
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 1999 – 2003

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, March 20, 2003

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: At the time of the suspension, the House was in Committee and I would wish that Your HONOUR would now leave the Chair and the House resolves itself into Committee of Supply. Mr. Mark Williams in the Chair.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: When the suspension was taken, the House as in Committee of Supply to that it will now revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, as indicated in my first intervention yesterday, I want to continue to speak on this double Head of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade on the matter of trade.

Mr. Chairman, I have the responsibility for one of the two sectors which has been most adversely affected by trade liberalisation, but I speak, Sir, of the manufacturing sector. You will recall, Mr. Chairman, that in the presentation of the Honourable Member for the City, she indicated the collaborative and consultative approach which her ministry has taken to advancing the implementation of a number of agreements. Even, Sir, in terms of the preparation for negotiations of several aspects of the various international trade agreements.

Sir, that is to be sharply contrasted to the approach which was taken by the Democratic Labour Party where, on the eve of the signing of Barbados' accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), given the wonderful platform of a Budget Speech to this Parliament, the Minister for Finance at that time for the Democratic Labour Party, made no mention, whatsoever of the WTO, and what would pertain for the manufacturing sector for Barbados.

I am pleased, Sir, that the contrast has been shown and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade had convened a number of committees, including a Standing Committee on Foreign Trade, a Standing Committee of this Parliament on which the Opposition is also represented, such as would ensure that unlike the approach taken in the past by the Opposition, this Government would lay out the facts before the people of this country such that those who would be affected by these far-reaching and long-reaching trade agreements would not be caught with their pants down and their most vulnerable parts exposed, as was the case with the last approach to the WTO.

Sir, the numbers bear out the facts. Since this administration came to office in 1994, it took a number of steps which saw the resuscitation of the manufacturing sector. In fact, during the period 1995 to 1998 inclusive, the manufacturing sector grew at an average rate of 4.4 per cent.

It experienced growth, Sir, but immediately, as the first wave of liberalisation took shape, in 1999, the impact was immediately noticeable in the results of the manufacturing sector. Moving from a position of growth, the sector recorded a decline of 0.8 per cent in 1999, 0.5 per cent in 2000 and 8.1 per cent decline in 2001. This can be directly attributed to the results of the implementation of the commitments which were agreed to in secret, without notification, Sir, by the Democratic Labour Party.

We had the task, Sir, wherever the agreement permits, on the one hand to seek out new opportunities and

on the other hand to mitigate the devastating impact of trade liberalisation on our domestic sector.

I am pleased to note, Sir, that our efforts, which during the course of the last year or so, turned largely on a programme of focussed technical and financial assistance to the sector, in addition, Sir, to educating Barbadians to the reality of trade liberation. Also, Sir, through the 100 per cent Bajan Campaign, letting Barbadians know that an option to choose products from wherever they may be in the world, does not represent a necessity to buy foreign products. Barbadians were able to make a conscious choice to support Barbadian products, to support Barbadian jobs, to support Barbadian creativity and ingenuity, Sir, in this era of trade liberalisation.

In addition, Sir, as a result of the set backs associated with September 11, 2001, in the emergency economic programme, we were able to identify a number of products for which the 60 per cent duty would be applied. It was removed from a series of products which are not made in Barbados but it was maintained on those products which represent the core of manufacturing in Barbados.

The sector has therefore, Sir, moved from a position of decline to a position of modest growth, recording less than 1 per cent growth but showing the signs of good recovery.

Sir, this matter of foreign trade and policies and trade liberalisation impact directly on the manufacturing and agricultural sectors, but this Government, Sir, is committed to ensuring that there continues to be a vibrant manufacturing sector. That sector is made up of two components which respond in very different ways to what is happening around us.

We have the international sector which is largely comprises those international companies using Barbados as a production location, but which are really producing for the international markets. Those are obviously immune to the issues of trade liberalisation because, Sir, they are more affected by what happens in the source markets for the products. Electronic companies in Barbados will be affected by the electronic markets in the United States. For example, the company here that used to make ladies foundation garments, located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, was affected by the nature of a buy out and a relocation of the company.

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Yes. Atlantic Manufacturing.

In a way, Sir, they have been affected by globalisation efforts and the consolidation of operations by a number of companies.

We had an electronic company in Newton, Sir, which was bought out by Israeli interests and relocated in Israel for their own strategic purposes, not so much economic purposes.

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Hon. R. R. FARLEY: The sector which concerns us most is the sector which is largely Barbadian and which produces for Barbados and the CARICOM markets. In fact, the CARICOM market accounts for over 50 per cent of total manufactured exports from Barbados. Therefore, the fortunes of the manufacturing sector relate as well to the fortunes of the economies of the Caribbean regions particularly the OECS countries and to the extent that they are experiencing some difficulty, that is reflected in their performance.

It is interesting to note that the food and beverage sector within the manufacturing subsector continues to be the major source of employment, exports and output in general. In fact, in terms of its contribution and participation, that sector alone represents some 37.5 per cent of the approximately 9 500 jobs which there are in the manufacturing sector. It is to that sector by and large that we look for innovation, for an increase in our exports and for the delivery of new products and services.

Sir, it is also interesting to note that some level of confidence has returned to the manufacturing sector. They were able to see new investments in the sector of some \$43.6 million. In fact, that level of investment represents an increase of some 32.9 per cent over the level of investment for 2001. A number of companies have been retooling, they have been expanding their production lines and they have been seeking to make themselves more efficient and more competitive.

Sir, the Government has not been a passive bystander in relation to this activity. As indicated during the course of the year, we have been providing very focussed financial and technical assistance to them which I want to speak about very briefly in the time that remains.

It is our very firm conviction that given the nature of globalisation and trade liberalisation that the future of manufacturing in Barbados will rest on the creation of a new class of Barbadian entrepreneurs to take this business forward. We will not see the same level of foreign investment in the manufacturing sector as we have seen in the past for the simple reason that while Barbados continues to be an attractive location, the breaking down of trade barriers around the world means that companies no longer have to invest in a country or in a region in order to sell in that country or region. They can shift across borders.

In fact, even the expansion of CARICOM to have a free trade agreement with the Dominican Republic, Costa Rico, Venezuela and others has resulted in some production shifting in some products. It has been good for Barbados in one or two products. It has been bad for Barbados in others. For example, the Colgate-Palmolive Company used to manufacture detergents here but when the Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement came into being, that resulted in a shift in production to the Dominican Republic where they already had excess capacity. So that looking to the Lewis Model, industrialisation by importation will not be the way to go because there is not that same trade environment which would have given fuel to that kind of investment. What is clear is that there are a number of areas where we can exploit the advantage that we have and we need to pursue those.

The rum industry is one in which we have the benefit of long expertise, a brand new recognition. The Government together with the rum industry has been able to secure technical assistance funds of 70 million Euros, that is about BDS\$140 million, as part of a Caribbean-wide rum technical assistance project for the rum industry. In addition, rum has a cured product. There are rum liqueurs and rum cakes, which is a leading export, and other spin-off products.

We have been able as well to work with the food and beverage sector to exploit a number of export opportunities. I am pleased to see that research and development efforts have continued in this sector. In fact, one is able now to get canned flying fish anywhere in the world through the initiative of a local company, Hipac Limited.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Yes, you can get 16 flying fish in a can.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: The reality is that the Government, through a \$5 million per year in technical assistance, has helped a number of companies such as BICO in terms of bringing their plant up to Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) standards and other food plants in terms of raising their standards, ISO 9000 standards. Notwithstanding the deleterious effects of trade liberalisation which was ushered in by the Democratic Labour Party on the domestic market, we are working to secure openings in export markets for our Barbadian products by making sure they meet and exceed the minimum quality standards and that our manufacturers are more competitive and more efficient and are therefore able to compete in terms of prices. The results are already

seen in relation to the size of growth in the manufacturing sector.

We, unlike the example of the Opposition, have taken them outside the boardroom and we have ensured that the process of consultation and information sharing has continued. We are also providing financing for them in the establishment of their trade units to make sure they are prepared, because it is not in our interest merely to sign agreements and to have them on the books but to make sure that we have a private sector that is able to exploit the opportunities in those agreements to the benefit of Barbados and the results of the good work of this administration are shown.

We were dealt a bad hand in relation to the nature of trade liberalisation and its impact on manufacturing and agriculture, but notwithstanding that bad hand we have been dealt, the yeomen efforts of this administration and the commitment and the dedication of the Barbadian private sector to success in this matter are beginning to show some results.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

2.20 p.m.

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Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, 40 years ago, the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow made a bold decision, that when the productive sectors and the private sectors are not doing what they are required, it is the policy of Government to intervene and to make sure that capacity was increased.

Yesterday I would have made a passing remark about the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow purchasing plantations in the Scotland District. I did not expand on that but today I will. Sir, when sugar was king and we wanted to maintain or increase the export levels, even though the sugar estates in the Scotland Districts were not making money...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, some 40 years ago, Mr. Barrow set a policy for all future leaders and players to follow. That is why I do not now buy the argument being given by the Government of the day, that the manufacturing sector has declined and that there is nothing that can be done to improve it.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member cannot stay there and so blatantly mislead this House. During the last 15 minutes, the Honourable Member would have heard me said that we,

through targeting technical and financial assistance with the sector, have engineered the growth of the sector and that we see a future for manufacture. I stated how that future would be different from what has occurred in the past. Therefore, the Honourable Member should withdraw those remarks.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I agree that the Honourable Member said that but the fundamental point I was making is that when a country's production sectors are in trouble, and a Government brags about its high levels of foreign exchange and liquidity, one would have thought that the Government would have been enlightened enough to use some of its resources to make sure that instead of those companies removing themselves or closing down, the Government would have intervened and seen which of those companies they could have bought into. Surely, some of those companies, as he said, the Colgate- Palmolive Company, which had great potential in Barbados, would have been a good example for Government to buy into and to make sure that was kept within the shores of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, it was not I who mentioned Colgate-Palmolive. It was the Minister who gave the impression that this was a company that had great potential but because of certain circumstances, the new buyers bought it and have taken it elsewhere.

Sir, during the 1960s and 1970s, when we were faced with these problems, great leaders used the capacity of Government to make sure that they bought into the industries that were of significance, to maintain capacity. Mr. Chairman, the only reason that a government should not do something like that is if they do not have the capacity.

We have to understand that sectors will go through problems but it is for the Government to intervene and to become involved and to purchase our support of the particular sectors of that industry, in order to maintain the capacity, in order to maintain the country's foreign exchange levels.

Sir, one would find that there are certain persons in this country who would call on me to speak on certain subjects and though I speak on these subjects, they still do not understand.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is rather smart. He wants me to say something else but I will not. I will make the statement later when a particular Head is called.

I have always said to my comrades that fortunately for us in the Democratic Labour Party, we can have the best ideas and can afford to give them to the Other Side. The major problem is that the Other Side does not know how to implement them. I have evidence to prove, based on what Mr. Barrow did in the 1960s and 1970s, that I am quite right.

Mr. Chairman, I will prove in this Parliament that a particular project which has Democratic Labour Party all over it, being copied from the philosophy of Errol Barrow but when it came to implementation, it was badly implemented.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South also made a very fundamental point yesterday and I do not know whether or not he knew. He said that Members of Parliament must be very careful how they criticise projects that are implemented by the Government of the day.

That Honourable Member would have done well to remind his comrades about the criticisms given to the Democratic Labour Party when Sir Lloyd Erskine Sandiford was Prime Minister of this country, when he sought to introduce the Sherbourne Conference Centre as part of the tourism plant in this country. That Centre is now providing significant support for the tourism and now allows the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade to have a product to be promoted on the international market.

Mr. Chairman, even the financing of the project was criticised and I have lived to see, 10 years after the same criticism of that project it is now being used as if it is an accepted policy by Government, which says that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is quite correct in his statement.

We must understand, and I agree, that Governments are elected to implement projects. The Opposition must understand that in this modern day and age, we must step up, which we have done, and must also find the alternative approach of implementing projects. One party cannot have all the ideas and if we must have a Parliament, then it must be a Parliament of dialogue. The Government cannot come to Parliament and believe that because they have implemented a project, they are free from criticism of that particular project. They must be prepared to listen.

Sir, we must understand. Our problem as it relates to the economy of Barbados cannot continue to function based on archaic ideas and policies that have been in place 40 or 50 years ago. We have to find new approaches as to how to govern Government's finances and to increase the productive capacity in this country.

I have made the point and will continue making it that the Foreign Affairs Ministry, through the Foreign Trade sector, must be able to tell the ambassadors who are working in the overseas consulates and embassies, that if we have the capacity that is greater and better than other countries in the world, those ambassadors must use their offices to promote that capacity.

This country should have learnt well from the criticism given to it by the OECD. Instead, we took everything as criticism and did not realise that the OECD was telling us that we have something that is advantageous to us and disadvantageous to them. That is, we have a taxation system that is operating in our interest and is impacting negatively on them and that we should seek to exploit that capacity. Sir, instead of taking the argument to a higher level, we held our heads between our legs and ran away from the issue.

I have heard a lot of praise given in this Assembly on the issue dealing with the OECD but the first person to have attacked the OECD was the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I hate to interrupt the Honourable Member, except he is seeking to change history and is, therefore, misleading this House.

The records of this House will show that, rather than putting its head between its tail and running away, Barbados led a coalition which ended up prevailing against the OECD.

In fact, Barbados will go down in history as the only small country that has taken on a group of big countries and have won. Barbados was able to have won, having maintained its position with the support of the Opposition, of which the Honourable Member is a Member. Now he is indicating that he is not in sync with their policies but there was bipartisan support for the position of Barbados against the OECD and in the end, the OECD had to recant. They had to admit that Barbados legal and taxation systems did not represent that of a tax haven. Therefore, the Honourable Member cannot change the record of this Parliament in the way in which he is seeking to do.

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Mr. D. StE. KELLMAN: . . .

Mr. D. StE. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West was correct in the later half of his intervention when he made point that the records of Parliament does not reflect it and it is a serious thing. I came to this Parliament after the Estimates in March/April

before I went to the Bahamas and blistered the OECD and I was accused by the Honourable Member for St. Peter of having a problem with large organisations. Sir, I made a blistering attack on the OECD and I warned the Government to be careful how they were going to bed with them.

In August before I left to go to the Bahamas the Prime Minister, sitting in his seat, shouted across the floor and asked me to blister them for him when I went to the Bahamas. I told him he did not have to tell me to do this because when I first blistered them he was the person who said that I was against big international organisation.

Mr. Chairman, in the Bahamas I delivered the same speech I delivered in March/April. Comrade Toppin, the Speaker and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North were on that delegation along with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and the Honourable Member in the Other Place. Sir, the attack was so blistering on OECD that it was picked up by CNN and made into international news. Asides.

Mr. D. StE. KELLMAN: Yes, it said that Denis Kellman, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy delivered the speech. It was even announced on Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy made a blistering attack on the OECD and it made international news. Sir, all those who said it was led by the Government are wrong because the Government hopped on my train and took advantage of it.

Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a short intervention. I am convinced and pleased to see the missions abroad have been changing their focus over the years. In my estimation they have moved away from putting on functions and simply stamping passports and have taken on what I would consider to be a true business approach. The ambassador at Geneva and Brussels are in the forefront in this regard but I am convinced more and more that those persons we are sending to missions overseas now need to see themselves as business people and not as civil servants.

If there are any missions in the world that do not have this business approach they will be left behind.

One of the things I would like to see missions concentrate on more is the whole question of inculcating in Barbadians abroad the need for them to invest at home. There are Barbadians overseas who have thousands of dollars on account in the USA and United Kingdom and I believe these persons should be told about investment opportunities in Barbados.

Sir, a lot of these people know nothing about investment possible here. When we ask them to make a

contribution they do but it not good enough for Barbadians abroad to believe that a contribution like a wheel chair or sporting gear would be enough. This type of contribution would have its place but we must encourage our Barbadian brothers and sisters overseas to get involve in business ventures. We also have to encourage them to send money back home to invest in instruments like shares.

Mr. Chairman, the Barbados National Bank shares at \$1.80 per share should have been oversubscribed and Barbadians abroad should have been part of that share ownership. I say that because I know of an instance where a friend of mine call five mutual friends overseas and three of them bought some of those shares. If the missions abroad do more of this kind of thing we would have had a difference situation regarding those shares.

I also want to say that Barbadians overseas have not given up their homeland. They want to return home and they want to know what is going on in the country in which they hope to live again. One aspect of the Jamaican foreign policy that I admire is the whole question of legal services and advice which is provided to Jamaican nationals. This is a service they get via the embassy. Perhaps we are not yet ready for this service because we have not reached that stage but the time may come, not very far away, when we may have to consider this service.

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Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: Sir, a lot of our Barbadians brothers and sisters abroad would have reported things like delays that they are experiencing with their lawyers here at home. A lot of them, for example, do not know how a foreclosure works and the various stages that the foreclosure has to go through before it comes to completion. You do get situations where some of them report lawyers to the disciplinary committee very quickly, through ignorance because they do not know. I think that more interaction where legal services are concerned would be of tremendous assistance to them.

There is also an underlying suspicion regarding members of the legal profession here in Barbados. Those who have legitimate grievances do not know the right of redress through the Disciplinary Committee of the Bar Association. A lot of them also speak of experiences that they had with relatives who have fleeced them. They said that they send money to relatives to build homes and a lot of the money that they sent should have been enough to build their homes. However, when they return to Barbados and they thought that the homes would have been completed or almost completed, sometimes the foundations of the homes are not yet completed. These are some of the things that some of them would need some advice on.

I take the point that, perhaps, certain countries would have the need for that legal service even more than Barbadians would. I can see the time coming when this would have to be another aspect of the kind of service that we render to our people.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I think that were doing business internationally, if we are going to do it we have to do it right. Drumming up business for Barbados must be treated as a specialised matter. Those who interface with others to solicit business for Barbados must have some kind of training. I know that we have employed persons from BIDC and other agencies at our overseas missions but sometimes I wonder if we have employed enough of them.

I think that the society, as it stands, must accept this is the way to go and they must also accept the fact that if we want to do something well, then it is going to mean an extra cost to Government. In this day and age, it is necessary that if we are to be competitive. We all will agree that times are changing and our missions abroad must be more than just diplomacy.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, trade liberalisation demands that there must be business advisory offices too and that they must carry full-fledged investment portfolios as well. There must also be staffed, not only with Consular officials but they must have trade envoys and attache's. I am sure that since the threat of globalisation and trade liberalisation, more and more of the missions from other countries have employed business experts and technical people. I think that we will have to take note of this and may have to increase the kind of representation in our missions.

There is another area that I think we should look at. I believe that if countries in the Caribbean want to go forward, there has to be a need for strategic alliances. We need more collaboration between region missions abroad.

I always loved the concept of sharing cost. The time may come when missions, in order to reduce cost, may want to share one building. I believe that it would be a lot cheaper to conduct business that way. This collaboration is necessary. If the European Union, with millions, of people could come together, I do not see why we in the Caribbean with a few million people cannot do it.

Asides.

Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: Sir, recently I saw an advertisement in the Financial Times and that advertisement said that there are places in the Caribbean besides Barbados. I thought that was a very cruel blow. This was an advertisement from one of our neighbours and they were saying to come to this particular country. That is the kind of attitude that we need to stamp out.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, it would appear to me that, like in cricket, everybody wants to beat Barbados. Even in terms of doing business and trying to attract people to their country, Barbados still appears to be the one that others find necessary to throw a dart or two at. I think that we need to make some effort at collaboration. I think that effort could very well come from Barbados who could initiate it.

I thank you very much, Sir.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: I want to use this intervention to speak to the component of foreign trade under this particular Head and to put a slightly different spin to what we have heard so far. However, it does not take me too far away from what the Honourable Member for Christ Church East would have said in his intervention.

Sir, one of the things that concerns me, as it relates to the effort which is being made by this Government is the area of preparation for the international trade negotiations at a wider level, promoting a greater understanding, the process and the implication of trade liberalisation and globalisation for the Barbadian economy.

My concern is, there is not enough understanding on the part of those persons who hold strategic positions in this society and the message has not reached the man on the street as yet, as to what we are participating so actively in and how that would affect their quality of life in the years ahead.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am extremely serious about this and the Prime Minister spoke to this particular matter on numerous occasions. Ever since I came to this House, one of the things that the Prime Minister has been extremely careful in pointing out is the need for us to fashion a new economic strategy, which would see a new economy emerging.

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Continuation of: Hon. A.P. WOOD:

Sir, this new economy must take into consideration and actively so, Barbados' participation in a new global economy.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to explain in a little more detail my concern in this particular regard. If we do not come into this Honourable Chamber or do it outside, and remind Barbadians that in 1994, before the general election of that year, the Democratic Labour Party was in charge at the time, would have been involved in the discussions and would have made certain commitments on behalf of

Barbados or they would have committed Barbados in 1994 and that was the route of acceptance to the WTO.

We must understand that.

Implicit in those actions on the part of the Democratic Labour Party, was that over the next ten years, concluding in 2004, we would have had to face up to certain realities. Therefore, the pressure would have been on whoever had the reins of Government to seek to have Barbados honour certain commitment and in so doing, make the necessary structural, financial and other arrangements to ensure that the prosperity of this nation was secured.

Mr. Chairman, the commitments which were made by the Democratic Labour Party at the time, and which we will recognise, because we have to honour them and we have done that and will continue to do that, they will forever determine how business is conducted, not only in manufacturing and agriculture - because we know these two sectors have taken the brunt of what has taken place in trade liberalisation and globalisation so far, but we must understand that all spheres of economic activity are being dealt with in the discussions in the various theatres of negotiations.

Yes, agriculture and manufacturing might be taking the brunt but it has implications for investments. It has implications for Government procurement. It has implications for tourism and services at a wider level and we must understand that all of us, because of the comprehensive nature of these negotiations, have a duty as politicians, to familiarise ourselves with the intricacies of these trade negotiations. Whether we are trade economists or not, we must be sufficiently well-versed on these issues, that we can take the message to the Barbadian public so that they will have a greater appreciation and a better understanding for what it is this Government is trying to do, in order to secure the gains that this country would have made over the years.

I am speaking to a consistent effort at educating the Barbadian public, that we are part of a changing regional and international economic environment, one that mandates us to participate fully in those negotiations. Sir, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East said, the approach taken by Deputy Prime Minister who leads the coordinated effort in this regard, must be admired, because the future of this Barbadian economy is crucially dependent on how effectively we participate in those discussions, and that is a fact. We have a duty to make sure that the various positions which we take that as many players, would have provided inputs to the shaping of the various positions.

This is a national issue. It is something that should concern all of us, and the Opposition and ourselves should

see to it that there is enough participation by the private operators, be it in tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, education, or other services, that they understand what it is we are trying to do on their behalf and they should be keen on making inputs and significantly so, in the various discussions which we hold to arrive at positions.

I am heartened, Mr. Chairman, that within the last two years, especially as the private sector has been reasonably slow to come around, I am happy that over the last two years, that the calls which were made by the Prime Minister, have been taken seriously and there has been very active participation in the last two years.

Sir, let me speak to agriculture as an example. The Barbados Agricultural Society has seen it as their duty to work closely with the planning unit at the Ministry to discuss the various documents coming out of WTO, the FTAA process, the CSME, the Post LOME IV, ACP/EU arrangements, they have seen it fit to work closely with us to provide critical reviews of those documents, so that what leads the Ministry of Agriculture in more recent times, en route to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, would be a consensual position between the planners of my Ministry and those who function on behalf of the operators in the sector.

Sir, as a matter of fact at the meeting on agriculture, these matters that are pertinent to the sector, the Barbados Agricultural Society's Chief would have participated in those meetings. So there is now a greater national awareness about globalisation, trade liberalisation and what it holds for the Barbadian economy, one that gives me a lot of comfort and greater pleasure than previous, that this country is going forward together and that this country recognises, and it will continue to do so, that the future of the Barbadian economy depends crucially on how active and how seriously we participate in these negotiations.

The Prime Minister has made it extremely clear when I attended a meeting in January, and he made some very clear statements as to what these trade negotiations hold for the man on the street. We have a duty to back the Prime Minister because he is telling the truth in that these persons who otherwise people might think should not be involved or should not have a knowledge of these things that they should find out. At the end of the day, Mr. Chairman, if we are not properly prepared, and we do not participate fully in these discussions, the adverse consequences could be so severe that when the man on the street realises what is about to happen to him, he might then say that he was not sufficiently informed. We have a duty, as I said, to make sure that this does not materialise.

3.00 p.m.

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Hon. A. P. WOOD: As the Honourable Member for Christ Church East has said, there is a lot of negative talk about globalisation and trade liberalisation but the fact of the matter is that we are part of what is happening. We gained access to the World Trade Organisation and we will participate in the Free Trade Area of the Americas and the Caribbean Single Market and Economy.

There are negative consequences to be derived from being involved in these and there are wonderful opportunities that will be created, so what we need to do is to reposition this economy and the sectors therein. Those that can participate competitively, we need to prepare them properly and we need to create an enabling environment to facilitate the modernisation, restructuring and repositioning of those industries and sectors.

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

Hon. A. P. WOOD: We also need to minimise the downside risk that could eventually lead to a dislocation of certain sectors. This Government is well aware of that and that is why over the last couple of years this administration has been very deliberate and very calculating in the type of policies and programmes which we formulated and which we are busy implementing because you cannot do these things in a vacuum. For example, the Prime Minister in recognising the challenges facing the sector, pronounced a set of policies to be implemented in the context of reforms to be carried out in the agricultural sector in his Economic Statement which was delivered in 2001. He said on page 35, and I quote:

"Government will, therefore, in the context of reforms to be carried out in the sector, provide our agriculture with protection in all forms and fully up to the extent consistent with regional and international trade agreements."

So, Mr. Chairman, activity in the sector must take place within the context of our regional and international trade negotiations.

"We will also provide the sector with continued but targeted financial assistance, to support efficient farming enterprises that have the potential to exploit local and export opportunities."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your time is up, please.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, I am very excited about this whole thing and I shall return.

I thank you.

Hon. Sir Harold St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for the opportunity to say a few words under this Head. As all Honourable Members would be aware, I have spent a considerable period of time in my political life dealing with matters of integration movement including trade integration, with international negotiations under the LOMÉ Convention and subsequently in an advisory capacity in Barbados for the Ministry of Foreign Trade in preparing positions that Barbados should feed into the regional negotiation machinery with respect to matters affecting the World Trade Organisation and the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

I have also been involved in the integration movement in the Caribbean particularly the expansion of the Caribbean Free Trade Area and the Customs Union into the Caribbean Single Market and Economy. Contrary to what people believe, I can say without question that there has been considerable improvements in the quality of the human resources more so in the public sector than in the private sector.

I believe it is true to say that the private sector important role, which everyone acknowledges, is to carry on trade, because as Honourable Members have said, governments do not trade nowadays, because their trade have been virtually abolished worldwide. Previously there was an underestimation by the private sector of the importance of their role in providing advice and direction to the Government in these international arenas but that has been remedied to a large extent and they are now the beneficiaries of a further help from the Government in the form of a grant of some \$200 000, I believe it is, in this year's Estimates to allow them to bring their human resource capacity up to standard.

Mr. Chairman, I do not think that we should underestimate what is happening in the ministries. The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of International Business and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have officers whose understanding and appreciation of the issues is of the highest level, there is no question about that. One only has to go and look at the papers that were produced when we first started between 1994 and 1995 and look at what is produced today and one would see the vast improvements.

One only has to look at the qualifications of the officers in these respective ministries and see how in that period of time the Government has encouraged people to advance their knowledge by taking higher degrees. Some have even taken the higher level of PhDs in international trade. It must be appreciated that many young people have decided to make international trade and international commerce part of their university education.

Indeed, we have reached the stage now where we have got at Cave Hill an international service centre of which this Government should be very proud. That centre is going to host the first international law conference this year. We have made great progress and it is our duty as a political party that has always been in the vanguard of Caribbean integration to make sure that by our public statements and by our directions that the public of Barbados and by extension the public in the Caribbean is made fully aware of the significant change that is going to arise consequence upon the new global order and the new trade order.

Mr. Chairman, I want to speak now on the Caribbean Single Market and Economy. Few people realise what is involved in the movement from a Free Trade Area and from a Customs Union into a fully integrated single market of goods and services. The Free Trade Area relates to laying down rules about the eligibility of goods produced in one country for free trade in another country. The Customs Union involves a common external tariff vis-à-vis third countries sending goods to us but this single market goes further because it not only relates to goods, but it relates to the provision of services on the same basis as on goods.

I am one of those who have been a great beneficiary of the availability in Barbados to provide services in other parts of the Caribbean. I make bold to say had it not been for my ability to sell my legal services in other parts of the Caribbean over the course of the last 30 years, I would not have been able to make the contribution to political life in Barbados that I made.

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Hon. SIR HAROLD ST. JOHN: It provided an opportunity for me to be able to sell my services free from any possibility of any domestic economic interest being able to put pressure on me. That is why I have always been able to speak freely and candidly because my bread is not buttered by any particular interest here or anywhere.

I want to go further. I want to say to young people that they must look at what has happened with very important people in the Caribbean. I make bold to say the Caribbean tonight could not be proud of the fact that they have a judge in the international criminal court, had it not been for that person being able to do like what we did, that is, to sell his services all over the Caribbean in the criminal law field. The nominee from the Caribbean on the international criminal court had the opportunity to sell his services all over the Eastern Caribbean.

It is the same thing with the cricketing team. The Caribbean could not have been a cricketing force if it had not been for the fact that the pool of talent from which we draw our cricketers, is not restricted to any one island. Therefore, I do not feel that any of us should approach the Caribbean Single Market and Economy with any degree of fear. I am surprised when I see, as it is called, an incipient parochial nationalism arising in this country against the fact that we have a number of skilled persons from the rest of the Caribbean, particularly in the construction area, who are plying their skills in Barbados.

I want to make it clear. I came from a generation in which a large number of Barbadians from all classes were able to sell their skills in the rest of the Caribbean when we were all colonies and there were no work permits. I have had relatives who went Trinidad, Guyana and other places, so therefore, that is nothing new to me and my generation when we grew up and regarded the Caribbean as an area which was fair ground for people of our age. That is what should be encouraged. What I disagree with is in the concept of some decisions that were taken, that we should approach this upon a snobbish class basis. I say it is wrong that we should try to restrict freedom of movement to persons, for example, media workers, university graduates, sportsmen, artistes, et cetera.

The Caribbean cannot build its productive capacity upon the basis of freedom of movement only upon those conditions. I understand there must be mechanisms to ensure that criminals, smart men and those kinds of persons, cannot utilise the opportunity to free movement, to exploit the criminal laws or to break other laws in the Caribbean.

I am a firm believer that the implementation of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy would involve a new look at our immigration laws and that our labour laws must contain mechanisms to ensure that in the area of shortage of skills and work permits that are needed for control mechanism only, these could be freely granted by immigration officers.

In the United States of America, the Labour Department certifies annually the list of skills which they are short of in the country. Why can our Labour Department not do that so that immigration officers and other people can know what are the shortages in our economy, and there are shortages.

I make bold to say that we could have never executed the Capital Development Programme that, in fact, has been executed between 1994 and 2003, without the skills that came from other countries.

In my opinion, the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, in its implementation, would also have to

developed a new national identity system. Today with modern technologies, the passport system is not the best system of identification. There are persons from some parts of the Caribbean who are experts at producing false passports. We must tell other people in the Caribbean that we will not tolerate passport manufacturers from Barbados or wherever else. This country has never taken the view that is a desirable level of activity.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I am proud of a negotiating team with respect to a fishing agreement. There is expected to be a meeting next week of another round of negotiations with respect to a fishing agreement. We have had our consultations with the stakeholders in Barbados. We have had a draft of a fishing agreement prepared. That agreement is based upon the previous one and a modern FAO-model fishing agreement. We have already told our counterparts in Trinidad and Tobago what the position is in relation to what we think a fishing agreement should contain. The Barbados delegation has a brief which has Cabinet backing. I only hope that the other side would come with a brief that has their Cabinet backing too because a negotiation involves two parties and if one has its hands tied for whatever domestic reason and the other has its hands untied, they cannot go forward.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I am very happy to join this debate. I believe that on every occasion that I have spoken on this matter, the very points made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South are points that I have been stressing, particularly that our professionals need to see the eight million consumers as well as the corporate entities, and the legal regimes that exist in all of the territories of CARICOM as their market. It is ironic that about 50 years ago, he was able to traverse the Caribbean through a combination of factors such as his own ability, contacts that he had and maybe his own broad mindedness but beyond that, he had an interest in doing it.

Sir, persons of my generation in the professional class, legal and many of the others, look no further than Barbados for their economic sustenance and the associations to which they belong do not help them either. I can say this as a personal testimony.

Some years ago, CARICOM engaged me to carry out a study which required me to meet with all of the professional associations in approximately seven territories. Before that, I had done another study for the Caribbean Law Institute in which I had met with the professional associations, the manufacturing associations, agricultural associations, the certification boards, et cetera, in almost every CARICOM territory and there was only one territory in which the professions and associations were interested in marketing their services outside of that territory.

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Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: The Jamaicans, of course, were looking to market theirs to the USA. They look northwards and they never had a particular interest in marketing their services in the region. The Trinidadians architects, accountants and lawyers market theirs here but the law was changed here to facilitate lawyers to practise here in Barbados. We have open our markets and other people can see the benefits of doing business in Barbados but we are sufficiently insular to think that we should only do business in Barbados because we have not yet opened our minds.

There is a downside to political involvement as well which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South may not have mentioned and that is that some of the best attorneys aligned themselves to political parties so that when the parties are in office they are content to do only Government work because they are satisfied with the substantial retainers they get from Government, which are very lucrative.

There are also a lot of attorneys who have been through Government and who have acquired skills of negotiation, who understand what policy making is about and who have skills in drafting but as soon as they are out of office they fall lower than pond water. Nobody wants to employ them because of their political involvement, they refuse to hold their heads high and market the skills that are marketed in other countries of the world.

Sir disgraced Attorneys-General in the USA can after five years of exile can return to the system as CEOs of leading firm providing quasi legal policy advice, designing regimes for trade in particular products, being involved in aviation law and a whole range of activities which help build up legal or professional system. This also happens with architects, accountants and the whole range of professions.

There is a great reluctance by Barbadians professionals to see their horizons as extending beyond Barbados but those persons who have been able to make the breakthrough have been credited as being outstanding wherever they go. You will meet old attorneys in the profession in St. Lucia and Grenada and the entire Caribbean, who speak with awe about attorneys in Barbados who work through the region and acquitted themselves well in the process.

I believe that there are hundreds of other Barbadians with professional skills who can market them. I want to appeal to the Minister in this regard that as well as the attention being paid to the negotiation and the process, to fashion another parallel programme that exposes professionals and all people who have an interest in

providing services or products within the Caribbean region, particularly in services because that is the area in which it is believe that we have a significant competitive advantage, the skills and the flexibility. Sir, Barbados is a hub for Caribbean travel, there is a variety of advantages that we have and we should have a parallel programme by the Government that can show people how to go out there and market themselves.

Sir, 50 years ago the Honourable Member for Christ Church South would have been among a small pool of individuals from whom one could choose in this regard. We now have 300 lawyers here in Barbados and 700 in Trinidad so there is a larger pool and this means they have to focus on specific areas of competence and expertise. There is a large pool of architects who also have to focus on a specific area of competence or expertise because marketing oneself as an attorney, accountant or architect is not going to be enough.

From time to time, CARICOM needs persons to employ who have policy experience because those persons can identify how the law interacts with policy or they may need an attorney who has accounting experience. Sir, professionals need to be able to advertise using the internet, journals and business pages of newspapers and on televisions.

Barbados stands to benefit significantly from a creative and aggressive programme of marketing the services that we have in this country throughout the entire CARICOM. We can also market in those countries that may not be true members of CARICOM like Cayman Islands and so on.

Asides.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Yes, teachers go to Cayman Islands but it should not be restricted to teachers because Cayman Islands want teachers from us but what do we want from them? What is it that our professionals want to get out of CARICOM and regional involvement and do we ever look at it that way?

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Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Sir, what do we want from them? What is it that our professionals want to get out of regional involvement and do we ever look at it that way?

I think that a lot of the challenges in relation to CARICOM and the Caribbean Single Market and Economy will come from people's attitudes because as long as you have a professional class that sees his own domestic market as the limit of its horizons, you will find that only when

people have acquired 50 years of experience in an area and retired from the public service, will their skills be drawn upon but the young professionals who are struggling need to reorient their focus on that wider Caribbean market. I believe that there are significant opportunities out there for professionals in a wide variety of financial services.

Sir, Barbados has skilled and experienced trade union leaders. Nowadays there are large amalgamated financial services companies that employ persons across the region but in each territory you may have a separate trade union representation. In fact, it would make more sense for the entire the workers in that conglomerate to purchase services. People do not like to use the term of purchasing services in relation to the trade union movement because the trade union is viewed more as a philanthropic and social entity.

The trade union is identified under the UNDP list of services as a service and Barbados will have to amend its legislation to open up trade union services to the rest of the Caribbean. If you have a better trade union in Grenada that Barbadian workers want to join or a better trade union organiser in that country who wants to come to Barbados, you cannot stop them under the new arrangements.

Asides.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Has the trade union movement ever sat down and worked out, apart from the 40 000 working in Barbados, we have the potential to have two or three million workers throughout the Caribbean. Trade unions activity today is now service activity. Today is no longer philanthropic nor viewed as political. In some areas it is political because it is influenced by race but by and large trade union activities are now being divorced from that element. There are professional services that people are providing to groups of workers for a fee.

Sir, those services can be provided in the traditional environment or they can be provided outside of it. There are consultancy services. There are negotiation services at that level. Think of that as a potential breakthrough labour law. This is an area in which Barbados can become a centre for providing those services.

Sir, Government needs to highlight these areas. Maybe, one of these days social transformation activities or physical development activities, not just the work of architects but as an area of service provision. These are things that we should aspire for and to provide the highest quality of professional services across professional activities, supporting regional development and providing opportunities to make money for Barbadians.

Sir, as long as an architect feels that the only place in which he can design buildings is Barbados or the only

place in which his services can be provided is Barbados, you are defeating the whole purpose of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy.

There are other people, show promoters, who have been doing that for years. A lot of it has been under the radar screen, illegally and we know about that.

Asides.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Sir, you can think about vendors and the airline services as the traditional ones which people have been able to breakdown the barriers. We have already provided for them by way of legislation but Government needs to have a parallel programme which says that these are the five or six areas in which we can finance the training of people and promote Barbados as the place that has the best services possible and use the Caribbean Single Market and Economy to get our professional associations and individual firms of professionals, of course they will have to become larger because the idea of sole practitioners either as attorneys or accountants functioning in that environment is going to be difficult. Sir, it may be possible functioning as consultants but not as persons who need to be at home-base providing those services.

Sir, I think that these changes are very important and the powers that be who are in the process of looking for the way forward for Barbados, professionals and service providers or whatever level in our society, that we can be in advance of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy.

The advantage that we have, is that Barbados has been chosen as the place for the location of the office of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and also our Prime Ministers have been chosen respectively to lead the initiative. It would make nonsense of it if everything located here points in that direction but our service providers cannot benefit from it.

I thank you.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Sir, I have waited long for this moment. Most of the discussion, even as it relates to foreign trade never touched the issue of services and a service particularly dear to a region, the trading of our tourism services globally and now regionally.

I must compliment the Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and the work that has been done in the past eight years. Barbados as a country, and the region as a whole, has come a long way in terms of the subject matter and as it relates to our socioeconomic development overall.

I think Barbadians in the past have not connected with foreign policy with our daily lives. It has become more relevant now than at any other time in our development.

However, if there is one failing, it is not on the part of the Ministry but those who operate in trading sectors in our economy. I do not think that they have utilised all of the opportunities made available to them in terms of educating themselves and their constituents more about the concepts of foreign policy, particularly foreign trade and how it relates to their development.

Many of the multilateral agencies have clouded the effort to explain and to get people involved in understanding trade policy matters and foreign affair issues by clouding it in all types of mystic and 'highfalutin' terminology that creates a basis for most people.

I think that it makes for a very intimidating situation for ordinary citizens who are involved in the most important productive sectors of our lives.

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Continuation of: Hon. N. A. LYNCH:

Sir, at the end of the day, everything that we do, our very way and our future, are much connected to our foreign affairs, foreign trade and foreign policy, because foreign policy can only be a reflection of your own domestic policy. I think this is one of the issues, Sir, that has not been stated very clearly to most of our citizens.

People think that groupings like the WTO, for example, are not a place where you go to negotiate and to determine what we need first and foremost, what is best for us and then see how we can negotiate with other countries in those theatres to get what is best for our development.

I think people believe that the WTO, is some organisation with a number of big people sitting down holding a stick over your head and telling you what you must and must not do. I believe, Sir, that it is important that as we go forward, we understand these particular aspects of our development.

I think, Sir, if there is one thing that must be done within our productive sectors and particularly so as it relates to our most important trading sectors, trade in services, and particularly so in the tourism industry, is that those involved in the industry, start to educate their constituents about the relationship of foreign trade to their own domestic policies and what we want out of the

industry domestically before we can even seek to speak about issues related to foreign trade.

Our future development policies as well, are even more tied up now in our stance on foreign trade and foreign affairs and our relationship to the rest of the world. I believe, Sir, it is even more important now than it has ever been in the history of the development of the region that we get ourselves even more immersed at all levels, in the whole issue of educating the populace, about these issues and about the issues related to the theatres for multilateral discussions and the like.

The ordinary man in the street, as the Minister refers to them, constantly make references to why do we continue, even as small countries to have so many of us in the overall theatres. But I believe, Sir, that we need to contribute a lot to the pool of popular thought as it relates to development policies and particularly so, Sir, as the world narrows through concepts related to technology, travel and the like. It is important that we contribute, even as small developing countries to the international pool of thought, as it relates to development in foreign affairs and foreign trade.

Many issues appear puzzling at times. One is the issue of special differential treatment. I believe that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, however, really made a substantial case, that the case to be made for our contribution in many areas to the pool of world trade is so very small that it will not at all influence the overall basis of global trade.

Therefore, it is important that there is an index that even though a very small country like Dominica may not be influencing at any high level the whole pool of trade, that what we may seek to do in terms of imposing restrictions on them, may not wipe out an entire country and an entire industry. These are the things, Sir, that are important.

Sir, I believe it is also important that many of us relate what happens in many of these theatres of international trade to our survival and development along the way. I believe, Sir, that when Honourable Members on This Side and even on the Other Side made a case for what may happen as a result of this military intervention in Iraq, I think even though you may believe that was discussed within the highest level multinational body, even though a conclusion was not arrived at ultimately through the Security Council, and the Americans still went in, that in essence it will affect us, as we go along for many years to come.

I think, Sir, it is important that we understand that history should remember all of us for, how we have made a contribution to that pool of popular debate and popular

thought because though these are minor issues for large and developed countries, they are certainly very important issues for smaller countries.

I think, Sir, that our voices must continue to be heard in the theatres of international debate, as it relates to issues that though they may not seem to directly affect us, will certainly affect our future, affect our economic standing, and affect our long term development. We need to continue, Sir, to use these agencies to also prepare the region to deal with many of the major issues which will confront us.

Many of the issues are in the private sector, as they relate to productive sectors, as they relate to services and as they relate to specific trading entities. Sir, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South would have said, no longer are we talking about state to state trading, but the private sector is very much involved.

Sir, if there is certainly one drawback, certainly one sad point for me is that particularly within the private sector and as it relates specifically to tourism, the private sector tourism players have taken as long as they have to embrace the issues related to foreign trade and to the trade in services as they start enhancing their own industries and fortunes.

I want, Sir, to look at some issues related to the development of the tourism sector. These are issues that even though the Ministry of Foreign Trade has already embarked upon a stated direction, in terms of where they go, in terms of which areas are the most sensitive, which areas we can give up, which are the areas we can look, even as they relate to trade in services, there are some things that must be said as they relate to this specific area of tourism development.

I think if there is one thing that we need to clearly get in our heads is to really seek to define the whole concept of tourism, as it relates to trade. I do not believe that we have ever really and truly defined the whole concept of the tourism sector.

I believe in many instances, we have tried to put it into very small categories, hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, tour guide services and the like, but the tourism industry, particularly as it relates to the Caribbean region has such far-reaching implications for everything that we do and is so much connected and linked to other sectors that we need to seek to create a proper and wider definition for tourism in terms of how we move forward our trade negotiations.

We also need to look at what are some of the practices in which we currently indulge to achieve our tourism goals because obviously, these are areas that might

be considered as barriers to future tourism trade. These are the things that the private sector needs to understand very clearly, how we will, as Barbadians, be affected by tourism, and by global trading in services.

I believe, Sir, more important, that the principles which have led much of these discussions, in relations to how we deal with issues in the trading sectors and even in services, are that market forces will best dictate the best means of providing impetus for these sectors to move forward, and that the consumers will be allowed the best chances and prices simply by letting the markets work.

I do not know, Sir, that in the context of the Caribbean tourism industry and the development of tourism these are principles that will always apply. Sir, it is very clear to me that there are some aspects of the development of this industry that we need to be able to hold on to, because though we may be opening up ourselves in terms of people and services coming in and whatever, we may not have the same options available to us, in other areas and territories.

Within the context of negotiations, we must also find ways and means to strengthen the capacity for expanding tourism regionally. Sir, this is a fundamental point which I do not think many people have actually held on to, that we must find ways and means of expanding tourism in the region. A particular focus should be placed on the major functional areas of the sector, those areas as they relate to tour operator and travel services, air transportation and the global distribution systems.

Sir, right now, many of the systems that we know that actually run our tourism are supplied to us from the exterior. Most of the people who control our movement in tourism in this region, actually come from outside of the region.

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Hon. Hon. N. A. LYNCH: What is important to many of us is that the tourism industry is an open industry. In addition to that, there must be agreed definitions of tourism as is universally applied. We need to fight, especially in terms of services, for annexes on tourism which comprised regulatory issues and their definitions, to competitive safeguards and access to information and transparent use of global distribution systems. All these issues need to be created within an annex and within all of these protocols as they relate to trade in each theatre whether it be regional, hemispheric or global.

As I conclude, I wish to repeat a couple of things which I wish to leave with a number of the tourism players.

We cannot negotiate about tourism in general and in a vacuum. We must speak from an intimate knowledge of the characteristics of our industry and seek to defend our interest in terms of the development of tourism.

The Caribbean as a part of any exercise must seek to define the tourism sector in its best interest. We have a long and distinguished record of delivering a quality tourism product and we are aware of all the various activities.

Sir, in most of these protocols there should be, particularly as it relates to services, a specific annex as it relates to tourism and tourism development.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make a contribution to this debate as well because I think it is important that we do our utmost through our debates in here and our work outside of this Chamber, to continue the process of sensitization as to the challenges that face this country and other countries such as ours in respect of the liberalisation of trade upon which the global economy is set.

I set it in that context because the contrast which stands to be made between the way in which the Government has treated to the issue of trade liberalisation as compared to that of the Opposition is stark. The reality is that many of the adjustments that we have had to make since 1998, as we have said in this Chamber over and over again, came as a result of commitments given by the Democratic Labour Party, particularly by the Leader of Opposition when he was Minister of Finance.

Those commitments were given within five days of his having completed the budget speech, the only budget speech he ever delivered to this Chamber, and in circumstances where they were not even addressed in the context of that budget speech, far less was it the subject of discussions with elements of the Barbadian public who would have been affected considerably.

When we realized the extent of the responsibility for the decline in agriculture and manufacturing, you would agree with me, Mr. Chairman, that there was a duty for extensive public consultations on these issues prior to the commitments being given.

This is a continuum. We have had to embark on negotiations, as the Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade has said, on a continuous basis because the negotiations have not stop and new things and new theatres have opened up since then. We have committed ourselves to a process of consultation that would seek to sensitize persons across all forms of economic activity, both at the level of investors and at the

level of workers, who are likely to be affected by the decisions taken by the Government.

The reality is that the global economy is more and more premise on the fact that there ought to be a liberalisation of trade, but this Government does not believe that unbridled liberalisation serves the interest of anyone.

Indeed, more and more, the evidence is stacking up to show that where there is a commitment to unbridled liberalisation that there is a sequence of negative consequences that have affected populations across the world. One only needs to remember what happened in respect of the South-East Asian countries in relation to the unbridled liberalisation in respect of capital and the extent to which those countries have suffered in the Asian crisis in 1998-1999.

Within the Caribbean, one only needs to look at Jamaica which quickly removed all of its exchange controls and made it possible for capital to move in and out easily. Once again the impact on those countries has been seen and the adjustment is borne not by persons who are invisible but by the citizens of the country whose families and whose capacities to earn a living are all affected.

We, therefore, feel that this requires the most rigorous consultation not just with the workers representatives in the form of the unions or the private sector, but the general public.

One of the things that bedevilled us in this whole process of negotiations across the various theatres is the fact that the commitment, the stated objective, on the removal of all barriers to trade comes as a request from the developed world primarily after they have had a lengthy period of adjustment in strengthening their internal economies.

When we speak in here about the need to support indigenous businesses, some people take that as a form of patronage for the sake of it. The reality, Mr. Chairman, is that when you look at the economic developments of the United States all through the 1920s, the 1930s, the 1940s and the 1950s, domestic business was substantially supported by the Government of the United States of America without competition, recognizing the need to give them government contracts to keep employment up and also to keep strong American businesses.

The reality also is that when we, therefore, get into the issue of Government procurement being put on the table for negotiations in the Free Trade Area of the Americas or the World Trade Organisation, it has the capacity to negatively affect countries like Barbados that have an indigenous business sector that relies on

Government contracts, which if they had to compete with people from outside of the country, in many instances, would be uncompetitive and unable to get those contracts.

It is for the same reason, Mr. Chairman, when confronted with the Maxwell Stamp Study that the Democratic Labour Party did prior to 1994, that looked at the issue of the manufacturing sector and wanting to carry the Government down a whole set of policy decisions, that we disagreed with it because it started from the premise that the manufacturing sector was only valid for the purpose of being able to earn foreign exchange. We do not hold that view.

We believe that the manufacturing sector, in small open economies such as ours, has also a valid role to play in the provision of employment and that if we move to the point where we feel that we must...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Yes, efficiency is good, but when we want now to so automate the sector and, as I said earlier in here this week, have as our strategic objective only the maximization of shareholder returns, there is a human cost to it.

In a small island such as ours we have to balance that human cost against the extent to which we maximize shareholders return and earn the levels of efficiency by importing to the extent that we deny our own producers the opportunity to produce and to employ.

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Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, there must be a balance, as with all things in life. We have to be careful how countries are held captive to new dogmas and philosophies that are put forward by the developed world, with the perspectives of the developed world, that do not speak to the realities of economies such as ours.

Mr. Chairman, essentially there are four consequences respective to trade liberalisation. There is the question of the fiscal impact, because once a country starts to reduce its duties, there is a question of reduced revenue to Government to finance its recurring expenditure and its other needs.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, that is the real problem that even the Eastern Caribbean faces. Many of the Eastern Caribbean territories have been excessively reliant upon import duties. Many of them do not have the size of population to justify income tax because the administrative cost of administering that tax, relative to the yield that it

will bring from the size of the population and the economic activity, might mean that the Government's ability to be able to finance public sector activity is severely constrained, largely because of the inability to get that revenue. Therefore, the issue of fiscal impact of trade liberalisation is a serious issue for small economies.

There is also the question of the extent to which economies rely on trade induced preferences. In Barbados

case, it is not much of a problem for us because the sugar is only three per cent of our Gross Domestic Product and our trade induced preference are low, so that we have built up and diversified our economies such that we have been able to rely on tourism, international services and other areas of economic activities that do not rely on the trade preference, quotas and subsidies in the same way.

Mr. Chairman, that is not the same for many of our sister counties in CARICOM. Indeed, there is a very real issue about the time that is needed to be able to move away from and to restructure the economies which rely on trade induced preference. The case in point once again, is the Eastern Caribbean and with bananas. The reality is that within the last two years, almost every country in the Eastern Caribbean has faced a revenue crisis, largely because they have had serious economic trouble in respect of the adjustment with the banana industry being the primary earner for most of them and, to the extent that they have diversified into tourism, most of them have suffered negatively in the post-September 11th, 2001, environment.

We find ourselves today in the region being confronted with the challenge of the establishment of a Stabilisation Fund, as well as a Development Fund, necessary to be able to help them in the transition so that they could become equal partners in the Caribbean Single Market and Economy but more importantly, they can avoid the spectre of becoming failed societies. Within the region, we already have the example of Montserrat that is fighting to survive and to rebuild, not because of the economic difficulties but because of the natural difficulties.

Mr. Chairman, it is nonsense to believe that there can be no such thing as a failed society in our time and in our age.

Mr. Chairman, a third consequence of trade liberalisation is the extent to which we must embark on domestic reform. The reality is that our producers, whether in manufacturing, agriculture or any other industry, have to be prepared and to ready themselves to participate in a liberalised environment. It does not happen overnight. It is a question of training, capital and culture.

There must be an entrepreneurship culture. There must be no aversion to the taking of risk. That is why this

Government has spoken more and more in terms of persons having to be prepared to see Barbados not merely as a domicile but launching investments in tourism, educational services, legal services, et cetera.

Mr. Chairman, there is no reason why our largest conglomerate, which has one major tourism investment in this country, should not already have had major tourism investments from Cuba, through the region, into Central and Latin America. That is what we must do.

4.10 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: We must be able to go into countries where the production costs are lower in relation to the production of goods and services such as Guyana where there is the opportunity to do this.

Mr. Chairman, I have established a committee to look at the reform of the legal profession recognising the new environment in which we must function. That committee is being chaired by Mr. Leslie Haynes, Q.C. and has as its consultant doing the work, Sir Roy Marshall, an eminent Barbadian who has had tremendous experience. We are looking to completely reform the practice of law because we recognise that it must not only be limited to Barbados but we must also develop entrepreneurial drive within the legal profession. There is no reason why Barbadian law firms should not be established in the United Kingdom or in the USA where thousands of Barbadians live overseas and want to do business here but also for legal work in those jurisdictions.

The fourth aspect to trade liberalisation is the question of the level of regulation which must be embarked upon by the Government if it is to act as an additional defensive measure once you start to reduce duties and not benefit from the other things that constrain trade.

The reality is that we need new anti-dumping measures which will come this year. We need also to strengthen the capacity of the other regulatory agents because it is not only about allowing the goods to come into your market, then complain and seek to take actions after but also about using a series of regulatory measures to defend the national economic interest and that of your private sector where in particular there are under severe threat. There must be a strengthening across Ministries and in our ability to be able to do the regulatory work in agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and the various industry. Sir, I have not yet spoken about new industries like the cultural industries and broadcasting.

Mr. Chairman, we are going to have to defend the public interest, the public morale and public health interest

because these are acceptable exceptions in addition to any other argument we may run about the fact that there should be special and differential treatment on the basis of the negligible interest of zero per cent of world trade that we have.

This Government is committed to doing all those things but we need to out-source more legal skills. This is why I cannot help but defend Miss Lynette Eastmond when she was contracted back six months after she resigned from Government because we have limited skills in the island that can buttress the Government's attempt to defend the national interest to stop us from losing jobs down the line.

Sir, I am obliged to you and I will come back if necessary.

Mr. D. StE. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, one must understand that with financial resources whether we are speaking of foreign reserves or liquidity in the system that Government must move swiftly to educate its consumers of the importance of looking after localisation.

Mr. Speaker, it is okay to talk about liquidity but if the productive sectors are not producing at the right rate then import substitution is the way to go because if we are not producing, we are not creating the foreign exchange capacity we need.

With trade liberalisation, globalization and removal of the licenses system from Government Prime Ministers and Ministers of Trade who previously had the power to dictate the amount of business that could be imported into the country they no longer have that capacity. The capacity is now in the hands of the consumer because from the time the licensing system was removed the Government no longer had control over those things. Sir, the various agencies of Government should have carried out an educational programme informing consumers of their additional responsibilities.

We must pay some respect to the agriculture and manufacturing sectors because the consumers of Barbados will either make or break these sectors. I strongly believe that the pressure put on vendors in Barbados should be looked at again because we will have to rely on those vendors to market the produce whether they come from the agriculture or manufacturing sector. We must give the vendors incentives and the capacity to enlighten and help their brotherman who is in the manufacturing sector, the fields of Barbados or on the high seas. Sir, any freedom given to any particular sector must also be given to the vendors of Barbados. If the playing fields are to be levelled, the vendors of Barbados must be given the advantage.

Sir, if agriculture is to have a place in the development of Barbados we need to pay attention to the other crops which would need agro-processing. The players in the agro processing area must build a relationship with a country like Guyana. They must come upfront and not wait until they reach the capacity to build the plant. From day one the plant must be fully sourced and supplied with produce. We must bring along our farmers at the same time the plant is operating at full capacity and use import substitution as the farmers expand their produce.

Sir, I will continue to make the point that the important people in the agricultural sector are the vendors, farmers and those people who live in Guyana and produce in Guyana because they have the resources we need. It will be foolhardy if we do not continue to build on the relationship that we have developed with Guyana over the many years because there are people in Latin America fighting hard to get the relationship with Guyana that we have sourced at no cost. We have a natural relationship with Guyana that we must continue to develop. People in Guyana are prepared to help us in our productive sector and we must allow them to do it. We must also understand that for our tourism sector to grow we must first get back to basics and build our tourism from the bottom up and not from the top down. This is why it is important for us to develop community tourism in Barbados.

Sir, I always made the point in this Assembly that a home must also be a business and this is why I strongly believe that Barbadians should be encouraged to have a second home by building an apartment as an attachment to the home.

Sir, a tourist cannot be seen only as someone outside of the CARICOM region but as someone in the CARICOM region with the capacity to earn and pay their way. Therefore, community tourism is the way for Barbados to go. If we practise and exploit community tourism we will not have to worry if there is a war because we would have had a base.

Sir, the same way Barbadians line up everyday on Fontabelle to get a visa to go to the USA and nobody sees that as a crime there is nothing wrong with Guyanese lining up to come to Barbados.

4.20 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, the tourism planners should read the magazine called 'The Visitor' because I am convinced that they do not read that magazine. Sir, every time you read that magazine you see one thing all the time. Whenever you ask a tourist what they like about Barbados, the first thing that they say is, the people. The ambassadors

overseas must understand that we have a resource here called 'the people' that is the positive product of the tourism industry. Tourists must be allowed to come to Barbados and mix with the people and as they are allowed to do this, you will have a continuous flow of tourists to Barbados.

Sir, we in Barbados have been fortunate in the 1960s to have had generation after generation coming to Barbados. They did not come here because of the beach, sea or buildings. It was because of the Barbadian people.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I would try to bring closure to this Head. I thank all Honourable Members for their very wide-ranging contributions but it only goes to reinforce the point that I made at the beginning, that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade has a remit which requires it to throw its net far and wide.

In respect of foreign trade matters, I do not know if I want to add too much more to what I have already said during the course of the debate, except to say that we hope that the Opposition Democratic Labour Party will by now have seen the error of its ways and will be more positive in the support that it would seek to give the Government in respect of our trade negotiations.

The Democratic Labour Party has a long negative history.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: I was in here and I saw the closure of the 400 small shops in the 1970s, Mr. Deputy Chairman, and that spoke to a certain attitude. In my opening remarks I made reference to the fact that the Caribbean Single Market and Economy might have been fully implemented by this time if only an earlier Democratic Labour Party Government, going back to the earlier 1989/1990s, would have pursued its responsibility. Even then Barbados had lead responsibility within CARICOM for the Caribbean Single Market and Economy but nothing was done.

Sir, you can see the difference post 1994 where Prime Minister Arthur then had to move with dispatch to make up the ground where we have come to a point where today there is a Caribbean Single Market and Economy Unit established here in Barbados, seeking, as quickly as we can, to implement the Caribbean Single Market and Economy in advance of other negotiations in which we are presently involved. Virtually nothing was done in those years prior to 1994.

Sir, in 1994, the Honourable Member for St. John, when he made an earlier intervention in this debate, said that I know that I am going to accuse him of having Barbados signed on to the World Trade Organisation without relevant consultation. Sir, that is a fact. It was no small thing. There was no consultation with the Opposition at the time, private sector or labour movement. It was almost in stealth. The Leader of the Opposition, himself, used the word transparent.

Sir, there was no transparency. The ordinary man in the street did not know that we had signed onto the World Trade Organisation and that a significant aspect of our future as a country would depend upon that. It was done almost in stealth. It was done like a lot of things that were done on the eve of a General Election in 1994 but you see the difference between the two administrations.

Sir, I spoke at length on the interface that we have with the private sector. In fact, provision is being made in these Estimates under Head 22 for the private sectors coming on board with even further assistance. The damage, which was mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East earlier this afternoon, that was done to agriculture and more particularly to manufacturing, as an almost immediate consequence of that.

We recognised that as soon as we came into Government in October 1994, one of the first things that the new Minister of Finance did was to give a significant leg-up to manufacturing. We heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church East expatiate on what follows on and, even now and in the future, is following to help us to shore up manufacturing in this country and these things have to be said, Sir.

Let us hope that they have seen the error of their ways. The point has been made by me and by other Honourable Members that the Honourable Member sits on the Standing Committee of Parliament on Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, he has all of the documentation as well as members of the private sector and other stakeholders. There is nothing hidden here. These are not issues on which now we can be partisan. I am hoping that the Opposition will lend ongoing support and will help in the effort that we are making to raise public awareness and education in an ongoing way on this very important issue.

Sir, I cannot sit down having moved this Head without making a comment in respect of hostilities which have been put in the way of Iraq.

4.30 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Continuation of: Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER:

I am made to understand that on the 1.00 p.m. news here in Barbados today, a statement was made that the United States had certain concerns about proposals to convene a general assembly emergency special session, or some special sitting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to discuss Iraq. In the course of that statement it said that in Barbados, diplomatic sources suggested that the matter had gone much further than a verbal request.

I think I have a duty to say to this Honourable Chamber, Mr. Chairman, that a diplomatic note from the Embassy of the United States in Barbados has come to my hand and that this diplomatic note, does in fact, refer to certain proposals for a General Assembly Emergency Special Session.

I am reliably advised that while the Security Council is deliberating on these matters, it is unlikely that at one and the same time, the General Assembly will convene a special session. We have seen a movement away from the norm in these matters so one has no way of guaranteeing as to whether it will happen or not happen. I have only been made to understand that there is a proposal so there is no Resolution or even a draft text of a Resolution that comes to hand.

The diplomatic note goes on to say that the United States of America does not believe that the convening of a special session will produce positive results and may possibly simply serve to reinforce Iraq's belief that it has divided the international community, and further undermine the UN system.

I do not know how much further the international community can be divided on this issue. I shudder to think how much further the UN system can be undermined in this issue. The note goes on to say that the United States of America urges our country, meaning Barbados, to oppose or abstain from voting for the convening of such a session.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Barbados is a sovereign country, so is the United States of America. We are today on the floor of our Parliament freely and clearly elected by the people of this country. Freedom of speech is enshrined in our Constitution. Freedom of speech is also enshrined in the Constitution of the USA and so I have to say that we would have the greatest possible difficulty with what is being requested of us.

There is an enclosure which is attached and I would not want to say that there is anything threatening in the enclosure but what I would want to say is this, Barbados is a fully paid-up member of the United Nations.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: Whenever there is a special session of the United Nations General Assembly, Barbados speaks. When it is in ordinary sessions every year, the Foreign Ministers of the world, including me, in recent years, have gone up to speak and we have always tried, either by radio, television or both, to show the people of Barbados what it is we are saying at the United Nations and what are the positions that we take.

I can only say that if it turns out that there is a special session, that I do not think that Barbados can be asked not to do this and not to do that. The President of the United States feels that he may ask the President of another country to exile himself from that country for whatever reason. I asked a question and it was not any empty rhetorical question that I was asking a few days ago on this floor. Who is next? Which country is next?

In this new climate within the United Nations, and some actions now being taken outside of the tenets of the Charter of the United Nations, what is Barbados going to be asked next to do or not to do? It never occurred to me, Mr. Chairman, that within the week, we would be asked this question. There is only one answer that we can give to this question, that is, once there is going to be a general assembly, special or otherwise, you have to understand that those countries which do not sit in the security council - and a little developing country like Barbados, as things go now in the world, will never get a chance to sit in the security council - would obviously, once given an opportunity to address weighty international issues, in a general assembly take such an opportunity.

I can only say on behalf of the people of this country, that we could not allow anybody to dictate to us how our right to freedom of speech might be circumscribed. I can only say that if there is such a session, be assured that Barbados will be at the session. What the substance of the Resolution will be, one does not know, so you cannot say what position we may or may not take now. You will have to see. All of this is purely speculative.

I think that in view of what is going on, and it is not only a fight between the United Kingdom, the United States and Iraq, the entire world is engulfed in this. There are other countries in CARICOM which will be in the same position as us. Even within this western hemisphere, the Canadians find themselves in a similar position.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: No. Mexico finds itself as a non-permanent member of the Security Council at this very difficult time, and President Fox finds himself between a rock and a hard place because his people are not supporting the United States' position, but at the same time, he does not want to damage his relationship with the

United States. Neither do we, but we deserve the right to disagree with respect. On this matter, the Prime Minister of Barbados has spoken in the highest Committee of the land, on the Floor of this Parliament, not once but twice in this week.

I think that it is entirely fitting and proper that I should have brought this matter before the House because it is of such enormous importance that it cannot be left to a matter of speculation in the media, in this region or even outside of this region. I am not aware that any sanctions have been threatened if Barbados or other countries in this region defy this request.

They are entitled to make their requests but we are entitled to decide on how we will respond to it and the people of Barbados need to understand and to appreciate that this is the position that we take because we do this in their name. Indeed, as I see it, in the name of the generations coming beyond us as well.

We want to be consistent on this. We have clearly thought it out. The head statement was very clear. It made its appeal to the Iraqis, it made its appeal to the United States and it spoke to the deep concerns that we have, as the consequences mix, may redound to us in a negative fashion.

Sir, it is on that note that I would wish to bring Head 32 to closure and to ask that Head 32 now stand part.

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

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

4.40 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

HEAD 24 - MINISTRY OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

\$67 766 565

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to use this opportunity first of all to thank Almighty God, the people of St. Michael South East and the Right Honourable Prime Minister of this country for giving me the distinct opportunity to head such an important Ministry as the Ministry of Social Transformation.

Sir, it was not by accident, but more or less by design, since as you would know, that Barbados was a signatory to the Copenhagen Accord of 1995. Subsequently, there was a follow-up meeting in Trinidad and Tobago in 1996, of this hemisphere and the region,

where all of the countries that signed the Copenhagen Accord agreed through their signatories that they would implement policies within their respective countries to alleviate and eventually eradicate poverty.

Sir, Head 24, the Ministry of Transformation has been allocated \$67.7 million for the coming financial year. Therefore, I want to use this occasion to put the Ministry's broad position to the public of Barbados and to this Honourable Chamber. First of all, the Ministry's focus is for the provision of assistance to and the empowerment of individuals, families and communities. These are the socially disadvantaged groups across Barbados.

I want to use this occasion to list those departments that function under the Ministry of Social Transformation because sometimes I believe that Barbadians and even some Honourable Members of this Honourable Chamber do not make the connection between the departments and the Ministry, so sometimes they treat the departments under the Ministry in isolation and as distinctly not associated with the Ministry. These departments are the Community Development Department; the Welfare Department; the National Assistance Board; the Child Care Board; the National Disabilities Unit; the Poverty Alleviation Bureau; the Bureau of Gender Affairs and the Urban Development Commission. We also have the newly created department called, the Relief 2000 Programme to which I will speak later in this debate.

Sir, some of the major programmes with which we will primarily be concerned in the coming financial year - I would like to take an in-depth look at them in my early preamble - are the organisational restructuring and streamlining of the Ministry of Social Transformation which speaks to the continual rationalization of the Ministry, a process which we begun from the inception because as most Honourable Members know, the Ministry of Social Transformation brings a lot of innovative social programmes and policies with it. Sir, everyday we sit and review and assess and look at where the Ministry is, so that we will be able to determine where we should go from where we are and hence bring the right type of programming that will enhance the lives of those poor and marginalised persons across Barbados.

We will continue to put considerable emphasis on our poverty alleviation programme which basically speaks in the material sense to the construction and the repairs of houses for the most needy which is executed through the urban development programme. Most of the programmes that were under the National Assistance Board (NAB) have now gone over to the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission.

Sir, you would realise that we have now moved away from the old design and colour that use to be

associated with the welfare houses of the past, where the persons living in them were easily identified by Barbadians and we have designed a new type government house for our poor persons in Barbados to the point now where people are looking at this same type of design that we brought and are using it as a normal model for houses throughout Barbados. The whole idea behind that move was to remove the stigma attached to those persons who were easily identified as being on welfare. We more or less and made it in sync with what is happening throughout the country in terms of the new design of houses for our poor.

Sir, this Ministry has also embarked on a new community education programme for the prevention of HIVAIDS and a care and support programme for persons living with the deadly disease. This particular programme is being executed through our Community Development Division. I would also speak later to this particular programme because this is one of the most important programmes that this Government has initiated in this island at the community level to educate young people within the various communities and also the elderly because this dreaded disease knows no barriers and have no respect for any person. Government has developed this programme which is working wonderfully well across the communities which involves a number of community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Sir, this Government has also, through the Ministry of Social Transformation, brought about what is now known as community resource centres. One aspect of the community resource centre programme is that of the community technology programme. The whole idea behind the community resource centres in Barbados is that we believe the community centres through a process of decentralization should become a one-stop shop for social services. Just to draw an example, why should someone who lives in the Pine have to travel from the Pine to Bridgetown to collect a simple immigration form or why should someone from the Pine not be able pay their water bill, electricity bill or various other domestic bills within the community of itself? If we apply this to the medical area and other areas of social development, you will find that the overall concept of a community resource centre is really a holistic intervention programme within communities across Barbados, hence, the community technology programme. We will speak more about this very important and very popular programme that has now enveloped most of Barbados by providing this Honourable Chamber with more statistical data on it.

Sir, I was listening to the Honourable Member for St. John lamenting. I did not know that the Honourable Member reads the book of Lamentations in the Bible so often, but he was basically lamenting on the Floor of Parliament. He was lamenting on the fact that we seem to

forget St. John. I want to let him know that in the coming Estimates for next year Gall Hill in St. John which is probably one of the most widely used community centres throughout the island will be on our programme.

4.50 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, the Welfare-to-Work Programme is another innovative programme that has been developed in the Ministry but I remember hearing the Honourable Member for St. John remarking that the idea was borrowed from the United States of America. That programme was enacted by us last year.

Mr. Chairman, I do not speak as regularly as other Members of this Chamber but I remember at least speaking about the implementation of a Welfare-to-Work Programme. What it basically says is that our Ministry of Social Transformation actually begun the process of implementing a Welfare-to-Work Programme before the United States of America. This speaks volume to the level and the type of innovativeness that lies within the Ministry of Social Transformation and amongst its social workers and I would want to use this occasion to laud them.

Sir, the provision of the Relief 2000 Programme is an intervention programme within communities which targets the poorest of the poor and try to provide them with skills and with the ability to rehabilitate themselves to become involved in community activities across Barbados. It is also to provide them with life-long skills and that they could earn an income to help their families and themselves.

Sir, these items to which I speak, are poverty reduction strategies without working a process that is so popularly known across Barbados called hand-outs. I must reiterate that this Ministry will always provide the necessary safety net for those most disadvantaged and marginalised persons, the poorest of the poor and the disabled. We must, as a caring Government, provide the necessary safety net for that category of persons. It would be ridiculous of us to talk about poverty eradication strategies and do not provide that necessary safety net for that group.

Sir, we have initiated a programme for the provision of loans and for the expansion of micro businesses. I believe that by now every Member of this Honourable Chamber would have, every week, for the last six months, have been able to see a new micro business that has developed in the urban corners of Barbados from out of this programme. There are some 300 persons who have been able to be provided with work through our micro business programme at the Urban Development Commission.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most revolutionary pieces of social engineering was created by this Government through the transfer of titles programme. Additionally, one would realise that Barbados has become the oldest aging population within the English-speaking Caribbean.

In recognition of this rapidly changing demographic profile, we have decided that we would embark upon a policy and would bring to Cabinet a new paper on aging. The implications of an aging society would have a profound effect on this country, if we do not act now and chart a course for our country as it relates to our aging population.

Sir, additionally while we are developing that special paper, we also want to develop a charter that speaks to the rights of the elderly in this country. Sir, we in the Ministry are working on this aspect to bring to this Honourable Chamber.

Sir, we are looking at the matter of gender equality, gender equity and gender mainstreaming, which, when the whole equation is put together, can be called gender justice. The Bureau of Gender Affairs is probably one of the most important and innovative departments under the Ministry of Social Transformation. In fact, we look at the aspect of gender budgeting because it might have a significant impact on how we look at our whole budget analysis in the future.

Additionally, we are looking at the development of a legislative programme to enhance the operation of a Ministry and its departments and, therefore, our social policy document was forwarded to Cabinet. Sir, with regards to those promises about the ability of the Ministry to organise, to formulate, to implement and to coordinate policies in the social areas, I want to inform those doubters that we have formulated a policy of social development for Barbados and this will be the Ministry's blue print. The document was prepared by the United Nations Development Programme, by Doctor Olney Daly, through a Professor Clive Thomas.

Sir, I would like to use this occasion to thank our Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Ruth White-Blackman, Mr. Rodney Grant, and all those persons who would have worked collectively on this important document.

Sir, for our Ministry, \$1.4 million was allocated for the coming financial year. Out of this \$1.4 million, an annual subvention of \$300 000 has been allocated to the Thelma Vaughn Children's Home. That Home is probably one of the oldest institutions that has done a lot of wonderful work for our disabled children and adults across Barbados. This is an institution that this Government will always support in terms of building its capacity and

strengthening it so that it can carry out its work to one of the most vulnerable sectors within our island.

Additionally, there has been the allocation of funds to PAREDOS, which is a very important aspect of our social engineering programme. The most important aspect is that this Ministry is working very closely with the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community-based Organisation (CBOs) across Barbados and that there is very close collaboration between departments and ministries.

Sir, working at the Ministry of Social Transformation is not an easy task and this I would want all Barbadians to know. Those staff members at the Ministry of Social Transformation face a very difficult task every day. It is the type of Ministry that attracts the poorest of the poor, those persons who really need assistance. I have always said in this Honourable Chamber that we need special types of persons to work within this Ministry.

I would also want to use this occasion to ask for more specialised staff at the Ministry, so that together we could all take this Ministry to the plateau that we know it could arrive at and further enhance our capacity of service to that most vulnerable sector.

Mr. Chairman, I would now start to look at the specific programmes. Sir, never in the history of this country has one Ministry developed so many programmes for an entire country and focused directly on those most vulnerable sectors.

Sir, I now look at Subprogramme 395. The Community Development Programme is also spearheading our HIV/AIDS Community Education Programme. The background to this is to:

1. Sensitise the community on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS.
2. Minimise at risk behaviour through the changing attitude and practices.
3. To implement a variety of programmes and projects and reducing this pandemic situation in Barbados.

Sir, this programme began as a joint initiative between the Community Development Department and the Department of Youth Affairs. A comprehensive plan of action for community education and prevention was developed by staff who mobilised partnership that are established with Government and Non-Governmental Organisations following a knowledge, attitudes, practices and behaviour survey. Out of the survey, nine communities were identified for the intensive intervention, this has been going on during the last year and will continue. A number

of strategies have been used including community theatres, role playing workshops, health fairs and visual arts projects.

Mr. Speaker, presently an evaluation is being undertaken to determine the impact of these strategies that were implemented under this particular programme at the community level.

Sir, because Barbadians must know what this Government has planned for them as it relates to our HIV/AIDS prevention and control programme, the plans for the coming year are:

1. The establishment of a core of community volunteers to facilitate and partner the thrust in community education.
2. The continuation of work in the nine communities. We are planning to add another ten communities to this programme, bringing a total of 19 communities, particularly in urban Barbados but throughout the entire island into the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Community Education Programme.

5.00 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: We will continue to sensitize workers and volunteers towards the HIV/AIDS pandemic. We will also use promotional activity utilising the media.

Last year the National Assistance Board senior citizens programme drama group put on a wonderful programme call "The Real Golden Girls of Bim". This dealt specifically with the HIV/AIDS pandemic from a senior citizen's point of view. This production was also done in the USA to tremendous rave reviews. I am convinced that we now have to start to plan in a difference way for a society where its population is ageing actively.

The issue of gender impacts on the spread of the HIV/AIDS. The gender relations between women and men where women are dependent on men economically and socially, serve to place women at a disadvantage in sexual relationship. As a result, women are often unable to say no to unsafe or risky sexual practices and are some times subjected to sexual violence.

A large segment of the female population remains uninformed about sexuality, reproductive health and best practices as it relates to HIV/AIDS prevention.

Further, women have the additional responsibility of caring for family members who are sick or dying from this deadly virus. Women and men need to be empowered to

protect themselves against this deadly disease. They both need to have access to reliable information and services and life-saving treatment. In addition to information on health and education and related services there is a need for information to be provided on the gender dimension of HIV/AIDS and the implications for individuals, families and communities. Sir, it is anticipated that 150 communities in the coming financial year will be educated through this programme and process. As I said before, this deadly disease knows no bound or barrier. The National Disability Unit has established the following objectives with respect to the fight of HIV/AIDS:

To educate students with disabilities about the disease and improve their negotiating skills. Promote safer sexual behaviour and attitudes in relation to the diseases. Educate parents on sexuality issues for children with disabilities and their relationship to the spread of the HIV/AIDS virus. To teach professionals to acquire, formulate and present HIV/AIDS information to persons with disability. To train a core group of teachers and counsellors and train leaders of all CBOs and NGOs across Barbados to combat this deadly virus.

The programme offers assistance to persons living with HIV/AIDS through monetary grants, payments of utility and rents, repairs and construction of houses. These houses are being done through the Urban Development Commission.

There is a level of confidentiality that must exist so that each and every case is treated with the highest level of that confidentiality. There are systems in place to preserve the confidentiality of the victim.

The Welfare Department and the Community Development Department have been working closely with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital care group and the family care group. Various concerns relating to accommodation, job security, day care, counselling, utilities, access to drugs and welfare assistance have been raised during the meeting. There has been a holistic approach of assistance to 204 persons living with HIV/AIDS.

Meetings and discussions were held with the various social services agencies to address these issues. It was agreed that there was a need for the development of an instrument to ensure the confidentiality, which I spoke about earlier, of people with HIV/AIDS. We will conduct workshop to establish peer groups, erect billboards and benches in strategic locations across Barbados and update and publish a data base of CBOs and NGOs and other services.

We will establish AIDS bureaus in respect of persons living with HIV/AIDS.

5.10 p.m.

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H.F. LASHLEY: We will continue to stage community theatre and other multimedia production similar to what the Pinelands Creative Workshop did with 'Snakes and Grasshoppers'. Sir, \$860 000 have been allocated to this programme and I will come back later in this debate to speak about all the activities under the Ministry of Social Transformation.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, there is an amendment to Head 24 and the amount should now read \$7 634 848. I now beg that Head 24 stand part.

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

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head. I want to say from the outset that I have always strongly believed that social transformation should have been a policy and not a Ministry. It is not for me to decide whether it should be a policy or a Ministry.

Sir, when one recognises that the Ministry of Social Transformation, some of its mandate is divided between Urban and Rural Development Commissions, one can understand why someone as enlightened as myself on this particular issue, would make the point that it should be policy and not a Ministry.

Sir, every Ministry should play a role in social transformation. In the beginning when social transformation was policy and the Minister was an adviser, the effectiveness of that policy was seen more throughout Barbados than now that it is lodged under a particular Head. That is why you will find that a lot of jealousy is created between the two officers, who also happened to be Members of Parliament. This is so because two people are operating in a Ministry that should be a policy. Therefore, comrades who should understand the position of the policy, would sometimes want to hold back their contributions to a particular policy, that is why I would have made the point that social transformation should have been a policy and not a Ministry.

Sir, if this Ministry is to function effectively, then this Ministry must understand that when you are looking after the old people in Barbados you must also bring the young people to come along with the old. I do not believe that because the Ministry is providing housing for the old that there should be any policy in place which states that because you have an old person living in a house, a young person should not live in that house and that any benefits going to the old person should be reduced because young

people are also living in the house. Sir, a policy like that is self-defeating.

Sir, it does not make sense to construct a house with two bedrooms if you only want one old person to live in that house. I want the Government to understand that old people must have younger people to look after them. It is very important that when these homes are constructed, provision is made for some family member or someone with an interest in the old person to be able to live in that home.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, you cannot compensate and punish at the same time. When you allow people to acquire a home from government and then turn around and punish them by not allowing a younger person to look after their welfare, you are compensating and punishing at the same time.

I strongly believe that utility bills which are paid by the government for old people should not come to the homes of the old people. These bills should go directly to the ministry instead of going to the old people, because when these old people see that there is a notation of the bill 'due for disconnection', they have to use the little money that they have to pay these bills. When they pay the bills, they are not reimbursed.

I hope that these points are being noted and taken into consideration. A sitting Member of Parliament who has a social conscience would know what I am talking about.

Sir, what I am going to speak about is not anything new because I write about these things in my weekly column.

Asides.

Mr.D.St.E. KELLMAN: I believe in the Greek. I believe that those people who cannot help themselves must be helped but you cannot continue to have a policy in place where you make people dependent on you. I believe that those who are dependent should be removed from the dependency syndrome and placed in the independency syndrome. If you find a needy person, provide the capital for them to remove themselves instead of recurring handouts.

I believe that when one looks at the number of people who are benefitting from the Ministry of Social Transformation, those people should not be recurring even if the numbers are recurring. You have to elevate people from this dependency syndrome but you should not be seeing the same names appearing all the time. There should be a revolving fund but not for the same people. I am saying that Social Transformation should be taken to a new

height and my comrade should understand what I speak because we have a commonality when it comes to matters like these.

Sir, recommendations have been made that day care centres should also be located in St. Lucy. We identified a place in Colleton called Dr. Gilmore's Residence. That property, even though it was identified, is now being used as a halfway house. I believe that there are other locations in St. Lucy, especially in the Nesfield area, which are central. The locations at Colleton, or Judge Gap/Kellman Road would be ideal for the people of St. Lucy, since the majority of people meet at the Judge Gap/Kellman Road junction. If a day care centre is located in this area, parents would have easy access to it.

5.20 p.m.

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

Mr. Chairman, when we in St. Lucy speak about things, we do not just speak about them because we like to speak about them, we speak about them because there is some common sense to the issue and that is why that particular location would have been chosen.

We are saying, Sir, that now we cannot have that location, the next possible sight is in Nestfield because when one looks at that area, that is an area which is easily accessible by nearly every person in St. Lucy. If we use the St. Lucy Church bus, use Josey Hill bus or Pie Corner bus, they all pass that particular location.

If you feel within yourself that you have other plans for the Atlantic Manufacturing plant and you cannot utilise that particular area, I am saying that there is some land where the old Fairfield Sugar factory was that can be utilised.

I honestly believe that we can start maximising the land and the locations. One thing I have been taught while studying commerce that location is always key and do not wait until somebody has utilised that particular area, then to say that it would have made a good location.

We also have to understand, Sir, that we have to look at the older folk. While talking about the older folk, we also have to make a decision whether we are going to keep our old people scattered all across Barbados or whether we are going to develop a community for our old people.

When I say, develop a community for our old people, I am not speaking about building one large building and putting all the old people in that building. I am speaking about building separate units and having the old

people come together so that they can socialise and be able to discuss what happened to them when they were much younger and how they grew through life. I am saying, Sir, that social transformation, as it relates to old people, there must be a significant change in the way we look at this programme.

We also have to understand that the old age pensioners, when they go to the supermarkets, they also pay VAT. The same way that people working for \$15 000 or less can get a rebate on VAT, the old age pensioners must be entitled to get that 15 per cent rebate on VAT. I am saying, Sir, that the same \$500 allocation given to people under \$15 000, the old pensioners are also entitled to that or part thereof.

It would be a good thing for the organisations which represent the old aged pensioners, or the people 50 years old and over, to understand that they have a better case, putting a case for the \$500 refund or part thereof and even putting a case for a reduction in Income Tax. They have a sound basis for putting forward this particular argument.

Sir, if people working for under \$15 000 can get back their VAT because they do not pay taxes, then the old aged pensioners who only get \$172 every two weeks, they also pay Income Tax and VAT and they have the same entitlement and there is a justification for this particular argument.

The transportation system, Sir, the young people should also understand that they have to appreciate the old people who helped to develop this country and that they sometimes have to give way to the older folk when getting on the bus. Old age is something that must be respected. A lot of us sometimes strive hard to get there but do not get there.

Sir, a lot of these old people would have been the people who worked many hours in the hot sun of Barbados, and the mere fact that they were able to survive so long, they should be complimented.

Just this week, Sir, a gentleman said to me and some others in an audience that if you want to have a good cow, all you need to do is feed that cow and keep it from the sun. This is a very important point. Imagine when those old people who work in the fields bore all the sun, to work on our behalf, you do not think we should be grateful and be prepared as a Parliament to look after their interest. They could not shield themselves from the sun. They had to work in the sun, so these Estimates should be compensating those old people for building Bridgetown and all the buildings in Barbados, because of their hard labour in the agriculture fields in Barbados to develop this country.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D.T. GILL: Mr. Chairman, I sat and listened in amazement to the 'pie in the sky' approach of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. He would have had an opportunity because he speaks of his involvement, since he was 14 years old, with the Party to which he has aligned himself.

Mr. D.St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression that I have been partied to a Government.

I want to make this particular point in this House. I am the only member of this House who has not had the opportunity as yet, to depart thereof a Government as an elected member.

Mr. D.T. GILL: Sir, I was not speaking of his parliamentary presence but his branch presence. His contribution, because he speaks glowingly of his days with the Right Excellent and the dialogue and exchanges, so I find it strange, Sir, that now in the upcoming 'silly season', that the Honourable Member can proffer such, Sir, as I said, 'pie in the sky' statements.

Mr. D.St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression, Sir, that I have only made this comment now that it is in the 'silly season'.

If the Honourable Member was in this House when the last Budget was delivered, he would have recognised that most of these points would have been made in that particular Budget and there was no sign of the 'silly season' at that point in time and he can check that in Hansard.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not think that is a point, nevertheless.

Mr. D.T. GILL: Point or no point, Sir, suffice it to say, that this Ministry of Social Transformation, over the past four years, has made a significant, meaningful and profound contribution to the social landscape of Barbados.

Sir, in my Second Reading speech, I remembered making reference to the hackneyed statement by the opponents of this Ministry, by saying day in and day out, rather than give a man a fish, teach him to fish.

5.30 p.m.

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Mr. D. T. GILL: So it is the physical and nutritional sustenance in some cases of abject poverty.

Sir, the impression goes out that the only area in which social transformation is active or makes a contribution is in the repairing or the building of houses for the elderly. That is a major part of it but it is not only part. Even if it were the only part, I have seen individuals transform their entire life. All they wanted was a 'leg-up' and they have not gone back as far as I know to the Ministry for any assistance. You gave them the shell as it is, and they have been looking after it for the past three to four years as if they were living in such conditions for years.

I would not go into that to any extent because I think the average individual is entitled to his or her personal privacy. It is not that you go and take pictures of them every day and say, that he has moved from this, he can maintain cupboards or he or she can maintain a bathroom. To do that would be invading the person's privacy. Suffice it to say that these people who were in real abject poverty, having been housed, are now looking after their surroundings in an excellent way.

The major contribution of the Ministry of Social Transformation apart from housing is its contribution to the environment. When I speak about the environment, I speak about the derelict housing programme. We know Barbados has had a number of derelict houses. I do not know of another island in the Caribbean that has as many derelict houses particularly in the urban area as Barbados does which is a need for great concern. As the word derelict suggests, these are houses that were given up by people for one reason or another. Some are dilapidated and some are not, but they have all become the home for several other things which I will speak to.

The genesis of this dereliction is multiple. It is the case of people who would have migrated to the United States and England - you know that only too well, Sir - in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, and who had no one else to leave the houses with. In some instances, whole families left Barbados. Not only that, Sir, it could be the factor of death, a natural part of life. They had no one for whom they could leave the property and hence the property has fallen into a state of dereliction.

Sir, there is also the problem of succession when it comes to death. There is also the problem where someone might have left the house for someone who did not have the wherewithal to carry on the upkeep and the support of a house. Therefore, they too could not be bothered with it and they move away from it.

There is also the cost to refurbish. All of these things superimposed on each other contribute to the dereliction of

houses. When they do become dilapidated, that is a need for great concern.

Another factor which I have not referred to yet is the element of litigation. Some people will come to me and say, "Mr. Gill, why don't you get that old house from in front of me?" But you cannot touch it because it is tied up in court, where a brother is fighting another brother, a brother is fighting a nephew, a sister is fighting a brother and all types of problems occur.

There is also the problem of structure. I know of one very well at Belmont Road where it was in court not because of succession or anything so but because of the tunnelling which BARTEL, in those days the Barbados Telephone Company, had done along that area where severe undermining was done which contributed in no small means to the destruction of the foundation. That building had to remain in that state until the judgment was given.

The head count when done, was that some 500 houses were deemed to be derelict. Some are habitable and others are not. Nonetheless, it is the policy of the Urban Development Commission that where they are habitable and repairs are minor to enter into a formal contract or agreement with the agents or the owners and have them restored and in that instance it provides housing for whomever has inherited it.

Sir, these derelict buildings pose real problems. Some create health, environmental and fire problems. One that comes to mind belongs to a very good elderly family friend. She woke up one night to see the house in front of hers afire, that has dealt, in my opinion, irreparable damage to the lady. She thought her house was on fire and she finds it very difficult up to this time to come to grips with any small blaze. She rushed straight to the window and she could not believe it. You get people sleeping in these houses. They go off to sleep smoking or they cook in these derelict houses and they pose severe problems to the community. There is also the problem of security. These houses are excellent havens for criminals and vagabonds and all in all they become public nuisances. Sir, as I have said earlier on, the Urban Development Commission along with the Environmental Engineering Department and the Ministry of Health, are the agencies which have the mandate as enacted by the Laws of Parliament to tackle and to correct problems of derelict housing. This can be done either through the Urban Development Act, the Health Services Act and/or the Health Services Nuisances Regulations Act of 1969.

Sir, none of these agencies can go willy-nilly and destroy, demolish or remove a derelict house without certain progressive steps being taken. A minimum of 28 days notice has to be given which must be published in the

daily media and in some instances they have to be even published overseas.

There is a house not too far from my constituency house which belongs to a commentator who calls in ever so often on the radio programmes about the environment. He is also a very well known canvasser for the other side. He has done some work in catering, selling pig tails and that sort of thing. He gave up that house, paid no attention to it and let it become dilapidated. Before that house can be touched, it has to be advertised locally and overseas, but twenty-eight days notice has to be given before it can be deemed derelict and dilapidated before the Act can take its course.

Most of these houses are discovered or known about through the day to day tenancies programme. This just shows you how all-encompassing the work of the Commission is. It is testimony of how the Urban Development executes their work when it comes to the removal of derelict houses.

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Mr. D. T. GILL: When a Member executes his tenancy work, he falls or stumbles upon these houses and as part of his work, that is also reported, just as one deals with the tenancies programme by finding houses which are not fit for human habitation or finds that there are no proper access to roads, particularly for emergency vehicles.

To date, between October 1st and last November, some 41 houses were deemed derelict and were removed at a cost of \$105 375. In this current financial year, at the end of the calendar year, there were 32 derelict houses which were tackled, removed and laid to rest at a cost of

\$77 438. It is projected that another 30 houses would be done by the end of this financial year costing approximately \$78 000.

In the coming financial year, it is being projected that another 114 houses would be deemed derelict and would be removed and this will cost \$3 000 per house. The reason for the incremental increase is that quite a number of these houses have incorporated into their structure, stone.

Sir, I see a signal that my time is up but I will come back later in the evening to speak to this Head.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Chairman, I want to start off by saying that it is most unfortunate that the Democratic Labour Party can now have a spokesman to speak on the

issue of social transformation with special reference to the Urban Development Commission programmes.

Sir, this agency is like a hangman's noose around the neck of an ailing party and some people set about to try to defend a party that has never had any serious track record on issues relating to the social services in this country.

Mr. Chairman, the reality is that for some time now, there was evidence as far back as the first half of the 20th Century of some of the major social ills that this country was facing. In the latter half of the 20th Century, we also had modern analyses by bodies who had contracted social scientists to carry out the required scientific surveys to have empirical support for any assumption that might be assumed as wild and groundless. Those assessments were made from very early.

Sir, even under the Conservative Government, there were records indicating that there were a number of major social problems facing this country that gave rise to the social disorder of the 1930s.

The Dean Commission Reports were clear. Lord Moyne came and his reports were clear. As a consequence, many recommendations were made. Subsequently, the Inter-American Development Bank carried out an in-depth assessment of the social problems in Barbados and those reports were made to the Urban Development Commission and the Ministry of Social Transformation.

We had HABITAT 2 Document and there were discussions throughout the Caribbean in the Assembly in Trinidad where in 1996, they had discussed poverty. Those exercises were focused on the concerns that relate to poverty in the society. Therefore, we have an abundance of evidence that is available to us that clearly revealed what are the problems.

As a consequence, the Government found it important to establish a unit called the Ministry of Social Transformation. It does not mean that the other Ministries are not touching on elements relating to poverty, poverty has always been central to the issues and concerns of Caribbean Governments in a dependent state. Therefore, there is a collaborative effort that exists amongst the Ministries but that there is a specific Ministry with a central focus, exclusively on redressing and addressing some of the social ills that the Barbadian people face.

Therefore, to me, it is a total misrepresentation to make one believe that it is a knee-jerk reaction coming from the Government of Barbados in dealing with poverty issues.

I would have been happier if persons had tried to make an informed contribution to the Chamber on matters

relating to the Urban Development Commission, the Communities Resources Centres, or to take an analysis that could be helpful in assisting the Government or the people of Barbados and helping them to improve the quality of life of its people.

I would hope that as the Minister of Social Transformation returns to the Heads, he would deal with the Ministry in a more detailed form.

Sir, I want to touch on a specific area. I heard mention made to the issue to the aging in this country and that is one of the areas that is of great concern to the Ministry. The reality is that there are too many people - and this was clearly implied by you - who do not understand the importance of those strong stabilising principles that ought to guide the society itself.

We ought to have a society that has respect for inter-generational relationships, how people of different ages can socialise without any artificial barriers being placed on age. The only way that we can develop the kind of society that remains stable and nationalistic is if we could fuse the different generations together to recognise their interdependence and worth to each other and form the kind of organism that is required for stability and nationhood in this country.

Over the years, we have not been concentrating so much on inter-generational programmes but begun to focus specifically on the youth, probably in one Ministry and then seniors in another but not bringing those two programmes together.

Mr. Chairman, I would like there to be a more concentrated and intense effort in pulling together inter-generational programmes. The reality is that we are on the road of progressive path to bringing this society together in a very harmonious way. Therefore, I do not want the Honourable Member to be pulling points out and indicting the Ministry for any felonious practice for which the Honourable Member believes they ought to be charged.

The Urban Development Commission has records of hundreds of families across Barbados who are experiencing great difficulty in responding to some of their basic needs. One of those needs which we have set about to address early, is the problem of derelict housing. We have carried out proper social surveys at the homes and families of those people to whom we are catering, in a planned action in trying to address those problems. Based on the data that was available to us, we made an assessment and developed a plan of action as to how we would address the needs of the people who are experiencing these social negatives in their lives.

5.50 p.m.

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Mr. T.A. PRESCOD: The way in which we are now trying to address this particular problem is something that we ought to have concentrated on even earlier than the 21st century and responded to them based on the various concerns which they highlighted.

Sir, transformation is not only giving a house but wherever possible we help develop the human capital to give people an opportunity in life to be self-reliant so that they can stand on their own feet to do things for themselves so that they can respond to their own concerns.

Sir, this is not always possible because there are people in the society who are physically and mentally challenged. Also, children are marginalised with extremely poor parents, bad social habits at the domestic level and the Ministry must address all these things. We have people who are unemployed and underemployed with a substantial number of children, their incomes are extremely low and as a consequence we have other units in the Ministry that seeks to address these problems. We have the Poverty Bureau and the Relief 2000 programme which put programmes in place that help to moralise the social environment in which those children live.

Sir, it is a comprehensive and extensive programme looking at how we can turn around children in the society and bring different generations together to eradicate poverty and address all the social needs. We have been putting ramps in areas across Barbados to accommodate and facilitate people who are physically challenged.

There has never been any effort before by any Government department on behalf of people who are physically and mentally challenged to write a Green Paper with a lucid policy, offered to the people of Barbados, where a Government after 2050 will be able to use it as a guideline to the issues that we need to address.

Sir, no Government can address these issues in a five or ten-year period because we are not magicians nor can we do things supernatural. We are ordinary men and we will do our best in this regard.

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

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD: Sir, I will come back and speak in more detail on the programmes of the Ministry of Social Transformation especially on behalf of the senior citizens of Barbados.

Thank you for allowing me the short intervention.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, there is absolutely no doubt that there is room for the Ministry of Social Transformation in this country. It appears to me that there is a divide between the Democratic Labour Party and this side. The Democratic Labour Party does not believe that there is a need for urban renewal or social transformation. In fact, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said it is a policy and not a Ministry. We believe fundamentally on this side that there must be a department to look after the social transformation of this society and within the last five years we have seen the society transformed beyond what it used to be in the dark, hard days of the Democratic Labour Party. We believe it is the right thing to do and we have seen roads, street lights, pathways, clearing of derelict properties, helping welfare cases and the eradication of poverty across Barbados mainly in the urban areas.

Sir, successive Governments have tried to put in place programme to eradicate poor housing in this country but before this Government came to power a previous administration of the Barbados Labour Party recognised that there was a need for transferral of titles under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act and this was the first attempt to provide for the masses of this country to own property and to provide opportunity for security of tenure. Sir, this has always been the divide between the parties.

The Democratic Labour Party fundamentally does not believe in the transfer of title. The late Errol Barrow felt that the Tenancies Development Act was enough for the people of Barbados and people were perpetually tenants all their lives but this administration in 1981 took the view that people should improve themselves and move beyond tenants and we gave them the right to buy the land. Since the new Urban Development Commission Act was passed in 1997, we have seen a transformation in the society where a number of tenants now own the land. Mr. Chairman, just as you have seen a transformation in the rural areas like Pool, Lower Estates and Drax Hall, you will soon see a transformation within urban Barbados and people will now have title for their land. They will have title deeds they can take to the bank and pass on to their children.

Sir, that is the difference between the two sides.

6.00 p.m.

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Hon. G.A. CLARKE: Sir, the Honourable Member spoke of the Moen Commission and I would advise the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to read the Moen Commission Report. Fifty years after the Moyne Commission Report, we now see the fundamental of that

Report coming to fruition and the census data shows that 50 percent of the people of Barbados own their land.

Since 1999, 15 000 now have conveyances to their land. People are now opting to buy the land on which they live.

Asides.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Chairman, we must understand that the amendment to the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act allows thousands of Barbadians to enjoy the security rights and tenure which they deserve to have.

We believe that there should not be two Barbadoses and the Ministry of Social Transformation will try to eradicate the poverty that exists in our society.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East spoke about resource centres. These centres offer opportunities to the people of the communities to be trained and retrained in terms of the technology that is available. For example, the resource centre at The Glebe is very well used. The old and young are going to the resource centre to be trained. I believe that very soon we may have to expand that centre because it is being used to the maximum. There are many people who would like to use the machines in that centre and they cannot have access to them because they are always occupied by others. The Centre is used seven days a week.

Asides.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: I believe that we have to decentralise these centres. For example, in the Market Hill area where the public transportation does not go directly to The Glebe, and a number of persons from that area cannot get to this centre. I believe that the James Bryan Complex should also be a resource centre where the people of that area could have access to the technology that is being available.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I must compliment the Minister for insisting that the Thelma Vaughan Home get an increase in the subvention. I did not hear the Democratic Labour Party on this. In the 1991/1992 Budget of the Democratic Labour Party, they cut the subvention to the Thelma Vaughan Home.

Asides.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: I recall when the Barbados Labour Party came to office I spoke to the Honourable Member for St. Philip North and I told him that I wanted to increase the subvention to the Thelma Vaughan Home. This subvention was increased in 1995 and every year

since then, this Government has increased the subvention to the Thelma Vaughan Home. Today I understand that they are going to get \$300 000 and this is what you call a good Government.

Asides.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: If you look at what is happening within the Ministry of Social Transformation you cannot only applaud the efforts of the staff and Minister. There is no reason why people should be put out of their homes. There is a subvention which says that there is provision for rent for National Housing Corporation, private landlords and welfare cases.

Asides.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: The point I am making is, once people are not working, old people and pensioners, their rents are paid by the Ministry of Social Transformation. Is that not true? The Board pays it. When people are working, they should pay their house rents. If they are unemployed or pensioners, their rents are paid by the Welfare Department, through the Ministry of Social Transformation but if they are employed they should pay their rent.

Asides.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: The Minister would explain that but there is no need for a person to be put out of their home once they are working.

I am saying that there is a need for the Ministry of Social Transformation. It has been doing a good job and I believe that it would continue to do a good job for the people of Barbados.

I thank you.

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE I want to thank you for this privilege to make a few comments. I heard the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Michael East.

Mr. Deputy CHAIRMAN: One moment, please. I cannot hear the speaker. Please keep your voices down, please.

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE Sir, on my way back to this House I heard the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and it was chalk and cheese. I am wondering what world is the Honourable Member for St. Lucy living in. I always hear that most Barbadians have short memories. I want to remind the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that during the early 1980s the people of Barbados enjoyed a rich quality of community life because the Cultural Foundation released teachers on secondment to

various communities across Barbados to ensure that we build more community life. This activity stopped almost instantly in 1986 when the Government was changed and the Democratic Labour Party regime took over the reins of Government.

6.10 p.m.

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Continuation of: Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE:

It pained me, Sir, when the upsurge in lawlessness started, under the Democratic Labour Party because a lot of young people did not get that opportunity to participate actively in the communities where they lived because there was hardly any money voted for them.

I can speak, Sir, particularly to the constituency of St. Thomas, where, what we held as the Community Centre at District D, for many years, indeed from the 1960s was turned into a magistrate's court and killed all the community life that we held in Rock Hall, St. Thomas.

This was done under the Democratic Labour Party and they did not seek to rearrange or do anything to set up a structure to facilitate the needs of people who would go there for service of songs, dances, lectures, demonstrations and all the activities, Sir, you could think about and now, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has forgotten that his Party did little or nothing to promote community life in Barbados.

Sir, I want to laud the efforts of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East for having taken just two to three years to help to turn around that lawlessness into productivity in the communities. Indeed, there are other social agencies that are working with the youth in Barbados and indeed with the people of Barbados to ensure that community life comes back again.

Mr. Chairman, the Youth Affairs department, in a survey that it carried out sometime in 1996 indicated that seven out of ten young people did not belong to any community group.

The Barbados Labour Party between then and now having put in another institution to work with community development has been able to mobilise young people to give them a sense of belonging to the communities where they live, to give them an appreciation of where they come from and what they can do to help to upgrade the communities where they live.

I cannot only, Sir, laud the efforts of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, I also have to include his staff. The staff there work beyond human call to ensure

that these programmes are put in place. And so, Mr. Chairman, I want to mention the responsibility that is derived from community involvement, the care and concern for others, the neighbourliness that is so lacking, thrift among our young people and other attributes of that kind, that come as a result of community life.

We know that as Barbados makes changes and has been making changes over the last 20 years, many of the residents, especially a lot of the role models have been moving to different communities, thus leaving what we would consider to be their traditional community bare, in a sense.

I want to say, Sir, that the programmes that are included in these Estimates are clearly outlined, that individuals can go back to their communities, that we can forge links and relationships between the old and the young and that is something that is very important. Unless we bridge that gap, we are going to lose more of our culture and the good discipline, the morals and values that Barbados has always held in very high esteem.

Mr. Chairman, the community programmes which that department has set out, are extremely important. When we look at the inter-community games where 59 communities are participating, that is money well spent. Anytime that we spend money on our youth and help them to divert from the criminal activity and help them to use the energies they have in a positive way, Sir, that is extremely important to our growth and development.

Sir, 150 persons are involved in the Community Arts Career Programme. They are doing graphic arts, animation, drawing and illustration and children's programmes in the Speightstown and the Bonnetts communities.

The community choirs and Honourable Members will remember less than a month ago where that whole activity of what would have been Service of Song took place at the Jackie Opel Amphitheatre. I think that Barbadians are extremely conscious as to what how they want to hold on to in the culture that has put them where they are thus far, and how they want to transfer it to their children. Therefore, these activities and the money which is voted here will help with the growth and development of our community.

Mr. Chairman, we are not going to be asking here, what shall we cut. We are looking at what we can extend and what else can we include to ensure that this culture of neighbourliness, love, kindness and all the other things that communities do will continue to flourish. It is important for us.

The only thing I would like to add where the Community Development department is concerned, Sir, is

that I would like for a change in the times in which the offices are opened. Young people are at school during the day or they are studying or getting meaningfully involved in training or whatever, but community centres are generally opened between 9.00 a.m. and most likely closed at 4.00 p.m. They are some, Sir, I must confess, where communities have taken charge of their neighbourhoods and they are managing the community centres where they continue to be open until 10.00 p.m. or later. This helps to keep our young people out of trouble.

We know of the saying, the devil finds work for idle hands. These are opportunities for our young people to be even more productive in the various things they have to do, so I want to laud the effort of the Community Development division for the excellent work it has done and is doing, to say how much I appreciate the opportunity to be able to ask all Barbadians, especially those who are past 40 and 50 to continue to give their support to the community.

We cannot wait on the Government agencies alone. Community is about people and good living. They could tell folk tales to our children, stories, teach them folk songs, help them with literacy programmes, develop demonstrations for them, so that they will be able to benefit from those particular activities.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to touch briefly on the issue of disabled persons and other Honourable Members have spoken on it. I think that \$1 980 815 is well directed. Sir, for too many years, we know Barbadians have kept children with disabilities at home. They were hidden away somewhere. They were tied somewhere. I am happy to know that the Children Development Centre has been doing excellent work, the Ministry of Education is looking at mainstreaming where that is possible, they are day nurseries which cater to the needs of children with disabilities. Sir, the effort, by not only the Government but indeed, non-governmental agencies, as well as the private sector should be congratulated because they have made great efforts to look at the infrastructure of Barbados, to ensure that ramps are put in place, that sidewalks are made available, that car parks now have areas assigned to those who are disabled and that there is a lot of signage which would help.

Indeed, Sir, there are other aspects to assisting those who are disabled, when we look at it from the point of view of access by disabled persons, to walking sticks, wheelchairs, hearing aids and other equipment that will help to upgrade the various senses of those people with disabilities.

I had the distinct privilege, Sir, of attending the concert in which disabled persons participated. I felt extremely proud to be able to sit and be entertained at the highest level by persons with disabilities. It told me, as it

has told many other Barbadians, disability is not inability. Therefore, I think that the effort through the Ministry of Social Transformation in spending that \$2.46 million is a worthy effort to be able to help these individuals to advance in life.

6.20 p.m.

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Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the thrust for them to be able to gain employment is very necessary. If we are to allow them to become part of the mainstream, if we are going to set up all these various agencies to help them to develop various skills, if we are going to give them the training and the exposure, they cannot stay at home.

Therefore, persons like Mr. Carson Small, Miss Eudalie Wickham and Mr. Cleveland Mayers must be lauded for the untiring efforts they have made in trying to get government... The Democratic Labour Party did not pay much attention to those requests, but this Labour Party gives a listening ear and pays special attention to situations of that nature.

I am happy, Sir, to know that efforts are being made to ensure that persons with disabilities are given opportunities to become productive citizens. They are people too. They can make an equally good contribution to this country in their own way. Disability is not inability.

Mr. Chairman, every day we as Barbadians are seeing our young children especially our girls - I am not focussing too much on the ones in the Children's Homes because the agencies are looking after their needs to a certain level - not being able to complete their schooling in the manner that many of us in here and most Barbadians would have been able to. Because many of them are not given adequate attention and because their parents are not as responsible as we would like them to be, they get a lot of latitude, so you would find 13 year olds going into nightclubs. They get opportunities to go to the cinema. They drive all around in the public service vehicles and too many of them are getting pregnant.

I would like for this Government to do a little more. Yes, we are making an effort with the School Attendance Department and with the Child Care Board, but every year too many of our young girls are getting pregnant and the sad story about it is that they do not get pregnant. Sir, for a school boy, more often than not it is a 'hard-back' man who is responsible and then we cannot get most of the parents to come forward to say this is my child and what has happened is wrong, and therefore, I would like for him to be charged in a court of law. We have to do more of that. I will get another opportunity to expand on that a little

more because that is a plaguing experience we see every day, but people are pushing it on the back-burner.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: For a parent to tell you they are not going to put the man in court because there will be nothing for them to get for the child if he has to go to prison, is indeed unacceptable. Men have to know that these young girls could be their children and therefore they should give them the respect that is due to them. They should let them know their 'own little places' and send them to go and do something useful to improve themselves.

Sir, when it comes to the pregnancies, that is now saddling another layer of responsibility on any government and on any society because they cannot manage the children in the way that our foreparents did because we had that extended family to help us to keep and train the babies. That is not happening anymore. I will get another opportunity to speak to that, so I thank you, Sir.

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I too rise to give my support to Head 24 in these Estimates for 2003-2004.

I want at this time to pay gratitude to the Minister of Social Transformation who has been working in this position for some four years and also to thank the staff of the Ministry of Social Transformation for the good work they are doing throughout urban Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, the Urban Development Commission was set up in 1997 through a vision. We can go back to the 50s and 60s to what I would refer as chattel house urban Barbados. I too, like many Honourable Members on this side - I do not know about those on that side - am a product of the chattel house movement. You, yourself, Sir, I believe would have come through the chattel house movement.

I remember living in the Bank Hall/Eagle Hall area. When I was a boy, we had communities like Bank Hall; Eagle Hall; Worrell's Land; Peterkins Land; Alkins Land and Tudor Bridge. At that time, people would leave the country and come into urban Barbados where they could live in the area where they worked. People lived around these areas where they could make their way into Bridgetown easily - Broad Street; Roebuck Street; Milk Market and Baxters Road, and it was convenience for them where in some cases they could walk or ride a bicycle from their village to town.

These people in those days lived in what we know as a rented house. In most cases these rented houses were on tenantry land. There was a man in Bank Hall named Elder who owned over 200 of these little chattel houses. We also

had Mr. Bynoe who is the father of Mr. Bynoe from Carlton and A1 Supermarket. He himself owned over a hundred of these houses. Those landlords in those days, Mr. Chairman, allowed these people to have somewhere to live because, as I said, the people were poor in those days and they depended on these little houses to get somewhere to live.

In those days these chattel houses were moved from spot to spot. On Sundays you would see carts, many of which were owned by a man in Bank Hall named Skeete who used to rent these carts to people, with houses on them. We had great house movers in those days. Eagle Hall produced house movers like Conrad Riley; 'Usie' Browne; 'Cracker'; Joe Cobbs; Hannah; Russell and 'Dolphus'. I knew these people very well as a little boy when I was growing up in Eagle Hall. I came up in an era when we had poor people and we were all part of the chattel house movement.

Mr. Chairman, I heard the recently announced candidate for the Democratic Labour Party for the constituency of St. Michael West talking about squalor in the St. Michael West area and in urban Barbados. Mr. Chairman, in 1986 the Democratic Labour Party controlled all of the seats in St. Michael.

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Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: In 1991, the two Members lost their seats. I remembered the City seat was and is controlled by the present Member for the City. Sir, St. Michael East went back to the Barbados Labour Party, the National Democratic Party did not win a seat and the Barbados Labour Party held the St. Michael South Central seat.

Sir, the Democratic Labour Party when in power, although they controlled those seats, they never had the vision to see if they could have done anything about the squalor and about helping the people in urban Barbados. When the Barbados Labour Party came to power and in 1997, with the vision of the Right Honourable Prime Minister and the present Minister of Social Transformation, decided to look and see what had to be done to transform urban Barbados by raising their standard of living.

Mr. Chairman, I have to congratulate the Minister for the work he is doing. There are areas in St. Michael West that I knew when I was a boy, for instance, Parris Gap, Rotten Town and Alkins, et cetera. It is only under this administration that has brought some enlightenment to the people in those areas.

Mr. Chairman, I worked in that constituency of St. Michael West with the present Member of Parliament and the people of the area said, "Yes, the man was down here for x amount of years and has done nothing for the people. The 'Rev' has just come and is working."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Who is the 'Rev'?

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: That is what the people told me. Mr. Chairman, I am glad to see transformation has taken place in that area and will continue.

Mr. Chairman, under this present administration, we have been able to transform urban Barbados. We have done work in the area of St. Michael West Central. We have been able to look at the tenancies in that area such as, Crichlow's Tenancy, Gibbs Tenancy, Belgrave's Tenancy. Sir, the majority of these tenancies, the land is now being sold to the people, through the Urban Development Programme, where they are giving people the opportunity to own their land at a price of \$2.50 per square foot, while the balance is subsidised by the Barbados Labour Party Government.

Mr. Chairman, there is a road improvement programme in St. Michael West Central. There were a number of tracks that were simply mud tracks. Under the Urban Development Commission, I can now see paved roads. Now that these roads are paved, people can now borrow money from the National Housing Corporation to improve their homes. In doing this, they can now acquire insurance for their homes, which gives them a better value.

Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to the Ministry of Social Transformation for the work they are doing. In the constituency of St. Michael West Central, I have seen the Urban Development Commission workers come into those areas and have helped the poor people. We have seen houses that were in a bad state of disrepair where the Commission has come in and has given people the opportunity to borrow money to repair their homes.

In cases where they were old or poor people who were unable to repair their homes, these were given new homes by the Urban Development Commission.

Mr. Chairman, I know that election is imminent. I am quite sure that the Barbados Labour Party has a track record to go on. I am also sure that when we go back to the people, we do so on a track record where we will be given a chance again.

Hon. M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the pleasure I feel in your asking me to speak is matched only by the pleasure I feel at the performance of the Ministry of Social Transformation and the Urban Development Commission.

Mr. Chairman, this Government was resolute in its belief that if we were to represent the people of St. Michael well, we would have had to transform their relationship with a society and with the communities in which they live. In 1991 and then again in 1994 as we campaigned, there were a series of issues that engaged us as we sought to interact with the constituencies of St. Michael in particular, southern St. James, and parts of Christ Church in the urban corridor, that spoke to the issue of how we could seek to materially improve their welfare.

Mr. Chairman, I have practised criminal law for sometime. Anyone who has practised criminal law in the Magistrate's court knows that many of the disputes that end in courts, especially up to the early 1990s when we saw a different type of crime come in, were centred around disputes between neighbours over line marks. There were issues regarding lack of security of tenure; the inability to borrow from the bank to do house maintenance or to add water-bourne facilities and their relationship to the society in which they were born.

The Urban Development Commission is designed and has been established to alter and to transform that relationship with this society of Barbados and the community within which they live. That is one of the reasons why its programme is as varied as it is.

Mr. Chairman, we have done well in this country, let no one fool us, but there is still a hard core of poverty and of difficult circumstances that we must overcome.

Mr. Chairman, I want to mention some statistics that came out of my Ministry. Last year we conducted the Barbados Crime Survey and some eight thousand persons across Barbados were interviewed. Sir, I am relying on these statistics because apart from the census data this is probably the largest sample that has been taken for interviewing purposes.

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Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: The survey revealed that the majority of Barbadians are not mobile, that 72 per cent of Barbadians live in the area they now live for more than 10 years which reinforces why landownership is importance because they want to drop anchor and improve where they live.

In addition we have the benefit of the 2000 Census data which shows that 56 per cent own their homes and land. This survey goes further because it shows that on average, 78 per cent of Barbadians own their homes.

Sir, when asked whether people in a household consider themselves worse off than other households only 11 per cent of Barbadians consider themselves worse off than people in other households and this reinforces the Government's official statistics that the poverty index is on or about 13 per cent.

We have to come to grip with the fact that having moved more than 100 000 people out of poverty between 1950 and the year 2000, how are we going to move this hard core of persons out of poverty who have been there for some time. I believe that the Urban Development Commission along with the Rural Development Commission and the Poverty Alleviation Fund are strategically placed to be able to make that dent and move persons from a position of reliance to one of independence where they can ultimately give back to the society.

Mr. Chairman, poverty is not only about lack of resources but about lack of will, confidence and opportunity and we have to create a society in which people have access to that opportunity, in which we engender a sense of confidence in people such that they are prepared to take the opportunity because if people do not have confidence that they can do it, even if they have the ability, they will step back instead of stepping forward.

Mr. Chairman, the combination of programmes at Urban Development Commission are treating to the individual needs of those most vulnerable in our society in terms of house repair, the disabled, the indigent and pensioners on their own and we also ensure that we can lend money to people in St. Michael who need \$20 000 or \$30 000 at a concessional rate of interest to fix their houses because they are in a bad state without all the red tape and collateral they might have to put up if they had to go to a bank.

In addition, we recognise that we cannot seek to improve the house if the house needs drainage, there is a dirt road around it and the general conditions around it makes it difficult to maintain the house and it becomes a nightmare for you to have a car or walk to the main road from that house.

Mr. Chairman, a substantial amount of roads across urban Barbados have been done, more than any other Government has done in St. Michael. I stand proud to be associated with this Government for the records of achievement in respect of St. Michael. Almost 1 000 houses have been repaired or constructed. Over 50 roads have been done in the asphalt and concrete road programme and this organisation is barely five years old. Mr. Chairman, I want to speak to what I believe to be the most revolutionary part of the Urban Development Commission's programme. When I entered politics, I determined that I was going to judge myself primarily by

one thing. I believe that rent is dead money and that from the time it leaves your hand, it is dead and consistent with the Barbadian culture, I believe that people must be encouraged to own their properties. The statistics show that we are well on the way to having a full property-owning democracy. We are not there yet but we are on our way to doing it.

Mr. Chairman, in 1991 I met with the residents of Alleyne's Land and Bush Hall who were all confronted with the requirement to pay, at that time, \$5 per square foot for land in circumstances where the land was value at that price because the owner had not put in any services, also, the tenantry in Lower Estate, led to the Barbados Labour Party developing a strategy for the enfranchisement of persons living on tenantry land in this country particular in urban Barbados and in non-plantation rural Barbados.

We looked at the development which the Barbados Labour Party had established for the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act and recognised that persons who were small landowners were the ones owning these tenancies for the most part and we did not want them to carry the burden in the same way that the plantations carry the burden under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act. We also recognise that because they were in urban Barbados that the value of the land was likely to be more than ten cents per square foot because it was closer to the network of roads for commercial activity. We settled on a policy of \$2.50 to be borne by the tenants and the difference between that and the fair market value to be borne by the Government of Barbados. We set it at the fair market value because it is not the intention of this Government to disenfranchise those landlords either and we were resolute with that.

The transfer of land was done in Alleyne's Land, Bush Hall and I stand here today proud to be able to tell you that we have conveyed already in excess of 65 properties subsidising the land and anyone driving through Alleyne's Land can see the transformation of the houses already with people improving their circumstances because now that they have security of tenure, they can use their land papers to borrow and improve their circumstances.

Mr. Chairman, this is the difference between a Government who believes it can only sit in the House of Assembly if it brings material improvement to the people it represents and a party who sat in Government and did nothing to improve the lot of the people who it said constituted its bedrock of support in St. Michael.

Mr. Chairman, you now represent a constituency that has had the honour of this party representing it in St. Michael North West. If you check the records, you will see that since you have been the Member of Parliament that 4th Avenue University Drive and 3rd Avenue University Drive have been done.

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Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: they have done Carter's Gap No. 1 and 2 and I can go on and one.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: They have done Free Hill, Straker's Road, the hard courts at Deacons Road, the market at Deacons Road, which stands as a model of community participation and empowerment in this country today.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, tell who is running against you that he had the similar opportunity in this Parliament and he has nothing to show for it. Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have to contrast it with your record. I see that he is giving out weed wackers but you will remember that we were abused when we bought weed wackers to help youngsters get off the road in that same constituency, St. Michael North West, in 1996 in the By-election.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have seen it all. They abused the Barbados Labour Party for having the confidence in the same youngster to build the market that I referred to that stands as model. Mr. Deputy Chairman, you have me jealous with your record of achievement in St. Michael North West and I had to use other things because I benefitted from both Urban and Rural Development Commission to try and level the scale.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Sir, all of us have benefitted. In my constituency, Howards Land and Richard's Land, off Syndicate Road, the part that joins my constituency from St. Michael North with Mottley Land and Small Land with the asphalt and concrete roads.

However, I do believe that the roads that were most urgent ought be done first. I am looking forward to having Thompson Land Gap being done because it is imperative that those people have an opportunity to have access to a good road, particularly Thompson Gap where the residents have to walk across a pasture to reach the main road.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am hoping that the Urban Development Commission (UDC), which has in its estimates the Bush Hall Yard Gap for two years now, will make it a reality this year. We need the market in Bush Hall Yard Gap. We have some level of enterprise but we need the rest of it. I am told that there is a matter pertaining to the land that is holding up progress.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, this is what I mean about community projects. The Linden Grove Foundation, of which I am associated, has raised \$60 000 and it is in a bank account waiting for the Ministry of Housing to conclude the lease for the Bush Hall Community Council. It is our intention to build a day care centre to be run by the residents of Bush Hall, putting both the old people as well as the young children together and trying to ensure that the old people can impart values but also stay young from the interaction but we are asking Government for assistance in training. The money that we have raised would go towards the materials and this is an excellent form of community partnership which I would wish to reflect strongly on.

Sir, the Ministry of Social Transformation and the Minister deserves our highest praise for helping to transform the relation of the people living in urban Barbados with their communities and country. I think he would go down in history for this defining landmark work.

I thank you, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I beg that you now leave the Chair and report progress to His Honour the SPEAKER and beg to sit again.

Mr. SPEAKER: When suspension was taken the House was in Committee of Supply, to that it should now revert.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 7.45 p.m.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 7.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

7.00 p.m.

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RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. When the suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply, to that it will now revert. Mr. M. Williams in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, let me begin by saying that I rise to give my full support to the Estimates under the Head of the Ministry of Social Transformation. I also want to give my full support to the Minister of Social Transformation and his staff for the wonderful work that they have been doing from the beginning of this Ministry.

Mr. Chairman, in the by-election of 1996, in St. Michael North West, the Prime Minister in one of his addresses gave a solemn pledge to the people of Barbados and it was the first time in all of my years around politics, that I would have heard any person acting on behalf of a party, lay out a policy for the alleviation of poverty. He said on that occasion that the Barbados Labour Party Government would launch an assault on poverty and over the next four years, resources of the order of \$5 million would be made available to the requisite Government ministry and agency specifically for poverty alleviation programmes.

Mr. Chairman, we have seen since 1996 through 2003, a commitment to the pledge that the Prime Minister gave during that by-election in 1996 in St. Michael North West.

Mr. Chairman, when a young man wants help to make his mind up about getting involved in elective politics, especially if he would have chosen a path for which there was some success along the way, and I am speaking about myself, one has to focus on a couple of things that a political institution is doing, to be convinced, beyond a shadow of doubt that the move he intends to make, is the correct one. It is no secret that a person like me, Mr. Chairman, and all of my constituents can attest to this, that my involvement in elective politics is because I have a desire to stop poor people in my constituency from being poor, and by extension, poor people from elsewhere in Barbados from being poor for much longer.

Sir, I state that as my launching pad. When I looked at what the Barbados Labour Party was doing up to the election of 1999, I was convinced that I should have got involved in elective politics, fighting for the cause of the poorer persons in my constituency, first and foremost. Sir, that is my mission in politics and I will continue along that line.

This Barbados Labour Party Government through its enlightened social policies and social programmes, as I said, provided the decided moment for my involvement in elective politics. I have not regretted one moment of it today, because I have seen the enlightened policies of many years ago, helping to transform those persons who are located at the lower end of our society. I have seen it and the effort is intensifying and Honourable Members on This Side, would have spoken to the many policies and programmes which we have put in place.

Mr. Chairman, we have seen the establishment of the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission certainly within the last five to six years. We have seen a reactivated Community Development Department since this Barbados Labour Party Government took office.

We have seen the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act being implemented and this is a very strategic piece of social engineering. We have seen more funds being made available to low income earners for housing. We have seen the General Workers Loan Fund and other funds being established within the Urban Development Commission to help low income earners with their home improvements.

We have seen, in general, through the efforts of the Ministry of Social Transformation, attempts to build community life in Barbados.

I want to mention a couple of the programmes which are looked after by the Ministry of Social Transformation which leaves us in no doubt, that our mission is looking after the less fortunate in the society, mobilising the community to get involve in activities which are productive and wholesome.

The Community Technology Programme, Mr. Chairman, is just like the bit of social engineering which the Barbados Labour Party spearheaded to make plantation land available to those who were living on them for a long time.

Asides.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Honourable Members on This Side and I would imagine on That Side would benefit from the implementation of the Community Technology Programme in the communities. We could well appreciate that combined with the EduTech Programme which is taking the information technology into the schools, that there are some persons who would have fallen through the cracks, so to speak, if we did not take information technology into the communities.

There is a cost attached to having access to this type of training and some persons just may not be able to avail themselves of the financial wherewithal in order to take classes in information technology privately. This Barbados Labour Party knows the importance of giving those persons, who otherwise would not get an opportunity, this vital opportunity to gain some knowledge of information technology.

I cannot boast of the Community Technology Programme being brought to my constituency because I do not have a building in my constituency for the programme to be taught. What I can tell you from speaking to those

persons who have facilities in their constituencies, that each of the programmes which have been offered were oversubscribed, and this should tell you something.

This can tell you that those persons appreciate and recognise what this Government is trying to do in order to give them an opportunity to participate in activities in a meaningful way, having acquired some facility for information technology.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East mentioned also the Welfare-to-Work Programme. Mr. Chairman, some of us spend a lot of time preaching to the young people in our constituencies, the virtues of self-reliance. We want you to be independent, we want you to be more self-reliant, we want you, notwithstanding your circumstances, how unfortunate some of them might have been, to use the facilities that are available to you, to use the various avenues being provided by the Government to make yourself independent.

Sir, any Government that sees it fit to introduce a programme that takes people off welfare and on to work, must be viewed as a very serious Government.

7.55 p.m.

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Hon. A. P. WOOD: Many years ago in my constituency - I took over a constituency that was basically sleeping - we had a situation where a large number of young people felt that nobody cared about them, that nobody wanted them to participate in anything meaningful and that nobody valued their services.

The Democratic Labour Party representatives both for St. Philip North and St. Philip South thought that by keeping the minds of the young people in those constituency enslaved by not giving them the opportunity to build self-esteem and self-confidence and to become independent and self-reliant, they would continue to get their support. That worked for a time but since 1994 and certainly since 1999 all of that can be put behind us.

The constituencies of St. Philip North and St. Philip South are now fully mobilised because we have found ways of getting the community practitioners to operate at the centre of the planning activities which are numerous in both constituencies because we want them to feel that we value their expertise and we want to give them an opportunity to participate in the planning of the various activities which are for the good of the communities.

We have numerous sports programmes. The planning for those activities do not start at my constituency office level. We go into the communities and find the best

persons and we encourage them to encourage others to be part of the planning process. It happened with the educational programmes, it happened with the cultural programmes and it happened with the sporting programme.

Mr. Chairman, I have the good fortune of being the parliamentary representative for an area that includes the Sterling Children's Home. I also have the good fortune of being close to someone who is a member of the Optimist Club. I know that since 1999 the rejuvenated Child Care Board has been doing wonders in this country for those children who are living at the children homes. Through a collaborative effort between the Optimist Club and the Child Care Board three houses were constructed at Sterling so as to give those children at the Sterling Children's Home, who have to leave the home when they reach the legal age, an opportunity to survive on their own so to speak before they are put out of the precincts of the Sterling Children's Home altogether. They are involved in finding jobs for them, so they will be kept in the homes about a year-and-a-half so that they can see what it is like to be operating in a largely uncontrolled environment. The skills which they acquire and practise during that period would serve them in good stead when they have to move away from the home altogether and go back into society so that they can integrate well and function with limited supervision and certainly be able to make good use of their lives.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of other things the Ministry of Social Transformation has been doing. Mention has been made of the attention paid to the improvements in the physical environment. They spoke about the road repairs being done by the Urban Development Commission, the tenancies programme and many other things which they are doing.

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

Hon. A. P. WOOD: We should also make note of the fact that there has been a wider coverage of cases which are being covered through the Welfare Department. What we are saying is that we have looked around to see and to identify those cases which can be considered as poverty cases in a genuine way and we have widened the net to make sure that more and more persons get an opportunity. Mr. Chairman, I think I am going to have to come back because one of the things that this Government should be commended for is that in the last two years when economic circumstances were not as rosy as we have grown accustomed to, this Government did not cut the money that was made available to the Poverty Alleviation Fund because, in accordance with the philosophy of the Barbados Labour Party in the promotion of a better quality of life for our people and our need to always reach out and lift up those of us who are less fortunate than ourselves, we

saw it fit that notwithstanding the economic stringencies that were with us that there should have been no cuts to the Poverty Alleviation Fund or no reduction in the money given to the Ministry of Social Transformation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am sure the Honourable Member has a lot more to say and he will be back.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, it is rather regrettable to sit in Parliament and hear Honourable Members say that the Democratic Labour Party never had any social programme and that they only were able to practise their social engineering skills after they left the Democratic Labour Party and joined the Barbados Labour Party. It is good that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East was not one of those because he would have known better.

When one looks back at the history of Barbados, one surely would understand that free secondary education, free school meals and free textbooks would have been social engineering. If the Honourable Members on the other side cannot locate with those policies, then it is clear to me that they do not understand what is social engineering.

One would have to also recognise that the Democratic Labour Party not only educated the people, but they assisted the ones who were less fortunate by introducing something called Parks and Beaches Commission which we now call the National Conservation Commission which previously was seemed as a crash programme but today is regarded as one of the major environmental projects ever to be conceived in this country. The National Conservation Commission has not only provided work but it is now regarded as the environmental project of Barbados. On top of that, it is also regarded as the project that is very much connected to the tourism industry because it has beautified Barbados to make the tourism industry what it is. That is not all, the social engineering went much further.

We also formed something called the Barbados Marketing Corporation so that those poor farmers who previously produced products but did not know where to sell them, were able to take all their produce to the Barbados Marketing Corporation so that they could find a market for their produce. Yet still, I can hear in this House this evening that the Democratic Labour Party did not know anything about social engineering and that social transformation started in this country in the 1990s.

I know that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East would not say that because he took his knowledge from here over to there to teach them about social transformation, so much so that they even made him a consultant to teach them how to socially transform Barbados.

8.05 p.m.

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Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, that was not all. After realising that people cannot only be educated and employed, but that there was the need to find them a cheaper way to allow them to travel, the Democratic Labour Party then introduced the 25 cents bus fare, which was another aspect of social transformation. If there is one thing that it has to its credit is the ability to allow poor workers in Barbados to move throughout Barbados, at a nominal cost. Is that not social transformation and the alleviation of poverty at the highest level?

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: It is sustainable for it has started many years ago and has continued. Therefore, when one looks at the combination of these things, what can one see but an enlightened Party, of which I am now the disciple for the people of Barbados.

It was not only that, Sir, so innovative was the Democratic Labour Party, so entertaining and exciting were these programmes that we recognised that we not only allowed people to remain in the communities even though they were educated but we made sure that we brought Crop-Over fairs to the people of Barbados so that they could get some form of entertainment and interaction amongst the masses of people of Barbados, along with the other classes.

Sir, I want it be known that before the Government started their resource centres, the Anglican Church of St. Lucy started a resource centre at St. Swithun and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East can confirm this. They have now taken that to the old St. Clement's School. Now there are two resource centres in the constituency of St. Lucy which have been formed by the Anglican Church.

We have also been able to get the Ministry of Social Transformation to agree that the North Stars Centre will be the official resource centre in St. Lucy with the Government project. I have also recommended that Rock Field will be the second resource centre in the phrase.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, I heard a complaint from the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that the people of St. Thomas are not able to socialise as accustomed but I want this House to know that at Moon Town, there is a mixture of prime ministers, ministers, ambassadors, leaders, chairmen of committees, all types of persons socialise there.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, on point of order. I did not make that comment. I said, as a result of the closure of the community centre that was the heart of the whole of St. Thomas, there was an elimination of activities but because of the programmes of the Barbados Labour Party in 1994, community activities have begun to grow again. I never said that it did not happen.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, all I was saying to the Honourable Member that all she had to do, seeing the people used to say that St. Lucy was behind God's back and was too far to travel, was to find an enlightened project like I did at Moon Town, of which she can also speak, where people come from all over the world to enjoy the goodies of Moon Town and also to interact with the masses of people in Barbados.

I am glad that point was made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. A number of weeks ago, I mentioned the importance of people going back to the communities and meeting under the manchineel trees to socialise with the youngsters in Barbados. The same point that they had previously made, they are now making. That is, that one does not go under manchineel trees.

Mr. Chairman, it is impossible to go to any beach and not find manchineel trees. Anyone who understands social life in Barbados would know that one only needs to worry about a manchineel tree when the rain is falling or if somebody throws a stone in it, also, that is where you can find young boys pitching marbles, playing dominoes, draft or warri.

Sir, we have to understand that in the same way the older people found time to socialise with us when we were youngsters, we need to go back to our communities and to socialise with the youngsters too, so that we can be role models for the youngsters and help them to develop their lives. That is what is needed but we are so caught up with the other things in the communities, that we are not giving back what we should. We have allowed the youngsters to operate on their own. When they get themselves into trouble, we blame them, forgetting that when we were growing up, there were senior people who would have directed and protected us from mischief.

We have to understand that we must put a proper programme in place for those persons who have disabilities. I believe they must be integrated within the society and that structures must be put in place to make sure these persons could adopt to such structures and we do not develop a community with two societies, nor allow a divide-and-rule situation, as it relates to persons with disabilities.

I also believe we must understand the national cake must be divided equally among every constituency. There

are some Ministries in this Parliament where the Ministers believe their budgets belong to only certain constituencies. It is not fair. Every year I strongly believe that the social budget must be divided equally. For example, I heard the Minister of Public Works outlining the amount of work that was done during the last year and the only constituency the Minister has not mentioned is that of St. Lucy.

I have already said that I find it difficult to vote for these Estimates of Expenditure unless I get a commitment that St. Lucy will get its fair share of the money voted in this Parliament as it relates to social services, roads, et cetera.

Sir, in the same way that the Honourable Members for St. Philip North, St. Philip South and the Minister for Social Transformation, could understand the needs of St. Lucy, the other Ministers must learn to play their role, once this policy is put in place.

8.15 p.m.

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Mr. D. StE. KELLMAN: It is regrettable to hear a Minister get up in this House and mention all the constituencies from Christ Church and did not mention St. Lucy. Sir, the Minister of Public Works promised me that he will do one road at Butchers better known as Colleton and I am grateful for that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member's time is up. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Chairman, I want to pick up where the Honourable Member for St. Lucy left off. He spoke about integrating persons with disabilities into our social programmes. The disabilities unit is very dear to my heart because it was set up under my watch and one of the things which pushed me into that direction was when I noticed that there is a women's bureau speaking on behalf of women, a child care board to speak on behalf of the children, a national assistance board speaking on behalf of the senior citizens but that we did not have specific agency speaking on behalf of persons with disabilities. I took a conscious decision that Barbados needed a disabilities unit that would air all the concerns of persons with disabilities.

Sir, the unit has been doing excellent work and has virtually transformed the way in which we approach the problems of those persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities must now feel that this Government actually cares about them. They are now more conscious of their worth to society.

A person with a disability once said that if he had to live anywhere on the earth it would be Canada because of the programme that country has for persons with disabilities. Barbados has not yet reached that stage but I believe someone will soon say that if he has a disability and had to live anywhere on the earth it would be Barbados. Clearly, with the policies and programme that this Government has it is clear that each one matters including those with disabilities.

Mr. Chairman, the sky is the limit for persons living in Barbados. If ten years ago someone told me that I would witness a cricket match being played by blind people in Barbados I would have laughed at them. Yesterday, I went into Queens Park and saw blind people playing cricket. On Sunday night the Barbados National Team for the Blind will play against the English team.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said we should do more but this Government is doing its best and this is a significant breakthrough for persons with impaired vision or who are totally blind.

Yesterday the Honourable Member St. Michael South East and I met with the team and we could see joy in their faces because in their wildest dreams they never thought they would be introduced to the Minister of Sports and the High Commissioner of England as they were about to play a cricket match.

Mr. Chairman, these persons will now represent Barbados at a national level on the national team in their game. This is not something to ridicule because a blind world cup cricket competition is being played. The British team came third and the Indian team came first. The Caribbean has to form a team because there is World Cup cricket for the blind in England in 2006.

Sir, we have integrated the disabled into the community and they are doing the same things that people with sight can do. I witness the English team against our celebrity team which included Haynes and Greenidge. A few years ago blind people did not think that they would walk on the same team and shake the same hands as Greenidge and Haynes.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that any game organised on behalf of persons with disabilities must be safe for them to play. It was okay to explain to me how it would be played but I wanted to make sure that the game was safe and that these persons were free from injury.

8.25 p.m.

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Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: I am satisfied that it is an excellent game. I saw a chap from England who is totally blind making some dives and saves while traveling at high speeds out of this world. Mr. Deputy Chairman, I will be going all out to ensure that more of our Caribbean islands know about this game, get involved and that the Caribbean tries its best to put a World Cup team for blind cricket to tour England in 2006.

Sir, next in line is going to be wheelchair basketball. I have to say that the British High Commissioner has expressed a wish to bring a wheelchair basketball coach to Barbados as soon as we are ready. It is not just cricket that we are going after as far as people with disabilities are concerned.

Swimming for the disabled is also on the cards, including blind people. There is a coach that teaches blind people to swim once a week here in Barbados. We have to realise that this activity is also an Olympic event and our persons with disabilities are not going to be left behind.

They are people like my friend, Wesley, who is always representing Barbados overseas in the paralympics in the wheelchair sports and I am making an appeal to the private sector to lend some more assistance to those persons who want to participate in the paralympics with their wheelchairs because the wheelchairs are very expensive. These wheelchairs are not like the ordinary wheelchairs that we use to move from point A to point B in the house, they are a different type of wheelchair.

Sir, may be the Honourable Member for St. Lucy does not know that we have integrated the disabled in all sports. We have not pushed the disabled aside.

Asides.

Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: Sir, it is clear to me that the focus of the Disability Unit is to better the lives of people with disabilities in every respect, even at the level of sports. I feel good about this because as Minister responsible for community development, I took a conscious decision to set up that Unit.

I know that the Honourable Member for St. John used to be Minister responsible for community development too but I cannot think of anything that he did. I can think of something that I did. I can also think of other things which the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East has done but I can think of anything that was done over the other side.

Sir, the concept that I heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas used in here earlier this afternoon that disability does not mean inability. I think that if proving to

be true more and more every year as we put these programmes in place.

There are a lot of positives that we have in this society that we can build on and a classic example of this is the resource centre where those persons with disabilities are concerned. We have not left them out. Over at the Disability Unit there are some computers that are equipped with the necessary gadgets that are needed for persons with disabilities. For example, these computers are equipped with braille menus.

Sir, regarding the Edutech programme, we are not leaving them out either. I recall we had a Ministers of Education meeting here in Barbados a few months ago and after the meeting I was speaking with some of the Ministers about the programme that we have at the Irvin Wilson School. When I explained it to them, they said that they wanted to go over to the school to see what it was. I did not go with them to the school. I went back to my office.

However, three Ministers of Education ended up in my office immediately after that meeting and they told me that they want to send some of their officials to Barbados to see what we were doing at the Irvin Wilson School. That is part of the EduTech programme for persons with disabilities and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is saying that we need to integrate the disabled in our programmes as though we are not doing that now. He does not know about the programmes that we have.

Asides.

Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Deputy Chairman, our national sports policy has as its core theme "Sports for All". It is easy to look at that theme and ask yourself what do we mean by 'for all'. It is easy for someone to say that 'all' does not include the disabled. When we say 'Sports for All' in this day and age, we include the disabled as well. When we say 'Education for All', we include the disabled as well.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, let me quickly say that our senior games that will be coming up at the National Stadium. I attended those games last year and the stadium as packed. The participation was of such high level that they were persons at the games that vowed that next year they would be participating.

Sir, we tried to restrict the way in which you enter the stadium because we had to turn away people last year. Admission is by tickets and this year all of the tickets are gone.

Asides.

Hon. R.N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the overall point that I want to make is that we have not left out anyone and everybody is being integrated into sports in this country.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

8.35 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I am very much obliged to you. I always wish in the Estimates debate to speak to this Head of expenditure because from the very beginning, the City of Bridgetown has been a major beneficiary and I have to say, continues to be a major beneficiary. And how else could it be, Mr. Chairman, because the City of Bridgetown, more than any other place in Barbados, had the greatest need.

Let me begin with the concrete roads. The Prime Minister made the point on this floor that because I advocated for concrete roads for over twenty years, it was only fair that they should start with the City of Bridgetown and I am utterly delighted.

Sir, what was known as the Marl Hole at Green Point Lane is no longer a marl hole. Dickinson Alley, which was never paved, connecting Queens Street to another Alley which have been paved on an earlier occasion, now has a concrete road.

Last week, I was in a place down by St. Mary's Church known as Pond Bottom which is beautifully paved. Half of the people who live there are old, in their 70s and 80s. I only need to get the electric light for them, so that when it is getting dark in the evenings, there will be better security. A lot of people did not know that Pond Bottom exists but not now, for the first time in the history of Bridgetown, and that is 375 years, Sir, it has a concrete road. I walked on it. Little children on tricycles were riding on it and school children were playing hopscotch on it. It gave a very warm feeling and I am very grateful to the Urban Development Commission for that road.

Sir, between Light Foot Lane and Sobers Lane, there was a very rocky track for all the years that those two lanes were there. Sir, these are lanes which were there at the beginning of Bridgetown because that was the part of Bridgetown that was first settled 375 years ago. All of those roads have been done. Mr. Chairman, those are the areas where people first settled, Suttle Street, Mason Hall Street and Reed Street. Sir, I have to let my gratitude be known.

Sir, work also being done in the uptown area. For years there was a bath just off King William Street and

there was a concrete drain behind it. We always called it 'the concrete' but it was only called 'the concrete' because it was a big concrete box drain which brought strong water into the Constitution River. Now, for the first time, it has a proper concrete road, connecting Spruce Street to King William Street.

Sir, Murphy Pasture over the years had been upgraded, this goes back to a campaign promise in 1976. In March to April 1976, I was on the campaign trail for a by-election. One of the promises then was that we would do something about Murphy Pasture. It is a wonder thing to see now a part of it fenced, with proper hard courts which are used by the St. Mary's Primary School in the day time and when school is over, the community is there.

The next thing now will be lights for that because until this time in the evening, young men are out there doing something that is wholesome, rather than getting too busy on things that are not and that is very gratifying. This makes the 25 years of effort, Mr. Chairman, worth it.

The homeless, particularly those who are elderly, we continue to get them upgraded. The list is long because the housing stock in the City of Bridgetown has been so poor and that is why, Mr. Chairman, from the beginning, in every term of office, when I am part of a Government, I plan for modern housing in the City of Bridgetown.

It started with Kensington Lodge and then it moved to Pond Side and to London Bourne and I am pleased to say that a redevelopment project has now been conceptualised for what is known as Cats Castle. This is in the downtown area. I am proposing that where the old Bridgetown Ice Factory is, behind St. Mary's Church, the whole block, right out to the Emmerton main lane that the Government would acquire that and put sometime even better than London Bourne on it, at least four storeys.

A draft proposal was prepared and as I am advised, it is currently being considered by the Board of UDC. Two firms have been short listed to provide consultancy services for the preparation of a feasibility study and I gather that the Ministry of Social Transformation is engaged in exploratory discussions, in respect of how this project will be funded.

Perhaps some of the worst ever housing in the City of Bridgetown were to be found at Cats Castle. I have done my best to improve it over the years but there is only a certain point to where you can go. When I first went into Cats Castle, there were dirt floors. 'Pushan' lived in a hovel with a dirt floor and over the years, I have tried to upgrade it but there is a point beyond which you cannot go and we need to go in and put in proper utilities and modern multi-storey housing.

Sir, we need to always remember that two-thirds of City of Bridgetown is below sea level and we are always going to have problems with drainage. The Ministry of Public Works has done wonderful work in Baxters Road, and I thank them, but there is still work which has to be done in respect of drainage.

Sir, a drainage study for the New Orleans area was undertaken a few years ago by the Urban Development Commission and the final report of that study was examined by the Commission and the report on the recommendations were submitted to the Public Investment Unit and the Planning and Priorities Committee for consideration. This is a costly project but the work for it must start at some point.

I keep making the point, when you see flooding in Bridgetown that it sometimes comes from all up in Sturges. The work has to be done. When the West coast Sewerage project is undertaken, the whole of the New Orleans has to be sewerred. This was the undertaking that was given.

The Cats Castle area also has to be sewerred. Both these areas have to be sewerred because you cannot go on in the Twenty-first Century with a situation where in the New Orleans - and I make this point all the time - you meet water sometimes at 18 inches. The water level can get very high. It is very important that this drainage works be undertaken.

I am pleased that the study has been done, although it has been done for a couple of years now. I am a patient woman and I am prepared to wait for it to be done. As I said, I am very grateful for the work in Baxters Road. Now that the road works have been completed and all of the wires are underground and Baxters Road is a beautiful place, we can get to work on putting those new frontages with the lovely overhanging galleries back onto the buildings so that Baxters Road will be transformed. There was no point trying to do that before the road works were completed, and even now that the road works are finishing you will see the people now starting to upgrade their properties.

We have designated an area of land which was acquired for the road works but was more than was needed for the road works, in the four-cross. The ladies who sell fish in Baxters Road are going to have nicely covered stalls, running water, tiled surfaces, storage facilities and so on. They will also have tables and chairs. I am asking that they build in a deep lay-by so that cars can drive up to purchase fish.

8.45 p.m.

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Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I think they should be able to do business in the day time not only in the evenings. Until the public works get out of the way, we would not see what that four-cross is going to look like. People cannot imagine how beautiful that four-cross is going to be. There is going to be rapid business on all four corners of that four-cross. It is a lovely location.

I think it is fortunate that the Government will actually own land on one of those corners. It is there that facilities will be put in place for the fry fish service which has been associated with Baxters Road for as long as I know myself.

Mr. Chairman, the City of Bridgetown has much to be grateful to the Ministry of Social Transformation for. At the risk of sounding like Oliver Twist, I have asked the Minister of Social Transformation privately for a resource centre for the City of Bridgetown and he has given me his word, that the City of Bridgetown must absolutely have a resource centre. For several years we have had a skills training programme at Emmerton that was mostly funded by the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) which is still doing excellent work. As part of that programme, one of the skills offer was computer skills which was always the most heavily subscribed of the programmes. People would sometimes have to wait for two or three terms before they could get in on that programme which was not done at Emmerton but at Mall 100 which is fronting on to Baxters Road.

Every time I talk with the young people of the City of Bridgetown I drill into their heads the point that they have to get a skill. I do that all the time and it has reached a point now where they accuse me of telling them that they have to get a skill every time I talk to them, but I have to tell them all the time that if I ask somebody for a job, the first thing they are going to ask me is what skill the person have. So if it is but one thing the young people of the City of Bridgetown understands is that the future lies in the computer and these new technologies. So they are doing all kinds of programmes in the churches - because churches are doing some of this work - and with other entities, wherever they are being done. So what I would like is that the City of Bridgetown Resource Centre be so located that it would not only be accessible to the people from downtown, be it New Orleans, Chapman Lane or Kensington Lodge, but that it be equally accessible to the people across the bridge in the uptown areas. I am hoping that would happen in this new financial year.

In these Estimates, as I understand it from the Minister of Social Transformation, provision has been made for that resource centre for the City of Bridgetown preferably in a fairly central place where people on both sides of the river, who are my constituents whose interest and concerns I have been representing in this Parliament

for 25 years, can have access to it. This year of our Lord 2003 will be 25 years that I have been representing their interest in Parliament. Even in that time when I was outside of Parliament I have been making the case for 27 years for a better quality of life for the people of the City of Bridgetown.

The river is really a landmark for the people who live in the City. You can either live downtown the city or you can live uptown the city. The river may not look like much but it is the centre of Bridgetown and it is that from which Bridgetown was named from the very beginning. In fact, Bridgetown used to be called the Bridge before it was even a town. When it became a town, it was called Bridgetown.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Sorry, I have to interrupt the Honourable Member, but your time is up.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I want to give my fullest support to this and if more monies could have been voted, it would have been a good thing because these monies are going to the best cause of all. These monies go to where you can see an improved quality of life with the naked eye and for that I give thanks and praise.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Chairman, let me begin first by giving my full support to all the praises that have been showered on the Minister and the Ministry of Social Transformation.

I believe that we are privileged and blessed to have a Minister particularly in this Ministry with such a high level of commitment and sincerity to the task of stopping poor people from being poor in Barbados.

I also believe that this Head is fundamentally important to the development of people in Barbados and maybe a lot more so than we sometimes give it credit for.

I have always wondered why in some corridors and in so many forums there are so many 'blows' thrown at the Ministry of Social Transformation. It is only after hearing the Honourable Member for St. Lucy tonight that I realise why in many instances there is some criticism of the Ministry of Social Transformation and its policies. For the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to pick isolated development policies and try to lump all of them under one banner of social transformation is to completely miss the philosophy that underlies why the Ministry of Social Transformation was created in the first place. What we are talking about is not just the establishment of a ministry and a number of individual core policies but a national social revolution that must take place in Barbados if we are to truly become a developed country or show the indicators that point to us becoming a developed country.

There is no doubt that issues relating to free education and the Barbados Marketing Corporation are important development issues but, they do not constitute in and of themselves - a year here and a year there - any concept of a revolution in social policy. The Ministry of Social Transformation creates a platform and a new thinking in social development and social policy.

This debate on this particular Head is very rich its philosophy. I believe that most Bajans understand this. There are the few unenlightened souls like the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who does not understand and cannot at all endorse or come to grips with the philosophy, but that is understood. Those are the ones who seek to pick on the negatives of the programme and the Ministry of Social Transformation rather than focussing upon the issues that are right for the development of Barbados.

The Ministry of Social Transformation will have its problems like any other ministry and the programmes will have some negatives. But this is a concept and a philosophy that all Barbadians must be educated and sensitized to embrace if we are to continue to develop in terms of where this country is supposed to go among the community of nations.

Sir, I actually sat in here and heard the Democratic Labour Party criticised the establishment of the Ministry of Social Transformation. This is not anything that anybody told me. I believe this calls for bi-partisan concurrence in terms of the development of this society and where the Ministry of Social Transformation should go. I do not understand how anyone at all in his/her right mind who has been sent here to represent poor people's interest could have a difficulty with the concept of the Ministry of Social Transformation. I believe that everyone who is a representative of an urban constituency, as is in my case, understands it very well and have benefited from it.

8.55 p.m.

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Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Sir, I want to show the difference in the thinking and in the philosophies of the Democratic Labour and the Barbados Labour Party. When the Democratic Labour Party speaks to free education, one never hears the Barbados Labour Party criticising that concept. What one might hear is that we might seek to own part in it or to put it in its right context. What they seek to do is to criticise and to put down the programme. This is the first time I have ever heard the Honourable Member St. Lucy speaking to what they would have done to socially transform the nation. They have criticised the programme and the philosophy under the Ministry of Social Transformation.

Sir, those representatives on that side who had represented the urban corridors of Barbados should eternally hang their heads in shame in terms of what they would have done to the development of urban Barbados during the time they were in Parliament. Sir, it was 25 years of social neglect.

I represent a constituency where an Honourable Member over that side, who was a Prime Minister, had represented for 25 years and there are no enduring monuments to his representation to St. Michael South. There are no monuments to the Honourable Member that represented St. Michael West and all across that urban corridor, particularly in places where the Barbadian populace and those constituents had constantly returned them to this Chamber. They have neglected the people's most fundamental interest and that was empowering them to be transformed socially. Mendacity

Sir, I believe that other people who are benefit from and criticising the programme at the same time should be afraid. There are those people who are speaking about building or perpetuating mendicancy but have demonstrated a fundamental backwardness about the concepts of how one deals with people's socialisation and development.

Sir, how could one build a society without a direct onslaught upon issues that represent the major overriding problems of the society? I hear some persons such as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy espousing philosophies about giving a man education, a job, recreational facilities, building the Barbados Marketing Corporation, and that is a way out of poverty.

Mr. Chairman, let me ask this: While a man is being educated, where does he sleep? Could a man, woman, boy or girl, who wrestles with rodents every night for a space to sleep, have any understanding or would focus his or her attention to the concepts of learning? When the Member spoke of teaching a man to fish, what is that man going to do after he is being taught to fish? What is he going to eat? The philosophy must be that while that is being done, the fundamental social issues with which that man has to deal, must also be attacked.

Mr. Chairman, those persons who have had to fight everyday in this country in order to exist understand what this administration has done for them, in terms of seeking to raise a sense of pride. It is not only about giving. In my constituency, I have seen what it has done for the psychological development of those people.

Sir, most of the time when one goes into a community, one will see that whenever people fall into some level of deviance and cannot look after themselves, it always ends with the grandparents having to look after the

children because the parents somehow ends up becoming incarcerated in jail or some other institution. Therefore, if I am able to change the fortunes of that grandparents who have paid their dues, the only way I am going to be able to raise the consciousness of those persons, including the neighbours, would be to create a whole new level of thinking and a sense of pride in persons.

Mr. Chairman, the Democratic Labour Party should be ashamed of themselves for they had dominated the majority of the constituencies in St. Michael.

Mr. Chairman, building a house for a poor person does wonders for the attack on poverty, especially when that person knows that he has somewhere to come home to.

The Honourable Member spoke of giving any number of contracts to small businesses and enshrining them in law, then turns around and criticises the issue of being able to create a number of small contractors to do urban work. Mr. Chairman, there would always be problems and issues with some contractors. In every thing, there is good and bad. There are good Parliamentarians and bad Parliamentarians, and he is a bad one.

Mr. Chairman, some people do not understand the issue about the elderly. The issue of a government looking after the elderly in a society shows a certain level of national social maturity. It not only gives a sense or pride to those persons but also gives a sense of sure-footedness and confidence to younger persons because they are aware that, in their twilight years, they have a net to fall on.

Sir, when the elderly is looking after the elderly, this is also symbolic of the type of serious social maturity of this administration. If one looks at any nation across the world in terms of these development policies, those nations are the ones which will go further. I am obliged to you.

9.05 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

REV. J.J.S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to speak specifically to a particular issue. Mr. Chairman, your responsibility of presiding in the meeting precludes you from participation and in this matter and I speak for the constituents of St. Michael West as well as those served by you in St. Michael North West. I am sure that we have identified common problems across the borders of the two constituents at the western end of urban Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, there is no dispute that this Government has served this country well in terms of managing the economy. It has, for the last nine years, brought this country forward at a pace to a position where

it is very much respected in the Caribbean and in the wider international community.

Mr. Chairman, in spite of the best efforts and the most striking successes there will always be those who fall through the cracks. In St. Michael West there are some who have fallen through the cracks and, Mr. Chairman, I am sure that this is your experience as well.

I want to speak to the issue of poverty alleviation as it relates to the matter of provision of housing for the elderly. This theme, the issue of the provision of housing for the elderly poor in Barbados, was addressed by the last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South as well as the Honourable Member for the City. It is a credit to this Government and its record that housing for this category of person in this country continues to be of good quality and it has developed to a stage which suggests that we can be proud of this particular situation.

My experience in St. Michael West in 1996 suggested the need for a Ministry of Social Transformation and a serious attack on poverty alleviation in Barbados and what I find in St. Michael West is also to be found in St. Michael North West. It continues to be a soul-searing experience of mine when I come upon elderly poor people in modern Barbados in the 21st century who live in deplorable housing conditions in spite of the Government's good record and its best efforts. It speaks to the need to continue to expand the programme and make it more vibrant. It stands eternally to the discredit of the Democratic Labour Party that they would have decried and devalued the importance of this programme.

I find elderly poor persons in St. Michael West living in housing where the floor is literally the dirt of earth. We have corrected some of those problems but others exist. I say this especially for the appreciation of the Honourable Minister of Social Transformation. I remember an experience where I entered a house in a district in St. Michael West, went through the door at the front of the house and upon entering the door I realised that the back of the house was missing. Such a large portion of the house was missing that one could have driven a car through the space. Sir, these experiences are soul-searing. There are people living on dirt floors and roofs with substantial portions missing.

What complicates this is that in many of these instances the elderly people living in these situations are also infirmed. There are instances where people must use wheelchairs and it is almost impossible to use a wheelchair within the precincts of these so-called domestic dwellings.

Mr. Chairman, if your experience is the same as mine in terms of how these situations should be addressed we have a record in the past four years of which we can be

justly proud as representatives of the people of St. Michael West and St. Michael North West. In St. Michael West we have been able to replace 40 houses for persons living in deplorable conditions. Sir, that is almost one house per month. Mr. Chairman, being the progressive and earnest representative that you are, I am sure that the record in St. Michael North West will be the same as mine.

In spite of this, there is still a long waiting list. There are more yet to be addressed than those we have already addressed because this matter of provision of housing for elderly folk in urban Barbados is a serious issue.

Mr. Chairman, I trust that the Minister of Social Transformation will join me in this call because I believe that within his bosom lies the capacity to help prevail upon the private sector in Barbados to join the Government in the establishment of a special fund to assist in the address of this particular situation.

We live in an era of public/private sector partnership. We live in an era of partnership of strategic pursuit of organisational objectives and here in Barbados we have local conglomerates that make millions of dollars in after tax profits every year. Also present in Barbados are multinational corporations and their subsidiaries operating that make millions of dollars in after tax profit a year. Some contribute to the development of sport in this country and that is to be commended but there is need at this time for the private sector in Barbados to be challenged to join the Ministry of Social Transformation and the Government in establishing a special fund which will address the problem of housing for the elderly in Barbados.

Sir, we are not talking about partnership for profit nor an enterprise for profit, we are talking about partnership for the strategic purpose of addressing the problem for elderly poor in this country.

Sir, we live in an era where a private sector led development should be seen in terms of economic development and this suggests that there is scope for private sector initiative and support of Government with respect to social development as well.

We live in an era of social partnership in Barbados. We have a model of social partnership which we have given to the world. We talk about the Prices and Income Protocol which is a mechanism that addresses prices and income, wages and matters of industrial relations. I am suggesting that there can be a new dimension given to that mandate and that it can be expanded to include a reference to the provision of housing for the elderly poor in Barbados.

9.15 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Rev. J.J.S. ATHERLEY: Sir, some would suggest that is not realistic. If we cannot have the existing mechanism to serve or pursue an expanded agency, I am suggesting that we can have a parallel social partnership mechanism, the focus of which would be on social development. I am saying that a priority of social development in this country at this time is the provision of housing for the elderly poor in Barbados who cannot make it on their own and who do not have the family support systems and mechanisms to help them in this regard.

Sir, I feel strongly about this and I am very serious about this. I hope that I will find some support in this Chamber and particularly so from the Honourable Minister of Social Transformation, who is obviously touched with the sense and feeling of the common man's infirmities. Therefore, I call for that support from that quarter and not for a profit situation.

Sir, some people may see this as idealistic. I believe that it is a national responsibility which we need to address the needs of these people. A society is measured in terms of its civil, human, national development and level of maturity by reference in part to how it treats its elderly. The record must show after a while that this Government, while it had the opportunity, expended all possible energies to tap into all possible resources to provide for making acceptable standard of housing available to the poor of this country.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, we owe them a debt. We owe the elderly of this country a debt. It is on the backs of those persons that this country and economy have been built. We talk about the professionals, lawyers, doctors and politicians but it is on the shoulders and the backs of the poor older people in this country that the development of this country has been hinged. We know that we owe them a debt and I am not being idealistic.

Sir, their dignity in the evening of their days must be preserved. I make this plea from the heart because I have had the experience of having done a reasonably good job in addressing a problem and I am, yet to be confronted with a need which outstrips the obvious resources available to respond to that need. Therefore, I am calling upon the private sector some form of social partnership with Government to address that problem.

I believe that when there is not a certain level of dominance attached to your voice, when what you say is not heard. I said in here and elsewhere that we need in this country a rent control and standard authority. I believe that part of the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Transformation is to address the issue of social relations in Barbados. It cannot simply be about infrastructure or

housing. It is about social relations and social relations in Barbados need to be transformed in various areas.

I believe that must be seen as part of the mandate of the Ministry of Social Transformation. If you are going to address social relations in this country, one of the issues that you must address is the issue of landlord and tenant relations in urban Barbados. Landlord and tenant relations in urban Barbados continue to be a painful experience to be faced with situations where people who are tenants are maltreated by landlords and are faced with very difficult situations, to which you cannot adequately respond.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, it is also true that landlords suffer abuse of property at the hands of tenants.

I thank you.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am sure that the Honourable Member would get what he wants if he holds on until tomorrow morning.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I beg that you report to the SPEAKER and seek leave to sit again.

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

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

On the motion of the Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. Miss B.A. MILLER, Mr. Deputy Chairman, reported to and Mr. SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair reported accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, we have come to the end of a long day and asked that this Sitting be now suspended until Friday, March 21, 2003 at 10 o'clock in the morning.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

9.25 p.m.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

Prepared with the transcript; for checking against the recording and the Minutes.

EDITORIAL QUERIES

Points noted while preparing this report from the edited transcript. The text has not been altered except where stated.

Q1. Masthead. The session is not stated in the source, so no session line is printed.

Q2. Opening. The source opens without the convening sentence (Pursuant to the adjournment ... met at ...). The date is taken from the heading of the source.

Q3. Committee of Supply, Head 24, about 6.00-6.10 p.m.. The source does not set off Hon. Miss C. Y. Forde's speech with its own speaker heading; her name appears inside the paragraph ('Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE I want to thank you ...'), so about 1,450 words of her speech print under the label 'Mr. Deputy CHAIRMAN', who had interrupted to ask for quiet. Printed as in the source; please confirm the attribution.

Q4. Committee of Supply, close of Rev. J. J. S. Atherley's speech. The sentence 'Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am sure that the Honourable Member would get what he wants if he holds on until tomorrow morning.' follows 'I thank you.' with no speaker label and so prints as part of Rev. Atherley's speech. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Committee of Supply, report of progress. The procedural sentence reads 'Mr. Deputy Chairman, reported to and Mr. SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair reported accordingly'; the wording is garbled, and the House was in Committee of Supply on the Estimates and had moved to report progress and seek leave to sit again. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Committee of Supply, speech labels. Some labels differ from the usual form: 'Hon. Hon. N. A. LYNCH', 'Hon. M. A. MOTTLEY' (elsewhere 'Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY'), 'H.F. LASHLEY' (elsewhere 'Hon. H. F. LASHLEY'), and Mr. R. D. Marshall appears as both 'Mr.' and 'Hon.'. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Resumption. The Speaker's sentence reads 'the House as in Committee of Supply to that it will now revert', presumably 'was'. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly resumed its suspended Sitting on Thursday, 20th March, 2003, with Mr. Speaker in the Chair. On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, seconded by Hon. R. C. Eastmond, the House went back into Committee of Supply on the Estimates for 2003-2004, with Mr. Mark Williams in the Chair; a Deputy Chairman presided for parts of the day.

The debate continued on the double Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. Hon. R. R. Farley spoke on the manufacturing sector and trade liberalisation, saying that the sector grew at an average of 4.4 per cent from 1995 to 1998, that new investment of some \$43.6 million represented an increase of 32.9 per cent over 2001, that CARICOM took over 50 per cent of manufactured exports, and that the rum industry had secured technical assistance of 70 million Euros, about BDS\$140 million. Mr. D. St. E. Kellman argued that a Government with high foreign exchange and liquidity should use its resources to keep companies from closing, drawing points of order from Mr. Farley. Hon. R. N. Greenidge, Hon. A. P. Wood, Hon. Sir Harold St. John, Mr. D. J. H. Thompson, who urged professionals to treat CARICOM as their market, Hon. N. A. Lynch and Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley also spoke.

Closing the Head, the Minister, Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, told the Committee that a diplomatic note from the Embassy of the United States had urged Barbados to oppose or abstain on any proposal for a General Assembly Emergency Special Session on Iraq. She said that Barbados was a sovereign country, that freedom of speech was enshrined in its Constitution, and that if such a session were held Barbados would attend. Head 32 was agreed to without division.

The Committee then took Head 24, Ministry of Social Transformation, \$67 766 565. The Minister, Hon. H. F. Lashley, described the Ministry's departments and programmes: poverty alleviation through house construction and repair by the Urban Development Commission, a new design for Government houses for the poor, HIV/AIDS community education, community resource centres and the community technology programme, the Welfare-to-Work Programme and Relief 2000. Mr. D. St. E. Kellman said social transformation should have been a policy rather than a Ministry and argued against creating dependency; Mr. D. T. Gill, Mr. T. A. Prescod and Hon. G. A. Clarke replied, Mr. Clarke citing the amendment to the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act. Hon. Miss C. Y. Forde spoke on community life in St. Thomas, the inter-community games involving 59 communities and spending on persons with disabilities, and Mr. R. D. Marshall and Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley supported the Head.

After a suspension until 7.45 p.m., the debate on Head 24 resumed. Hon. A. P. Wood supported the Estimates; Mr. Kellman rejected claims that the Democratic Labour Party never had a social programme, and Hon. Miss C. Y. Forde rose on a point of order to correct his account of her remarks; Hon. R. N. Greenidge spoke on the Disabilities Unit set up under his watch and the national sports policy of 'Sports for All'; Hon. Miss B. A. Miller spoke of the City of Bridgetown as a major beneficiary; Hon. N. A. Lynch contrasted the philosophies of the two parties; and Rev. J. J. S. Atherley called for a social partnership to provide housing for the elderly poor and for a rent control and standards authority.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, the Chairman reported to Mr. Speaker and sought leave to sit again. Miss Mottley then moved that the Sitting be suspended until Friday, March 21, 2003 at 10 o'clock in the morning; the question was agreed to and the House was suspended at 9.25 p.m.