
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION OF 2003-2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, January 28, 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, B.A., Dip. Ed.,
(Speaker) His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J. P.,
(Deputy Speaker) Hon. Sir Henry FORDE,
K.A., Q.C., M.A., LL.M. (Cantab.) Rt. Hon. O.
S. ARTHUR, M.Sc.(Econ.), (Prime Minister,
Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs and
Minister for the Civil Service) Hon. Miss
BILLIE A. MILLER, BCH (Deputy Prime
Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and
Foreign Trade) 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.
R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A.,
M.Sc.(Econ.) Mr. G. W. PAYNE, LL.B. Hon.
R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., B.A.(Hons.), Dip.
Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., J.P. (Minister of the
Labour and Social Security) Mr. D. CARTER
(Chairman of Committees) Hon. R. N.
GREENIDGE, B.A., LL.B., (Minister
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. R. StC. TOPPIN, LL.B., (Minister of

Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Business
Development) Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN Hon.
Miss H. ELIZABETH THOMPSON, LL.B.
(Minister of Physical Development and
Environment)) Hon. Miss MIA A.
MOTTLEY, Q.C, 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, the
Attorney-General and Minister of Home
Affairs) Hon. D. T. GILL, B.Sc. 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 Industry
and International Business) Hon. Miss
CYNTHIA Y. FORDE, J.P. (Minister fo 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, January 14, 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, January 28, 2003, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

I beg to second that, Sir. Mr. SPEAKER If there are no corrections or observations, then let these Minutes stand confirmed.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY:

Mr, Speaker, I beg to move that the following Standing Orders Nos. 6,16,18,20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

PAPERS

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following documents

1.Mutual Funds Regulations, 2002

2.Financial Administration Amendment Rules, 2002

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ORDER NO 4

NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC
WORKERS (Guarantee of Loan) BILL, 2003

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Speaker, during the year 1944, while the world was still at war and Barbados was yet a colony, a number of public officers banded together to launch the Civil Service Association of Barbados. As indicated, this was before Barbados's Independence, this was before World War 11 ended. In those days the early framers of the Rules of the Civil Service Association settled more for an interest group rather than a pressure group. Mr. Speaker, for 20 years, between 1944-1964, the Civil Service Associations of Barbados remain an association representing the interest of members but still was not a full labour union.

Sir, history will record that icons of the ilk of Sir Carlise Burton and H.S.L Moseley played fundamental rules in the Civil Service Association for the period 1944 - 1964, in particular.

Mr. Speaker, a decision was made in 1964 to convert this interest group into an actual trade union consistent with the trade union law of the time. Yet, at 1964, a mere two years before Independence, the group did not demonstrate the type of intensified activity that a labour union would normally do. By 1971, Mr.

Speaker, there were indications that things were to change and from 1971 until 1979 this union operated from their Belmont Road headquarters.

There were indications when persons of the ilk of Mr. Norman Daniel were at the helm of the National Union of Public Workers (NUPW), which it became in 1971, that they were about to launch into an ethic of industrial relations practice that would inure to the benefit of workers and that would see the movement fully evolved into a proper trade union.

Mr. Speaker, in 1974, Earl John Byer, a firebrand and radical called John Cumberbatch and a number of teachers broke ranks with the National Union of Public Workers and launched the Barbados Union of Teachers (BUT). Clearly, a young union seeking to assert a particular vibrant approach to industrial relations could not have easily survived such fracture and hemorrhage. Notwithstanding the fact that a significant number of members broke away from the National Union of Public Workers to form the Barbados Union of Teachers, the union still survived.

In 1979, the union moved to headquarters at Dalkeith Road and today the headquarters of the union is situated there, occupying a property of 4.1 acres in size. The union has made an approach to Government requesting them to guarantee a loan in the sum of \$6 million, the lender being the Barbados National Bank. My sources told me that the process of the negotiation of this loan was by no means a smooth one and that there was a measure of trauma facing the negotiators from the union as they sought to raise money in the local market. Members would no doubt infer from what I said that if, indeed, there were difficulties confronting the union when it sought to borrow this money, then the stage would clearly be set for some benefactor to come to the rescue of the National Union of Public Workers. So,

Government has come to the assistance of the National Union of Public Workers.

Mr. Speaker, in time I shall look at the conditionalities under which the Government guarantee will operate. A Government which raises revenue from taxpayers has to be so responsible, when it is both spending and undertaking guarantees of spending, that the Government should be prudent and should exercise the maximum caution.

Honourable Member can refer to Clauses 4 -8 of the instant Bill before this Honourable House and Clauses 4-8 will enlighten Honourable Member of the special conditions required by Government for this guarantee to operate.

Sir, the actual guarantee is located in Clause 3 but Clauses 4 -8, in particular, set out the terms and conditions under which Government is prepared to assist. I will not at this point elaborate on these particular Clauses because I want to address particular matters at hand.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the National Union of Public Workers seeking to raise finance at this time is a purpose based on the union's desire to expand. It proposes to construct an entirely new headquarters building to cater to the needs of its 8 000 members. It also proposes to extend its auditorium and construct four two-bedroom apartments.

A cynic might wonder why the apartment? Mr. Speaker, labour unions, the world over, cannot easily survive on members' subscriptions alone. In the context of Barbados industrial relations experience, there is no question that union dues in the interest of the socialist principles that our unions practice have been kept to a minimum. In the context in the operations of the National Union of Public Workers, union dues equate to \$5 a week.

The point that I am making is, in this day and age, considering all things, labour unions cannot easily survive on union dues alone to meet their expenses, hence, the very real need for them to invest.

Mr. Speaker, you will recall, just before the break of 1974 when the Barbados Union of Teachers went independent, already, the Barbados Union of Teachers had been looking at ways and means to invest. Prior to 1974, the Barbados Workers Union had already been looking to invest to raise funds. Clearly in the context of National Union of Public Workers' desire to build apartments, the fact of the investment is clearly to raise money to subsidise what revenue they would normally raise.

Mr. Speaker, it is expected that when this project succeeds, and I cannot now indicate the exact date on which the project will come to completion, there will be better and improved offices for the union's staff, there will be offices to provide rental income. The point that I was making earlier was not about providing rental income but raising revenue through the establishment of apartments for rental. On completion there will be conference and seminar rooms, a documentation centre and a reading room, an expanded bar, so that members can more readily socialise, share fellowship, break bread and consume the spirits that often add to levity. There will also be expanded accommodation for cultural activities, an archive, caretaker's facilities, storage space, showers and changing rooms.

11.30 a.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. R. C. EASTMOND

Mr. Speaker, I think that we should welcome the efforts of an independent trade union,

operating in a tripartite situation, seeking to expand and modernise. I want to make the point, Mr. Speaker, that as regards modernisation, the submission can be made that whereas at the years 1937, 1940 and 1950 trade unions would have been concerned primarily with working towards improved physical conditions of work and improved wages and salaries, in this modern era as the Assistant General Secretary of the Barbados Workers Union has repeatedly said, trade unions must keep with the times.

Let me talk, Mr. Speaker, about the whole thing of the modern era in which we are operating in which we are all functioning. There is no question that trade unions now owe it to their members to continue working for the basics that members must have but, also to embark on proper education for workers. In this regard, we have in Barbados the Barbados Workers Union Labour College and the National Union of Public Workers has an academy but in addition to these efforts, which to my mind would still need to be expanded, trade unions today must certainly keep apace of the international global economic environment in which all workers are literally made to function.

Trade unions have to keep with the times. Trade unions must encourage their workers to become multi-skilled, multi-competent and must make their workers wake up to the fact that the international economic order is changing, and that the type of security that workers 50 years ago had in jobs may not now be the norm.

The type of friendly conditions that, in a socialist framework assisted workers, may not be the same. Trade unions have to sensitise their workers to the implications and consequences of globalisation and trade liberalisation, we in Barbados must wonder whether labour is in a globalised environment.

I will not now today look at this whole question of whether labour is in a globalised environment but permit me to say, Mr. Speaker, that this Government's vision for the Barbadian worker, is not only for that worker to be multi skilled, multi-competent, sensitive and aware of local labour market and regional labour market conditions but also painfully aware of the international economic order.

Workers today, whether they are maids, porters, messengers or gardeners, must wake up to the fact that there are international influences that impact on our sovereign Barbados, that when these international influences are favourable, we end up deriving increased foreign reserves, when these international economic circumstances are favourable, we end up attracting more investment, when the movement in international trade is favourable to us, we are able not just to see increases in our foreign reserves and improved investment, but we see within our shores, a type of effect where there is a confidence and where a number of interesting variables would redound to the interest of the country.

Mr. Speaker, I still want to make the point that in this year 2003, workers cannot afford to be complacent. A worker 45 years old, even a worker 50 years or even a worker 55 years, must bear in mind the demands and stresses of the international global environment, be prepared to train and retrain as may be necessary when our economies adjust to respond to the consequences of new economic shifts. Honourable Members in here are aware that within the last month, in China, a country which in many parts is rapidly developing, there is a new movement now away from the traditional security of tenure of public officers.

Mr. Speaker, before I go further, I am not saying that Barbados will follow the China

model and that we in this Government are prepared to abandon that security which is very much entrenched in the Constitution of Barbados. The message is clear that international powerful countries are suggesting to workers that they should not be complacent, that they must not go to sleep assured that when they wake up, all will be fine and that all will be sweet and dandy.

Therefore, workers, internationally have to be alert to the fact that economic twists, turns and changes can so affect their condition as to literally cause a particular turbulence and to raise threats to the security of their jobs.

Right now, as I speak, Mr. Speaker, the prospect of further international turbulence looms as we consider what is happening in Venezuela, combined with what is about to happen in Iraq. Workers, the world over, must not see themselves as being limited only to providing for their families and going to work, doing honest work at the regular pay, workers the world over must follow international events and must be always aware of the fact that such will impact on many countries, especially countries with open economies, where in our instance, around 70 per cent or more of what we use has to be acquired from abroad.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that China will be the first of many countries in the future that may want to negotiate specialised contracts with workers for fixed duration of employment. We in the Caribbean have the culture as cases like Carl versus the Attorney-General out of Belize shows, as Thomas versus the Attorney-General of Trinidad and Tobago shows, and Davis versus The Commission of Antigua, we have a culture in the Caribbean of security of tenure for public officers.

In the context of Barbados we also have a culture where in recent years, this Barbados Labour Party Government has gone so far as to

ensure the protection of the salaries and wages of public officers and to stop such from being garnished or reduced by the amount of 8 per cent or any per cent, whatever argument is used in the pursuit of such a reduction. That has been stopped.

Mr. Speaker, I now come to the relationship between the Barbados Labour Party and workers unions over the years.

11:40 a.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

In October 1999, I believe the Honourable Member for St. James South has pleasant memories of this, the Barbados Labour Party, for its Annual General Conference, journeyed to Mangrove, St. Philip. Mr. Speaker, there is a significance in this. There was a time in our polity and our political culture, especially between 1961 and 1976, when there were doubts as to whether the Barbados Labour Party was willing to embrace the Barbados Workers' Union (BWU) or any union for that matter, but consistent with my Party's philosophy of a better life for our people and its stance in helping to fund the Barbados Workers Union, especially after 1937 and 1940, and to further strengthen the labour movement, this great Barbados Labour Party welcomed that opportunity in 1999 to go to Mangrove in the same way that it welcomed the restoration of the photograph of the Right Excellent Sir Grantley Adams on the walls and within the confines of the Barbados Workers' Union (BWU) headquarters.

Let us reflect for a minute, Mr. Speaker, on

the relationship between the Barbados Labour Party, as a party and as a government, and the labour movement because nothing can be further from the truth if someone alleges that this party had at any time in its history been anti-union. What has transpired in Barbados' politics is that individuals from certain unions, in the exercise of their freedom of association, would have, from time to time, associated themselves with different political parties. It has been our party's experience that particular individuals from the labour movement worked closely with a political party with which we have literally nothing much to do in normal times.

The point, Mr. Speaker, is that the Barbados Labour Party is not anti-workers union. Even when individuals from the labour movement work closely with the Democratic Labour Party our party was supportive of the objectives of the trade unions as they were expressed. Our party may have disagreed with some of the members for their public stances and mouthings when they spoke under the influence of political partisanship but our party was prepared to guide and help them as they sought to work in the interest of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I personally welcome that opportunity which was given to this great Barbados Labour Party to go up to Mangrove in 1999 to have a conference under the chairmanship of the Honourable Member for St. James South. I also want to say that if we check to ascertain what legislation has been brought by the Barbados Labour Party over time in the interest of the working-class then we can submit, Mr. Speaker, without hesitation or contradiction, that our legislative record when it comes to setting up legislation in favour of workers is second to none.

We must consider, Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party and the Protection of Wages Act. We must consider, Mr. Speaker, the Barbados

Labour Party and its Holiday with Pay Act. We must consider, Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party and the Labour Department Act, Chapter 23. We must consider, Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party and the many other pieces of legislation. We must consider, Mr. Speaker, how this great party agitated for and succeeded in having maternity leave for workers. All these are but a few of the matters which will show the public that the Barbados Labour Party, as a party and as a Government, when in Government has never flinched or absconded from its responsibility to be a party for a better Barbados and for the betterment of workers generally.

I have no doubt that when the National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) approached the Government, this current Government, for this \$6 million that it was an approach that found favour, for the reason that can be implied from all that I have said, with this Barbados Labour Party Government and we will do our utmost to ensure that responsible and solid institutions are never made to suffer disadvantage.

In talking about responsible and solid institutions, Mr. Speaker, I want today to publicly commend all the unions that function as unions, all the unions that have had an enduring life and all the unions that have been responsible. History will show that the vast majority of the trade unions, close to 100 per cent, had been responsible. I want to commend the unions of Barbados, the Barbados Workers' Union (BWU), the National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) and the other unions, for having set the stage for industrial relations peace and industrial relations harmony. I also want to congratulate the unions for actively taking part in the tripartite process and for becoming social partners. I also want to compliment the employers too for being largely responsible and for being often prepared to yield and grant concessions in the interest of industrial relations harmony.

Now, talking about industrial relations harmony, the question naturally arises as to what was the cause or what were the causes of the events at the Crane Hotel site, the Hilton Hotel site and such like in recent times. The hard facts of the situation on those construction sites is that the employers on those construction sites freely recruit their own workers directly often without reference to anyone sponsoring them, often without reference given to the nationality or the legal status of the workers in Barbados and often without reference to parliamentarians who want jobs for their people.

On those construction sites where there were some evidence of fracas and little industrial relations turmoil recently, experience has shown that the vast majority of those workers were skilled in masonry, carpentry, steel bending and plumbing, but the majority of them went to work without being represented by a trade union. One may wonder, Sir, how in the year 2003 there are still persons in Barbados who do not belong to a trade union. A lot of the problems that occurred on those construction sites in recent times came about because the workers were yet to be represented by a labour union and most of them went ahead and staged strikes at times when they were not yet unionised, often functioning under the tutelage and guidance of a firebrand or an agitator among themselves who was not a unionist. But in time we will see, and I am taking about recent events, Mr. Speaker, those workers eventually becoming organised. The moment they get organised, Mr. Speaker, then peace will easily be had and the proper practices that we have had in Barbados will resume.

11:50 a.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Speaker, I think the Democratic Labour Party should be complimented for being the first Party to go for and to encourage tripartism in Barbados. I recall the words of an outstanding parishioner from St. James, the Right Excellent Sir Lloyd Erskine Sandiford who in the early days, oft with fondness and in his own inevitable way, called employers and workers the social partners.

We in this Party have not only adopted the social partnership but have refined it to such a degree that the current Protocol that advances tripartism has been held up at the International Labour Organisation as a model for industrial relations peace and harmony for the world.

We have had a number of protocols. The last one was signed historically on May Day, 2002, in Queens Park at a workers rally where everyone, including employers, employees, Cabinet Members and the Right Honourable Prime Minister showed up. By the time the world had come to see that protocol, we have been getting favourable responses from no agency other than the International Labour Organisation which has been founded in 1919 before the League of Nations and certainly before the modern United Nations system. We have been receiving applause and compliments to such a degree that the International Labour Organisation has said that, as an entity, they would be bereft of a full scholarship until they had invited the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter to come and to address them.

Mr. Speaker, years ago they were the persons who have always advocated for better industrial relation practices between employers, employees and Government. By the time they became aware of Barbados and its protocols, they could not resist the temptation to invite the

Right Honourable Prime Minister and Member for St. Peter to Geneva to deliver a speech which, even today, 28th January, 2003, is still being spoken about internationally. Media houses such as Voice of Barbados, Radio 900, FM stations and the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation would constantly replay this great speech made by a brilliant mind so that Barbadians could be able to savour its quality.

Mr. Speaker, June 2002 in Geneva was the first occasion where a leader from any of the CARICOM nations, not the Bahamas, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Mexico or Peru, had ever addressed the International Labour Organisation Convention but instead our leader coming from a small 166 x 14 square miles island.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Peter follows in the shoes of President Clinton as regards to addressing the International Labour Organisation Convention. At that meeting, when President Clinton's speech was ended, persons went to the computers, pulled his speech out and matched it against that of the Member for St. Peter. When matched, as much as President Clinton's speech promised some element of funds, the resident persons at the International Labour Organisation were of the opinion that the best speech that has ever been delivered to the International Labour Organisation in recent memory came from the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I can say that such a level of participation by this Government and this great Barbados Labour Party, such a commitment to the workers' cause, should clearly reaffirm in the minds of Barbadians, the fact that this great Barbados Labour Party with this indomitable spirit has always wanted the utmost for the working-classes of Barbados and indeed for the masses and classes of Barbados. A better life for Barbados is a better life for all people.

Mr. Speaker, Government has offered to guarantee a loan of \$6 million being raised by the National Union of Public Workers. I will not go into details as to whether any sensible evaluation has been done on the 4.5 acres to determine whether the market value would come to the amount of \$6 million. Suffice it to say that Government being aware of the fact that this project will inure to the benefit of all workers, has decided to lend a helping hand.

Mr. Speaker, I have said earlier that a responsible Government must be the sacred guardian of the public's purse. A responsible Government must be matured and prudent enough when spending, must be equally matured and prudent when offering guarantees.

Mr. Speaker, as I understand the law, whenever a debtor raises funds and there is a guarantor, the debtor remains primarily liable to repay the loan but the guarantor must be sufficiently aware of the possibility that there could be default which could come from any different causes such as death or migration of the debtor. In the context of a legal entity such as the National Union of Public Workers, even though Government does not anticipate a default, it must still be sensible and sensitive enough to protect the public's purse.

Mr. Speaker, let me refer all Honourable Members to clause 3 of the National Union of Public Workers (Guarantee of Loan Act) 2003. Clause 3 sets out the quantum to be borrowed and makes a general reference to terms and conditions set out in the Schedule to this Bill.

Clause 3: Subject to this Act, the Government may, by a Resolution of both Houses of Parliament, guarantee the payment of the principal and interest due in respect of a loan in the sum of \$6.0 million to the Union on such terms and conditions as are set out in the Schedule to this Act for the purpose of

financing the development of the Union's headquarters.

Mr. Speaker, of particular importance are the provisions of clauses 4 to 8. When Honourable Members check their Papers carefully, they will realise that the \$6 million borrowed is done so exclusive of VAT.

Clause 4: "All imposts shall be borne by the Union."

Clause 5(l) "As a condition of the guarantee, the Union shall submit the following documents to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs:

(a) within 90 days of the close of each financial year, an audited report including balance sheets and related earnings and surplus statements, prepared and certified by an independent Certified or Chartered Accountant;

(b) unaudited balance sheets and related earnings and surplus statements, prepared and certified by an authorised officer of the Union for each of the first three calendar quarters, not later than 60 days following the quarter for which the balance sheets and related earnings and surplus statements have been prepared;

(c) on a quarterly basis, accompanying the financial statements being submitted, a certificate signed by an authorised officer of the Union certifying that no default exists;

(d) such other information as the Ministry may request.

(2) The Union shall not, without the prior consent of the Minister, create or suffer to exist any encumbrances against property now owned or subsequently acquired by the Union except by pledges by subsidies to ensure borrowings.

Clause 6: The loan guaranteed under this Act

shall be applied to the purpose for which it is guaranteed, as specified in the guarantee agreement.

Clause 7: All amounts required for the payment of sums in pursuance of a guarantee given under this Act and for the payment of all interest and other charges on those sums are charged upon and shall be payable out of the Consolidated Fund.

Clause 8: Where any amount is paid out of the Consolidated Fund in respect of any liability incurred by the Government under the guarantee given in exercise of the powers conferred under section 3, the Union shall repay any sum together with interest thereon at such rate as the Minister may prescribe, to the Consolidated Fund, in such manner and at such time as the Minister may direct.

12:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

A forward-looking draft person and the Government would definitely put in Clause 4 in the Bill but, Mr. Speaker, if in ten years' time special taxes are to be attached to the loan, the draft person should also be able to anticipate this situation and make allowances for this in the Bill. Where there are charges to be borne, these will be borne directly by the National Union of Public Workers and there will be no shifting of the tax burden, negotiation fee or legal cost to the Government.

Clause 5 empowers the Ministry of Finance to require, within such times as shall be specified, that particular documents should be submitted to the Ministry of Finance for scrutiny and audited balance sheets must be

submitted within 90 days of the close of each financial year. Where there are related earnings and surplus statements certified by an independent or chartered accountant these must also be submitted to the Ministry of Finance.

Unaudited balance sheets, related earnings and surplus statements, duly authenticated and certified, must be submitted for each of the first three calendar quarters and not later than 60 days following the quarter to which they apply.

On a quarterly basis the financial statements to be submitted must be signed by an authorised officer of the union certifying that at that time no fault exists.

In Clause 5, paragraph 1(d) the Ministry of Finance reserves the right to ask for any other information that it requires.

Mr. Speaker, as further protection of Government, a condition sine qua non is to be found in Clause 6. Sir, permit me to read Clause 6:

"The loan guaranteed under this Act shall apply to the purpose for which is guaranteed as specified in the guarantee agreement."

This condition and guarantee clearly means that in its seriousness to be businesslike as regards this particular matter, Government wants to ensure that the purpose for which the funds are raised is honoured and also to ensure that the money is not deflected to another purpose.

Sir, I want to expatiate on this matter. The Government does not doubt the reliability and honesty of the National Union of Public Workers but since in every other case of a Government guarantee there is always this particular provision, the Bill seeks to extract the assurance that the purpose for which the loan is raised is honoured and that there is no

secondary or ancillary purpose as regards the applicability of this particular loan.

Sir, all guarantors and risk-takers in the world of lending money must always be cautious to make sure that funds are applied for the purposes for which they are borrowed so between Government and the National Union of Public Workers there will be a separate guaranteed agreement based on contractual principles between the National Union of Public Workers and the Crown which will constitute a relationship between the bank, the borrower and the Government

Clause 7 reads:

“All amounts required for the payment of sums in pursuance of a guarantee given under this Act and for the payment of all interest and other charges of those sums are charged upon and shall be payable on the Consolidated Fund.”

For the record, notwithstanding the literal words of Clause 7, it should be read together with Clause 8 which speaks quite clearly in defence of Clause 7 and is one of the better Clauses of this particular Bill

Clause 8 reads:

“Where any amount is paid out of the Consolidated Fund in respect of any liability incurred by the Government under the guarantee given in exercise of the powers conferred under section 3, the Union shall repay any sum together with interest thereon at such rate as the Minister may prescribe, to the Consolidated Fund, in such manner and at such time as the Minister may direct.”

12:10 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

Sir, what that means, in effect is, if the Government for some reasons, in the event of a default, had to pull money from the Consolidated Fund to help rescue the debtor, Government has reserved the right, not just in the Guarantee Agreement, and is about to enact in legislation a legal requirement that if there is a default and Government pays, Government shall pursue the borrower to make the borrower repay Government, and this instant borrower has a property of 4.1 acres in size and the buildings on it should be undergoing improvement during the life of the loan.

In the event that Honourable Members are interested in other matters with respect to this particular loan, I want to say that the interest rate is going to be fixed at 0.25 per cent above the prime floating rate, which is equivalent to 10 per cent. I have already mentioned the amount. Honourable Members are aware that the original debtors, Barbados Union of Public Workers. The principal payment, before interest, is to be amortised over 15 years, excluding the first year immediately following the conclusion of the contract for the loan, and this is what would concern Government.

Mr. Speaker, there is a Schedule to the Bill and the Schedule has a mixed character. Some of the components of the Schedule refer to the relationship between the National Union of Public Workers and the bank more than the relationship between the National Union of Public Workers and the Government. Where the Government is involved and where governmental protection finds its way into the Schedule, I have already referred to that.

Mr. Speaker, as I thank you for allowing me such time in delivering myself of a relatively simple matter, I felt driven to go to these lengths for a number of reasons but time would not allow me to explore them now. As I seek

to close, I want to cite general objectives found in the Charter of the National Union of Public Workers, and these are objectives that most trade unions would have.

Sir, among these are:

-The promotion of goodwill and harmony in the public service.

-The promotion of the general improvement of the public service.

-The regulation of and settling of industrial regulations and disputes.

-The promotion of legislation in the interest of members etc.

Mr. Speaker, Government is prepared to work with this entity, not just to ensure that this entity is about to realise a dream and embark on a project that is worthwhile to the entity and its members. Government, as a willing partner in the Social Partnership, shows that a happy healthy public service, and a happy healthy public officer who can retire to a headquarters of a union of which he is a member, will eventually be such a person in Barbados to continue to function into public service, not just for an income in support of his family and himself but will function in the public service of Barbados with a desire to achieve greater productivity and Board membership beyond one person will likely work in concert with other elements, be able to evince greater productivity, will be able to use resources like the proposed archive, library and other areas to enlarge his life.

Mr. Speaker, ultimately, the public officer, who is a member of the National Union of Public Workers, has an opportunity to have a larger life by going to facilities where he can access in the interest of his own self development.

I want to conclude on a point which I made earlier in my presentation. I want to say notwithstanding our great country's achievements, the desire of every Barbadian to succeed at micro level, notwithstanding those patriotic Barbadians who want to see this country succeed, I want to repeat and reiterate that the worker today in Barbados must be sensitive to the goings on internationally, must be prepared to follow international trade issues, must be aware of the full implications and ramifications of trade liberalisation and on the larger scale must be able to appreciate where globalisation originated, what it entails, where it will lead to and what implications and repercussions it has for the worker in his castle, bungalow, chattel, studio, library or place of work. No trade union or its membership can divorce themselves from the economic reality that now engulfs this globe which we call earth.

Mr. Speaker, my friend, a former Honourable Member of this House who represented Christ Church East Central, Mr. Robert Liviston Morris, may he fully recover and may he live long.

12:20 pm

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. R. C. EASTMOND

Mr. Robert Livingston Morris, from time to time and I have heard Mr. Joseph Goddard repeat the words, has uttered that in the context of where this world is going, we have to be sure that we are on the ship. We have to make sure that the ship is floating well, for none of us can risk being so reckless as to tempt fate and be thrown over board, and if the ship's captain is not careful, Mr. Speaker, the ship can sink. In the case of Barbados, Mr. Speaker, Barbados is

ably led by a captain steering the ship and it is for Honourable Members to work out whether we mean the ship of State or the ship of Party.

We have a captain, Mr. Speaker, ably commanding matters in a way where there will be no failure, where there will be no going back, we along with every worker, along with every patriotic citizen led by this leader, will certainly, see this great country of ours go forward at a pace and at a rate which will be the envy of the entire world.

With these few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Thank you.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this particular Bill that has been brought before this Parliament. I want to say from the outset, Sir, that when we speak of the trade union movement, we must differentiate and recognise that there is a trade union movement that solely represents the workers in the private sector of Barbados and there is a trade union movement that represents the public sector and sometimes the private sector.

Today, we are faced with a situation here, Sir, where we are being asked by the National Union of Public Workers to guarantee a loan from the same people with whom they, in a couple of months will have to come and negotiate wages and salaries on behalf of its members.

I want to remind this House, Sir, that some months ago, the CCL had a similar provision, the only thing they were worse. They came through a supplementary to this Parliament to get Parliament to agree to give them some money so that they could continue. I said then, Sir, without having the necessary information

in front of me, but using my memory that this is the beginning of the end of the trade union movement for the simple reason, Sir, that you have a trade union movement that has to come to the same people with whom they have to negotiate on behalf of other members. What was ridiculous, you had the main body that represents the interest of the other trade union movements, having to come to Government to beg for alms on behalf of the organisation of which it had many members.

I said that if the CCL was in trouble we could not wait to see the day when the other trade union movements used the same opportunity to come to this Parliament and beg also for alms and help.

I want to say, Sir, that I have lived to see this happen and one of the interesting things about this particular one is that this first came to this Parliament over a year ago and I am asking Government and the unions, how come this particular guarantee has been on the Order Paper for nearly one year, and they have now waited until they are in the final stages, I would like to believe, of concluding an agreement to bring this before this Honourable Chamber.

It is no doubt, Sir, that during the 1990s the workers went through some problems. They were not able to get their salaries as they would like. At one stage, the Party of which I am a member, was in control of the Government and they cut their wages. No one can dispute that. What has also happened, Sir, that in the year following, even though we cut their wages, the present Government has seen growth in the economy, of which they have bragged, but the workers of Barbados have not been able to see salaries increased, commensurate with the growth in the economy.

Sir, what is even more ridiculous, that the workers had to put up with direct taxation and they were also inflicted with indirect taxation.

So the trade union movement must ask itself, how is it that the economy of Barbados has grown to such an extent and the Government can report growth in increased foreign reserves and in many other things that are positive but the trade union movement and the workers per se cannot report the same thing?

Am I to believe, Sir, that there was some deal in this country where the workers, the private sector and the Government launched into an arrangement and today we are now recognising and admitting that what I spoke about since 1999, in this Parliament that it is true?

That is, the private sector got their profits, the Government got their profits from this deal and the workers have suffered. They have suffered so badly that the trade union movement is even admitting now that they have not represented the interest of the workers well. Normally they would have turned to their workers and ask the workers to buy bonds, or they might have asked the workers to come together as a collective group and go to their credit unions to get the amount of finance to help them with this. But they acknowledge that the workers lack the capacity financially to be able to do this, and they went where the milk was flowing, back to the Government, who have been able to gain everything, at the expense of the workers.

This is interesting. This is an admission both by the Government and now the unions of Barbados, that the workers have not received the deal that they have entered into in the interest of Barbados. But the two groups have been able to do it.

I am saying to the National Union of Public Workers that I will support this but it needs an explanation. They must tell me why is it that the workers are begging alms of the same people they have to work for, and they have been paid by the workers to represent their interests and to make sure that the increase of

capacity is also felt in the pockets of the workers.

I am told that there are about 20 000 to 30 000 public servants. Let us say, 20 000. If there are 20 000, all that is required is \$200 in bonds from each worker to protect the interest of their trade union and to make sure that the trade union can improve the facilities and that is all that is being asked. If there are 20 000, it will be \$200 and if it is 30 000 it will be \$300.

Aside.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Sir, am I to believe that the union is admitting that the public servants are so poor that they cannot even ask them to buy a bond for \$200 or \$300? You must understand that it has to be an admission on behalf of the union because in any club - and it must be seen as a club - the first place you turn to for help is your members. They are admitting that the members do not have the capacity to carry it and they have gone to what we would normally call in negotiating terms, the enemy.

Then we talk about a social relationship. The unions must ask themselves whose interest they are representing and who are they empowering because, surely, it cannot be the workers of Barbados. The mere fact that they brought this here is an admission that their members do not have the capacity to help them and they are the ones to create the capacity for the workers.

I cannot blame the Government. If they are going to negotiate and do not negotiate in the fair interest of workers and then come begging for alms around the time of negotiation. It is a negotiating tool for the Government. I am not surprised that this has been on the Order Paper for so long because there is a good reason.

It is like fishing, and the fishermen will tell

you this, Sir, that sometime to keep the dolphins in the calm, you hook them and leave them there and hope to hold them on a longer time to keep the others around them in the calm. Many Honourable Members will not understand of what I speak because, as I come here, I bring different knowledge that some people cannot appreciate. But you keep the dolphins there on the line, Sir, so that the others will gather.

Sir, am I to believe that this is what we are doing here. That is to make sure that all the workers remain in the calm because they have now been hooked and caught by the line of the Government.

I am saying, people must understand that this is serious business and you are interfering with the interest of the masses of people in Barbados. The workers of Barbados have done what was asked of them and the trade union movement must understand that through this agreement, the workers have given their best.

12:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

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

They have accepted not to demand the salary increases that they were due and on top of that they have also accepted the introduction of new taxes on their backs. So the civil servants of Barbados should feel proud and people must not be accused of not doing their fair share. It worries me whenever this agreement is talked about because one gets the impression that it is the trade union movement... When people speak about the trade union movement they do not include the general membership, they talk about the heads.

I once read a book that discussed this politics of inclusion and it said that once you get the head, the others will follow. What this is saying is that once you include the leader of the trade union, the leader of the private sector and the leader of all leaders, you will get what you want, and once you get what you want, nothing else matters.

I am saying, Sir, that the public servants must understand what is in their best interest and I know they have. The one thing they cannot be accused of is not acting in good faith because they have acted in good faith to make sure that this economy is a good economy. So one must appreciate that they are deserving of something.

One must recognise that we are now in a globalised economy and any more increase in cost to the producers is going to affect the end product. So we cannot continue to look at increasing cost to the producers, instead we have to find a way to increase the disposable income of workers.

In my opinion, Sir, we have to cut out the wastage that is within the government sector. That is why we have to look at the way we are operating in government, that is the point.

We have to recognise that the world is changing and that Barbados is a consuming society. We also have to recognise that at the end of the day if we continue to consume that we are going to be spending valuable foreign exchange, so we have to find a system to ensure that we stop people from consuming and encourage them to produce. All journalists who do not understand that simple philosophy, that is not my problem. We have to understand that at the end of the day it is Barbados we have to represent and we have to be clear about that.

I am saying that this particular guarantee today will not strengthen the unions that it will weaken them because they have now given up

all their negotiating powers to the employer who they have to go and approach. Sir, people must recognise that it is the unions that negotiate with Government on behalf of the workers. The unions and the Government are a twofold aspect and we must look at it. We must understand that this is the union that will negotiate for increases in salaries and wages for the workers with the same employer who happens to be the Government. So it will be the union that will have to stand by and watch the Government inflict more cost on the workers whether it be in taxes or other impose.

The union cannot only look at this from the point of view of an increase in wages, it also has to look at it from the point of view that if we cannot get the increase in wages we will have to get a shift in taxation that will impact positively on the workers. If they cannot negotiate for higher wages and salaries, then they must tell their workers that they want to get tax reform that will impact positively in their pockets.

Increase capacity is what we have to fight for from henceforth. This is something that the party of which I am a member has been fighting for since 1994. May God bless that great leader, Sir Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, who had the foresight to recognise the effects of globalisation since the early 1990s.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

If we missed the boat in the early 1990s, we cannot now miss the boat today. We had golden opportunities to understand the true effects of globalisation and trade liberalisation then, but because those were not terms being used in those days and in the way people wanted them to be used, people did not want to appreciate them. We have to move away from the concept that we can only deal with things when we see

them on our doorsteps. We also have to create the capacity where we start thinking about things before they arrive on our doorsteps so that when they get on our doorsteps we will have the solution. The problem with this Parliament is that it does not have the capacity to deal with things before they are right on the doorstep but whenever someone has the capacity to see it differently people say that they are a maverick, they are mad and all sorts of foolishness.

We have to understand that if we are operating in a globalised world that we have to overwork our brains and must be prepared to look at things before they reach us and find solutions for them, because if we do not do that, they will land on our doorsteps, we will not have solutions for them and the whole world would bypass us and we would not be relevant in the world. The trade union movement must understand that for their workers. They were forewarned about this when we first came with the Bill for the money for the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL). I told them that this would happen but nobody listened to what I said and people even said in this Parliament that I was cursing the trade union movement.

I am saying that if we had empowered the workers they would have had the money to pay the trade union movement. But the trade union movement have not empowered the workers and they are so shamefaced now that they cannot even go to the workers to ask for an increase in union dues because they know that they did not give them the resources to be able to pay increase union dues.

This is an admission by the trade union movement that they have not done what they should have done between 1994 and now, so now the workers do not have the capacity to help them because it is the workers who have to provide this money for the trade union

movement not the Government. People come in here as if the Government is obligated to do it not realising that by coming in here and behaving like that, they are admitting that they have given to the Government the money that should have gone to the workers of Barbados and now the Government is giving it back to the workers through the backdoor and through a guarantee. But the workers are not even getting it back because it is only a guarantee. The only way they will be giving this money to the workers through the trade union movement is if they default and they do not have the capacity to repay.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that we need to empower the workers. This debate is all about taking power away from the workers and giving it to the Government and then they have to turn around and beg Government for favours. That is not the intention of the trade union movement. I am not looking at this situation for the first time and discussing it, this is the third time that I am discussing this. I would have discussed it twice before for CCL and now once for the NUPW, but it seems as though the labour movement has not learnt anything from this.

12:40 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

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

Mr. Speaker, this will stop them from having the negotiating impetus that they would normally have. If they had gone to the members, had negotiated and had given the workers what they needed, the unions would have been able to say to them that the workers needed to have money to help finance these projects. The unions cannot do this anymore because they have lost the opportunity to put

that on the table.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we would not see these things happening. I hope the trade union movement would understand their responsibility of empowering the workers in order for the workers to be able to achieve their wants in the future. It is not for the trade union leaders to behave as though they are the gurus of Government where they need to look after everything but the workers, and then to ask Parliament to guarantee a loan. They also admitted to the people of Barbados that the workers are suffering and could not raise money on a bond issue to build buildings, et cetera.

Trade unions have a role to their members, Government has a role to the whole country, the private sector has a role to the private sector. When trade unions feel they must give up their role and other people cannot, then there will not be an agreement. There must be an agreement on all sides and it must be respected. There cannot have a situation where one group of people believe they have rights and not the workers. This is a cause for which I will continue to fight in this House.

Sir, I came to this House in 1994 with one mandate, that is to empower the masses of people in Barbados. People must understand when the masses are empowered, there becomes an empowered middleclass and an upperclass society. When people spend money, it is done to the betterment of all classes. Whenever the masses are empowered in Barbados, we will have a decrease in crime and in the other social ills.

People must also have a philosophy about politics. Those persons who think I do not have a philosophy, I am sorry for them. They have a number of years to catch up. I am not begging anybody to say I have a philosophy. I know where I stand on any particular issue. I need no

issues padded for me.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN:

I speak what comes from the heart which is a gift given by the Lord, which I will never give up. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is pathetic that we have to listen to distortions and total misrepresentations of the interest of the workers movement and its commitment to its interest. It is most unfortunate because I had expected something different from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy but during these testing periods for him, one can understand there is likely to be a malfunctioning of the intellect, coupled by a number of external and internal forces.

Mr. Speaker, at this time in our history, we have to recognise that our institutions must make the relevant adjustments to the changes of modernisation because the society could become paralysed as a consequence of the institutions that surround the governance of the State in not moving on par with the fundamental changes, not only in the local arena but also as a consequence of the impact of globalisation.

The trade union movement has always had persons even within the working-class environment who felt that its function in the society should be totally isolated from what is happening in the governance of a country that is ruled by a black government. There are always those detractors who do not understand a more harmonized relationship between the State and the workers.

I can understand this feeling. It is a colonial

feeling. In the early stages of the trade union movement when the atmosphere was more antagonistic than it is today, there was always that war existing between capital and labour. Therefore, we could understand that the agenda of the workers movement was completely different to what it is in modern times.

The unions came out of a hostile atmosphere at the end of the 1930s and it was a white colonial rule. Over the years that union worked as a partner and was even responsible for establishing the pillars that gave rise to black self-government.

The State, in the form of the Government, benefitted from the foot soldiers of the trade union movement. The history of the Caribbean will reveal that in the early stages of those political parties, the Parties that did not work in harmony with the trade union movement never rose to power. We, as a people, are indebted to the trade union movement. We also have a responsibility to make the modern adjustment in all of our institutions and, therefore, the trade unions cannot be excluded.

I do not believe this Party has any doubt of the workers movement repaying its debts but if the unions even fall short of having the required fixed assets in case there is a default, we have a historic and moral responsibility to the trade union movement to ensure that it remains part of the governance of the society.

Sir, I am very surprised that someone who has been exposed to secondary education and probably tertiary education can make such a moribund analysis of the requirement of modernisation in terms of what is required within the trade union movement. We cannot jettison the movement. If the movement is experiencing certain difficulties, the State must respond because it is a beneficiary of the trade union movement. We have absolute confidence in the workers who are responsible for the

selection of its leadership. Every year matured men and women over the age 16 select their leaders. The leaders are only a reflection of the membership. One cannot condemn the leadership unless it is said that the selection was based on ignorance.

There is even provision in the constitution that where the leadership is not functioning in the way in which it ought to - just like the Democratic Labour Party - the union will take disciplinary measures.

What is important is that the union has put modern facilities in place that are beneficial to its membership, that relate to the changes in the society; that facilitate the types of programmes they want to put in place, for example, the establishment of a library or archives where people could do research, lectures and other activities so that the worker can function in an atmosphere which is in keeping with modern times.

12:50 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Mr. T.A. PRESCOD:

The credit programme is one of national interest which emerged from the membership of the trade union movement and grew into something expansive that responded to the social and economic needs of the people.

Mr. Speaker, the trade union should have these facilities because workers and their offspring need to be educated in these times. They not only need the physical structures but there is also the need for new programmes so that others like the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would not make statements like the ones which he made earlier this morning.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is suggesting that the state is wrong for backing a loan of \$6 million to the workers' movement and that people will represent their own interest. Mr. Speaker, if the state becomes an obstacle in the growth and development of the people of Barbados the workers will, as a consequence, look after their own interest. Sir, if the workers believe the Government is not doing what it should do, they know that the Government will have to return to the polls in five years' time. Is the Honourable Member for St. Lucy saying that people are devoid of basic commonsense and intelligence to make the analysis required to determine that what is being done has a sinister motive to undermine their interest? The Honourable Member is also saying that when people voted 26 to 2 that they did not know what they had done. Probably, by example of what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said, it is a confirmation that they are clearly in his thoughts.

Sir, a man in the Honourable Member's position who is struggling and staggering over the punches which he has received internally should go back and plea to the masses of people who are the only source and saviour existing for him today. Yet, he condemns the judgement of the same people to whom he has to return when he is jettisoned by the Party that he supports.

Sir, the Honourable Minister who introduces this debate was extremely lucid and very detailed in outlining the trade union movement. He explained the relationship between the Government and the trade union, indicated that the trade union had a programme and that it was not going to be a large erection that would stick out.

Asides.

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD:

We know it will be productive because in recent times the trade unions have been going through a transition and is working to find they way to come up with methods and structures that will enable us to survive against the imposition of globalization. Sir, we are now doing something that is positive that requires the collective complement of all the institutions of the state and there are many new formations that we do not have much control over because of the dynamics around us daily.

Mr. Speaker, the present situation is forcing us to come up with a method that will put us in a position similar to the one we found ourselves in, just like when we were trying to establish self-government in the 1950s and 1960s. We need now to find new models and approaches in order to response in a relevant way to the fundamental changes that are happening within our society.

Sir, I fully support the state in providing this guarantee for \$6 million. I hope that as a consequence of my voice and contribution that my brother on the other side would be much wiser at the conclusion of this speech.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 200 p.m.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

I beg to second that.

The question that the House be suspended

until 2:00 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended the House accordingly.

1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER:

This Sitting is resumed.

Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE:

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a very short contribution to this debate. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy made the point earlier that he did not think that the National Union of Public Workers was really looking after the interest of the workers in this particular matter. The way that he put his point has brought the integrity of the National Union of Public Workers and the Government's into question.

Sir, he made the point that once the guarantee was given to the National Union of Public Workers by the Government, that these two would have been in bed together and that situation would mean that the interest of the workers would not have been served. I think that it was a bad very point for the Honourable Member to make.

In fact, his words were: " the guarantee would not strengthen the union, it would weaken it." Mr. Speaker, I think for him to make that point means that he would have been totally unaware of what is happening.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael East made the point that the Government was

actually responding to the needs of the union and the workers at this time of our development. I think that this relationship between the Government and the National Union of Public Workers gives credence to tripartism. In other words, you do not have a situation where National Union of Public Workers wants the guarantee and Government would look at it and say, I am not lending you because you represent workers who are always complaining about what we are doing and what we are not doing; that cannot be Government's attitude. The two institutions, along with their employers, have formed a tripartite arrangement.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados has benefited tremendously from that arrangement. I do not think that because you get a situation where National Union of Public Workers is asking for a guarantor, that the National Union of Public Workers is going to shirk its responsibility to the workers. I think that the National Union of Public Workers will continue to work in the interest of the workers, they will ask for no quarters where Government is concerned and, certainly, it will give none.

Sir, I knew of the circumstances in which the National Union of Public Workers found itself. They always wanted to construct a new headquarters but the cost of repairing the old building was extremely high. We also have found that sometimes it is more economical to construct a new building rather than attempt to repair some of the old ones. Sometimes commonsense dictates that we abandon the idea of repairing and move onto to constructing a new building. Mr. Speaker, the National Union of Public Workers headquarters has been overcrowded for the last few years and they are cramped for

space.

Sir, you cannot go about as a trade union with

the status of the National Union of Public Workers telling employers, including Government, about providing suitable working conditions for workers and then doing the opposite for your employees. I think that the National Union of Public Workers has a duty to set the example so that they should be able to take government officials to National Union of Public Workers headquarters and show these government officials that they are practising what they preach.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the National Union of Public Workers for taking this initiative at this time to show that they are living up to what they are demanding from Government.

In 1979 when the National Union of Public Workers moved to Dalkeith Road their building might have been in good condition and they might have had adequate accommodation at that time. There has been no expansion of the building but the staff has increased. Therefore, more space is required.

The work of the union is expanding. It has grown in membership and services that are being offered. When the National Union of Public Workers moved to Dalkeith Road in 1979 there was no education officer, research officer, medicare person or industrial relations officer. Secretarial services are now being offered for those officers.

When I was Minister of Labour, I always tried to say to the trade unions, whenever we had meetings, that I want to see the day trade unions would look at one of our workers and tell the worker, for the public to hear, that he or she is wrong. I am not backing you on this occasion. This is the fourth or fifth time you have committed this offence and I am not backing you. Sir, I want to hear that from one of the unions.

Mr. Speaker, the time comes in our lives when wives have to tell husbands that they are wrong or vice versa. There also comes a time when parents have to tell children that they are out there on their own because of whatever decision they have taken or because whatever mischief they have committed. I want to see one day that the union is brave enough to tell the worker that he or she is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, we do get situations where the attitude of the worker is, I belong to the union and the employer cannot do me anything. Sir, a lot of that goes on in work places. I am going to call in the union, is a popular phrase. Mr. Speaker, this is something that I would want to hear or see from the National Union of Public Workers at some point.

2.10 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE

Sir, both the Honourable Member for St. Michael East as well as the Honourable Minister of Labour spoke about this morning about in-service training. I think that the NUPW has that duty. Mr. Speaker, let me say that I do not intend to be long, I will just speak for about five minutes. The interpersonal skills are something which I think the NUPW also has to work on where its workers are concerned. The whole question as to how workers in the public service should deal with the general public. I think that they need to work a bit on that.

Sir, so often when I am driving home, I hear on the call-in programmes, Mr. Speaker, complaints about the attitude of workers in the public service. I take some of them, 'with a pinch of salt' but the point I want to make is that all cannot be lies, all cannot be wrong, all cannot be untrue. Therefore, there is some of

that going on in the public service which I would think that the NUPW, and indeed the Government, will need to work on.

The NUPW has a duty to train and to retrain their workers, their own members because, Mr. Speaker, what used to be prerequisites for workers in the last decades, no longer apply today. They are no longer in sync with the reality of the day. They need to let the workers know that they have to give 100 per cent in whatever they do. The NUPW is not just there, Mr. Speaker, to deal with complaints from their workers. I think they also have a duty to talk to their workers and train them as to how the workers can give us the best service they can for the pay they receive. They also need to speak to their workers about things like lateness and absenteeism.

Mr. Speaker, I said that I would like to say just a few words on education within the NUPW. I know, Sir, that there is now an education officer on board. I want to make the point that the NUPW should make this education officer and the whole question of education available, not only to the people who are members of a union, but also to those who fall outside of the trade union.

Mr. Speaker, I personally believe that the NUPW should be speaking more often to our fifth and sixth formers who are about to leave school. They can speak to them, Sir, on questions of occupational safety and health. They can speak to them, Sir, about work ethics, they can speak to them about drug abuse, also, what is expected of them in the world of work.

I believe, Sir, that the person who spearheads the education programme within the NUPW should be a person who is capable of managing business efficiently. I think that person should also be an educator with a teaching background, especially where things like adult education is concerned. The key thing I wanted

to say is that the person should be able to make more of a contribution within the schools.

Sir, I think this country is rich in labour history and too little is known by our school children about the contributions made by the late Right Excellent Sir Grantley Adams, the late Sir Hugh Springer and the late Sir Frank Walcott. These are persons who have made such an invaluable contribution to the Trade Union Movement. I do not think that we have capitalised on the richness of our labour history.

I think, Sir, that dispute resolution is another area in which the NUPW could offer some education. I spoke about substance abuse already but they should be able to conduct seminars on these topics to take to our people. I believe that they can impart a lot of knowledge to the young people in our school.

I have to say that the Ministry of Education sometimes feels the presence of the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA). We can feel sometimes other agencies and I do not think we can really feel enough of the NUPW. I believe that the work of these organisations is only limited by the imagination of the leadership. Therefore, I would urge those at the top of the NUPW to ensure that our students, indeed the wider public through adult education and so on, benefit more from the input of the NUPW.

Sir, we can have structured programmes for our schools and our evening classes. This can be done in a peripatetic way. It does not necessarily have to be done in a way where they meet in a particular room and so on, the officer or officers can go out to these schools and impart the knowledge.

Labour institutions, Mr. Speaker, in today's world must look at themselves as educators because if they do not do this, then all of the

issues such as HIV/AIDS and substance abuse which are rampant will continue to be detrimental to our society and the NUPW would have failed our people, so they have to play a more positive role in our society.

Mr. Speaker, questions like we ask ourselves everyday, what is the FTAA? What is the WTO? How are they impacting on labour issues? These are questions which can be answered by the NUPW in their education programmes. So I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that when the building is completed that we will feel the NUPW education programmes even more.

Mr. Speaker, I support this Resolution but as I said, I will be expecting from now on, a bit more from the NUPW.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

Mr. Speaker, I had given sometime ago when this matter first came to Parliament an undertaking to the NUPW General Secretary and to other officials of the union that it would be receiving my support. They explained quite clearly to me what they propose to do relative to the property at Dalkeith and I felt that it was desirable to move in this direction.

Sir, what is regrettable, and I think the Minister in his attempt to impress us with things that are really not relevant to this particular debate today, should have done was to have pointed out that the NUPW, whose resilience is known, whose standing in Barbados is acknowledged, et cetera, cannot raise the money to build quarters on its own resources and without the assistance of a guarantee by the Government of Barbados. This is something that any policy maker who pledges, whether in an empty way, as have been done from time to time today, or even one

who is sincere - and that was sincerity today too - would raise.

Why is it that a long standing public sector union cannot go to the commercial banks and borrow the funds to undertake this project, without a Government guarantee? That is at the heart of the issue. But as I say, the Minister himself has not worked that out because his focus is in fact to establish that the Government is doing the union such a great favour and his focus is to try and establish that his party, although nobody questioned it in this debate, has labour connection credentials. I do not know why it is, he is trying to establish that the Government, which has passed no serious labour legislation in recent times, has had such a wonderful record in labour relations.

I say all that, but Mr. Minister, you will be judged at another level in relation to those things. But I cannot believe that it would not fall from your mouth to even question why it is that despite all you said in view of the National Union of Public Workers, that in Barbados in the year, 2003 no banking institution, including one in which the Government has a 49 per cent stake, or greater, I do not remember what is the status in BNB, could not lend the National Union of Public Workers money to undertake this project, without a Government guarantee. That is the real issue.

2:20 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

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

Regrettably, the Minister has missed the boat because he constructed a speech that is entirely irrelevant to what is at the centre of this particular debate. If the trade union movement is so advanced and so respected and if

Barbados really was functioning in a environment where at the core of our development process was the interest of the worker, not the general secretary of any union... I am unmoved by changes one way or the other of individuals in the trade union movement, they will come and go. Some will make an outstanding contribution and be appropriately rewarded. Some will not make an outstanding contribution and will still be appropriately rewarded. That is life. But they are irrelevant to the process.

What the Minister of Labour, speaking I presumed on behalf of the workers in this country, should be saying in this debate is that he is entirely dissatisfied that the private sector banks in this country could not lend the National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) \$6 million to finish a headquarters or to undertake a project of this size and that they are so myopic that they have not even recognise that in this era trade union activities are designated as services under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) classification which would have to be traded freely throughout the Caribbean but by which classification itself recognises that trade unions activities are like the legal services provided by lawyers in Barbados, medical services provided by doctors, landscaping services or whatever range of services which are covered by Protocol II of the CARICOM Treaty.

They should recognise the activities of the National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) as being as legitimate as a loan raised by the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated to renovate a building as an investment in our economy, as a loan raised by a group of attorneys setting up a new practice or by any other area of activity designated as services. The Minister should question that and not waste our time in here with an hour-long speech of platitudinous irrelevance.

Unless the Minister comes to that realisation and target his attack if he has one because I got the impression that he was extremely satisfied, almost smug, in his perspective on labour relations because those strikes on construction sites are nothing big because they have something to do with how people employ people in the construction sector. That is nonsense.

A labour environment is not inculcated and sustained only by hiring practices. Barbadians feel exploited for whatever reason. There are some people in this country who you could pay the highest wages on the market but there would still be an innate feeling of exploitation by workers in this country. Workers who are in Government receiving all of the benefits that Government offers feel exploited and often justifiably so. Workers in the private sector at the bottom rungs of business as well as those closest to the management who know they will go no further have internalised a feeling of exploitation in Barbados which is one of the reasons why our workers are not giving of their best because even when they are paid at the highest level they still feel ultimately that they are being exploited.

So any Minister of Labour in the year 2003 should be trying his level best to put his finger on the pulse of workers in this country to find out why we have the levels of productivity we have; why we do not have a culture of cooperation in this country between people working in the same enterprise; why there is not a greater effort for workers to become owners in businesses in this country; why workers are not moving into the boardrooms in Barbados at a faster pace and why there are people sitting on the 'block' in Barbados who will not move from that 'block' until the remunerations you are going to pay them start at a certain level. Because of their fear of exploitation, they are not going to work for anybody, they would rather work free than to

work for somebody below a certain level. Those are the things the Minister of Labour should be regaling us with. All of the rest of what was said was irrelevant to this debate.

What we have here is a slap in the face of the NUPW, a union, we have acknowledged on both sides of this House that has made an outstanding contribution to this country. The fact that it had to go to Government for this guarantee may cause some people to feel that it places the NUPW in a compromising position, and there are people who would feel that way. A personality driven debate is going to centre on that but it is a very relevant issue.

The Barbados National Bank is lending the money to the NUPW and the Government is providing the guarantee in respect of the payment of the principal and interest. In addition to all of that, the National Insurance Board is required to make a deposit. I saw some correspondence on my file in which the National Insurance Board was required to make a deposit with the Barbados National Bank to facilitate the process.

I am looking at some correspondence here, Sir, where the National Insurance Board had to approve a deposit of \$6 million to the Barbados National Bank for on-lending to the NUPW for the construction...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON:

I am not saying that there is anything wrong with that. I am saying that even with all of that the Government now has to provide a guarantee on top of it, so something is fundamentally wrong here. The mere fact that this guarantee is required makes a nonsense of all that the Minister said about the current environment with respect for trade unionism in Barbados and the institutions et cetera. So that has to be

explained. I think that is explainable against a background that people are not living in the real world and they do not understand, to my mind, exactly what the role of trade unions can be.

2:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of D. H. J. THOMPSON:

Mr. Speaker, subject to the amendments of laws in the individual jurisdictions under the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), trade unions would be able to provide services to all of those member territories. Therefore, it is conceivable that the Barbados Workers Union could be providing service of representation to workers in Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and that the National Union of Public Workers, one of the premier public sector unions in the Caribbean, could be providing expertise as well as full representation to workers in other countries within the Caribbean.

In the context of what has been happening in CARICOM, the fostering of the development of the Single Market and Economy could easily be made for supporting the work of the National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) in expanding its facilities as well as its potential, its beauty and the need for facilities of that type throughout Barbados because it is clear that it needs to expand. Anyone traveling along there or attending any activities there, can see the piecemeal way in which the building is being constructed. Then there is the fact that there is going to be a greater need not only in relation to an education programme but to be able to provide those facilities to a growing non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) movement in Barbados. Solidarity House is used widely

by a cross-section of non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and political parties for their activities. Likewise, the National Union of Public Workers has facilities that could be effectively used in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, because of the portend of Protocol 2 and the development of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, it means that the work of trade unionists and trade unions as a whole, is going to have to be much more vibrant and competitive. Barbados has benefited, or suffered, depending on how one looks at it, from a trade union monopoly, and almost a classic understanding between government, the private sector and certain unions in this country.

Whenever new unions spring up, they have effectively been wiped out by the might of the leading trade union monopolies. We understand that to be our way but with the development of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, we have no power to stop competing trade unions from coming into Barbados and from challenging the work of any of our trade unions in Barbados. Therefore, it is conceivable that a breakaway group of workers employed in a particular entity which for decades have been represented by the Barbados Workers Union or a Government department, whose workers have joined and have been accredited to another regional trade union, could not be stopped from having that trade union come into Barbados and representing their concerns. That is the reality, that is why trade unionism, as a service being provided to workers, is going to become more and more competitive and is going to require a level of vibrancy from trade unionists.

Therefore, the idea that trade unions, as previously treated, are groups of like-minded people who, with lofty views about the role of labour, get together is going to come under greater and greater challenge when one finds that people recognise trade unionism as a

business in which people want results. Therefore, people other than those weaned on that philosophy of the trade union movement will come into it and will seek to adopt more aggressive, vibrant and competitive practices, just like in political party and older institutions in which one sees those kinds of changes coming about. As persons see similar organisations functioning, they will adopt some of their approaches but there are people all over the region who are going to be available for hire, to provide trade union services. This means the existence of one's national trade unions must be protected. Under the new World Trade Organisation's Rules, one cannot protect the monopoly. We are such romantics that we believe trade unions are going to be exempted. The truth is that trade union activities have been brought fully under the operations of the new world economic system. Therefore, it is going to require more businesslike approaches and more modern, effective techniques of working on behalf of the workers through the trade union movement.

Investment by trade unions is not new. This is not something that has suddenly emerged for us to grapple with. The Barbados Workers Union has been undertaking major investments in Barbados, especially in housing, in developing its own Labour College and its own new headquarters. It has properties in prominent places in our City. What is new is the attitude that a trade union, on its own resources, cannot go to the bank and borrow money to develop a headquarters and that it requires a guarantee from the Government of Barbados.

The sad part of it is that Government has said that it wants to help but if I were the Minister of Labour, I would have asked why, what is it that we have not been able to impress upon the banks as yet.

Sir, in this legislation where Government is guaranteeing the loan, I am pleased to see that

it requires the National Union of Public Workers - and it is a requirement that does not exist in relation to Government's own companies - to provide as is set out in clause 5(1):

“As a condition of the guarantee, the Union shall

submit the following documents to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs:

(a) within 90 days of the close of each financial year, an audited report including balance sheets and related earnings and surplus statements, prepared and certified by an independent Certified or Chartered Accountant;

(b) unaudited balance sheets and related earning and surplus statements, prepared and certified by an authorised officer of the Union for each of the first three calendar quarters, not later than 60 days following the quarter for which the balance sheets and related earnings and surplus statements have been prepared.

(c) on a quarterly basis, accompanying the financial statements being submitted, a certificate signed by an authorised officer of the Union certifying that no default exists;

(d) such other information as the Ministry may request.

This is an important addition because we have guaranteed loans for companies in Barbados that have no requirement to provide any information to Parliament. The only thing I would say is that even now we are about to guarantee a loan and no one has produced any financials relative to the operations of the National Union of Public Workers. Therefore, we do not know if we are lending money to a solvent or insolvent trade union. We do not know what is the level of its financial prudence or its operation.

This Parliament which is guaranteeing a loan for \$6 million knows nothing about the financial status of the National Union of Public Workers. Is it that which has caused the banks to ask for a guarantee from Government? I doubt it. The point is that at least the banks, which are not willing to take too much risk, have before them information about the operations of the National Union of Public Workers which have helped them to make a valid judgment about the solvency of the institution, or as to whether it has the capacity to repay the money that it is borrowing, what are its future prospects, et cetera.

It would have been a credit to the Minister of Labour if, as part of his irrelevant introductory remarks, he would have spent some time in providing that important information so that it would not be said that we are flying-by-night rather than with navigational equipment which would have helped us to make sensible decisions in this Parliament, decisions which no subsequent generation would be entitled to question.

2:40 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

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

I support the Resolution fully subject to the comments I have made which I hope the Minister would address today or some time in the future. The overriding concern is that he should explain to the people of Barbados why it is that a banking institution could not lend the National Union of Public Workers \$6 million without a Government guarantee even when the National Insurance fund is making the deposit available to that banking institution. Sir, I find this unbelievable and I would like the

Minister to address it in this debate.

Sir HENRY FORDE:

I rise to support this Resolution. I have been a member of the Barbados Labour Party for many moons and I was instrumental in passing the legislation for the formation of unions in this country. Sir, the Barbados Workers Union and the National Union of Public Workers were formed under the Barbados Labour Party. There is a tie between workers' right, workers' advancement and this Party as the oldest political party surviving in the English Caribbean for more than 65 years. Sir, we have this relationship and it will not be broken no matter how hard people try to misrepresent the position of the Barbados Labour Party in this country. When the history of trade unionism is studied in Barbados no one can remove the fact that the Barbados Labour Party built the trade union movement for the protection of poor workers. We often have to remind young people of these matters because they forget quickly and easily but those of us born in the 30s and those who went to school in the 40s realised that it was very hard for our parents and we do not forget the hard labour of Grantley Adams, Frank Walcott, Hugh Springer and the Grants from Harts Gap.

Sir, the National Union of Public Workers has adopted the Anglican Church in my constituency and other institutions in Dalkeith Road and there is also an outreach programme which is carried out at Dalkeith House. We often have to remind people of these things and the Press can also use these opportunities for helping us to build up an appreciation of our institutions.

Sir, this loan is required to modernise Dalkeith House which was bought by the National Union of Public Workers in 1979. The money to purchase it came from the American Institute for Free Labour

Development through a generous financial grant. This is not the first time that the Barbados Labour Party is assisting the union in getting headquarters because the mortgages to improve the present Dalkeith House came from the Barbados National Bank and the Insurance Corporation of Barbados both of which were established by the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, people need to do the necessary research to make a proper judgmental decision on matters such as this. The Government has again come to the assistance of the workers through the National Union of Public Workers in order for them to modernise the property at Dalkeith House.

Sir, Dalkeith House is on 4.1 acres of land was formerly owned by the DaCostas. It has moved from white hands into the hands of the workers of Barbados and when construction is finished it will be worth \$10 million. It will have an auditorium; offices for the union staff; conference rooms; a documentation centre which will be used in the community of St. Michael South, Christ Church West, St. Michael South Central and the City of Bridgetown; accommodation for recreation and cultural activities, changing rooms; three apartments and offices for rental income so that they will have the capacity to repay the loan and improve their balance sheets.

Sir, I agree that it is a bankable proposal and the union had to borrow the money. The National Insurance agreed that it would make available through the bank \$6 million for the period of the loan for on-lending to the National Union of Public Worker. Sir, the problem was that other commercial banks wanted too much collateral and at the time of going to the Barbados National Bank the prime rate was high, the National Union of Public Workers wanted to reduce the cost to them so that the project would be viable and they would not have to use the money they received from membership.

Sir, I want to answer the question of the Honourable Member for St. John. The suggestion was made to the union by the bank that if they could get a Government's guarantee, the bank would bring down the rate thereby allowing the bank to make a profit. Originally, Government's guarantee was \$3.7 million and in order to improve the rate being charged to the union the Government decided to guarantee the full amount so that the Barbados National Bank would still make a profit for servicing the loan but the rate of interest would be reasonable. Sir, I hope this explanation satisfies the Honourable Member for St. John.

2:50 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE:

Sir, I hope that the Honourable Member is satisfied. I have had to deal with the matter, as a member of the National Insurance Board, on behalf of the investment of the Government fund. It is not only an institution such as the National Union of Public Workers that the Government helps. For example, the BCA. We have had to do a similar arrangement in order the Government to give a letter of comfort for the bank in order to promote the Barbados Cricket Association and help cricket in the country.

There is a social development aspect of how workers' funds are being invested and at the same time being protected and the social development that takes place as a result of the use of the funds in this way.

Sir, I am satisfied that the union will repay this money. I am pleased that the state is

willing put its support behind it and that the workers' funds in the National Insurance Scheme will also be there in order to ensure that this project goes forward.

I am surprised, as indeed my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, at some of the statements given by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Asides

Hon. Sir. HENRY FORDE:

I am still surprised at the suggestion that the unions have not been doing enough for their workers. Barbados is lucky. We have a stable industrial climate but we have an industrial climate in which the unions are strong. I do not know anywhere else in the world where the union has as much influence on governmental policy as they do in Barbados. As a matter of fact, they do it from a position of their own strength and the recognition of the important role which the unions play in the development of this country.

Sir, take the housing development done by the Barbados Workers Union. It is a fantastic development in housing. Some of the National Insurance funds have been lent to them and I have been begging them that when they are ready for the next part of their project, to use some of the workers' funds in the National Insurance Scheme, without undermining the Scheme, and at proper rates of interest in order to provide housing.

Sir, do you know of any union in any part of the world, Sweden or Britain where unions dominate, where they have gone into housing in the way that the Barbados Workers Union has had the foresight to do in this country? I hope that the workers would appreciate these matters. I do not see any pressure from the Government.

Sir, the Government has not exacted any Quid pro quo as a consideration of giving this guarantee. It would have been improper for the Government to even try to exact such a thing. Knowing the workers, as they are led, that would have become a big issue in this country had a Government sought to do that. Knowing the Government of which I am a part, although I am a back bencher, you would have heard the voice of many of us against our own Party if that had been the attitude taken.

Mr. Speaker, some people listen to rumours and rumours fly. Particularly between now and 2004, the rumour mongering in this country is going increase fantastically. People would be scheming and bringing up all kinds of things when we are have to exercise our democratic right. This project, in my view, is a bankable project. It is one in which I believe the public will not suffer one penny lost. I am satisfied that the union has thought carefully about it. Sir, I am pleased that the Leader of the Opposition has said that it is backed because it then has the support of both Parties.

I want to say that, in my view, whenever the occasion arises for the State to strengthen an institution, such as its unions and trade unions, it must do that because in the long run it is the prop on which the State will advance. I compliment the Honourable Member for St. Michael East for making that point in the very attractive use the English language.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill has the support of both sides of the House and it has the support of the banking institution in which the Government is the majority shareholder. It also has the support of the workers pension funds. I am satisfied that as Chairman of that Board, that those funds will not be lost. I am happy to see that the Honourable Minister with the responsibility feels likewise and is in a position to have piloted this Bill today to show our

complete solidarity with the workers of Barbados.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Speaker, at no point during my previous presentation today did I set out to regale nor was my mood one of self satisfaction or smugness. Mr. Speaker, if I proceed to use figures of speech in what will follow by way of similes and metaphors, I am not unmindful of the Rules of this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, to date we have seen sanity prevailed on the benches on this side. We heard a presentation before lunch from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who, at his ridiculous worst, yet managed to make a speech that was superior in every respect to the Honourable Member for St. John. I am aware of fact that the Rules of this Honourable House do not permit me to call the Honourable Member for St. John a numbskull. However, true that may be, the Rules of this Honourable House do not permit me to call him a numbskull but to suggest that I engaged in irrelevancy, to suggest that I bear responsibility to this Honourable House to come and indicate why the private sector banking institutions could not warm to the request of the National Union of Public Workers is to acquire the behaviour of a mindless quadruped, unthinking and totally incapable of creative thought. Nothing can be further from the truth that Honourable Members on this side would be so privilege to the negotiations between banking institutions and borrowers, as to bear responsibility to come here to answer questions.

Sir, there was irrelevance today, it came from a person who is clearly on mental long leave, who has taken flight from his senses and who has sought to regale us with the air and tone of a canine that is barking under the influence of some wounds that have been inflicted.

3.50 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. R. C. EASTMOND

Mr. Speaker, why does he not explain how he has succeeded in destroying a great political organisation called the Democratic Labour Party? Why does he not explain why he is still unswerving in his commitment to a policy not to reduce public workers' salaries by 8 per cent? If ever there was any irrelevancy, Sir, it were portrayed in the fulfillment of fury and froth in the personage in the Honourable Member for St. John.

I say so, Mr. Speaker, abiding by the rules of this Honourable House which does not permit me to call him an ass, but his tone of language, Sir, suggested that the realm on which he rises is a kingdom other than the known kingdom.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Honourable Member, please, I would advise you to temper your speech, please, and be very cognizant of the rules of this House, please.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Speaker, I never set out to breach the rules of this Honourable House but this matter has become a public matter. This matter is really a private matter but the reason why this matter has become a public matter, is because the Government has intervened to guarantee a loan. Sir, this guarantee would not have been necessary, if the agency seeking the loan in a private legal situation had been able to fulfill all of the conditionalities.

Mr. Speaker, let us assume that there had been no guarantee or there is no proposal for a guarantee, this matter would have transpired in a way where the National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) would have been negotiating with a private sector bank in the absence of politicians, without any political involvement. And so, it is demonstratively unfair for him to say that I owe it to this Honourable House to explain why they could not guarantee this money from institutions in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, much as you might want to caution me against excessive use of language, I wonder when I heard him speak, if he had not taken permanent long leave from veracity. He purported, Sir, to be citing documents from a file. He raised a file in here. He did not read at any length anything in the file but gave this file the character of a sacrosanct thing, claiming that because something was not on his file, it was not accurate.

Sir, anybody who knows the Honourable Member for St. John will not readily see any file to anything said by him as being sacrosanct. And he purporting to say that his files suggest something about the NIS, which was totally false.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member was obviously not listening. He wants to know what I have on the file. He is misleading the House, Sir, because all I said was on the file. It is exactly what the Honourable Member for Christ Church West confirmed, which is that the NIS made a deposit of \$6 million and the letter was merely confirming that the deposit was made. The document was provided by the NUPW. It was not any document that you should not have within your file, unless you are sleeping on the job, or doing something else on the job.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Okay, please, please.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Speaker, I certainly am not sleeping on the job. What has happened is that I have come here, in all honesty and sincerity to make a presentation. I did so in my opening speech to the best of my ability. The tone of the debate in here assumed a tone of civility, notwithstanding the intervention of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. Speaker, but certainly the tone changed when an Honourable Member got up in here and behaved very much like, and I said, figurative of speech, some vulgar and some canine.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the intervention of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. I think the Honourable Member for St. Michael East made the very clear point as to the state's role in assisting those agencies that are in special need of help. This Government has never flinched from its duty to be the guardian of the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it would have been for the Government to assess this project to make sure that it is a viable project and where the Government was clearly of the opinion that they had a role to play in stopping the NUPW from being frustrated in its aspiration to do expansions, then the Government should have been involved.

Mr. Speaker, there is no way that I can give this Honourable House any answers at all to the question as to why a guarantee has become necessary, other than by what I have said. Mr. Speaker, I cannot say, for example, that the

NUPW went to bank 'A'. I do not know. I cannot say that the NUPW went to bank 'B'. I do not know. What I do know is that what I am here trying to do, is to ask parliamentary approval for the guarantee for a loan from the Barbados National Bank (BNB).

Aside.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

I do not know. I am no trade unionists' neighbour, although I am supportive of the trade union movement. The file that he just cited and its contents were never passed to me. I have nothing in my possession from the NUPW involving the NIS or anything like that. All I have and I am prepared to make it a document of this Honourable House, Mr. Speaker, is a type of brief from the NUPW, it is here in my left hand, and even though I will not be reading from it to any degree, if you want me to make it a document of the House, I will, and Honourable Members will see that there is no reference in here, whatsoever, to the NIS.

We feel, Mr. Speaker, much that I thank and compliment those Honourable Members on my side for having put the Government's position very well, and must as I say that even though the Honourable Member for St. John claims that he is supportive, there were times when he was more supportive in words, and at the same time was raising questions and queries that suggested he had doubts about the sanctity of the project and possibly doubts as to whether the Government should be fully involved in the absence of a thorough cross-examination.

Nonetheless, notwithstanding this last point that I have made, I think that what this Bill is doing, Mr. Speaker, is trying its utmost both to help the NUPW but with conditions that will make sure that in case the Government had to intervene and pay any money, the public purse and the integrity of the Consolidated Fund

would be protected.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North raised the question of education. I can report that at the moment, the NUPW has a programme with the Princess Margaret School and the Garrison Secondary School.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude before asking that this Bill be read a second time, by indicating that eventually when the project gets going there will be three phases. Phase 1, which is the extension of the auditorium, phase 2, the construction of new headquarters and Phase 3, the construction of apartments. As I mentioned earlier, the apartments are designed, Sir, to raise revenue to supplement the revenue base of the NUPW.

I am particularly attracted to the proposal to have a documentation centre, a library and a centre with archives. I think, Mr. Speaker, in agreement with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that unions nowadays must look at opportunities beyond mere subscriptions to raise revenue, Sir, because for any labour union that employs any significant number of members of staff to be able to function, it needs a solid revenue base.

Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that if the NUPW had been in a position originally to be able to meet the conditions of the lenders, if the NUPW could have shown an asset base of real property and cash assets of an equivalent or superior amount of the loan, then this guarantee would have been unnecessary.

It is true that the premises represent 4.1 acres on which they have buildings, but it is also true, Mr. Speaker, based on the information the union has given me, that their own calculation is that the total value of all their assets is much lower than the total loan sought.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael East

mentioned that this Government and this party have a historic and moral responsibility to side with institutions that are erected on solid foundations and that proceed to discharge a social conscience and a social responsibility and I am entirely in agreement with the Honourable Member for St. Michael East.

Mr. Speaker, I close by asking 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. RAWLE C. EASTMOND, seconded by Hon. R. D. MARSHALL, the House resolved into Committee, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

3:10 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Chairman, before moving that Clause 1 stand part, it is necessary to change the term "2002" in Clause 1 to "2003". With that amendment I beg to move that Clause 1 stand

part.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I want to find out from the Honourable Member if the term "2002" in this Clause was intentional or if a delay has now caused it to be changed to "2003".

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Chairman, I was not responsible for printing the document. I myself was a little taken aback to see the inaccuracy and I therefore cannot explain to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy's satisfaction how there was a printing error in the absence of running a commercial or any printery or in the absence of having printed it.

The question that Clause 1 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 2 to 3 inclusive, were called and passed.

Clause 4 was called.

Hon. Sir Harold St. JOHN:

Mr. Chairman, I have a little technical difficulty here with this Clause and I would like to draw it to the Minister's attention. Perhaps, he may be able to enlighten me on this point.

Clause 5 sets out the condition of the guarantee which relates to the conduct of the borrower. My understanding of a guarantee is that it is a document that is given to a lender and secures the obligation of a borrower to the lender. This document here which is a guarantee does not deal with the conduct of the lender but with the conduct of the borrower. This is a little difficult to me because when I go over the page to the Schedule where I see the

terms and conditions of the loan, there is no cross-referencing of the obligations of the borrower as part of the condition of the loan in which case it would make sense to me because it is possible for a guarantor to say, I will guarantee the obligation of the borrower to you but you the lender must make part of the terms of the loan that the borrower covenants the view that it would do what I want it to do. I do not see that here, so it is a little confusing to me.

Asides.

Hon. Sir Harold St. JOHN:

I understand what the Government is trying to do which is to ensure that the borrower carries out certain obligations. What I want the Minister to make sure is that the terms of the loan include those conditions to make sure that the bank cannot say that it is not part of its loan so they do not care whether the union does it or not, or that the union, the borrower, enters into an independent agreement with the Government that it would have carried out that. Either one of the two. That is all I would like to see.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful for the intervention of such a learned legal luminary. A Bill, Mr. Chairman, is to be read as a whole. I want to suggest to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that he should refer to clause 3, and indeed to clauses 5, 6, 7, and 8. What clause 3 is suggesting would be done as far as this guarantee is concerned, is that this House is going to have to further entertain this matter by way of a resolution. So sometime in the near future a special resolution will be coming to this House on this matter.

In any event, the Ministry of Finance which represents the Crown has signalled a clear

intention to have a special guarantee agreement as between the lender and the Government and as between the borrower and the Government. Clauses 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 suggest quite clearly the special conditions imposed on the borrower and the special conditions that suggest that the Government is protecting the public purse and the public interest in this whole process.

The point that has to be made is that there would be a separate guarantee agreement as between the Crown and the borrower that spells out all the conditions. The borrower is primarily responsible for the repayment. The Government steps in subject to the special terms and conditions that the agreement itself, which we do not have before us, will spell out. Clause 3 suggests that in the near future a resolution to put the icing on the cake on this matter will come before this House.

Mr. Chairman, I understood every word that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said and I am thankful for his intervention. As usual, veracity and commonsense flowed forth from the mouths of all Honourable Members on this side, something I cannot say about the sole surviving Honourable Member on the other side.

The question that Clause 4 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 5 to 8 inclusive, were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

3:20 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

On the motions of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND seconded by Hon. R R. FARLEY the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the National Union of Public Workers (Guarantee of Loan) Bill, 2003.

ORDER NO.5
THE BARBADOS INVESTMENT AND
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2003.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation was established by Act of Parliament, The Barbados Investment and Development Act, 1992. That organisation was a recreation of the Barbados Industrial and Development Corporation (BIDC) which had been established decades earlier.

As part of the restructuring activities of the day, there was restructuring within a number of entities within the Government sector. The intention was to provide the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation to be more streamlined and efficient. The Debate of that period would have been in 1992 and the Bill passed into law soon afterwards. It created a new organisational structure and represented an amalgamation of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation and the Barbados Exports and Promotion Corporation.

The Bill, like most pieces of legislations establishing statutory corporations, speaks in broad terms to the functions, duties and responsibilities to be performed by the

corporation and makes administrative and legal arrangements with respect to the employment of individuals, provision for their pensions, as well as the reporting requirements which are to be discharged by the institution.

It is interesting to note that whereas the financial year of both the Export Promotion Corporation and the Industrial Development Corporation mirrored the financial year of the Government, recognising that both of those forerunner entities to the current Barbados Investment and Development Corporation and Barbados industrial Development Corporation were exclusively funded by the Government. I believe that part of the restructuring was so intended that the new Barbados Industrial Development Corporation could have a more commercial orientation and that with several commercial ventures of Government, the financial year was given as the calendar year. The reality of it is that with respect to the finances of the Corporation, in an annual budget which is usually between \$20 and \$22 million, the larger proportion of that figure is provided by a central government grant. For example, the annual rents of the corporation for last year were estimated to be in the region of \$9 million.

The Government grant, therefore, as you would appreciate, would have represented over 50 per cent of the funds which have been utilised by the Corporation. Those funds were utilised primarily for capital works and for the payment of staff to conduct export promotion and export promotion activities. Indeed today, much of the funding for capital programmes is provided through funds raised on the private market as well as through till transfer arrangements with private developers.

The reality is that over the last several years of having the financial year in accordance with the current Act coinciding with the calendar year, it continues to represent a source of

administrative inefficiency. That is, for the purpose of the audit, the Corporation is required to focus on January to December preparation of accounts, yet for the purposes of the reconciliation for the Government's grants and for the preparation of Estimates in determining what are the financial needs of the Corporation, they are also required to keep the preparation of the Corporation's documents on an April 1st to March 31st timeframe.

Additionally, the preparations for the audit have continued to be ineffective because during the three months passed the end of the calendar year, the same staff is required to focus both on having audit and annual report done, so that the requirement of the Act to have the annual report to Parliament as soon as practicable after March 31st of the following year is not often met.

Additionally, it is at that same time that Government's planning for its new fiscal year is undertaken. Therefore, the proposal to change the financial year is not a matter of tinkering but one of removing what has been a source of frustration, also for the auditors as they have had to reconcile, for example, the amount of money to be allocated as Government's grant in a given year.

As you would appreciate, Sir, that whilst the Government may allocate \$10 million as the grant to the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation in its fiscal year, when these funds are dispersed on a quarterly basis - and not necessarily in equal tranches - then one gets into the differences between what funds were allocated to the Corporation during the two different fiscal year, et cetera.

For some time now, the auditors have been strongly recommending that for the purposes of accuracy, transparency and to facilitate easy and tidy completion of reports, we take this step to make the adjustment to have the

Barbados Industrial Development Corporation's financial year correspond with the Government's financial year.

It requires that in the transition year there be a fifteen-month financial year which would be January 1st 2002 to March 31st, 2003. From April 1st 2003 we will then get into the twelve-month year, ending at the end of Government's fiscal year. This is a technical amendment which would permit the Corporation not to be distracted from its important function for the promotion of industrial development and the stimulation of exports to have to deal with these administrative matters.

I am pleased to note that notwithstanding that particular hiccup, the Corporation continues to have its reports for 2001 up-to-date in Parliament. The Report was laid sometimes last year in Parliament. In fact, were it not for this amendment, work would have already started on the preparation of the 2002 Annual Report. One can rest assured that in accordance with the amendments that are proposed today, in which the reports will now be required to be laid by the 31st July of each year, the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation is working assiduously towards meeting that deadline.

3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Hon. R. R FARLEY:

Sir, in keeping with the Minister of Finance's decision that statutory corporations should take that the issue of corporate governance seriously, we bring this amendment in that spirit to ensure that all known obstacles are removed in the interest of timely reporting by this particular corporation.

With that introduction and explanation of what is really a technical amendment to facilitate the meeting of deadlines for the filing of reports and to ensure that there is an efficient system.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. R.D. MARSHALL:

I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. D. StE. KELLMAN:

Mr. Speaker, even though it is a technical defect that is being corrected, at the end of the day, there will be no significant growth of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation. I would be interested to hear if the Minister has a new plan for the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation in the light of everything that is happening with globalization. We must admit that, at the end of the two years, the output will still be the same and we want to know what policies the Minister will put in place to push the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation back to the days of glory when in Barbados, we were able to count the returns of that corporation.

I would like the Minister to explain what are the projections for the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation as it relates to the next two years....

MR. SPEAKER:

Honourable Member, the Minister has clearly set the parameters and I would not allow you to go into other aspects. Please restrict your reply to area mentioned by the Minister.

Mr. D. StE. KELLMAN:

Mr. Speaker, that is a difficult thing to do. I prefer to sit as my reply cannot be limited only to technical change.

Hon. R. R FARLEY:

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is anxious to discuss this matter but Estimates are around the corner and there will be ample opportunity to discuss plans, programme and policies. I look forward to engaging the Honourable Member in debate of this matter at that time.

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

Hon. R.D. MARSHALL:

I beg to second that.

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

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

The House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. R.R. FARLEY, seconded 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. R.R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. R.D. MARSHALL the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the BARBADOS INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2003.

ORDER No. 7

TO MOVE THAT THE HOUSE RESOLVE ITSELF INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY TO CONSIDER THE GRANT OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE SERVICE OF THIS ISLAND.

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

**COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
MR. CHAIRMAN:**

This Honourable House is in Committee of Supply.

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUMS OF FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINE DOLLARS BE GRANTED FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND BE PLACED AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 2002-2003 AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 10 2002-2003 WHICH FORMS THE SCHEDULE TO THIS RESOLUTION.

**HEAD 14 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE -
\$290 869.00**

Hon. R. R FARLEY:

Mr. Chairman, the expenditure of these additional sums by way of supplementary vote is required to perform essential work on the Treasury Building as well as to provide for utilities and other operating expenses with respect to the Central Purchasing Department. Of this amount, \$215 000 is required to meet the cost of repainting and the erection of scaffolding so as to ensure that work on that building can proceed. There was an engineering assessment of the structural integrity of the Treasury Building done in the later half of 2002 and it revealed that work of an urgent and pressing nature needed to be done and could not wait until the new financial year if we were to ensure that the building maintained its structural integrity. This building was erected in the 1960s and is one of the earlier modern buildings in Bridgetown.

3:40 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

Sir, over time assessments have indicated that some of the structural steel has been exposed. As with a large building, it is important in cases where that has occurred, for there to be urgent remedial action to ensure that there is no corrosion of the structure and, therefore, a threat to the structural integrity.

In fact, the entire area where the Treasury Building is located would have been subject to significant activity in terms of building in nearby area. The new Julie N Supermarket was constructed and other building works associated with the piling work in the Carenage

and the surrounding area. Sir, in fact, you can expect that all of the older buildings in that part of town will have to undergo ongoing assessments to ensure that there are no structural challenges. Therefore, the work on the Treasury is expenditure which is being made in a timely manner such as would ensure that we are able to avoid having to find major sums of money to spend on the building later.

In addition, the Government started work of a rehabilitative nature on the Treasury Building several years ago. Windows have been changed, a new air-conditioning system has been refurbished, leaks in the roof have been fixed and the interior and exterior finishes are being upgraded. This is part of Government's commitment to ensuring that its workers are able to operate in a safe and comfortable environment, as well as ensuring that the general public, which has to conduct business with government departments, is able to do so in comfort and, in particular, to ensure the ease of access to those buildings, particularly for the elderly and disabled.

Sir, the Government over the past several years has expanded the vote which has been allocated towards maintenance and rehabilitation. Sir, you will recall that work has been done on the former National Insurance Building, Fairchild Street, several police stations and schools. There has been a significant period of neglect of the infrastructure owned by the Government.

Sir, I must take the opportunity to salute public officers for their patience and forbearance. It is not easy to work in some of these buildings which are in need of repairs. Even when money is allocated and the work begins, it is not easy working either in a building or near a building where there is repair work going on. Therefore, the officers who have functioned above and beyond the call of duty, who were willing to grin and bear under

those circumstances need to be saluted.

Sir, the staff who work in the Treasury Building, those involved in the tax administration, public expenditure documents, providing the cabling for the Smart Stream computer project, which includes the payment of salaries and other government expenditure via a computerised system...

Aside

Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

Sir, the teething problems that were experienced during the last year are almost over and, therefore, we can only expect better and greater things as a result of that particular expenditure.

Sir, you will notice that one of the challenges that we had with some of the older buildings has been that, in an age of computerisation, many of the electrical systems in those buildings were not prepared for the increase use of electricity, either in terms of the quantity or quality. Those offices which have seen the introduction of many computers and other forms of electronic office equipment, we had to upgrade the electrical system. We had to upgrade the electrical system in the former National Insurance Building, the Treasury Building and the schools that are involved in the EduTech programme. Part of this expenditure is to meet the provision of new electrical points for computer equipment, security system and the increased cost of utility services.

Sir, the funds in relation to the Central Purchasing Department are for part of the consequential expenditure. Let me explain what I mean by consequential expenditure. There are several messengers who were among the large number of public servants who were considered to be casual employees. As casual

or temporary employees they did not receive all of the benefits which all of their permanent counterparts received. You will recall that the Government, through the creation of a number of posts, came to Parliament to make persons permanent, who for many years have lived in the uncomfortable framework of having no job security.

Upon that action, we now have to spend approximately \$6 814 which is required to supplement the supplies, Purchasing Management Subprogramme of the Central Purchasing Department, to provide uniforms for the Government messengers. Sir, this relates to the change of the terms and condition of their employment, due to the change of status of employment.

Sir, this expenditure is being sought by way of Supplementary expenditure under the Ministry of Finance, 90 per cent of it is related to the improvement of the Treasury Building. I look forward to the conclusion of the retrofitting work on that building.

3.50 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. R. R. FARLEY

Sir, from where I stand, that building is an important landmark in terms of the changes which have occurred in Government's administration. It is to my recollection, after the Government Headquarters, the ministerial building on Bay Street, which is a 1940s or 1950s building, the next wave in the attempt to modernise the administration of the Government. We, certainly, Sir, do not plan to be an administration which is involved in the kind of neglect of Government property, such as would see us, rather than spending modest

sums for maintenance, having to knock down buildings and spend large sums to rebuild, neither do we plan to engage in the wanton wastefulness in which we would be spending sums of money to rent private premises to accommodate officers because we have failed to maintain the office space which we have and to use it optimally.

Therefore, Sir, the project for the rehabilitation of the Treasury Building is one which will ensure that all of its floors are fully retrofitted, the air conditioning systems are functioning, security is tight, the interior, as well as the exterior are a credit to the City of Bridgetown, to the Government of Barbados and to the workers who perform very important functions of the Ministry of Finance, within those walls.

With that, Sir, I beg to move that Head 14 stand part.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER:

I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Supplementary and to say from the outset, I am happy to see that the Government has finally acknowledged that instead of allowing revenue expenditure to be ignored at the expense of capital expenditure, the Government has finally acknowledged the point that I have always made that you must continue to look after your buildings.

A good example of this, Sir, is that they are now prepared to renovate the Treasury Building, instead of allowing that building to become dilapidated, then to go on the international market in order to borrow funds to rebuild. I am happy to hear that they have accepted what has been said from this side and

they have been prepared to do this.

Mr. Chairman, one of the best programmes I have seen for a long time, and I want to describe it in capital letters, BEST, is the EduTech Programme. This was a classic of a Government being able to convert revenue expenditure into capital expenditure and being able to take it on the international market to get funding for it, even though it was revenue expenditure.

Sir, that is because all the schools were allowed to become run down and a beautiful programme called EduTech was introduced in order to get funds to repair the schools and install computers. This was a very clever move and what you will call the maximum use of revenue expenditure in order to get funding for capital expenditure. As somebody said, it was real vision.

Sir, as you know, one trick can only serve once and it will not be able to be replayed again. It was a very well placed move by the person who thought of it because there is no way, Sir, that the revenue expenditure at that level would have been financed on the international market, because there will be no Government that would have been able to convince the international market to finance revenue expenditure. If you put it in a programme and call it capital expenditure, then that is the lead way to arrive at funds which should have been revenue expenditure.

Sir, let me explain what is revenue expenditure. Revenue expenditure is expenditure you incur in doing repairs. Capital expenditure is expenditure you incur when you are doing additions or you are creating a new building. It is as simple as that, never mind a friend of mine previously used to tell me that there is nothing called revenue expenditure but he has now lived to appreciate the point that there is something called revenue expenditure.

Sir, in light of everything, this is a good acknowledgement where the Government has recognised that it cost the Treasury a lot more when they decide to allow the buildings to go without repairs. It is better for them to sustain the buildings by repairing them on a short term basis, instead of looking to the international market.

Never again, Sir, would I like to see any Government having to use revenue expenditure as a way to get foreign exchange. Government must stop using revenue expenditure to get foreign exchange and they must understand...

Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I hate to disturb the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, but I recognise, Sir, that poetic licence is available to all of us but I believe, Sir, that a place as serious as Parliament, we must all be enable to follow the drift of the discussions. The Honourable Member is providing a definition for what he calls revenue expenditure. We know, Sir, that they are diametrically opposed. Revenue is revenue and expenditure is expenditure.

I wish that the Honourable Member, Sir, would not confuse the simple matter at hand by mixing up the two terms. He had me a bit lost, I must confess, Sir.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I have always said in this House...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

I think you should address the Chair.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Honourable Members on the Other Side that if they do not understand what is revenue expenditure to speak to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Honourable Member for St. St. James North, because revenue expenditure is expenditure incurred because of revenue.

Sir, it is a very simple matter because any Accounting book, even Frank Wood at the beginning would teach the Honourable Members on the Other Side what is revenue expenditure. Sir, for a Member of Parliament who wants to become Prime Minister to get up and tell me on this matter, will regret when this speech is published in Hansard, having made such a speech like that in the House of Assembly.

Sir, I apologise for him because he was misled by his comrade, so I would ease the weight on his back on this particular issue and I will forgive him. I will not spank him this time but I will say to him, Sir, if he allows the Honourable Member for St. Michael North to encourage him to get involved in a debate like this again, I cannot forgive him any more. He has learnt his lesson but he has enticed him to fall into the trap.

Sir, it is simple because as you get revenue, you get expenditure and there is expenditure coming out of revenue and vice versa. This is a simple accounting thing and I will say to the Honourable Member, do not challenge me on these matters any more.

What I am saying, Sir, we must admit that EduTech was a clever programme. It was the best programme, where you could take revenue expenditure and cloud it into capital

expenditure and make it saleable. I want to congratulate the Minister who did it and made it a saleable item on the international market.

Sir, previously, no other Minister or Government would have been able to go on the international market and get finance for a project that was revenue expenditure. We have always been...

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Current and revenue is the same thing.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Yes, but you see, I cannot use Government language only. I must use private sector language.

Sir, what they have been able to cleverly do, is to take revenue expenditure and capital expenditure, put the two together and provide Barbados with a valuable source of foreign exchange and I congratulate them on this particular matter.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

I beg to move that Head 14 stand part.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 22 - MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$19 163

Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Mr. Chairman, this represents the difference between the sums which were provided for the payment of rent by the Energy Division of the Ministry of Economic Development to their landlord, the National Petroleum Corporation.

The sum of \$19 163 is now required to supplement that vote due to an error in making the calculations previously.

I beg to move, Sir, that Head 22 stand part.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 38 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS IN THE AMOUNT \$207 347

Hon. G. A. CLARKE:

Mr. Chairman, the amount of \$207 347 is needed to supplement Head 38 for the remainder of the year, 2002-2003. It is important for us at the Ministry to look at the Department of Lands and Survey where there is an expenditure of \$30 210 to be put into their Estimates.

4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 28, 2003

Continuation of Hon. G. A. CLARKE:

The sum of \$99 000 is also needed for the maintenance of property in that department.

With those remarks I beg to move that Head 38 stand part.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

I beg to second that.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:

Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this particular Head. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East said that I was very short just now but that was so because I was aware that we were coming to this particular Head.

Mr. Chairman, in light of the need to repair government buildings, the government must understand that it is very important that the project at Warrens be completed for the simple reason that it is not environmentally proper to have civil servants working in buildings while repairs are being carried out. It is important for us to have holding space so that whenever repairs are going on in any particular building we can move the workers out of that building and put them somewhere. We must understand this particular point because we cannot allow the workers to be constantly coming out and saying that they are affected by this or that. We must operate within a situation where we take the workers interest at heart. That is why I am calling on the Ministry of Housing and Lands to acknowledge this point and make sure that they complete the project at Warrens.

Government must have available space that

whenever a problem occurs they have some place where they can put the workers so that they can move in and correct the problem. This can only occur when the project at Warrens is finished. It is important that Government move ahead and complete that particular project at Warrens because we cannot have the old National Insurance Building with the problems that it has been having and not recognise that we need to move the whole set of workers out of that building and move in and repair things and then allow those workers to go back there where they are accustomed working.

It is very important that we have long-term planning and not the shoddy type of planning that is coming from the Ministry of Housing and Lands where today they have workmen working next to workers and in an environment that is not good for the health of workers. I hope that this advice would be taken and something would be done to look after the interest of the workers within the Public Service.

I thank you.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 38 stand part.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

I beg to second that.

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

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 Money Resolution in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. R. R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, the Resolution was read a first and second time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER:

Mr. Speaker, this being the end of Government Business for today, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, February 04, 2003 at 1100 a.m. in the morning.

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL:

I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, February 04, 2003 was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

4:10 p.m.