
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION OF 2003-2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, 25th April, 2003.

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(OFFICIAL REPORT) SECOND SESSION
1999 - 2004 HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of
Assembly met at 11:20 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, G.C.M. B.A., Dip.
Ed., (Speaker) His Honour J. M. EDGHILL,
J.P., (Deputy Speaker) Hon. Sir Henry FORDE,
K. A., Q.C., M.A., LL.M. (Cantab.) Rt. Hon. O.
S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.), (Prime Minister,
Minister of Finance and the Civil Service)
Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY LL.B. (Attorney-
General and Minister of Home Affairs) (Leader
of the House) Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON,
LL.B. (Hons.) (Leader of the Opposition) Hon.
Sir HAROLD St. JOHN, K. A., Q.C., LL.B.
Dr. the Hon. R. 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) Hon. R. C.
EASTMOND, J.P., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.,
LL.B. (Hons.), LEC (Minister of Labour and
Social Security) Mr. D. CARTER (Chairman
of Committees) Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE,
B.A., LL.B., (Minister of Education, Youth
Affairs and Sports) Hon. G. A. CLARKE,
B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Minister of Housing and
Lands) Hon. R. D. MARSHALL, (Minister of
Public Works and Transport) Hon. H. F.
LASHLEY, (Minister of Social

Transformation) Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN,
LL.B., (Minister of Commerce, Consumer
Affairs and Business Development) Mr. D. St.
E. KELLMAN Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON,
LL.B. (Minister of Physical Development and
the Environment) Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE,
J.P. (Minister of State, Ministry of Education,
Youth Affairs and Sports) 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) Hon.
N. A. LYNCH, B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of
Tourism and International Transport) Hon. A.
P. WOOD, J.P., B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil.,
(Minister of Agriculture and Rural
Development) Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc.,
J.P., (Minister of Economic Development,
Industry and International Business)

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan
Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in
session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER:

The Minutes of Tuesday, 22nd April, 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, 22nd April, 2003, be deferred at this stage because they are not yet in receipt from the Printery.

Mr. SPEAKER:

With the House's agreement, that request is granted.

Before we proceed, let me inform the Honourable House that permission has been granted to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) to record the Session. They will record, not to televise the full session but to present extracts from their recording.

PAPERS

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay

1. The Instruments adopted by the International Labour Organisation at its 89th Session held in Geneva from 5th June to 21st June, 2001.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

The Right Hon. O. S. ARTHUR:

Mr. Speaker, today at 9.00 a.m., I held an audience with His Excellency the Governor-General.

I have today advised His Excellency the Governor-General Barbados, to dissolve Parliament in accordance with the Provisions of Section 61(2) of the Constitution of Barbados,

for the purpose of enabling a general election for Representatives of the Honourable House be held.

A Proclamation effecting this dissolution will be issued later today at 5:00 p.m. Writs issued under the public seal and addressed to the returning officers for each constituency are being forwarded to the Supervisor of Elections for transmission to the said returning officers in accordance with the provisions of Section 36(1) of the Representation of the People Act, Cap. 12 of the laws of Barbados.

Immediately on the dissolution of this Parliament, the Electoral and Boundaries Commission Review of Boundaries Order, 2002, will come into effect, as provided by Section 3 of the said Order, dividing the island into 30 constituencies as specified in the First Schedule and having the boundaries as described in the Second Schedule. The result is to create the new constituencies of St. James Central and St. Philip West and to give effect of the realignment of certain boundaries described in the Order.

Mr. Speaker, nomination day will be the 6th May, 2003, and the polling date for the general election for Members to serve in the House of Assembly will be May 21st, 2003.

CONGRATULATORY/OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER:

Mr. Speaker, it transpires that today is an historic day in this August Chamber.

As a consequence of the statement just made by the Right Honourable Prime Minister, there are some Honourable Members of this

Honourable House who, by their own choice, will not contest the next general election and who will leave Parliament. I am careful not to say public life. They are not going to retire from public life but from Parliamentary service.

Sir, those Honourable Members are all highly distinguished Members of this Chamber. We are all distinguished Members but these are to be distinguished above all. I am calling in an order of seniority. These Members are the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, who is happily in his seat today, as he is always. I think out of all the Honourable Members, perhaps none has been more faithful, constant and true in service to this Honourable House than the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Secondly, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, who, it must be said, has been faithful and has been a credit to the Honourable House of Assembly in excess of 30 years.

The third of the fourth Members who will not return to the House, by their own choice, is the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, who is also in his seat and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East-Central who is with us here this morning.

Mr. Speaker, these four Honourable, distinguished and learned Members, have served with the greatest distinction in the Barbados House of Assembly.

I know this House of Assembly will be much the poorer when it reconvenes in their absence. They are all statesmen in their own right. They have brought to this House of Assembly, a wisdom which will be greatly missed but they are all Honourable Members who have a wider civic involvement in the life of Barbados. I would like to think that this must be a hallmark for all Honourable Members.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South has not only served in this House of Assembly but for many years, has served as legal advisor when there was a Southern District Council.

I like to say and I will say it again today, Sir, that though there is no longer a Southern District Council, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is still the legal advisor. He is an authority on all matters relating to Christ Church, particularly matters of pedigree. He brings a quality of legal advice, not only on things which bear immediately upon the work that we do as legislators but a very broad spectrum of highly specialised knowledge and wisdom, having practised at the Barbados Bar for almost 50 years. Next year he will celebrate a golden anniversary. I do not know if I am in the position to say that it is unprecedented but it may be very close to, if not the case. A former Speaker of this House of Assembly may have taken that first path.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has a civic involvement and endeavour that cover quite a range of legal matters. He was a leading light at the Barbados Bar and, indeed, the Bars in several of the countries in the Caribbean.

11:25 p.m.

Friday, April 25, 2003

Continuation of Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER:

Sir, there was a time when, as a younger man, he had large interest in sport and indeed was a footballer of some note.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER:

The Right Honourable Member for St. Peter suggested a modest achievement. No one has contradicted him.

Mr. Speaker, this is important because as legislators we come to Parliament at a time in our lives, for the most part, when we have had some involvement with the kind of contribution that one would make at the level of service clubs, churches, sporting, business or professional groups. As we mature as Parliamentarians, that wisdom matures as well and it deepens.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West has been untiring and generous beyond the call of duty in sharing his great understanding of matters and his great wisdom with us, as younger Members of this Parliament.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West is unfailingly prompt and faithful in his attendance here and on all sides of the House throughout the years we have been able to depend upon a word of caution from him; a word of advice from him and that is going to be sorely missed in our Parliament.

In almost any matter that comes before this Honourable House we could depend on the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to have an opinion and to speak sometimes with much passion, sometimes with that wisdom that comes with the years, so that we harkened to his words.

Sir, in a manner of speaking he is the father of this Parliament at this time. In this way I want to say, I believe that I speak for all Honourable Members and, indeed, for yourself, Mr. Speaker, to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that he has earned this high reputation. He leaves this Honourable Parliament with it intact and we know that from

time to time, particularly as the style of our governance modernises, we would be able to call upon the Honourable Member for Christ Church South in one way or the other so that his tremendous knowledge of the history of many matters that occupy our attention will not be lost and the very salient advice upon which we depend, particularly those Members of the Front bench, each one of us whether is a matter to do with foreign trade, land, where he has a peculiar knowledge of parliamentary practice, we could depend upon the excellence advice of the Honourable Member and this would be much missed in this Parliament.

In respect of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, it is almost like getting two for one. The Honourable Members for Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South have been great friends from their days at the Foundation School and later on at Harrison College and when they studied their professions in the United Kingdom. That friendship saw the Honourable Member for Christ Church South encouraging, and he can be very insistent in that regard, I know this of my own knowledge; he eventually pursued the Honourable Member for Christ Church West not only to join the Barbados Labour Party but to offer himself for membership of this Honourable House of Assembly.

They shared early political experience in what the Honourable Member for Christ Church South described as the “Membership of the lard oil lobby”, otherwise known to some of us as the under 40s team. From those early beginnings the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, who holds the distinction of having held his Seat in excess of 31 unbroken years in this Honourable House.

Sir, most of us in this Chamber would have tasted defeat at the polls from time to time but the Honourable Member for Christ Church

West, who is now in his Seat, has not had that experience.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West brings like wisdom and advice particularly in the area of the law, which like the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, we have come to depend upon his judgement and upon the good advice that he brings to this Parliament.

I have known in my experience in this Chamber, on diverse occasions when, on his feet, the Honourable Member was able to draft an amendment and important pieces of legislation and to have been one of the originators. Sir, this distinction is shared by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South as well. They have been the originators of many pieces of legislation coming before this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is more my contemporary than the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, who has been my master in Chambers and my mentor for all of my adult and working life. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph came into the Chambers of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South a few years after I came and he too has risen to the pinnacle of his chosen profession.

Mr. Speaker, all three Honourable Members have taken Silk and like the Honourable Members for Christ Church West and Christ Church South, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has a practice which goes far beyond these shores. He too enjoys the highest reputation in legal circles across the Caribbean and beyond it.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph has also brought to public life a wider involvement than that of a legislator. He has interest which helps to equip him to bring the very best that he

has to offer to the service of the people of Christ Church East, as it then was, and in more recent years, to the people of St. Joseph. Mr. Speaker, this is a prerequisite in my judgement when we present ourselves to the people in this country in one constituency or the other and we are soon going to embark upon that endeavour.

The people are entitled to ask what do you bring? What qualifies you to be a person to represent my interest in the House of Assembly of Barbados? These Honourable Members were always able to answer those questions, not necessary only with words but by virtue of civic service that they have given in this community. This applies as well to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central who has given heroic service both at home and abroad and particularly in the field of sport.

11.40 p.m.

Friday, April 25, 2003

Continuation of Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER:

These are all Honourable Members, Sir, who have brought to their communities and to the wider Barbados the best of what they had to offer and they had much to offer. I said before that although they are retiring from Parliament, I do not believe that they are going to be emitting public life. No one retires in these modern times. People simply do other things, Mr. Speaker, perhaps at a different pace and marching to a different drum.

I have every reason to believe that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, Christ Church West, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and the Honourable Member for

Christ Church East Central, will continue to distinguish themselves as former Members of this great Parliament, as we go forward in the business of building a Barbados of which all Barbadians can be proud, not only now but in the years to come and as we go forward, Sir, in the business of creating a legacy. They would be a part of that and those who sat here before our time, are all a part of that legacy.

Next Monday, Sir, we are going to be celebrating, in this country, a National Heroes Day, so that this is all happening at a time when Barbadians, generally, will be reflecting on the quality of sacrifice and the quality of contribution that has been made by our heroes of the past, or heroes of the present and those who we hope, in time to come, would have inspired heroes for the future.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a sense of much pride and a little regret that I rise to offer congratulations, gratitude and much thanksgiving for the many, many years of service given to this House and to the people of this little island nation, by these four Honourable Members who by their choice, will leave the House of Assembly on this day.

By their choice is important, Sir, because we come here at the behest of the people, but there must come a time when we know to leave this aspect of public life. I am one of those, Mr. Speaker, who believe, although I have served for a considerable time, myself, and fully intend to serve again, given the opportunity by the people of the City of Bridgetown...

Asides.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER:

I believe, Mr. Speaker, in bringing on younger people and I would like to say that it is really a hallmark of the great Party of which we are all members on This Side of the House, that

we would have revered our senior Members, have sought to bring forward younger people, with new skills, with new ideas, with new stamina, to bring to the task of nation building. It speaks volumes and speaks well for the Barbados Labour Party that these four stalwarts, and among them, I would imagine close to 100 years of service here, if you add them all together, so that this is no small moment in the history of our Parliament. It is a moment to be savoured. It is a moment for much reflection.

Mr. Speaker, a history of our Parliament has not yet been written. I hear sotto voce remarks coming from the direction of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph that one is indeed forthcoming. I am fully aware, as a member of the Management Commission of the Parliament, that a commission had been given to a member of the UWI, Cave Hill Campus, several years ago, to embark upon such a work. After 364 years for this Parliament, we celebrated our 350 Anniversary of the Parliament in 1989, the time for a major volume of the history of this Parliament to be published, is overdue.

When that history is published, Mr. Speaker, it will speak well and positively of these Honourable Members. It will recall that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was a Prime Minister of this Parliament, who had no difficulty after he ceased to be a Prime Minister to come back to this Parliament. It says a lot for the character of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that he would come back here to serve as an Honourable Member of this Parliament and continue to give of his wisdom and of his advice.

It will speak to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and those 31 unbroken years of service to the constituency of Christ Church West. It will speak to the Honourable Member for St. Joseph who served as a

member of the Cabinet, as indeed, did the Honourable Member for Christ Church West who served as an Attorney-General of Barbados and a Foreign Minister of Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph served as a Minister of Agriculture and the Honourable Member of Christ Church East Central who served well and even unto this day, Sir, as a Chairman of Committees. And so, they have all served in this Parliament in a manner which is worthy of mention in any history that would be written of the Parliament of Barbados.

I like to say, that in Barbados, we have a strong, stable participatory Parliamentary democracy. I believe that all of these four Honourable Members who leave us now, would have added to that stable, participatory Parliamentary democracy and will continue, even outside of this Chamber, to do that as long as they live. It is the kind of service that they give. The service goes beyond years in Opposition. It goes beyond years in Government. It is an ongoing service that, in effect, Sir, we dedicate our lives to that kind of civic service in Barbados.

11:50 a.m.

Friday, April 25, 2003

Continuation of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER:

It is the envy of many countries, not only in this region but way far outside of it, that this is the quality of parliamentary life which exists in Barbados. We have a multiparty system of government here. It says something good and positive as well that there are so many issues on which we have found it possible to be non-partisan. This whole business of service to country or service to the Parliament itself is one of those issues on which we cannot, and we

have never sought to, be divisive in this Honourable House. We have a healthy respect and a healthy consideration for each other.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honour and a privilege to have served in this Parliament during the years when these four Honourable Members have been giving their service. I hope that when they leave us we would continue to uphold, in the Barbados House of Assembly, those high principles and high ideals which they have endorsed and have upheld and that we do not fall below that bar which the quality and the length of their service have set for us.

I wish to say to these four Honourable Members again, I believe I speak for this entire Chamber, thank you. We say it with love and we say it with much gratitude. I believe that Honourable Members will endorse these remarks I have made in the time-honoured way that we do in this House of Assembly.

I am so much obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Speaker, we on this side also endorse those remarks. It was also an honour to serve in this Parliament with these honourable gentlemen. One could always tell whenever the other side is under pressure because, Mr. Speaker, when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Honourable Member Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph decide to enter into a debate, you can tell that there is something for them to correct and that the pressure is on.

We must admit, Sir, even though we have been drawn into battle, that on this day and on this occasion we cannot allow ourselves to be petty on these matters. We have to acknowledge that these Honourable gentlemen, the three I mentioned, have spent a long period

of time in this Parliament and would have contributed to our development. Anyone who knows me will know that I would have spent a lot of time monitoring and following the movements of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South because we sometimes serve in common beliefs even though we are not in the same political party. I do not know if it has anything to do with the northern connection but it was clear that the masses of people of Barbados meant something to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

It was also interesting to recognise that the Honourable Member Christ Church West, even though not at the earlier stage of the parliamentary term, acknowledged that there was a lot to be learnt from the north of Barbados. I am happy to know that before he left this Chamber, he was able to acknowledge that there is a growth of wealth in the north of Barbados.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph displays a type of politics that sometimes made me wonder which angle he was coming from. It is quite clear to me that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph even though he is leaving at such an early stage of his life had the opportunity to go much further in his political life but as fate would have it sometimes politicians enter Parliament at a time when the competition is so great that they cannot achieve what they set about to achieve in this Parliament.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central is no doubt a very different politician. His concentration, it is clear to me, was more at the ground level, in the field which he has been able to master. The mere fact that he was able to manoeuvre to replace one of the most senior men within Parliament, tells me that he too was very much liked by the people whom he represented.

Parliamentary life is not easy, Mr. Speaker, as you would know. There are many people out there who would like to be in here. If they follow the lives of these four Honourable gentlemen, they would understand that it takes a lot, they have to put in a lot of work and they have to devote their time to the people and the country.

On the behalf of this side, we too congratulate these Honourable gentlemen. We understand what they had to go through and we appreciate their contribution.

I thank you.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON:

Mr. Speaker, let me thank the Honourable Member for St. Lucy for speaking on both of our behalf in this debate.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON:

First of all I would like to not only express my appreciation to those long serving parliamentarians who have expressed openly-although they have not acted fully on it as yet because we have to wait until May 6th, to be sure that there is no reversal - their desire not to stand for election again.

I have learnt different things from each of them, the vast majority of which have been positive. Despite the acrimony of debate from time to time, we have a very fortunate tradition in Barbados that by and large we can say that across the divide we have positive relationships as Members of Parliament.

I remember only three years ago being asked by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) to go to Zimbabwe as part of an international team to assist in trying to get

the Opposition and the Government to work together. Even though at the level of Backbenchers and initiates in Parliament there was communication, at the leadership level, there was a rivalry, a bitterness and a hatred that I have never witnessed before and certainly would not visit on this Parliament.

A lot of tough things will be said during the campaign even about the persons who are retiring because their mandate has to be scrutinised but when the dust is settled they should rest assured that the contribution that they have made will not go unnoticed either by this Parliament, since we merely add to what has already been in existence, or by independent writers and historians who may have positive views about their contributions.

I would also add my commiseration to those other persons who would not be joining us in the next Parliament and I hope that they would enjoy...

Asides.

12:00 noon

Friday, April 25, 2003

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

I assume there might be some but I do not know from where they would come. I hope they would feel that they have made a valid contribution to the development of Barbadian politics.

Sir, I read it somewhere that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central has been described as a gentleman. On a personal note, I want to say to him in particular that he has granted one of my important requests, which was to assist with the installation of

lights at Gall Hill, St. John.

I want to say that having been done, has resulted in a tremendous boost to sports in that and other areas too but the manner in which he personally intervened, the warm relationship as a Parliamentarian and his gentlemanly conduct that he has always exhibited in this Parliament has always struck me as a Parliamentarian. Therefore, I would miss him sitting at my left or at a far distance, depending on where I am sitting in the future, or if I am sitting at all.

Nevertheless, I wish him good health and a full recovery because I very much have enjoyed his presentations as a Parliamentarian. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Sir HAROLD St. JOHN:

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to detain the House of Assembly for any long period of time. I think I have been around here for a considerable period of time observing and, therefore, I am very grateful to all Honourable Members who have spoken.

I would like to say that the period of time that I have been a student of Government from approximately 1958 or 1959, when my interest in politics was kindled by the speeches I had heard from the federal candidates at the time and which continued in my interest in local government in 1959 and then as a Senator in 1964, until I ran in 1966. It has been a very pleasant one and one which I have enjoyed thoroughly. I like the camaraderie of Party membership and that which exists in Barbados, despite there being opposing political parties. I went into politics as a result of my interest in the federal exercise.

As I go now, I am very happy that our last Debate bears great significance. In my opinion, a Debate relating to the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice and the legislation

implementing the amended Treaty of Chaguaramus.

I do hope that I would live long enough to see those instruments coming to force and that particularly the Treaty of Chaguaramus will be further strengthened because I still believe that the future of the citizens of these territories in the Caribbean lies within a very close association. This is the belief as we are strengthened by the international developments that have taken place since the 1950s and in this year of globalisation and trade liberalisation.

The other point I would like to make is that I hope the Parliamentary tradition as we know it, would continue for a long period of time. Democracy is not an easy form of government to follow and I think that we in Barbados in particular, because of our long interest in it, with a history of a defiance of a colonial master, of the proclamation of what we regarded as Rights at Oistins Town in 1951, we have mastered it to a very large extent.

I was very pleased to have seen a recent report on television a few nights ago, in which the commentator had given the results of a survey of some eight thousand persons in Barbados. One of the questions asked was in relation to the views of the people regarding corruption in the police force. That commentator made a very significant point that the response was so small, that it could not be recorded and that we share a history with a very few countries in the world.

I would like to say that despite the mouthings of opposition parties - and we too used to mouth when we were in Opposition - I believe a critical examination of the conduct of governance in Barbados would indicate much the same thing.

Some people confuse corruption with the well known political phenomenon as the former

Member for St. Andrew used to say: "A friend in Government can be very useful at certain times." He used to say that in relation to applications which were made by the then Opposition, that he preferred his friends and families for jobs in the Housing Authority, rather than an objective analysis. He used to say "Where the competition is equal, the party ticket tells."

Sir, as I retire, I am very happy and grateful to have met and have worked with all Honourable Members. I am very grateful to my constituents in Christ Church. They have been very faithful to me at time and at other times they have regarded it as being necessary to discipline me. It just goes to show that in politics, very few people are fortunate enough to have a constituent that will always support them. I think though that I have earned their respect because of the fact that notwithstanding their discipline, they never stopped me from coming back, nor never stopped them from changing their minds.

I wish all Honourable Members a very happy election. There would be some disappointments in all elections and I certainly look forward to following the Debates in Parliament in the future. I am not going to retire and do nothing. That is impossible for me to do. I will certainly maintain my interest in the political affairs of Barbados. I will certainly be participating in no small measure in the upcoming events.

All those persons who are promising to scrutinise my career, I welcome it. I will have two opportunities as usual, one on the platform and in case they cross the line, the other opportunity is in the law courts.

Sir, I thank all Honourable Members for the statements they have made about me. I thank you.

12:10 p.m.

Hon. Sir HENRY FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, within the first month of my being elected to this Honourable House, I had the opportunity to cross swords with the Right Excellent Errol Barrow. In my enthusiasm, I had not properly learnt the rules of the House of Assembly and he brought me down to reality on taking a point of order. He ended up saying that I tried to reply by saying that for the five years, I would be in this House. The Honourable Member sprang to his feet and said, "Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. Five years? He means five months."

I have never forgotten that exchange. It has taught me then that first, no matter how enthusiastic someone is about service, it also requires preparation, dedication and understanding the rules of the House of Assembly, being ready for debate and also understanding the House traditions and upholding its rules.

12:10 p.m.

Friday, April 25, 2003

Continuation of Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE:

Sir, I trust that in the 31 years that I have been in here that I have understood those traditions and appreciated how important it is to recognise that Parliament is the epitome of institutions in our outstanding and well respected democratic life.

Sir, I have tried not to be disrespectful to you, Mr. Speaker, or any of your predecessors and I have seldom in that time had to be reprimanded in debate. I would urge those who are here, those who come back and those who are coming for the first time to this House, if there are any, to always remember that they must

show respect and appreciation for the Chair and the Rules of debates. I think that the challenge that faces us in the future is how to strengthen this Parliament.

I believe very strongly that if our Parliament, during the years that I have been in Parliament, is compared with Parliaments in bigger countries, with more money, more people, a wider spectrum of talent from which to draw, despite our small numbers, we excel.

Sir, we have been fortunate to have outstanding members contributing to the public life of this country, both on the Government's side, whoever is the Government, and the Opposition. That meant that Barbados, I believe, today can be seen not as a developing parliamentary democracy but as a fully developed parliamentary democracy.

Asides

Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, sometimes we sell ourselves short in the heat of battle. I would like to place on record my deep appreciation for those Members on both sides of the House with whom I have had to exchange words in debate, and from whom I have learnt a lot, for the occasions on which they have had to correct me and for the occasions that they have allowed me to correct them in turn.

Sir, I believe that this Parliament mirrors the best talents in our community and we have been fortunate in being able to draw from all social classes across our island. In fact, sometimes in the heat of battle we tend to believe that we are a stratified society and we make the public believe that we are a stratified society.

In truth, if you look in this Honourable House, we are more cohesive, despite one our

partisan loyalties, than many other countries in the world, including the superpower of the day.

Sir, I want to recall a remark that the then President of the United States of America made when I served in the Cabinet. He said that if he looked at the Barbados House of Assembly and the Barbados Cabinet, the members were more qualified than those in the Congress of the United States of America, that is true.

Asides

Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE:

I hope that our people take comfort in that fact that we really do have the people who can run our affairs properly.

Sir, as a Parliamentarian, I have recognised three interests which I have had to represent and to protect. The first is, not necessarily in this order, the interest of the party. I believe that it is important that if you are elected to Parliament to represent a party, you must understand the philosophies and the policies of your party and you must put those philosophies and policies forward fearlessly and honestly. There is not every occasion on which you are going to accept the party's ideas but parties must be able to allow dissent, providing that if that dissent reaches the stage that it is a matter of conscience, then you have to do the honourable thing.

I am grateful to the Barbados Labour Party to have given me the occasion to represent its interest and its philosophies. I believe that I have tried as best as I could to mirror them, both in debates in this House and elsewhere. I believe that we are the better of the two parties. The Honourable Members on the other side probably feel the same way about their party.

Sir, one of the things that attracted me into politics and brought me into politics is the fact

that the party has never wavered from its very farsighted view of the Caribbean; as seeing the Caribbean people as one great nation in this world. It was that attraction and our strong commitment to the Caribbean community in particular that drew people like the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, young people like ourselves, to the House. I am grateful to all the members of the Barbados Labour Party, at all levels, for letting me have an opportunity to put forward their philosophies and ideas.

The second interest that one has to represent is the interest of one's constituents and that is extremely important. I have had the good fortune of serving the good people of Christ Church West as their only Member of Parliament so far and it is a very historic occasion.

Asides

Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE:

I am told by the late George Brancker that in the last 100 years, there are only three people who have served continuously in Parliament for the period of time that I have served. I believe that one such person was a Sir Robert Clarke who came into the House in 1887 and was reelected until 1937 when he lost his Seat, and that taught me a lesson. You have to get out of politics before you are put out.

Asides

Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE:

Sir, he served for 50 years. The other person was Sir Theodore Brancker, who served here in this House longer than I have served. I believe that he served for thirty-five continuous years and he followed that by serving in the Senate. I am not having any ambitions of serving in the Senate, Sir.

Asides Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE: Sir, that is a tremendous record. I have served for thirty-one years and seven months. The late George Brancker, before he departed this life, was urging me to come back for another term in order to overtake his father's record. Sir, George Brancker died before I expected him to go and it brought home to me that one sometimes has to recognise that there comes a time when your time has come and you must move on and let others take over. Mr. Speaker, I have tried very hard to represent the constituents. I believe that Christ Church West is a better place to day in infrastructure and many other ways than when I first came to represent it. I am happy that there is now a large number of younger people who have the ability to represent Christ Church West. In fact, I look forward to the contest in the next few weeks. Mr. Speaker, like the Honourable Member for Christ Church South I will use the opportunity to remind the Honourable Member for St. John of how successful we have been. He said that we are going to be challenged and I accept that challenge. It is not a challenge that I will run from because I believe that in representing our constituencies and representing our party, we have represented our country well. I believe that the people will see how successful the Barbados Labour Party and its Governments have been. I will be there forcefully, fighting successfully. Asides Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE: We will do some further good in Christ	Church West. I am looking forward to doing good. 12.20 p.m. Friday, April 25, 2003 Continuation of Sir HENRY FORDE: Sir, this is the interest which we also have to keep pre-eminently in mind, despite our partisan interest, despite the interest of our constituency and despite the interest of our country Barbados. We have a tremendous legacy and traditions to uphold. In the last 50 years, Sir, this country has come fast and has gone farther than at any time in its 360 odd years. It is a tribute to our leaders, to the working-class people in particular, and to all Barbadians that we have been able to do so well. We should have no doubt about our ability to stand up to whomever in this world and indeed, I have been proud to hear our leaders and our representatives when they speak, from the principle of high moral ground, which has been maintained in this country. Therefore, I have total faith in Barbadians and faith in the political people who represent us and I have faith, Sir, in our traditions and I hope that I have conveyed that to others as well, in my time in Parliament. Sir, I do not want to delay this House, but to say that service has been a tremendous pleasure for me. It has given me the opportunity of meeting colleagues in Government and in Opposition who normally, if you are not giving service, you do not meet. I have had some really good times, Sir, in this Parliament and outside of this Parliament. I have enjoyed the thrust of debate. Sometimes, Sir, it becomes a bit rough but one of the things that we must say to our
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constituents, is that after the exchange of words, I cannot recall an occasion in which the exchange of words has led to rancor and bad feeling between Parliamentarians and I hope the country would under that, Sir.

Finally, I want to thank my family. I like two of everything, Sir. I had two mothers, two wives and that sort of thing...

Asides.

Sir HENRY FORDE:

I want to thank both families for the sacrifice they have made. I do not believe that people sometimes remember that persons who are in public service make a sacrifice, but so too do our families. It is very hard on family life and I think, we should always take the opportunity wherever we can, to remind ourselves that although we get the praise, a lot of the hard work is done by our children, wives and nearest relatives.

One of the things, since I have been in this House, Sir, and this is just an observation, that concerns me, is that the children of many politicians do not come back into public life. I was therefore very pleased to see the Honourable Member for the City who has followed the outstanding example of her father and her uncle. Also, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East who has followed the tradition of her grandfather and her father. I would hope that there would be other children who are not put off by the time that their parents have to devote, but would look at the outstanding examples and themselves come into public life.

I want, Sir, to thank the members of my various committees of Christ Church West, who organised for me during the years, to make it possible for me to give service. Another occasion will present itself when I can thank

them more personally but without the assistance of the grass roots and without the assistance and organisation that was there from these willing helpers, I may not have made it so long in this House. Of course, Sir, I want to thank the voters of Christ Church West.

I want also to say this, Sir, because I came into the House representing the constituency and I still represent the constituency that has the largest number, in any one area, of our citizens who are not of a black complexion. In a way it was a challenge. When I first canvassed, for instance in the areas of Blue Waters, Worthing View, the Opposition then, represented me as being a supporter of the Black Power Movement. They said that you only had to look at Elton Mottley, he was known in those day, now Elombe Mottley, who was running in St. Michael, and do not mind whatever Henry Forde says, it is obvious that he is part of the Black Power Movement.

Sir, when the members on the Other Side canvassed in Fordes Road, the different argument was that I was a white man through and through, and do not mind how Henry Forde looks, his heart is white. In fact, Sir, I remember going into a house to an old lady who could not see so well, and she said, "But son, what you said your name is?" I said, "Henry Forde". She said, "Come closer, 'hey', they told me you were white."

Asides.

Sir HENRY FORDE:

Sir, it was like that but I recognised then that one had to judge people, not by the colour of their skins. One had to judge people by their character and their standards. I have approached that great constituency of Christ Church West on the basis that we are all citizens of Barbados. I have tried to bring it and understand it as a cohesive force.

I hope and pray that the division on racial lines would be forever banned from our country as indeed, it is banned from our constitution. As a person who has represented Christ Church West, a constituency such as it is, I hope that we could go forward in Barbados as a cohesive group of people.

Sir, my time in Parliament has not been all of the success, or have not been all of the pleasures. There have been moments of regrets and there is still unfinished business. I want to say to the people of Christ Church West that I would love to have finished every tenantry road, repaired every house and done all the things that would be possible. We are only one of the 28 constituencies that have to be serviced but I think, Sir, that I have done enough and left sufficient there, that it is a beacon welcoming those who come afterwards, to continue to do good for the people of Christ Church West.

12:30 p.m.

Friday, April 25, 2003

Continuation of Hon. Sir Henry FORDE:

Finally, Sir, let me end as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South ended. When I first came into politics, it was due in part to his urging and his interest, we were both drawn to the federal integration movement. If there is one disappointment I leave public life at the parliamentary level, it is that we have not yet achieved the full integration of the Caribbean. I salute the efforts of those who have tried and I salute the efforts of those who still continue to try.

I want to say to the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter that his enthusiasm for

the integration of the Caribbean is a very strong plank on which he can continue to help to build the true West Indian nation. He would not only be one of the builders of Barbados, but he would be one of the builders of the West Indies. I was therefore equally pleased to hear the two Honourable Members of the Opposition supporting greater integration of our region.

When I first started in politics, immigration was a matter of division, it is no longer so. The people have run ahead of us and we are to catch up with them. So I have fortitude. The legacy is there, I believe it is in good hands. May God bless all the parliamentarians particularly my friend, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, who has had to take an early retirement not because the constituents wanted him to go but because of his health. I want to salute him as one of the people who ran when I was leading the Party as being the perfect gentleman that I have known. His outstanding contribution is not as long as that of the other three of us who are going but it is as worthwhile and he is an excellent example and model for all of us.

I take the opportunity therefore to say to the House, thank you very much, may God bless you all, may God bless Barbados.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM:

It seems, Mr. Speaker, that over the last six months or thereabout, I have spent a large amount of time reflecting on my service in my years in public life and thanking those who have helped me to realise the little that I have achieved.

The first occasion was when I announced to the people of St. Joseph that I would not be running for elective politics again. I then had the opportunity to reflect and express thanks on the occasion of the last annual conference of

the Barbados Labour Party when I was honoured with the Grantley Adams Award. I have the opportunity now again today, on this very special occasion, to join my colleagues, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East-Central, in expressing appreciation for the warm sentiments and the very generous appreciation of our service and our contribution to this Parliament.

I came to Parliament in 1976 for the first time, having ran first in 1971. For me it was the realisation of a childhood ambition. I always wanted to be a lawyer and to be a parliamentarian. In that respect, I have realised my childhood ambition. I leave public life with two regrets in a way. The first being that I did not serve 25 years in the House of Assembly. When I came to Parliament and I entered public life, the ambition and the goal I set myself was to serve 25 years in this House of Assembly not coming up the stairs and turning right or sometimes turning left, but always turning left and coming here with the approval of the people. This September will make 23 years and to the extent that I have fallen short, that is a modest regret because in recent times I have come to understand something that I used to hear from my mother and grandmother quite a lot, that is, that you cannot be in the church and the chapel at the same time. For a long while I never understood what that meant but in recent times I have come to understand because there was a time when I thought that I could be in two places at the same time, but over time, I have come to realise that is an impossibility. That, more than anything else, informed the decision which I made not to contest this forthcoming election. The second regret I have has to do with the fact that there are projects which I would have like to see realised in the constituency of St. Joseph. The main one is the establishment of the urban\suburban centre at Horse Hill which is sometimes referred to as

Tamarind Hall. However, I leave parliamentary life certain in the knowledge that all the preparation work has been done and that once the Barbados Labour Party is returned to office, that the people of St. Joseph will see that project come to fruition.

The one good thing at this point is that I need not concern myself with the question; for whom the bell tolls. So often in the past at this point in the life of a Parliament, I found myself concerned with the question; for whom the bell tolls. The interesting thing about that is that when this moment comes, even those who are boastful of their large majorities, are extremely quiet and humble because they realise that the locus of power really is in the hands of the people and has very little to do with them.

When I first came to Parliament, it was inhabited, if I may put it that way, with a large number of titans, there is no question about that. The debates were far livelier, the clashes more intense and the exchanges more memorable. That was the Parliament of 1976 to 1981 and to some extent to 1986. Every Tuesday, this Parliament had the cheapest and the best show in town. From 10:30 a.m. large numbers would gather outside and they remained here until 1000 p.m. and 1100 p.m. at night. We almost always broke at 1000 or 1100 p.m. We had two hours of debate after dinner every Tuesday night. Sir, these are different times and it is a much less lively place today but no less important.

I wish to join those who have spoken before me in expressing appreciation for those who have served with us on both sides of the divide. We have learnt from our exchanges, we have learnt from the lessons they have taught and we have learnt from the examples they have set and for the varied and different styles.

As I sit here over the years, I have come to realise that there is no single model of person

that comes to Parliament. All sorts of men, outgoing men, inhibited men, reserved men and talkative men come to Parliament. Men come to Parliament who could scarcely speak although this is by definition a talking shop.

12:40 p.m.

Friday, April 25, 2003

Continuation of Dr. The Hon. R. L. CHELTENHAM:

There are some features in common which we all know, that is the deep commitment to service and the love for the people. Without those, I fear that one would not make it but I have got that great satisfaction out of public service.

I leave competitive politics, as I have said on so many occasions, in praise of public service. I am encouraging those who have an interest, who appreciate the difficulties and the challenges which it offers and who have equipped themselves for service, to come forward and to offer themselves in public life.

There are a few avenues of service that would give more satisfaction and reward. Barbados has been fortunate that, for many years, some of our brightest and best people have offered themselves to public service and long may that tradition continue.

I have been fortunate to have been given the opportunity to have chaired a very important statutory corporation, the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC). I have served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP). I have been fortunate to have served as Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs. For a short period, I

have served as Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. I have also served as Minister of Tourism and International Transport and also as Minister of the Environment for a short period.

Sir, I do not look to my contribution, whatever it has been, with any individual role. I have been fortunate, looking at the bigger picture, to have been part of a movement, the Barbados Labour Party, that has, for the last 25 years, made a huge contribution to transforming the physical features of this place, modernising this country and uplifting, in a dramatic way, the standard of living of Barbadians.

Each party can only have one leader at a time and the late Tom Adams used to remind me of that. He always used to say, in a very important context, that he has a responsibility to see that all of us serve to the limit of our capacity. He was concerned that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Deputy Prime Minister, should make his mark in the ACP/EU world. He was concerned that all of us should serve in diverse arenas and make our contribution because he was always conscious of the fact that any two or three of us could, with ease, be standing in his shoes.

I am proud of the fact that I have worked closely with all of the outgoing Honourable Members today. In fact, in relation to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central this is a story not widely known. Many years ago, the late Tom Adams turned to me and said that we needed to identify and that he was looking to me to do it; that is to identify a number of people who will serve this Party, in Parliament and out of Parliament in the years ahead.

Among the first persons whom I had identified at the time was the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. I had

known him from my days in Manchester, going back to 1967, where he was a well known character in Moosside, Statenbridge and in other districts of Manchester, where he was known for his cricketing exploits. I saw his quiet dignity and his interest in service.

I was impressed with his sincerity and I put forward his name and had the opportunity to introduce him to service through the Board of the Barbados Marketing Corporation.

I have worked closely with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, when I came back to Barbados in 1970. I have seen many outstanding men in the public life of this country but I regard him as the most devoted and committed patriot of them all, on both sides of the political divide.

Barbados is his first love. Even in the days when he was out of Parliament between 1986 to 1991, every day, several times a day, he would call on persons asking if we had read the newspaper or had we seen a news items relating to something that was going on in any of the Ministries of Government.

We had to remind him that he was out of Office and must give those persons who have been chosen by the people, the opportunity to serve. But every day he would call, enquiring upon things that affect the country in a way that I do not believe any person of that generation was so concerned. In fact, there was a time when the most Excellent Errol Barrow was driving across the country with friends and he would simply say to me: "Let the Government makes it mistakes and bury itself. I have friends in from the States and I am driving them around the country."

I do not think the Member for Christ Church South has ever allowed himself to enjoy such relaxation, he was always concerned with the best for Barbados. I have no difficulty in saying

that he is the most devoted and outstanding patriot of his standing.

I have admired at short range, the large service and commitment of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. I have benefited from that example. I have benefited from the quality of service which he has given to this country and from the assistance which all of them have given me.

Mr. Speaker, my interest in politics continues to be a large one and I can assure all Honourable Members that I will continue to be active in the Barbados Labour Party. I look forward to playing my part in the forthcoming contest and I will be speaking out and speaking up on the issues of the day as I see fit from time to time.

I do not know for whom the bell tolls and, on this occasion, I need not concern myself with that. I would wish to express good luck to all those who are participating. I have no doubt that whatever the composition of the House, to the extent that it will reflect the will of the people, it will be a worthy House of Assembly and that it will serve Barbados well.

12:50 p.m.

Friday, April 25, 2003

Continuation of Hon. Dr. R.L. CHELTENHAM:

Sir, at the personal level, I want to wish all of my colleagues good health, good luck and good fortune in the years ahead. Sir, that extends to you, Mr. Speaker, from whose alert eye I have often benefited and whose generous evaluation of time has from time to time permitted me to speak just a little longer than the Rules permitted.

Asides

I thank you all very much, indeed.

Mr. D.CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, today is going to be the last day that I will be addressing this Honourable House. I was told that in 1937 a man said 'today is a funny night' and he was jailed for saying it.

Asides

Mr. D. CARTER:

I came to the Honourable Member today because we were supposed to meet. I prepared myself and the Prime Minister bowled a googly at me and clean-bowled me. I did not realise that today was the day.

Asides

Mr. D. CARTER:

Sir, I hinted to the Prime Minister that I was not feeling well and that I was leaving early and he told me to hold on a little bit longer. I now realise why he told me to hold on.

Asides

Mr. D. CARTER:

I would like to thank a few people who have helped me during my tenure. In 1991, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West gave me the opportunity to enter this Parliament. I did not write and ask for a position but he said to me that I have to represent a constituency in Christ Church, and that happened to Christ Church East-Central and I am grateful to him, Sir.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South played a very important part in my development. I remember at the political meetings he said not to call names just talk about issues. Sir, I did that for 10 years and I am successful today.

Asides.

Mr. D. CARTER:

Sir, I cannot be sued for the two blocks which I own in Christ Church and I am grateful to him.

Sir, it is funny that the four of us who are leaving today are four Christ Church representatives. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph and I have been friends for many years and many days he would talk to me about my future. One thing that he always said to me was to make sure that when you leave this Honourable House you can walk the roads in Barbados with your chest held high.

Asides

Mr. D. CARTER:

I want the Honourable Member to know that I have done reasonable well and I can walk with my chest held high.

I was on the back bench from the time I came to this Honourable House and I remember that I had to make a reply to the very first Budget of the Prime Minister. Sir, for three hours the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and I were sitting side by side making notes. After taking notes, I remember the Honourable Member for St. George South said to me, 'Tear up those papers. Do not try to reply to the Budget. Make a political speech and you will be alright.' Sir, I did exactly that.

Asides.

Mr. D. CARTER:

Sir, I see some very young men in the Gallery who are hoping to come into this Honourable House shortly.

Asides.

Mr. D. CARTER:

Sir, I hope that they would keep in mind that their their first political speech in this House of Parliament a political speech and not try to reply to the Budget.

Asides.

Mr. D. CARTER:

Sir, I wish to thank the people of Christ Church East Central for giving me the opportunity to come to this Parliament. Ten years ago I was not thinking of such but the good people encouraged me to do so. I know that the population of Barbados is approximately 260 000 and I find myself to be one of the Members of this Parliament during the time. It means a lot to me and to my family. Sir, when the history of Barbados is written, the name Duncan Carter will come up sometime.

Mr. Speaker, in the nine years that I spent in Parliament all the Members and I got on very well. I do not say that I have made any enemies. I came to this Parliament as a gentleman and I am leaving as a gentleman.

I thank you.

Asides.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY:

Sir, there is no Government Business for the day. Given the Ministerial Statement made by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, it would be fruitless for us to conduct any Government Business since at 5 o'clock today the Proclamation would be signed reflecting the dissolution of this Parliament. Therefore, the legislative process cannot be completed on the business that was intended for today.

In the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I would wish at this stage to move the adjournment sine die, recognising that other circumstances will take care of that. In so moving the adjournment, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all Honourable Members on both sides, as is my duty as Leader of the House, for a Session that has been rewarding and one that has seen a great amount of work done in the people's interest. I would like to thank those persons who have serviced Parliament, being at the Clerk's table, those who have worked downstairs, the officers who have serviced in the precinct of Parliament to keep us safe, the media who have helped to communicate the message to the public of Barbados and it would be remiss of me in my duty if I did not thank you, Sir, your Honour the Speaker, for continuing to maintain the highest standards that this House has become associated with over the years. Indeed, I speak on behalf of all Members in thanking you for a job well done during this Session of Parliament.

The question that the House do now adjourn sine die was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

1:00 p.m.
