the Ministry on several occasions in order to push this work; Professor Henry Frazer for his contribution to this field and Doctor Anselm Hennis. I would also like to single out Mr. Sinclair Clarke, now deceased, the Founder of the Diabetic Association.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: With the House's permission, we will now revert to Government Notices. The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Architects Registration Bill, 2003, be read a first time.

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

ORDER NO. 5 – 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 THE PARCELS OF LAND SITUATE AT CLAYBURY PLANTATION IN THE PARISH OF SAINT JOHN IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution before this House seeks to vest 8 462.5 square metres of land at Claybury, St. John, in the National Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, sometime around 1995, the Government at the time, was developing the roads at Claybury. It was then discovered that it was necessary to

buy some lands, not only to improve the road but also to have more economic use of the land. Therefore, the Government bought the strip of land to the east of Claybury road, thereby putting up a sort of rainbow development.

This development, Mr. Speaker, when fully serviced, will produced between ten and eleven lots. These lots have already been surveyed. The Chief Town Planner and the Ministry of Agriculture have given their approval on this land which was formerly part of the agricultural belt.

We believe a mixture of housing and agriculture could go hand in hand. We, therefore, would want the House to agree that this land be vested in the National Housing Corporation, so that the Corporation could sell these lots to persons who are interested in small scale farming and to erect a small house on the lots.

With those remarks, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

3.55 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

ORDER NO. 9 – ARCHITECTS REGISTRATION BILL,
2003

Hon. R.D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the Architects Registration Bill, 2003 has as its object the enactment of provision for the registration and regulation of architects in Barbados. Since the mid 1970s on the initiative of the then Barbados Society for Architects, draft proposals were prepared with the view of providing the legislative basis and the regulation of architects. However, for one reason or another, the enactment of these proposals were never pursued.

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport is at the moment preparing to establish a building authority to regulate and supervise the building industry in Barbados. This authority will have responsibility for ensuring that the Barbados building code, which sets out technical requirements and standards for design and construction of building, is enforced.

The building code has identified some three professional groups considered to do the implementation of these technical requirements and standards. These three groups are the registered engineers, registered land surveyors and qualified architects who are professionally qualified to practise as consulting architects. The only one

of these three professional groups that is not required by legislation to be registered are architects. In other words the present system allows persons not suitably qualified, to practise architecture without any professional restriction or regulation.

The Barbados Institute of Architects, the successor organisation of the Barbados Society of Architects, through its own internal register, currently registers architects qualified to practise architecture to the design standard specified in the building code.

Mr. Speaker, presently architects are registered in all European countries, USA, Canada, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and Antigua. In Barbados professional associations registered includes lawyers, doctors, nurses, engineers, quantity surveyors and land surveyors. Similarly, architects in Barbados should be registered.

The absence of a clear definition of architects creates an anomaly which should be rectified. Without proper professional registration, it would be difficult to protect the local architectural interest and they would also be unable to access extra regional territories in order to carry out their functions.

The practice of architecture in Barbados should, therefore, be given a legislative basis through the introduction of an architect's registration Act and hence, this is what we are doing today.

The major aspects of the Bill are the registration process, reciprocity and validation of documentation and appeals. It is proposed that a board comprising seven person would be established to administer the Act. Four architects will be recommended to the Minister to be members of the board as well as the Chief Technical Officer of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport.

A person awarded a qualification in architecture from a recognised university and has had at least four years practical experience will be considered for registration.

A person will be registered as an architect if he has successfully undergone and approved graduate programme in architecture, is registered by an approved body in another country with acceptable standards of architecture and professional practice. A person who does not have these criteria but wishes to carry on in the trade of architecture should submit an application to the board. The person must be over the age of 35, have had not less than ten years practice in a responsible position, possesses acceptable standards of architecture and be a fit and proper person for registration.

Section 12 of the act say that nothing in this Act shall prevent a person who is not an architect from

performing architectural services including drafting or supervising any architecture function as owner, contractor, superintendent or clerk of works or from performing architectural works involving minor alterations or from performing architectural work for single family dwelling.

Sir, I am obliged to you.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to give my support to this Bill before the House. It has been very long in coming and I am glad it has come at this time. I remember several years ago a few architects approached me and asked me if it could come to Parliament by way of a Private Member's Bill and I was quite anxious at the time to do so. I am aware that they have also approached the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and I am happy that it is here at this time because architects are commencing a week of activities and have decided to focus their activities around the 375th anniversary of the settlement of Bridgetown.

4.05 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: It will set very well with me when on Saturday , at their Gala, I will be able to speak to the fact that this matter would have passed this Chamber.

It is important , as the Minister who introduces it pointed out, because there are number of professionals who are registerable in Barbados and it is entirely fitting that the architects should be among that number. Indeed, in these days of rule-based trade negotiations and when one must undertake responsibility for one's work and labour, it is of critical importance that, particularly in a place like Barbados where construction is a major ongoing component in our economy, even in the leanest of times construction marches on, at a time when we have heard that the building code must be the order of the day, it is critical that persons who are holding themselves up to be architects should be registered.

There are some parts of the Bill that have caught my attention. It is suggesting that if you are going to sign your name to drawings or a document as an architect, you have to be an architect registered in Barbados and that has to apply to indigenous persons as well as those coming here to work by way of work permit.

I am particularly interested in that aspect of the Bill which recognises that it is not every piece of construction which necessarily should require an architect to design it and there must be a person who will certify it for the purpose of Town and Country Planning's approval.

I am drawn to the fact that there is a recognition of persons who are working with architects and who would not have been able to satisfy all of the aspects of training at this point and there is a possibility for those who have been working over a period of 10 years to be in the practice of architecture in a responsible position and an architect, with suitable qualifications, would be entitled to practise as an architect once the requirements under this Act have been satisfied.

I am very happy that there has been recognition that these persons, sometimes we know them as contractors, draftsmen who supervise either their own work or other people's work, superintend work or who sometimes act as Clerks of Works on all kinds of construction projects and perform architectural works on small alterations and building single family dwellings.

Sir, in my constituency people are converting houses from wood to wall, putting wood and wall structures in place and they do not necessary think that they need an architect for the work involved. It is still possible that persons who can draft plans to satisfy Town and Country Planning and supervise such works are not prevented from doing so by virtue of this Act. I am very happy to see that the Act restricts that kind of undertaking to buildings which are of no more than two storeys high because an engineer and other skills would be required for such projects.

Sir, I think that this Act has been very fair to those who practice this profession at this time and to those who would propose to come into it. I think that it is past due and I want to give my support to it.

I am pleased that the Minister has taken the trouble to point out, and the Bill also speaks to this, that nothing in the Act should be deemed to be construed as preventing the practice of their professions, engineers, land surveyors, architects, interior decorators or furniture designers if those persons do not use the word architects.

Sir, if you are going to be an architect you will have to undertake a period of study or work involved in order to put the word 'Architect' up on a plaque and you will have to register yourself.

The Bill also speaks to the fact that persons in other professions masquerade as persons who are architects when they are not so. I think that this Bill has covered all of the bases and I hope that it will be well received. I do not see any reason why it should not be received. The Board which will oversee many aspects of this is a Board that will be dominated by members of the profession, as in the case of many other professions. I do believe that it should find favour. I know that there has been an extended period of consultation with the Barbados Institute of Architects and

to crown off their week of activities and I commend it to Honourable Members.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, nobody in Barbados would think that for a person to practice medicine that he or she should just get up and begin practising without being a registered medical practitioner. Nobody in Barbados would want to ever hear that a person in the nursing profession is allowed to practice in the profession without begin registered to do so.

I recall, about 10 years ago, the architects of Barbados insisting that when they checked the full gamut of professionals in Barbados, they found that they were the only ones whose business was not regulated by statute. It has been more than 10 years that the architects have been asking for the legal capacity to have a Board of Registration and have qualified architects registered by the Board.

There is no question that in Barbados one or two persons have held themselves out to be architects when they were not qualified and at the most they were trainees or draftsmen.

4.15 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

Some of them were able, in the absence of legislation to pretend that they were true architects.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things about being a professional group is that a professional group, more or less, has the right to regulate its rules of membership, or to have regulated its rule of membership, or to have a system of ethics in place and a system of regulations in place that will enure to the professional development and to the competence of such a profession.

I am attracted to page 6, clause 4, where I notice that in addition to registration, there is a procedure for discipline. Sir, let me speak about registration. Registration, Mr. Speaker, means that the Institute of Architects, having searched and found that applicants are fit and proper to be registered, can be registered and that this Institute of Architects will be willing to vouch for the competence and professionalism of those who are qualified and who are registered.

Registration also constitutes notice to all and sundry that this is the group of persons that the Institute of Architects would indeed put out as the list of architects in

Barbados. Registration is evidence, Mr. Speaker, as to the class of architects that exists.

Sir, looking at the Bill, I am impressed with it but I have one query which I will raise in light of a decision by the House of Lords called, *Pfeiffer vs. Hart* which says that in the book of law, when in doubt, we can look at Parliament's *Hansard* to ascertain from Parliament's record, how the doubt can be resolved.

The word Minister, occurs throughout the Bill, in different clauses. One clause even allows the Minister to make regulations but the Definition Interpretation section of the Bill does not define Minister.

I want to say before this Honourable House that by Minister here, we mean the Minister responsible for Public Works.

Sir, interestingly Clause 19 of the Bill talks about the power of Minister of Finance and means the Minister of Finance, even though our definition does not name the Minister as their Minister of Public Works. Sir, the fact that the Minister of Public Works introduced this Bill, and the fact that usually his ministry has responsibility for such matters, by Minister, where the term Minister of Finance is not expressly mentioned, Minister will mean Minister of Public Works and not Minister of Housing or Minister of Physical Development. This is what the decided case of *Pfeiffer vs. Hart* that were a court is in doubt, the court could look at Parliament's record.

Of course, you could also use the Interpretation Act to ascertain, based on a given portfolio, or you could even look at the Minister's instrument. If the Minister's instrument says he has responsibility for he has responsibility but we are taking it that this House is going to approve Minister, where is Minister of Finance is not expressly mentioned, as the Minister responsible for Public Works, so as to avoid any problems with interpretation.

The draft Bill, Mr. Speaker, also mentions the qualifications expected of persons wanting to be architects. I am attracted to Clause 7, page 8 which talks about the whole question of reciprocity where persons from abroad, so long as they are registered in another country can apply before our Board of our Barbados issue of Architects and the Board, subject to making inquiries, will be able to decide whether or not to approve such an applicant from abroad.

We have had it in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, where on occasions established professions question the qualifications of non-nationals. They previously had it here with doctors. It has now become fashionable for many doctors, for example, not to train at the UWI, which is very hard to get in, not to train at Mount Hope where there are

problems in meeting the needs and demands of students, and some people are actually going to Cuba. We have also had people who have trained in medicine in Russia and when they came back here, they had problems.

This Bill in draft, is allowing the Board of Barbados Issue of Architects to make inquiries of applicants and having satisfied themselves, to register these applicants where these applicants are non-nationals.

I also notice, Mr. Speaker, that the question of fees occurs. As the Honourable Member for the City mentioned, Clause 12 says that persons like Land Surveyors, Town Planners, Landscape Architects, Interior Decorators, can practise their own professions, along with Engineers, so long as they do not use the word, Architect.

One of the cornerstones concerning the establishment of professional bodies is to exclude unqualified people. But where a related profession has people who can practise the profession without necessarily plagiarising or impersonating architects, then they are free to continue.

Of note, Mr. Speaker, and this should concern those professionals who do not yet have the privilege to incorporate, Clause 14 mentions groupings or architects and refers to partnerships, associations or corporations. There are instances, Mr. Speaker, where in certain professions, you cannot incorporate but this Clause 14 expressly permits architects apprentices as partners, in partnerships with unlimited liability or ordinary associations like clubs, to incorporate. In instances, Mr. Speaker, where professional people not only have to pay high fees, but where they incur high costs of operating, the concept of limited liability should be extended.

I realise that in England, Mr. Speaker, lawyers who, for years had been forbidden from incorporating are permitted under certain conditions to incorporate. In fact, solicitors in England are now allowed to form partnerships with auditors, accountants and business consultants and we in Barbados had better take note of developments in parts of the world where professionals, who were not originally allowed to incorporate, are permitted incorporation.

I used to be always fascinated, Mr. Speaker, even before this Bill came, by the fact that there are those professionals who had the foresight to incorporate when there was nothing restraining them from so doing.

Mr. Speaker, these architects are prepared to be persons respecting the law. I draw your attention to Clause 16 where a court can actually inquire into a decision of the Board, in respect of aggrieved people who are not pleased with the Board.

Provisions in respect of the professional misconduct and offences are also dealt with and the Schedules enable the Bill to actualise itself.

I too, lend my support to this and I commend the Honourable Minister. Now, something that I am going to conclude, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for the City mentioned that for a long time these persons were seeking to have law passed in their favour, have a Bill passed to regulate their professional relations. She did mention their hope, years ago, to have a Private Member's Bill come. The fact that this has come as Government Business suggests that this Government will lend its support to a serious body of professionals.

This has not today come as Private Members' Business. A Minister of the Crown has introduced this as Order No. 9 Government Business today and the architects must know that we are with them. We wish them all good health and success and continued professional prosperity during this week. We expect them to do something in the way of a fitting memorial to our capital city Bridgetown on the occasion of its 375th Anniversary.

I end, Mr. Speaker, on a note that the Honourable Minister who introduced this Bill had mentioned earlier in his speech. We are moving towards a building authority and a building code and there can be no question that the architects are going to have a role to play, however honorary, however free, in advising us as to how we should proceed in fulfillment of our mandate to establish a building code.

I want to congratulate the Honourable Minister for bringing this piece of legislation. I want to congratulate the architects for having persevered in the attempt to bring this legislation. I lend my support to it and, as an attorney myself, I find that this is an excellently written piece of legislation and the only doubt I had about it was when I did not see, minister in the interpretation or definition clause, specifically and expressly defined to include the Minister of Public Works but let it be said for Hansard's sake that the Minister with the overarching authority, notwithstanding Clause 19 which talks about the Minister of Finance on some occasions, is the Minister of Public Works and Transport, however such a minister may be designated in the future.

With those words, Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much.

4.25 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Like other speakers before me, I am pleased to know, after many, many years

of the architects crying in the wilderness almost and seeming to have their cries fall on deaf ears, that during this their week of celebrations we can come to this historic building in the City of Bridgetown on its 375th Anniversary and bring this piece of legislation to the Parliament.

The practice of professional registration exists all over the world. It was really a very serious omission in a country as sophisticated as Barbados with so many high-value projects. Sir, when you consider the multimillion projects that are being carried out in Barbados whether it is Port St. Charles or all of the other developments, whether they be tourism related, industrial or commercial - that we should not in a climate where there is continuous physical growth and where there has been an upthrust and an increase in the number of buildings being erected whether for residential or commercial use, that persons in the industry responsible for being part of the birthing of that process had no regulation in itself.

All other professions are regulated and have some authority by which they are guided and the public has a clear reference point. As a result of this absence, much mischief was done to the public because there were a number of people who held themselves out to be architects who really had no kind of specialist training, architecture is specialist training, who charged fees at the same rate and level that persons who went off and studied for years to be architects charged, but because there was no regulatory authority or no regulation via legislation, people frequently had no recourse when problems occurred. I am glad that we are now, as called for by the architects, responding to that very great area of need and putting legislation in place.

As Minister of Physical Development, my point of contact with them is perhaps far more frequent and maybe far more intimate than other ministers might be because they have to interface constantly with the Town Planning Department. The body of rules and regulations which govern building in Barbados is what they must be guided by whether they be rules relating to coastal zone, building development or general building. So often I am called on to interface with architects and developers...

Asides.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: We have now come to the point where we can speak of what this Registration Act can do for the profession and what it allows. It is important that the Board which is going to be set up is broadly structured because it would include the Chief Technical Officer from the Ministry, representatives from the architects themselves and people appointed by the Minister, who you would assume would have sort of technical expertise to bring to the table.

It is important that the Board should be structured in this way because very often within professions, the issue of self-regulation and discipline often becomes a point of discussion when the public is aggrieved as to whom they should appeal, what the appeal process should be and how their grievances should be treated. Today, for instance, there is an issue as to whether the Police should be allowed to have its own disciplinary committee or whether it should comprise of persons who are non-police officers or a mix of the two. The same thing applies to the legal profession. There are persons who believe that they do not get justice when they complain against lawyers because the legal profession is self-regulatory.

Therefore, that this Board brings a multiplicity of interest to the table augurs well, I think, for how the profession would be viewed and how issues relative to discipline, regulation and control will be viewed by the public.

The architects were the first professional organisation within weeks of my appointment as Minister to invite me to address them. They raised a number of issues at that time about which they were concerned. One was the functioning of the Town Planning Department. Since then I am very pleased to say that over the course of the last two years we have been able to involve the architects in a number of discussions that we have had for improvements of the Town Planning Department and we have put measures in place which have helped to expedite the processing of Town Planning applications. Other further measures are being put in place that I hope would be continued and that we would continue to seek constant improvements.

This issue of registration was the one that was paramount for them. I would wish to broaden the discussion away from the Architect legislation and look to the architect's role because architects have a role in the preservation of our built environment and of our physical and cultural heritage insofar as they are manifested in buildings. There are pieces of architecture which defines cities such as the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Colosseum and the Taj Mahal. There are buildings that have become very famous like the Laughing Waters and the Tower of London. The Sidney Opera House is perhaps one of the pieces of modern architecture that helps to define a particular city. There are monuments to man's design which has helped to define an age, an era, cities, a country and a culture.

Our architects need to be careful what they designed because they are representing something about Barbadians as a people and about Barbados as a place and making statements which will either endure for the future or will not.

I am concerned as a lover of traditional Barbadian architecture about the extent to which we are not seeing traditional Barbadian architecture being replicated and continued in the building designs. We are now building a lot of modern buildings of glass. We have moved away particularly in housing from these breezy houses that are built to capture wind flows and so on. We must take elements of traditional architecture in consideration even as we do all these new modern designs of modern planning. We cannot exist apart from them nor can we write off what is traditional Barbadian architecture because it really says something about Barbados, it is a cultural statement.

In that regard, I would wish to urge that a greater influence of traditional architecture be seen in the construction of new buildings in Barbados. Clearly, I am reflecting a personal bias. I do not want anybody to make any mistake that that is Government's policy. I am expressing a personal preference.

There are other people who might prefer all the glass buildings that are sprouting up all over Barbados. I am saying that traditional Barbadian architecture was not only founded on what I thought was good taste but good sense. There is a certain economy in having a building which is designed to capture the natural cross-flow of wind rather than having to rely on airconditioning, artificial lighting or artificial ventilation.

This is a tropical country, I made this point when I addressed them, yet we insist on putting carpets in every building, when carpets are used to create warmth, so we do not need them. We have in this country a lot of people have asthma and severe conditions of allergies. We do not clean offices particularly well. We are putting persons who use these buildings at risk, and I would wish to urge that we move away from so much carpeting and move back to hardwood floors. If we do not want wood, then let us have ceramic which is much easier to clean and care for. It attracts less dust mites and less allergens than carpeting does. As a tropical country, these are more economical and more practical for our buildings.

4.35 p.m.

Tuesday, April 08, 2003

Hon. Miss E. H. THOMPSON: It is things like that, in my view, which architects need to be more cognizant of and sometime too, to guide their clients. There are other things that we could speak to that would be an expression of personal preference but I do not think it is fair to foist my personal preference on the House or on the public of Barbados.

I would only wish, as I had indicated, to speak very briefly to indicate that I am pleased to be a part of the

member of an administration which has helped to fulfil what has been the long aspiration of the architect, that is, to have a proper form of registration and to allow those persons who have done the training and have the expertise to be recognised for the skills which they have.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard architects complained that people would go to draftsmen rather than to employ the services of an architect, even when they are building homes worth \$300 000 or \$400 000. Sometimes as one goes into these buildings one can see redundant spaces, small room, inadequate spaces, incompatibility with design not in line with the type of architecture, et cetera. These are all matters on which the trained person could advise.

Architects need to explain to the public what it is that an architect can do that a draftsman cannot. The reality is that a number of persons do not know, nor do not understand what special skills there are that an architect brings to help to guide them, to save them money, or to give them the best possible value for their money. As far as these people are concerned, they simply want a house, without specifying exactly their wants or designs. It is then for the professional architect to guide them. There are some people who do not appreciate the service rendered by architects and that rendered by draftsmen.

Sir, a Member made the point that a person who is not a lawyer would not generally call himself or herself an attorney or would not seek to practise as an attorney. It would not be allowed because there is a professional registration. Therefore, the same should apply in relation to architects. The architects also have a function to inform the public as to their skill and role and to explain to the public how it is that members of the public can actually benefit from utilising their professional skills rather than going to a draftsman. Many people see it only as a difference of dollars because the architect charges a far higher fee than the draftsman, for the same function. Architects need to have public relation and marketing and not simply have a week of activities. They have to use it to explain to the public their proper role and function.

Sir, I am glad that we are on the way to establishing them in their rightful place through this piece of legislation. I congratulate and compliment the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central who has brought it before this Chamber today.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, since 1994, the architects have been asking Government to bring a piece of legislation to regularise the profession. It has taken a long time but I must say that in the early days, the draft legislation was very harsh indeed. Over the last 9 years or so, a number of things have been done to the legislation. Looking at it today, it is more amenable and acceptable to the Government and, indeed, the architects' body.

I am very happy to see that draftsmen would still be able to continue practising. As we know, most people in Barbados still prefer draftsmen to draw their homes, whereas architects are used in bigger buildings for the designs and for models.

Mr. Speaker, I too would want to support this legislation. When it is looked at, doctors are registered, lawyers and accountants, et cetera, are registered and, therefore, the architects felt left out. This will help, not only to protect the integrity of the profession but will bring added status to the body as they move through the Caribbean. In most countries in the western world, architects have to be registered. It is a profession that is looked upon as being very important to society for the preservation of culture and the various designs that have come through time.

We would, therefore, want to wish the architect body all the best and would hope that they would go from strength to strength as they preserve and protect the designs of, not only Barbadians culture but also that of the western world. I thank you.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank those Honourable Member who have made their contributions to this Debate. I wish to say there are a number of areas in the Bill itself, to which I would make brief mention. Under Part 2 of the Bill, a register known as the Architects Register will be kept, in which all names of architects would be entered, while at the same time, the general public would be able to see this register and would be able to choose the architect of their choice.

4.(1) The Registrar shall kept a register to be known as the Architects Register, in which he shall cause to be entered the name of every person entitled to be registered as an architect under section 5 or 6 together with the following particulars in respect of each person,

(a) his full name and address;

(b) the date of his registration; (c) a description and the date of the qualification in respect of which he is registered.

(2) The Register shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection at the Registration Office.

(3) The Registrar shall cause to be published in the Official Gazette, (a) in the month of February in every year, an alphabetical list of persons who have at the 31st January in that year registered their names as architects. (b) as soon as practicable after such registration, the name of any person registering his name as an architect after the 31st January in any year. Mr. Speaker, I also wish to point out that with the

movement of persons within the Caribbean, there would be other architects from those countries who would wish to live in Barbados, who must have the necessary qualifications and must be a holder of a valid Certificate of Architecture to practise in Barbados.

The Honourable Member for St. James North has mentioned the incident where an architect has been found guilty of professional misconduct. The Act continues:

17. Where a registered architect has been found guilty of professional misconduct, the Board may, in addition to any other penalty prescribed in the Regulation, impose on that architect a fine of \$2 500.

18. A person who:

(a) fraudulently procures or attempts to procure the registration under this Act for himself or any other person by making or producing, or causing to be made or produced, any false or fraudulently representation or declaration, either orally or in writing;

(b) fraudulently makes, causes or permits to be made (i) any false or incorrect entry or copy of an entry in the Register; or (ii) any alteration in any entry or copy of any entry in the Register. (c) not being a registered architect, (i) practises architecture for which he demands or receives any fee, gratuity or remuneration, whether or not such fee, gratuity or remuneration is demanded or received in Barbados; (ii) pretends to be a registered architect. (iii) makes use of the name or title of architect or any other name, title, addition, designation or description implying that he is a registered architect or is entitled to be recognised or to practise as a registered architect,

is guilty of an offence under this Act.

Sir, I want to thank also the two Members of the Opposition, who have consented to having this Debate and have agreed on this Bill.

I also want to thank those persons from the Ministry of Transport and Works, my drafting team and my legal advisor, for the effort they have put in order to have this Bill brought here.

I know that the architects would be very happy because they kept contacting me wanting to get this legislation in place.

Mr. Speaker, to those persons who believe that this is a closed-shop, I would like to say that, in my opinion, it is not. We are trying to regularise the architect, as they would want to be recognised as a professional body in Barbados.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. R. D. MARSHALL seconded by

R. C. EASTMOND the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply. Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

Mr. Chairman: This Honourable House is now in Committee of Supply.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, before the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central begins, in the Preamble of this Bill, there is an error. The Preamble, as it is, says: "A Bill entitled a Bill". I want the second "a Bill" to be changed into "an Act", so that it should read: "A Bill entitled an Act to make provision for architects and for related matters."

I would also want to propose that when the Honourable Member speaks that he can do five clauses at one time. There are 20 clauses and, in the interest of time, rather than taking them separately, I would want the Honourable Member to do five at one time. Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Clauses 1 to 5 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 6 to 10 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 11 to 15 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 16 to 20 inclusive were called and passed.

The First Schedule was called and passed.

The Second Schedule was called and passed.

4.50 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

On the motion of Hon. R.D. MARSHALL, seconded by Hon. R.C. EASTMOND, Mr. Chairman reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. R.D. MARSHALL, seconded by Hon. R.C. EASTMOND, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Architects Registration Act, 2003.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, April 15, 2003, at 11.00 a.m.

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

The question that the House be adjourned until April 15, 2003 at 11.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker adjourned the House accordingly.

4.53 p.m.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY.....	1
Hon. R. C. Eastmond, 1.	

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY.....	2
Hon. R. C. Eastmond, 2.	

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

LAND TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2003

Hon. R.R. FARLEY.....	2
Hon. G. A. Clarke, 3, 7, 8; Mr.D.St.E. Kellman, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13; Hon. R.D. Marshall, 7.	

COMMITTEE

Hon. G. A. CLARKE.....	7
Hon. R. St.C. Toppin; Mr. D. J. H. Thompson; Mr.D.St.E. Kellman; Hon. Miss B.A. Miller; Hon. Miss C.Y. Forde.	

RESUMPTION

Hon. R. C. Eastmond, 14, 15, 16, 28; Hon. N.A. Lynch, 17, 18; Hon. Miss H.E. Thompson, 19, 20, 21, 23; Hon. Miss E. H. Thompson, 21; Mr. M. Z. Williams, 23, 24, 25; Hon. R. St.C. Toppin, 26, 27; Hon. G. A. Clarke, 28.

ORDER NO. 5 – 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 THE PARCELS OF LAND SITUATE AT CLAYBURY PLANTATION IN THE PARISH OF SAINT JOHN IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.....	28
Hon. G. A. Clarke, 28; Hon. R. C. Eastmond, 28.	

ORDER NO. 9 – ARCHITECTS REGISTRATION BILL, 2003.....	28
Hon. R.D. Marshall, 28, 34; Hon. Miss B.A. Miller, 29; Hon. R. C. Eastmond, 30, 35; Hon. Miss H.E. Thompson, 32; Hon. Miss E. H. Thompson, 33; Hon. G. A. Clarke, 34.	

SUSPENSION.....	14
-----------------	----

ADJOURNMENT.....	36
------------------	----

Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, 36; Hon. R. C. Eastmond, 36.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

CLARKE, Hon. G. A.
EASTMOND, Hon. R. C.
FARLEY, Hon. R.R.
FORDE, Hon. Miss C.Y.
KELLMAN, Mr.D.St.E.
LYNCH, Hon. N.A.
MARSHALL, Hon. R.D.
MILLER, Hon. Miss B.A.
MOTTLEY, Hon. Miss M. A.
THOMPSON, Hon. Miss E. H.
THOMPSON, Hon. Miss H.E.
THOMPSON, Mr. D. J. H.
TOPPIN, Hon. R. St.C.
WILLIAMS, Mr. M. Z.

DISCLAIMER. This transcript was prepared with the assistance of artificial intelligence tools and is provided for reference only. It has not been reviewed, verified or approved by the Hansard Department of the Parliament of Barbados and does not constitute an official parliamentary record. It may contain errors or omissions, including inaccuracies in wording or speaker identification. For authoritative quotations or confirmation of proceedings, consult the official Hansard record when available.

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. Minutes. The Speaker's words 'Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, then let those Minutes stand confirmed.' are run into Hon. R. C. Eastmond's seconding speech in the source. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Take-slip, Land Tax (Amendment) Bill. A take-slip during Mr. D. St. E. Kellman's speech reads '11.35 p.m.'; the surrounding slips (11.25 a.m., 12.05 p.m.) indicate 11.35 a.m. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 4, Resolution (Barbados Diabetes Foundation). Hon. G. A. Clarke gives the area as '209 square metres or 21 624.69 square feet'; the two figures do not agree (21 624.69 square feet is about 2 009 square metres). He places the land at 'Enmore, Collymore Rock', while the Order title says Lower Collymore Rock. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 4, take-slip about 2.15 p.m.. The sentence about expert psychologists and group therapy appears twice in Hon. R. C. Eastmond's speech, either side of the 2.15 p.m. take-slip, in slightly different words. Both are printed as in the source.

Q6. Order No. 4, close of debate. After Hon. G. A. Clarke's reply and the seconding, the source records no question put on the Resolution before the Speaker reverts to Government Notices. Please confirm.

Q7. Government Notices, Architects Registration Bill. Hon. R. C. Eastmond is shown both moving and seconding the first reading of the Architects Registration Bill, 2003. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Speech labels. Hon. R. St. C. Toppin appears once as 'Hon. R. R. TOPPIN', and Hon. Miss H. E. Thompson appears as 'Hon. Miss E. H. THOMPSON' and 'Hon. H. E. THOMPSON'. Printed as in the source.

Q9. Order No. 9, Committee. For the Architects Registration Bill the House is said to resolve itself into 'Committee of Supply'. In Hon. R. D. Marshall's reply, the reading of section 4(3) breaks off and the text resumes mid-

sentence ('movement of persons within the Caribbean'), which suggests a gap. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 8th April, 2003 at 11.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker in the Chair; prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of Tuesday, 1st April were confirmed, and the Speaker reported receipt from the Accountant-General of the Accounts and Statements for November and December 2002. On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, Standing Orders were suspended.

Hon. R. R. Farley moved the second reading of the Land Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2003, which made clear that a pensioner, for the special rate under section 62(B) of the Land Tax Act, Cap. 78A, meant a person who had attained the age of 60. He said the Land Tax Relief Board dealt with hardship cases, and that against claims for relief of \$1.475 million it had granted \$1.2 million. Mr. D. St. E. Kellman, the Member for St. Lucy, argued that pensioners were crying out, that owning property had become a liability, that tax should fall on the building rather than the land, and that people under 60 with medical difficulties should be considered. In reply Mr. Farley cited the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act and land sold at ten cents a square foot; Mr. Kellman raised several points of order that he was being misrepresented. The Bill passed through Committee and was read a third time as the Land Tax (Amendment) Act, 2003.

Under Order No. 4, Hon. G. A. Clarke moved the Resolution to lease Crown land at Lower Collymore Rock, St. Michael to the Barbados Diabetes Foundation for a diabetes centre. He said diabetes had risen from 8 to 10 per cent of the adult population in 1994 to more than 18 per cent, and that 103 lower limb amputations were done in 1989. Mr. D. J. H. Thompson, Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, Mr. D. St. E. Kellman, who spoke at length on footwear and a shoe factory, and Hon. Miss C. Y. Forde, who criticised what schools sold at lunch time, supported the Resolution before the suspension.

After the sitting resumed at 2.00 p.m., Hon. R. C. Eastmond urged closer links between the Foundation, the Ministry of Health and the polyclinics; Hon. N. A. Lynch spoke of silent killers in society and withdrew the word 'crap' at the Speaker's direction; Hon. Miss H. E. Thompson, who said she had ceased to be Minister of Health in 1999, gave figures of 150 amputations a year then and 200 in 2002, and said 60 per cent of the drug

service budget, or \$26 million, went on chronic diseases. Mr. M. Z. Williams spoke on eating habits and longevity, and Hon. R. St. C. Toppin on natural herbs. Mr. Clarke replied, thanking Dr. Oscar Jordan, Professor Henry Frazer, Dr. Anselm Hennis and the late Mr. Sinclair Clarke, among others. The Architects Registration Bill, 2003 was then read a first time.

Under Order No. 5, Mr. Clarke moved the Resolution vesting 8 462.5 square metres of land at Claybury, St. John in the National Housing Corporation, to produce ten or eleven lots for small farmers to build homes; it was agreed to without division.

Under Order No. 9, Hon. R. D. Marshall moved the second reading of the Architects Registration Bill, 2003, noting that proposals dating from the mid-1970s had never been enacted and that architects were the only one of three professional groups under the building code not required to be registered. Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, Hon. R. C. Eastmond, Hon. Miss H. E. Thompson and Hon. G. A. Clarke supported it, Mr. Clarke noting that draftsmen could continue practising. In Committee, Mr. Eastmond pointed out an error in the Preamble ('A Bill entitled a Bill'), the 20 clauses were taken five at a time, and the Bill was read a third time as the Architects Registration Act, 2003. The House adjourned until Tuesday, 15th April, 2003 at 11.00 a.m.