
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2003 – 2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, December 14, 2004

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 14, 2004.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, G.C.M., B.A., Dip. Ed.
(Speaker)

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P. (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs and Acting Minister of Finance and the Civil Service) (Leader of the House)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.)

Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A. (Oxon.)

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER, D.A. (Senior Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A. (Hons.) Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., J.P. (Minister of Labour and Social Security)

Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Minister of Public Works)

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL (Chairman of Committees)

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY (Minister of Social Transformation)

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment)

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

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.

Hon. Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, B.A., B.Sc., J.P.
(Acting Minister of Health)

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

Hon. A. P. WOOD, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil., J.P.
(Minister of Energy and Public Utilities)

Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc., J.P. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.), M.A.
(Public Finance) (Leader of the Opposition)

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C.
(Minister of Industry and International Business)

Mr. R. D. JONES, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. Ed., J.P.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B., B.S.

Mr. R. L. SEALY, B.Sc., M.B.A.

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, December 7, 2004.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, December 7, 2004, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: I beg to second that, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the rest of this day's Sitting.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 3 – PENSIONS (MISCELLANEOUS) PROVISIONS BILL, 2004

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, this amendment before the House today seeks to do the simple thing of amending our Pensions Act such that we remove the compulsory retirement age for public servants from 60 years old to 65 years old.

Mr. Speaker, it is perhaps useful for me to set a brief historical background as to the development of pensions in Barbados for public servants. Civil Servants in Barbados have, in fact, been receiving pensions from as early as 1890. However, only those officers at the time who were in receipt of a salary of 50 pounds sterling or more were entitled to receive a pension on retirement. Clearly, there was a situation where there was a very exclusive and elitist group of persons even within the civil service who would have been entitled to security of arrangements after they retired.

The situation was soon changed when in 1907 an Act was passed which was divided into two parts, Part 1 which provided for officers who were in the service when the Act was passed, to choose whether they wanted to receive retirement benefits under Part 1 or Part 2 of the Act. Those who elected to come on were entitled to a pension on retirement computed on a basis of one-fiftieth of their average salary over the preceding five years but up to a maximum of twenty-five years.

Sir, it is significant that the threshold then was lower than what it is today. Mr. Speaker, these officers were referred to in that legislation as Class 1 officers and did not in any way contribute to their pension. The officers choosing Part 2 fell into what was known in the legislation as Class 2, 3, 4 and 5 officers. Some of these were required to take out policies of insurance on their lives, half of the premiums were deducted from their salaries and the other half was paid by Government. The legislation made

provisions for pensions which were completely non-contributory and pensions which were contributory through a life insurance scheme of which the person paid 50 per cent of the premiums.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, annual amounts equivalent to the amount of annual premiums were paid into what was then the Savings Bank which later became the Barbados National Bank for officers who failed the medical examination while any officer earning 700 pounds sterling or more was given a choice of either taking out a policy or depositing its equivalent in the Savings Bank.

The legislation was yet to change again. In 1923, those civil servants who fell under Part 2 of the Act of 1907, who were paying contributions into their own pensions, were asked if they preferred a pension in exchange of the insurance policies and the majority elected to change to pensions. Mr. Speaker, a Select Committee was established to investigate the setting up of a general pension scheme for public officers and the Committee recommended a number of things:

- (1) That the same officers under Part 2 of the legislation of 1907 should be given the option to decide whether they want to remain under the Act of 1907 with the insurance schemes.
- (2) That pensions should be calculated on the basis of one-sixtieth average salary over the last three years. This is different from what I would have indicated for the pensions under the Act of 1907.
- (3) A maximum pension should be 40/60 of salary. All officers with a salary of 50 pounds sterling per annum or more, paid quarterly or in part from the Treasury, should be eligible for a pension and there should be legislation to provide for widows and orphans that should be passed concurrently with any pensions legislation.

10.20 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee also recommended that if an Act along those lines were passed, a request should be made to the Colonial Office to devise an appropriate scheme for the establishment of a Widows and Orphans Fund. It held the view that a Government servant should not be compelled to contribute to his own pension but that he shall be justly compelled to make some contribution from his salary to provide for his dependants after death.

Sir, I pause at this point because we all know that the scheme which we currently have is one in which public officers do not contribute to their pension, and in truth and in fact, part of the reason why we are here today is because of that decision emanating from that Committee in 1923 and the subsequent legislation passed in 1925 pursuant to those recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, in truth and in fact, at a time when almost every other category of worker contributes to his or her pension, not only in Barbados but throughout the world, the Government of Barbados maintains a scheme for pensions that is fully funded by the Treasury of Barbados. Sir, that is in part and parcel why there needs to be continual adjustment and why we need to ensure that our Government pension scheme is also brought in line with the reforms which are taking place within the National Insurance Scheme, and which has already been introduced to this Parliament over the course of the last three years.

Sir, I have no doubt that my friend, the Honourable Member for St. James North, who has responsibility for the National Insurance Security Scheme will speak also in this debate to be able to bring about the coincidence of passage.

Mr. Speaker, in 1925 a new Pensions Act was passed and it provided for the payment of pensions to public officers, such that every person lay or ecclesiastical, receiving a salary or an allowance attached to his office from the Public Treasury is now entitled to that pension. Also officers of the Government's Savings Bank but not officers appointed by the Legislative Council, House of Assembly or any officer excluded under the 1907 Act. Honourable Members will see the clear division as well for separate legislative and policy arrangements to govern the conduct of pensions in the range of service areas within the context of public service in Barbados.

In 1925 they also passed a Teachers' Pensions Act where for the first time teachers in public schools would receive pensions. It is interesting that part of the motivation for the passage of this legislation was because it was felt that the only way you would improve the quality of education in Barbados is if you were able to improve the terms and conditions attaching to teachers, such that more people would come into the teaching profession and you would be able to have a better quality of persons because access was still an issue in 1925.

Sir, it is significant that in the early days neither teachers nor police were entitled to the pensions arrangements and this only changed in the second or third decade of the 20th Century.

Mr. Speaker, in 1944 there was again an amendment to the Teachers' Pensions Act and, perhaps, I should say that the 1925 Act established a threshold to access to pension for 10 years of service and the person being at least 60 years old. The 1944 amendment dealt with the definition of who was the master or mistress in a first and second grade public school, categories that are no longer known to modern Barbados, and who would be assisted with pensions from the Treasury.

Mr. Speaker, further amendment in 1949 placed public school teachers on the same basis as civil servants for the purposes of pensions. Sir, you would see the gradual evolution of the conversion of teachers and public servants and it started with the issue of pensions. It took almost another 40 years before it related to other aspects of terms and conditions.

Sir, in 1937 legislation was passed to establish a Public Employees Pensions Act. These were public employees who were not civil servants but who were full-time employees of the Government and who for the first time were allowed to receive pensions. Prior to this only certain public employees were eligible for an annual pension or gratuity according to the provisions of the 1925 legislation.

The Widows and Orphans Act, which I referred to as one of the recommendations of the 1923 Select Committee, was passed in 1928 and it was deemed that contributions at the rate of 4 per cent would be voluntary for those officers who earned 50 pounds or more, such that their widows and orphans could benefit after their death. It is significant that the Select Committee indicated that pensions would be non-contributory but if you wanted your dependants to benefit, then you would have to contribute at the rate of 4 per cent to the Widows and Orphans Act.

The last point that I would like to make in terms of the historical development is that when Local Government in Barbados was abolished in the late 1969 there was a move to establish a range of Statutory Boards and, therefore, there had to be a resolution in the pension issue in relation to those persons who were formerly employed by Local Government but who were then being absorbed in the Government, whether through Central Government or Statutory Boards.

Sir, as a result a Statutory Boards Pension Act and a Statutory Casual Employees Act were passed to preserve the pensionable status of the employees who were transferred to Statutory Boards. Therefore, entities like the National Housing Corporation and the then Agricultural Credit Bank were scheduled within the legislation applicable to public officers.

However, generally, in 1988 a decision was taken by the Cabinet of Barbados that all Statutory Boards should seek to put pensions schemes in place for all staff. Sir, part of the reason for this because since the late 1960s when the evolution from Local Government and Statutory Boards took place, there has been a growth in a number of Statutory Boards and a number of them would not have been subject to the same provisions at the time the evolution like the National Housing Corporation, Child Care Board, Sanitation Services Authority, *et cetera*.

Mr. Speaker, why are we here today dealing with this amendment? In October, 2002, the Cabinet of Barbados established a broad-based committee to conduct a comprehensive review of the public service pension arrangements with a view towards reform. The terms and reference of that Committee were to –

- (1) review the existing arrangements in place for public servants that is the funding and entitlements;
- (2) review the various pieces of legislation governing pensions which are paid from the Consolidated Fund with a view to consolidation and rationalisation;
- (3) examine studies done by (Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean) ECLAC Partners on the cost of public service pensions;
- (4) advise the Minister of Finance on the most appropriate framework for the future funding of public service pensions.

10.35 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, that Committee recommended that the retirement age at which pension becomes payable in Barbados should be harmonised with the retirement age at which pension is payable under the National Insurance and Social Security Schemes of Barbados.

I want to repeat that point because what we are seeking to do now is to take two separate pension arrangements and ensure that there is a harmonisation of the pension rights and arrangements thereto. The retirement age at which pension becomes payable under the public service of Barbados should be harmonised at the retirement age at which it becomes payable under the national insurance and Social Security Scheme.

Mr. Speaker, this is going to be done in a gradual way. It would mean that this would permit a change in the compulsory age of retirement from 60 to 65, and ultimately by the year 2018 going to the age of 67 years old. This does not in any way, Mr. Speaker, change the right of persons who now have the right to take early retirement at 55 years old. It does not change, and this is perhaps the most important point for those who are communicating this generally to the public, that this does not change the right of persons who may now retire early at 55 years.

If you still wanted to retire at 60, 61, 62, 63 or 64 you could go ahead under this legislation, but you must retire at 65. The only two entities that are not covered by this amendment – and that is because their arrangements are

normally dealt with by the Constitution and we would continue to treat to new arrangements for them in the Constitution – would be the Auditor General and the Director of Public Prosecutions who, under the Constitution of Barbados must retire at the age of 62 years. They do not fall under this amendment and the Government will treat to their issues in relation to the new Constitution which will come next year.

Mr. Speaker, if I give the brief historical background to this, Honourable Members may recall that it was only in 1985 that changes were made to the Pensions Act through a Pensions Miscellaneous Provisions Act which sought to make changes. It provided that compulsory retirement should change from the then 65 to 60 years old and voluntary retirement should change from the then 60 to 55 years old.

Sir, 20 years ago, many public servants may remember that they were given an option, and those who did not sign the option form are required to leave at 60. Those who opted to stay to 65 would have had to do so by clear evidence of consent, through the signature of that option form.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the demographics, as well as the funding commitments have all been examined. It would seem that Barbados' demographics are leading us to the realisation that more and more, we are going to have to take action which will allow persons to be able to work longer, if not there will be too few within the working population, taking care of a rapidly increasing set of numbers in the age group of 60 and older in this country. Much of this has been expressed in the reform debates on the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme generally in the country.

The reality is, Mr. Speaker, that if you look at the numbers alone, between 1980 and 2000, between the percentage of persons in the 15 to 64, you will see that it has moved from 59.9 per cent to 86.3 per cent in the year 2000.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, that trend has caused the actuarial advisors to suggest that we have to reflect and take decisions on the length of the working life of the average Barbadian, not just in the Government services but persons generally working in Barbados.

The reality also, Mr. Speaker, is that health care conditions have improved considerably since the 1950s in this country, such as the treatment in chronic diseases and what would otherwise be life threatening diseases before. This means that people are living longer and they are healthier to a large extent. When a person reaches the age of 60, they still are fit in many instances, and capable of continuing their work, for sometime.

I do not think that I know many people now, Mr. Speaker, who at the age of 60, stop working completely, unless there is a medical condition or unless they are allergic to work – and there are a few of those – but those who are allergic to work at 60 were inevitably allergic to work at 40 as well, so that we leave them out as a separate category because it is not a condition known to Honourable Members of this Parliament.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: The reality is, Mr. Speaker, most people at 60 are capable of continuing work. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to be able to change the legislative and policy framework that currently now prohibits those persons from being able to continue in the service.

Mr. Speaker, if however, as I said, a person feels that they want to go, the law still allows them to take early retirement at 55, as they currently do, prior to this amendment. It in no way affects the individual choice of the particular public servant but it, in fact, enlarges the rights of the particular public servant to have a greater option. Equally, what it does, is to allow us to be able to deal with the very difficult and complex issue of continuing to fund Government pensions fully, as we have done since the early 1920s.

Sir, if I can give those figures, the cost of pensions and – I show you the growth in the cost, you perhaps will understand better, why this is a financially sound decision for the Government of Barbados as well. In the year 2001-2002, the cost of Government's pensions in that financial year was \$111 564 196 million.

Two years later, Mr. Speaker, 2003 to 2004, there was an increase of over 25 per cent to a figure of \$140 185 338 million. It is projected that if we continue on this trend, by 2007 to 2008, the Pension Bill of the Barbados Government would be hovering at about \$158 300 000 million.

Mr. Speaker, this is an extraordinary increase and we believe that it is critical that we start to look at it because what happens is that from the time a person retires at 60, and they are living longer, and once they are living longer, they are drawing a pension for a longer period of time. In drawing a pension for the longer period of time, the Government's obligation to continue to pay the pension obviously remains constant and, therefore, the Government's liability increases in the interim.

Mr. Speaker, it was therefore felt that persons would have the opportunity to be able to stay on. It means then that you are not funding as many pensions from as early, while at the same time, if those persons had gone into retirement, yes,

you would have been filling the post but carrying the pension cost right through probably to another 20 years.

The life expectancy of Barbadians is critical, Mr. Speaker, because in 1951, 50 years ago – and Mr. Speaker, sometimes we sell ourselves short in terms of what we have managed to achieve in this country as a developing country. Sir, in 1951 the life expectancy for men in this country was 53.4 years and for women it was 58 years. This disparity between men and women still exists, we are not sure why but...

10.45 a.m.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: The Honourable Member for the City is suggesting that it is because women work harder than men.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I might have to take my seat and resolve the conflict between the Honourable Member for St. James North and the Honourable Member for the City because the Honourable Member for St. James North is saying that the jury is out on that. Nevertheless, the reality is that the life expectancy for women, not only in Barbados but across the world, tends to be longer than the life expectancy for men.

Mr. Speaker, in the year 2000, the life expectancy had grown to 71.8 for men and 76.8 for women. So there is an almost 20-year increase in life expectancy over the course of the last 50 years due to improvements in the health care system, in technology, in education, in earning power and in living conditions. The cumulative effect of the quality of life in Barbados in the last 50 years has led to an almost 50 per cent increase in life expectancy. That is a hell of an achievement, Mr. Speaker, for any country.

However, Mr. Speaker, every success has with it its challenges. The challenge with this success is that if people are living longer then you have to be able to provide for them through a myriad of policy changes. One of them relates to their pensions arrangement, the others to housing, recreation and indeed many of the things that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East would have brought to this Honourable Chamber in his Green Paper: "A Society for all Ages", which spells out the policies this Government would like to be able to implement in relation to the ageing population which Barbados now has.

Mr. Speaker, for certain this Government cannot be accused of being inactive or silent on the challenges that face an ageing society.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot assert it for sure, but I am advised by my Colleagues in the social services that Barbados has one of the highest per capita rate of centenarians in the world and is perhaps only second to Japan. All of these things contribute to our treating as an urgent necessity, the rationalisation of pensions arrangements in relation to the Public Service of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, on an earlier occasion when speaking to the whole issue of pension reform, the Honourable Minister of Finance would have said that while we may have to take initial steps, there may be other long-term steps which are necessary for the comprehensive reform of pensions in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, we have a situation in other parts of the world where people are contributing to their own pension arrangements. In many instances pensions have been privatised. We have not gone that route yet but I am aware that both the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Labour are still examining the options for the completion of the reform process particularly as it relates to funded pensions for public servants in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, in the same way this Government amended the Constitution of Barbados to ensure that the cutting of public servants salaries would never be an option for a Government in straitened fiscal circumstances, I give the commitment that we would do nothing whatsoever to negatively affect the pension rights of persons in the Public Service of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I say so cognisant that in the last five years in particular many persons across the world literally lost all of their savings and pensions through the kinds of declines that we saw in the stock markets in the developed world. This brings home the necessity not to play fast and loose with the pensions rights of any person in this country.

Mr. Speaker, it would be a tragedy. To that extent, Mr. Speaker, I can safely say on this Government's behalf without any fear of contradiction that we would do nothing whatsoever to jeopardise the social securities arrangements in this country either for ordinary Barbadians or for the public servants of this country.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members should note a little thing that would have happened in the earlier amendments in the 1980s. In the context of this synchronisation, it would mean that there would be a reduction in Government's central liability to fund the pensions not only because we are asking people to work longer but because persons employed after September 1, 1975 in the Public Service in Barbados receive part of their pensions under the National Insurance Scheme. Mr. Speaker, that would therefore mean, as it has

meant for the last few years, that Government only carries part of the burden of the liability to provide those funded pensions which are before us.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments are very simple. It is intended that they should become applicable from January 1, 2005. This is why we are doing it today in the House. Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt as I said that my Colleague, the Honourable Member for St. James North, would speak more at length in relation to the National Insurance and Security Pension Reform which is also being implemented in the country where the retirement age has moved gradually to 67 but where persons can still retire earlier but with a reduced pension because it is an optional age of retirement. Yes, you can retire earlier but there are consequences. Sir, we feel strongly that the Government of Barbados should complete that synchronisation process with this simple amendment.

May I also remind Honourable Members that we would have also brought comprehensive pensions legislation here within the last year that would allow for portability of pensions rights and a number of other things to protect the right of pensions for persons working within the private sector and outside of the context of the Government scheme. Therefore, we can fairly say to this Chamber that this is but one other step in the process of pensions and social securities reform that this Government is taking to ensure that we do not strand Barbadians who are working now in the future by leaving them without the right to maintain themselves in dignity through access to a decent and credible pension.

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

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: I beg to second that.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I too rise to speak in this debate. As you know, Sir, my views will not be the same as the Government, and I would like to believe that mine would be more enlightening. Therefore, I want to begin where they ended.

Sir, there is no doubt that people are living longer in Barbados today. However, because people are living longer that does not give the Government the opportunity to continue to tie persons, who have the capacity to produce and are experience, to the Civil Service for a long period of time. It is my belief, Mr. Speaker, that we should be balancing the Act. That is, we should provide opportunities for those persons operating within the Civil Service so that they can leave at a particular point in time with their experience and go and share that experience with the rest of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, you cannot say that persons within the Civil Service have talent and then continue limiting that talent.

Sir, instead of seeing these people as being old, we must see them as being experienced, where we are then able to tap into that resource to the betterment to the country.
10.55 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe that it does not make sense in keeping someone employed because that person feels that he or she has to continue working in order to get his or her pension. I believe it makes no difference, in a negative way, if that person were allowed to enter the Civil Service and when he or she recognises that they cannot deliver what is expected of them, that person would be allowed to leave that accumulated time in the service. In other words, nobody should sit in an office, up to the age of 60, just because they feel that is the only way they would be entitled to a pension, when they could be better served by leaving the service, knowing that the years they have worked would have accumulated for them to get a pension in the future. It allows the country to have a better understanding and appreciation for the value of workers.

Mr. Speaker, this old fashioned approach of running the Government of Barbados must change because the world has changed and, therefore, we must change to suit the dynamics of the world. Sir, what we are having is a situation where people can tell you the history and why pensions schemes were set up, then those persons are falling into the same position as those who had set up the pension schemes in the earlier years.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that. We also have to understand the appreciation for maximising the benefits of workers. If we continue to do that, we would continue having the Civil Service operating in the way in which it has operated over the years, and I am saying it cannot be done that way. We need to stop, to change it, and to make it more dynamic. Sir, you cannot tell me that experience is important but that you are going to misuse that experience, instead of using the experience of the other workers.

Mr. Speaker, instead of tying down workers, we need to free them up and allow them to use their experience, to help develop jobs for others. That means that we also have to look at our taxation system. We need to go back and to reflect on the decisions made about lump sum payments.

Sir, I argued then and will continue to argue, that it was a bad decision by this Parliament when we tied workers to a particular amount because we felt that was what we wanted. Instead that decision should have been made by the worker. If the worker feels that he can take his pension early and in a lump sum, if you tell me he is experienced and then turn around and tell me that man has experience but yet he does

not have the ability to manage his money, then we have a serious problem in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we would not do it to other persons who are born with money or who have capital. Why would we want to do it to civil servants. If they have the experience, it means that they have the capacity to manage their money, and we should allow them to do so. Sir, I am convinced that most of them would use their experience to open businesses that can help their relatives, neighbours and others in Barbados but we are using this Parliament to stagnate investments and to stagnate the development of the masses who find themselves within the Civil Service but at the same time we do not do it for others who we believe have money and who do not have to depend on us.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that it is one thing to look at it from the point of view of the National Insurance Department, with which I have no problem. I can understand that argument but I cannot understand the argument when you now come to tie the national insurance pension, and that from the Civil Service, under the same terms and conditions because I argued that they were wrong and if they were wrong then, they are more wrong now than ever.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that you cannot tell a man that you have developed him to think and then enslave him at that vital point of his life when he has to make a serious decision. Sir, we have to respect civil servants' abilities and capabilities and, therefore, politicians should never come to Parliament to legislate their opinions on others. They would not do it for themselves and, therefore, should not do it for others. We have to be careful, this world is changing. Sir, in the same way that someone working in the private sector would know that he cannot be guaranteed a job until reaching age 65 and that he has to prepare himself in case he loses that job, so too should civil servants. We have to understand and appreciate that we cannot use the excuse of job security to tie a worker onto a job.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member spoke of the amount of money which Government is spending in pensions. We have to understand that one of the reasons for this is that the pension scheme of Government is not funded. We have to understand that if we are going to belly ache about the amount of money that is being spent by Government, what we probably need to do is to fund the pensions scheme on a yearly basis. We must also make sure that it is placed with a third party, which is exactly what it needs, so that there can be the investment aspect of it to accumulate such funds. Instead of that, Government is doing a shift per year and taking out an amount whenever they have to pay it, without necessarily investing that amount into any profitable investment or enterprise, in order to develop that amount in the future. Sir, if we are going to talk about that amount, maybe we need to look at that particular point.

Mr. Speaker, we also have to understand that if we are going to talk about funding these plans, that we have to think about vesting. Sir, this is where my divide comes with the lawyers and the trade unionists of Barbados. Sir, there are lots of people who tell workers that there are pension plans for them and that these pension plans are funded and vested, but the workers do not seem to understand the strong legal implications of those words. Sir, a man cannot be told that something has been transferred to him and then later tell him that he is not qualified for that pension because he has not put in his required number of years. This is foolishness. It defeats the concept of vesting.

Sir, the trade unions also have to understand that when they negotiate with the employers, that one of the reasons they do not go out and ask for higher wages for the worker is that the employer says to the trade union movement: "I am going to pay your worker a basic salary of "X" and an allowance of "X" and that I also have a pension plan, and that the worker is entitled to that within the pension plan."

Mr. Speaker, if that is true, what that is saying is from the time one enters the employment arrangement, automatically that worker has an arrangement for the pension plan. Therefore, because that worker has that arrangement and knows of a future value, the union tends not to ask for a higher level of salary because it understands that there are perks waiting somewhere for that union. The employer cannot, for years then after putting that on the table as part of the contract, then come back and says that the contract has been breached and that the worker would not be entitled to the agreed amount.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the trade unions and lawyers in Barbados seem not to appreciate this particular point, even though they will say that they know about contract law. Sir, people must understand that contract law must be consistent. That is the problem we have within the sugar industry. That is why I had to make a decision and that is why I had to take on the sugar industry and a large insurance company in this country.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Well, I do not have a problem being "I". A lot of you have been in Parliament for a long time and cannot identify one significant thing that has been done to the country, while some of us have come after and can advise many of you, that is why people who might be in here for a long time get a problem with "I". I do not have a problem with "I", because the "I" that I speak of can be found in the philosophy of the Democratic Labour Party. Therefore, the "I" has to do with the Democratic Labour Party and not with me in particular.
11.05 a.m.

Sir, I heard that I am identifying with the project at Nesfield as though it belongs to me. Sir, it is not mine because it was there for a long time before I joined the Party and I can identify it because I know the philosophy of the Party. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that I heard 'I Man' who copies the 'I Man' now saying that we do not need brand name hotels in Barbados but that we need local hotels. Sir, I did not introduce the 'I Man', it was the Honourable Member for the City who introduced it....

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I have not yet spoken in this debate.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I know that you cannot hear Asides but the law does not say that my ears should be dumb to Asides and when they are relevant, they must be taken into account.

Sir, we have to understand that we seem to copy everything people give to us but we are not thinking through the particular plan. Every time a change is made in the United States of America or elsewhere we run to Parliament with that change without thinking about it and, Sir, this is wrong because we have to create homegrown solutions to our problems. It seems that this Parliament lacks the capacity to think and this is a big problem.

If I were to make a recommendation to Parliament, it would be about accounts and not English because most Parliamentarians in this Chamber need to be exposed to accounts because we seem not be interested in future-values, gains and losses or foreign exchange gains and losses. This is why when we discuss loans to fund a pension plan from outside, we tend to look at the interest rate but not at the fluctuation that can occur with the currency but a simple course in accounts would solve this problem.

Sir, we are living in serious times and the decisions we make today will impact on the lives of others in the future and what we think we are doing in the interest of pensioners will not work out in their interest because no one can predict the future value of the pension. We are now speaking about the Caribbean Single Market and Economy. We understand the strength of the Barbados dollar as it relates to the other currency yet we want to pigeonhole workers to a future-value which we do not know. This is a significant point because we are not speaking about real estate but the cash value of something. Sir, everyone knows that in times like these, when you speak about a cash value, especially when you are dealing with a currency that is high which would have to adjust to meet other currencies, that workers would later on find themselves in a worse position than in a better position. We also have to tell the civil servants what would be the impact of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy if we had to make an adjustment in our currency.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is saying that it is the most convoluted foolishness he ever heard but, Sir, I want to bet you that in three weeks time the Honourable Member will repeat it as if it is original. This is why I need to go to the Intellectual Property Office and make sure that I get money from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South for what I say in Parliament. Sir, every time I say something in here the Honourable Member criticises it and then he goes on the radio and speaks about it as if it is his original idea.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, I would become rich out of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South because he cannot help repeating what I say and behaving as if it is an original point.

Mr. Speaker, Barbadians are now saying that if there were more local brand name hotels we would be able to get better plans and that they are glad that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South now understands the plan about brand names in Barbados. If the Honourable Member for St. Michael South was listening to the Honourable Member for the City about branding Barbados, he would have understood the point.

Mr. Speaker, if there are technocrats and people with 'know-how', we must respect their ability. Sir, in this climate we cannot continue to tell people that they have the capabilities but we who do not have those capabilities then limit those persons.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East made a point. The Honourable Member said that when pension schemes were first brought to Barbados that there were brought for a particular group of persons but I would hate to believe that our present behaviour is because we are jealous of other persons, that we want to remain in a particular class grouping and want to interfere with other persons so that they cannot catch up with us. Sir, civil servants have no control over us and we should have no control over them either. We should allow them to maximise their capacity and not limit it.

Mr. Speaker, we have grown up in a society where we understand the importance of the neighbour and the relative and because a man is 'bright', we must not take everything from him and not allow him to give back something to the community. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East would do good to listen to this particular point because, there was a time in this society, when older folks went back to 'the

block' and shared their values with young people under the manchineel tree, under the street light and around the dominoes table. If you go through the society today, young people are directing young people.

Sir, people are now caught up with the material but do not understand their social responsibility to the community. Sir, if we continue to pigeon-hole civil servants by keeping them in the service so long, they cannot share with the community.

Sir, just last week we heard the eulogy of a Member of Parliament who fought hard for civil servants. I know he would have been happy to come back and share some of his values with persons within the community.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, it is not so easy to do that.

11.15 a.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Instead of having to work in the civil service for such a long time, he would have been able to reduce his years in the service and return to the community to share his knowledge. Sir, that is what I wanted to say before you interrupted me.

Sir, I understood what you meant and I know that there was no ill feeling in making the comment because I know that you thought I meant coming back from the brim.

Mr. Speaker, even though he has gone to the great beyond, his values have been instilled in some of the people of the North of Barbados and we would try to do the things that he could not do.

We also have to understand that it is not the laying of the pension plan. We have to maximise the use the civil servants. We in this Honourable House have to make provisions for civil servants to determine when they believe that they have achieved their maximum and need to retire.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that we need to free up the civil service. We also have to understand that in these times we cannot give them everything that we would want to give them. That is why we have to allow them to moonlight.

Sir, I am saying, without a shadow of a doubt, that if civil servants were allowed to moonlight freely, the civil service would see an increase in capacity. If they are allowed to moonlight, they would be able to see how the

employees who work in the private sector operate. As a result they would then be able to return to the civil service and make the necessary recommendations for change. We have to understand that to tell a person you cannot afford to give him something and then tie him to what he is doing, you are depriving him of improving himself.

Sir, one-third of a civil servant's time is tied to his job and two-thirds is tied to something else. What is that something else? Do you believe that if we want to see Barbados being developed that we should be speaking about one-third of a man's time? I believe that a person should be allowed to work for a longer period of eight hours a day and the country would be better off for it. Those persons who do not understand what I am saying, well, I do not know what else I can say but I am sure the civil servants understand because they want the opportunity to use their talents in a wise way to help develop themselves and the country. However, if you limit the worker, you are limiting yourself and that is something that has to stop.

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister cannot talk about reducing the debt ratio unless we can increase the capacity of the country. We must produce in order to accomplish this.

Sir, when the Budget presentation was made, I agreed that we cannot continue to run our country on an eight-hour basis and expect to be able to compete with the world. If the world is operating on a 24-hour basis and we are at a third of that, how can we seriously expect to compete. The same principle applies in the civil service. If you allow the workers to do only a third of what they can do, how can you expect them to be any different? Then we would come into this Honourable House and blame them for not performing.

Mr. Speaker, a great man once said that some of us go to sleep too early and some of us get up too late. If you study this, you would see the truth in it. While you are sleeping you do not see what is going on but if you were awake you would see what is happening.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: We have to understand that country is not about self. This country is about us developing it.

Sir, I was shocked to hear the negative comments coming from the Government's Side. One would have thought that they would be happy to hear a Member of the Opposition putting forward these points. Sir, we need to get rid of the selfishness that is developing in our country. There are people who believe the only idea that they can relate to is the idea coming from themselves. If this country had to wait on the ideas coming from those persons, this country would never become a developed country.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, people are now being inflicted with other diseases and if we accept this, we have to recognise that these diseases will affect the working life of people.

Mr. Speaker, the same way that the insurance companies acknowledge this and they make provisions for it, I am saying that the Government should do likewise because the insurance companies see this situation as a negative one but, apparently, the Government sees it as a positive situation.

Sir, I would more go with the insurance companies who understand the additional risks that would occur and would have made adjustments to ensure that their companies survive. I believe the Government needs to look at it and be more conservative and everybody knows that this is a conservative Government but they seem not to understand this particular point.

Mr. Speaker, if we recognise that the diseases that now exist are affecting the lives of workers, I think that when the Honourable Member for St. James North did the new calculation that would have been taken into consideration. Therefore, if the private insurance companies are doing it, why is the Government not doing it? There seems to be a conflict because in one breath you are saying one thing and in another you are doing something different. I am saying that something is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that we are talking about civil servants and we should be arguing about the best deal for them. Over the last 10 years we told them to hold strain and they did that. After 10 years we cannot deprive them of having a lump sum payment when they retire and also deprive them of the right to retire earlier. I am saying that this is a step in the wrong direction and if the Government sees this as a problem, it means that they need to start making provision on a yearly basis and this money should be invested with a third party. This money should be vested in the workers of Barbados, which happens to be the civil servants. Sir, I will not accept that the Government should come every year and bellyache about the pensions of civil servants when there is a better idea. On a yearly basis they can negotiate with an insurance company on behalf of their workers, through their workers representatives, and put a lump sum to be invested over a period of time like we do with the National Insurance. This advice is not to be taken lightly because, it is in the interest of the worker.

11.25 a.m.

Sir, we have to understand that everything we do now is not about Party. It is about country. We have to understand that the debates in this House will have to be

how we are going to carry this country forward. We have to look for the best ideas and put them on the table, and understand the importance of debating.

Sir, it seems to me that there are people who do not want others to debate. If you do not debate, you are not going to get an outcome which is important. We have to understand that we have to do it now. We can talk about trade liberalisation and globalisation but the only way we will impact on what is happening within the world is if we do those things that are correct.

I thank you very much, Sir.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I want to add a few words to this debate. This is a serious matter which is before the House. Pensions are part of a larger mosaic of issues which speak to the quality and quantity of work in Barbados and how we work in Barbados, attitudes to work in Barbados, and there has been much public debate about that in recent times.

In fact, the NISE initiative which is occupying much of the attention of commentators in the public domain, is all part and parcel of that. We are living in a time when the way in which we work is changing rapidly. Our attitudes to work have also to be changing rapidly. How we prepare ourselves for work, is very much on the front burner at this time.

Let us begin by recognising that Barbados remains a Small Island State. Some even describe it as a small city State, 14 x 21 miles. Barbados, Sir, remains one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Had not for a far seeing Barbados Labour Party Administration in the 1950s and, indeed, successive Administrations of whatever political colour over the past 50 and more years giving support to policies regarding family planning and population dynamics, Barbados might be in not so enviable position as it likes to think that it is today.

There have been years of the social revolution in this country, and I want us to look at it in that context today. I make this point on the Floor of the House continuously, because it seems that people so quickly forget to conceptualise these matters. We have made an investment in health, education, housing, and training and all of the social sectors all of which we are seeing the dividends today.

The dividend, Mr. Speaker, is part and parcel, and greatly responsible for the rapid increase that we have seen in the latter half of the Twentieth Century in the life expectancy of birth of Barbadians. It does not happen by happenstance, it has to do with the way in which successive administrations have been unapologetic.

I remember there was a time when the IFIs in the 1970s and 1980s said that we were over investing in the social sectors, we needed to be investing more in the productive sector, we had the equation wrong and there was a great imbalance. I have not and will never support that view. I made the point then and I make it again now that the social sectors themselves are productive sectors.

Without the educational input, without our investment in health care in this country, education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, the productive sectors could not be where they are today. If we are saying that at this juncture in our development, services is the way we are going in these early decades of the Twenty-first Century, then the underpinning of that, as we constantly make the point, is our human resource base.

Again, in this respect we make no apology that this has informed social, economic and political policy in Barbados for better than 50 years, maybe now going into 65 years, but we do not do it for the sake of doing it. It is part of a continuum and as the Honourable Leader of the House pointed out when she introduced this measure that from time to time, adjustments have to be made.

From time to time we make adjustments in the educational system. Only last week we made an adjustment when we decided now that pre-primary education, that age cohort between three and five years old, would be the target group for universal mandatory education in this country.

We made rapid adjustments in respect of health care. We like to criticise the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), but it is a very distinguished teaching hospital of the University of the West Indies. It is ours and, of course, we reserve the right to be critical because it needs to be kept on its tip toes, but at the same time, we have to recognise that not only at home but abroad, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is recognised as a premier institution.

From time to time and very rapidly over the last 20 to 30 years, we have made adjustments at the QEH. We have added an Intensive Care Unit, we have added an angiographic suite, we have added many services. We have put on the ground a modern network of polyclinics which even now, we are upgrading on a continuous basis. We made adjustments in housing. We make adjustments in training and so, by definition, we make adjustments in pensions.

We have invested, as I have said, in Barbadians so that now in the year 2004 we are looking at a life expectancy at birth where any male child born today, can expect to live for at least 75 years. In the case of girl children, any girl child born today in Barbados can expect to live to close to 80 years, maybe 78 going on to 79 years.

Mr. Speaker, those are life expectancy rates of developed countries. In many countries in Africa the life expectancy cannot be 45 years. In our lifetime in here there is nobody who is a Member of this Honourable House who lived at a time when the life expectancy in Barbados was 45 years. That is the life expectancy that you would find in some of the developed countries. There are many developed countries which do not have such a high life expectancy rate. 11.35 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, having made that investment in your human resource base, why would you want to throw it away at age 55 or 60. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy in his ramblings this morning hit upon a point, which he failed to develop, that you have that very special intangible commodity called wisdom and experience.

Mr. Speaker, bearing in mind the emphasis now that we are putting on this human resource base, something we have been doing for 60 or 70 years, why would a country like Barbados, now that we are focussing on services, want to make such an investment in an asset like that and then abandon it when it is at its prime. What sense does that make? The taxpayers of this country pay the education bill, the health bill, the housing bill which is heavily subsidised and the training bill. Somebody always pays the bill.

Mr. Speaker, all of this is happening in a Barbados in 2004. This is where variables come out of the outfield that you were not expecting, where HIV/AIDS is doing great damage to the age cohort 25-44 which is the range where people are making the greatest input as workers in Barbados. This is a very serious spanner that has been thrown into the works. By the mid 1980s we thought that we had long put behind us those communicable diseases which were still around when we were children.

My mother was a nurse, Mr. Speaker, and I remember well that once a man came to our door and my mother spoke to me with such firmness in her voice telling me to come back from the door that I understood clearly that something was wrong. She then explained that this was a person with tuberculosis and that tuberculosis was a highly communicable disease. When I was a little girl, there were two wards at the old General Hospital which were referred to as the TB Wards. We thought we had put those diseases behind us everywhere in this part of the world, but we have lived to see in the 1990s and in these early years of a new century that many of them are reasserting themselves. We are living in a Barbados now which exhibits a developed country's health profile in respect of the way in which chronic diseases have now become the major killers in Barbados, the worst being HIV/AIDS.

I made the point in another place recently that I believe I have been to the funerals of more persons, homosexuals

first of all, who died of AIDS in Barbados than Members of Parliament. All those who lived in the City of Bridgetown have gone on. Then I found that in the 1990s I was going to the funerals of women in their 30s and 40s, and so it was very easy, by casual observation and not by any scientific method, to see where the disease was going in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the Caribbean is second only to Sahara Africa in respect of the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS. It is true to say that we have made great strides in Barbados in that more and more people who have the virus and full-blown AIDS are living longer, but that is because we are making this massive investment where everybody in Barbados who present themselves to any of the health care institutions with HIV/AIDS are afforded, courtesy of the taxpayers of Barbados, the anti-retroviral therapy. By definition that is lengthening the life of sufferers of HIV/AIDS. Mr. Speaker, it is also true to say that more newer cases are presented every day in Barbados, so we still have a long way to go with this.

I am therefore saying, Mr. Speaker, that in this context, I am one who would like to see the retirement age move to 70. If I exclusively had my way, I would take it to 70, but I would accept what is now before the House because we have moved away from retirement in the way that we used to think of it and the way we used to live it 20, 40 or 100 years ago. People now simply do other things. They retire from one thing to pick up another thing. Some people are doing two and three things.

There was laughter when I suggested earlier on in a *sotto voce* remark, Mr. Speaker, that women have a longer life expectancy because they work more and harder. Women always do two jobs. Men must not take for granted house work and child rearing, that is a job in itself. Sometimes it is as much as two jobs.

Asides.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to digress there.

The point I want to be making here is that pensions have to be linked to a number of variable issues. The Leader of the House when she made her introduction traced a little bit for us the history of the movement of pensions, and there is going to be more and more of that. If people are living in large numbers now until their late 70s and early 80s why would you want to retire people at age 60 when they have that wonderful experience and that wonderful wisdom that they can now impart. People will retire and come back to do other work.

Mr. Speaker, HIV/AIDS is a very debilitating disease and even though people are living longer, the quality of

life is not always good. Therefore, with the increases we are seeing in HIV/AIDS all over the world, many people when they reach retirement age, even to the age where we have set the retirement age now, will find that they are going to be called upon to come back to somebody's workplace. It does not matter to me, Mr. Speaker, where it is. I am very much for movement between the public and the private sector. I would like to see in public sector reform at a soon time too that there is more movement where people are prepared to leave. Mr. Speaker, what happens now is that people are retiring from the Public Service and are going into the private sector, where there are certain expectations. The private sector has a high regard for retired senior civil servants, although many of those senior civil servants would be going into a private sector domain which is so utterly different from everything that they have worked with over the past 40 years.

11.45 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, at an earlier stage of one's life, I would like to see more movement towards the private sector. I see more young people coming into the civil service and sometimes they do not even get to a stage where they become eligible for pension because in less than ten years they would have gone. Sir, we need to be designing systems so that, in a manner of speaking, it does not really matter where one works, the new technology has put us in a position where someone could be living in Barbados and working elsewhere or in more than one place. Would it be so difficult for us?

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Leader of Government Business this morning made reference to the portability of pensions. Therefore, Sir, we are not doing this in an *ad hoc* fashion. It is part of a larger exercise which is now focussing, very properly, on our work systems. There are some persons who would wish to work for some years in the private sector, to be able to take their skills into the public sector, while still not severing links totally with the public sector. There are persons who are not going to be working in the way in which most of us would have worked in our lives, that is, to get up on mornings and go to work.

Sir, we still go to work too late. A lot of us lie-in our beds for the better part of the day. In other parts of the Caribbean it is not so, children are at school at 8.00 a.m., with people at work since 7.30 a.m. We move too late. We are lazier in this generation than we used to be and I hope that in the next generation, they will get back to getting to work earlier, working but differently. People are going to be working in modules of time. People are going to work so many weeks or so many months of the year, in one task or in one place. Therefore, pensions have to be able to accommodate these new modes and modalities for work.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to give my support to the matter that is before this Honourable House but we need

to take very seriously this question of where the pension age is going to be pitched at this time.

Mr. Speaker, it is now optional. Many Government workers can opt to retire at 67 or to remain at work up to age 65. I have no difficulty with that. These things have to be done in a way so that it does not compromise or damage people's rights to pensions as they now stand. Sir, I think that will continue to be the way, where we should be able to fix it at where one would wish to take one's pension.

Mr. Speaker, I like to quote Botswana, a country not unlike Barbados, which is said to be the most rapidly developing of the countries of Africa, certainly in Southern Africa. Botswana is very friendly to Barbados. Prime Minister Arthur rarely pays official visits there. I wish he would allow us to arrange them more and more for him but whenever he goes there, he likes to be signing onto an agreement of one kind or other and not visiting for the sake of visiting.

Mr. Speaker, we paid an official visit to Botswana this year and we are hoping that the President of the Republic of Botswana will return the visit to Barbados next year. Sir, that is a country now land-locked just north of South Africa and is being ravaged by HIV/AIDS. It is a country where within less than ten years, has seen its life expectancy move from age 67 to age 47. That is how the ravages of HIV/AIDS can undermine a country and can undermine and reverse its developmental process. This is part of the fight in Africa, among other things.

Mr. Speaker, we close our eyes to what HIV/AIDS is doing in the Caribbean and we had better not do so. HIV/AIDS is deadly whether it is in Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, the Bahamas or in Guyana. Therefore, this is part of a planning process. Sir, in countries like ours where there are Ministries which have social and economic planning to be done, pensions have to fit into that process. Therefore, from time to time, there would have to be adjustments made to pensions.

Mr. Speaker, in these early years of the 21st Century, there are persons who would want to opt to take pensions in quite different and innovative ways than we take pensions today. It is happening universally, not only in respect of pensions but with insurance policies or wills. Life insurance can now be had where one begins to have access to benefits of that, even before one's life has come to an end. Therefore, there is new and quite dramatically different thinking on these matters and we need to look at pensions in that wider and larger picture.

Sir, people have begun, I believe in our part of the world, to plan their lives. Mr. Speaker, there are persons, especially those in the private sector who work and it is only when they have reached age 40, that they begin to think about their pension. Sir, I am amazed at the number of persons who do not think about that until they are approaching age 60, which is not the time to be thinking about it. We need to look back to see how the old people used to do their business, and I have seen it is my time. If you have a good sound roof over your head, no matter how humble your house is and you put your house in a condition so that you do not have major electrical work to be done, once over time your house is put in a certain comfortable situation and you are getting a livable pension...

Sir, look at how many old people in Barbados are living to reach 90 and 100 years old. But one does not start planning that on reaching 70, one starts thinking and planning those things at an early stage.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance is sensitive to these issues. Last week in this House, we were dealing with economic policies, and I do not know how many persons have recognised it but the Minister of Finance has now put us in an even stronger position. He has been doing it systematically over the years, from \$10,000 to \$15,000, now to \$20,000 a year, where one can spend keeping one's house in good condition.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Therefore, there are all kinds of incentives that the Prime Minister has made available over the past several years, so that persons are less vulnerable to hurricanes, storms, *et cetera*.
11.55 a.m.

Sir, Government is the largest employer so the public service is the largest employer of people in Barbados as well as the private sector but they need to synchronize more in order to encourage and enhance the possibility for movement between the two sectors, so that pension becomes portable so that they move with the employee wherever he goes.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Health was my first portfolio many years ago and I was also the Minister of National Insurance at the same time. The investment aspect of that portfolio was always a matter for the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs but I dealt with the day-to-day matters. Sir, I remember negotiating a reciprocal arrangement with the United Kingdom, from whence now come many returning nationals to Barbados so that their pensions would be protected and that increments would also

accrue to them. Sir, no other Government in the Caribbean has done this and many now regret that they did not follow the example of Barbados.

I have lived to see two years ago in the presence of the Prime Minister of Britain, Mr. Tony Blair at a meeting, other countries of the Caribbean who had similarly negotiated after Barbados but did not take the trouble as I did at the time for the increments and so people are now living on pensions which can hardly be considered a livable pension today. Mr. Speaker, Barbados alone negotiated that, it cannot now be taken from us but they are not allowing any new countries to negotiate similarly. Mr. Speaker, this is why I say that the thinking must be long-term and that we have to look at the big picture when we plan.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am appealing for employers not only in the public service but in the private sector to look at pensions in a holistic way that I am suggesting.

Sir, I am much obliged to you.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, when the Honourable Member for St. Lucy spoke, he made a pronouncement that was so profound and even though he did not elaborate on it, I feel driven on this occasion to begin with the observation made by him. The Honourable Member sought to say that consideration of pure contracts are insufficient in the employment relationship. I am sorry the Honourable Member is not in his seat but I want to begin by looking at this because it is extremely important.

Sir, if we consider the contractual relationship at Common Law between employer and employee without looking at the statutory modifications that have gone towards the employment relationship, we would end up in a situation where, beyond pure Common Law contractual principles, there was never any guarantee of pension for workers. This point came over to me forcefully recently. Sir, in St. Lucy there was an employee who worked in a business house for 35 years and served well. Under his contract of service he was required to do his job and in return he would get a wage but the contract made no mention at all of anything he would get when he retired. When this poor, unfortunate employee retired the employer had nothing for him. Sir, this has been the position at Common Law but, fortunately, statutory and other modifications have come about to make it better.

Clearly that employee, whom I just mentioned, would not have been given a pension from his employer but if you assume that his National Insurance contributions were paid over a ten-year period, he could qualify for National Insurance pension because after one pays 500 contributions, the equivalent of ten years, in National Insurance, one can qualify for a contributory pension.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to start there because modifications to the contractual relationship have often meant improvements in the quality of life for workers. In Barbados, to some extent, we can be accused of not having gone beyond Common Law principles in the contractual relationship in the private sector. Mr. Speaker, I trust that in the next year the time will come when Parliament can do something about this.

The Honourable Member who just sat made a very important point about which I would want to make some observation. Her point was not dissimilar from a point that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy sought to raise except that, the way he put it, her point ended up contradicting his because he did not manage to say what he wanted to say.

The Honourable Member for the City was clear when she said that people have to plan their lives. I concur wholeheartedly because we each owe it to ourselves to plan our lives. What is going to make this point even more pointed is that with the consequences of globalisation and trade liberalisation that overall protection that people used to get from Government could be affected because as globalisation and trade liberalisation intensify, it is highly probable that many countries are going to get a minimalist kind of Government and so the flow of welfare-type policies are going to be halted in parts of the world. I trust that such never happens in Barbados.

Sir, as a politician, a number of people come to me with hard-luck stories and as parliamentarians, we have to ask ourselves to what extent can we truly subsidise people with hard-luck stories. Sir, a lot of people are living above their means and this week, I called a number of outstanding financiers and asked them a lot of questions. The observation was made by these financiers that a lot of Barbadians have five or six credit cards, that they use all of them and then find it hard to service their debt. They said that people also borrow seven or eight times outside of the credit card system and when their debt service quantum is considered, it is considerably higher than any income whether visible or invisible. Sir, there are Barbadians who work for invisible incomes that often matter a lot but Parliament has to look at this in a legal framework on another occasion, this question of those who are able to flout the law and work for monies that they ought not to work for.

When the Honourable Member for the City said that people should plan their lives, the message clearly is that by the time we become pensioners, all of us should be in a position to realise two things, that prior to becoming pensioners what we were earning would be higher than the actual pension we receive and secondly, by the time we become pensioners, we should be in a position where we do not expose ourselves to financial insecurity.

Mr. Speaker, the worst fear anybody over the age of 65 can have is a deep-rooted fear of financial insecurity. Sir, I see this fear all over the world because the casinos of this world are full of old-age pensioners who, through a fear of their financial insecurity go into the casinos hoping to make it big. Sir, when the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, the Minister of Social Transformation speaks, he is going to verify that a lot of people in this country who are hard hit by the rooted feelings of financial insecurity take their pension cheques to arcades and cash them there, remain there and hope to make it big.
12.05 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I am not being judgmental but the point that I am making is that if anybody reaches pensionable age and is hard hit by fears that they do not have enough pension income, other income or capital assets to convert into resources by which they can live, they are going to turn to all types of behaviours that hit back at them hard. It cannot be a good thing to see a little old lady in a wheel chair in a casino, whether it is Nassau, Atlantic City or Las Vegas. She is there playing games in the hope that she would be able to supplement the pension that she receives.

Sir, I am saying this deliberately because all of us in Barbados are living in a parliamentary democracy, where despite welfare-type programmes and resources being made available by Government to help those in need, we at the end of the day owe it to ourselves to plan our lives.

Sir, Governments in circumstances such as what we are seeing also have to look very closely at what Governments are doing. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy said that people have the capacity to manage money and they can use money to invest in business. That can be true for some people but there are people in Barbados who can benefit from the investment climate who are yet to be educated into the types of instruments that exist in which you can make investments. I want to repeat that point. There are people in Barbados who are in a position to invest but unaware of the types of financial instruments in which they can make investments.

Sir, can you name for me the average Barbadian from Syndicate Road, Civilian Road or Main Road Bush Hall who understands the working of Treasury Bills? Sir, name for me persons in Barbados whether from your constituency or mine who work for incomes in excess of \$3,000.00 a month who are sensitive to the inner workings of the insurance industry where they can buy investment instruments in the insurance industry, investments today which are carrying a higher return than a savings account in the commercial banks, beyond ordinary live cover?

I also want to make this observation in the light of all that I have said today. We have Honourable Members in this Honourable House who belong to the credit union movement and I would want to urge every credit unionist inside and outside of this Honourable House to sit down in his/her credit union and persuade them to go beyond encouraging them to save and go into the realm of financial counselling for our people.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, I believe is a member of a credit union, has enough erudition and scholarship, having been educated in finance and the hard knocks of life, would tell you that the credit union movement has a role to play. We in the credit union need to protect our people from profligacy and spendthrift ways and we in this Honourable House should work together to counsel our brothers in the credit union movement about thrift and savings.

The Honourable Member here on my right, not only is he a member of a credit union but wrote credit union rules, if what I heard in Baxters Road is true. The Honourable Member is not a lawyer but it is my certain knowledge, based on the truthfulness that emerged in Baxters Road, which I parade from time to time in the night, I heard that the Honourable Member wrote the rules of a particular credit union.

Mr. Speaker, Government from time to time has to look at Government's resources. The last point that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy raised is this. It often happens that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy does not elaborate on what he says or it does not come over the way that he should say it. The last point that he made before he sat was that, perhaps, Government now has to look at that part of the Consolidated Fund that is preserved for pensions and see if a certain amount of governmental money in the Consolidated Fund can be kept and invested for proper returns for pensioners. That is a serious point and it came from the mouth of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who neither elaborated nor waited to sit down so that I could have assisted him.

Mr. Speaker, I said at the outset that in terms of pure common law contract the employer is duty bound to pay the employee during the course of employment. I also said that there are statutes that have been enacted that have inured to the benefit of employees. However, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East introduced this Bill very well, the thing about managing pensions is almost as soon as you write new pension laws you have to stop, look at it and ask yourself if it is going to be relevant 10 years down the road. As much as we are in here legislating that the pension law for civil servants be brought to some extent in line with the National Insurance Scheme pension law, I want to make a point.

Mr. Speaker, let me make this point crystal clear. In the event that there is a civil servant in this country who is tempted to come to the conclusion that what we are doing here today is transferring his or her pension rights over to the National Insurance Scheme, that it is not true. We are legislating to bring the terms of pension service in line with age requirements in the National Insurance Scheme, but we are not legislating to abolish civil servants' salaries and instead force them to make use of the National Insurance Scheme.

Sir, this matter engaged the person whom we today call the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow. I want Honourable Members to listen because emerging out of this debate there is bound to be some pronouncement to suggest that what we are doing is not being done correctly. In 1970, looking at emerging ageing in the population and declining birth rates and looking at the extent to which the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow had to preserve pensions for posterity, he was in a dilemma. He knew, based on all projections in 1970 that if he did not do something, that come 1995, things would have been bad for public officers in terms of pensions.

Sir, he also would have been aware that the 1968/1969 actuarial review for the National Insurance Scheme said that the National Insurance Scheme would be busted in five years. The first ever actuarial review, which is done consistent with Section 34 of the National Insurance Scheme Act, Section 30 gives the Minister of Finance power for investment and Section 34 says that you must review it every three years.

Sir, the first actuarial review indicated that unless something miraculous happens, that by 1971 the National Insurance Scheme fund would be broke. The late Right Excellent Errol Barrow had that to contend with. The fact that 20 years later, in 1991, civil servants pensions were under threat, what did the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow do in 1971? He categorised a mass of people who were not appointed as a group of casual workers and lent in favour of making them entitled to a National Insurance Scheme pension after Government gratuity but not for both.

Mr. Speaker, they emerged in 1971 a core of people, who were called casual workers, who were disentitled to a normal civil servant's pension and who only became entitled to such in 1997/1998 when we returned them into public officers and raised their status from casual to public officers. Sir, I am providing the background accurately to show, not for any political gain. In 1971 the rules to do with pensions in this country were so changed that unappointed casual workers could not be entitled to a public servant's pension. They remained dis-entitled for over 25 years, until we realised that these people numbered more than 5 000 in the civil service. We passed law, a mere six or seven years

ago, to convert them into terms of service, where they would be entitled to permanent appointment and become pensionable.
12.15 p.m.

I am not saying, Mr. Speaker, this for political gain. I am mentioning these things as matters of fact, and suggesting that the move in 1971 could have been born of desperation. The move of 1971 to stop casual workers at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the Barbados Water Authority and wherever, from being able to draw public service pensions, came at a time when public servants' pensions and the National Insurance pensions were generally under threat.

Sir, what the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow in his wisdom did, was to create a core of people who would not put pressure on Government pensions, because he worked out then that they would get pensions from the National Insurance Scheme. This, to some extent marked the popularity of the Contributory Pension.

The Contributory Pension started to register in this country, when persons in the public service were forced to draw it, because they were entitled National Insurance wise, the reason being that they were making contributions, but they were not entitled otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, I go back to what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was saying that we, as a Parliament have to confront reality and the inner workings of the law. The way the Consolidated Fund is legally regulated and structured, what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy proposed, cannot work. There would have to be an amendment to the law.

Sir, what he said, and I am going to give credit where it is due, was that for posterity, we have to look at the whole Consolidated Fund, reserve a fraction and put it in investments that will bring returns to ensure the viability.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: It was the last point he made. In the same way he said that pure considerations of a Common Law contract were against workers when it comes to pensions. He was also right there but he was not always right.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, as his first comment, he said that when public officers leave the public service, they should work or contribute elsewhere. We had public officers of the likes of Mr. Frankie Jordan leaving the public service and a Mr. Maynard, who was a permanent secretary. We now have a Mr. Harris, Mr. Carlisle Carter,

and a Mr. Kellman, out of the public service working at the top of the private sector, so we must tell that to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

He also said that we should not keep people at work purely to earn their pensions, which is also profound. If the Honourable Member is saying to keep people at work for their productivity, I concur with it. If he is saying that people should be made to work based on what they will contribute, I agree with him and that is the most liberal and benign construction I can put on what he is saying.

Mr. Speaker, he said that do not use the excuse of job security to tie a man to a job. This is also profound. In other words, is it just because a person is permanent that he remains in a job, or is it that the person should remain in the job not only for his marginal product but to make a contribution. Let me comment on this matter as the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Speaker, the time has clearly come when we must look at the relationship between workers and work. My own view is that in an ideal world, the worker should so interact with his work, as to derive not only income but some sense of psychological satisfaction and that good feeling. We have to ask ourselves how many public officers have that natural 'feel good' feeling for their job or for themselves, in consequence of working in the job. There have been all types of comments made about public servants.

There is no question, Mr. Speaker, that the vast majority of all of them are conscientious, dedicated and work hard, but realising though that some of them have problems, this Government set up an Employee Assistance Programme to counsel and assist public servants who were victims of sorrowful behaviours or conditions.
12.20 p.m.

Sir, we introduced that programme, fully aware that in a world where we each have a duty to our brother, there could be public officers, who hard hit by grief and other things, find themselves unproductive and not really performing up to speed.

Mr. Speaker, on the whole question of job security, I also want to say that recently, within the last four months, Red China signalled to its public officers that the Security of Tenure enjoyed there, could not continue. I want to send a message to Barbadian workers that nobody is looking at retrenching them.

Sir, even though there are some who say that the civil service is doubled the size it should be, this Government is

not contemplating reducing the size of the Civil Service, but in a situation where a person has job security, that person has to get familiar with the job, and look at the prospects that the job could offer, beyond working for income. They should look at what the job can do to lift that person and how that person can contribute to the job and, ultimately, to national development.

The time has clearly come, Mr. Speaker, where we have to find some formula by which we work out the degree to which each worker in Barbados is productive, and the degree to which there could be problems of productivity in Barbados. We also have to look to see what causes unproductive behaviour where it occurs.

I say so, Mr. Speaker, as I subscribe to NISE, this National Initiative for Service Excellence. People say that the private sector is usually more effective than Government, but I am not going with that view. I have been to many a private sector business and seen the wrong attitudes demonstrated to work. I have also gone to public sector businesses in Government and seen efficiency, competence, and conscientiousness, but at the end of the day, we have to be objective and detached.

How well are we doing in this business of productivity? Time was when employers were eager, 40 years ago, to make adjustments in wages and salaries, based on cost of living factors. Nowadays, Mr. Speaker, employers are looking to see if increases in productivity ought to be the criteria on which wage increases are to be structured. Nobody can fault them for that because, ultimately, they want to ensure that production is not kept back.

Mr. Speaker, I take particular delight in speaking in this debate. I want to say that all Honourable Members who spoke so far have done very well. I was deeply moved by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East who, despite her very tender years, not having traversed this earthly planet for as long as either the Honourable Member for the City or myself, was able to give the historical background.

The Honourable Member for the City who is the first person to drive this issue about ageing in my consciousness, years ago at the Barbados Labour Party during an internal meeting we had there, also spoke skillfully. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy had points but he did not elaborate on them. There are Honourable Members who would query if this is the first time, but I would not go down that road.

I trust, Mr. Speaker, that at the end of this session, this Parliament can concur in the view that if ever there was a time to look closely at how we manage finances, including pensions, the time is now.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 1.30 p.m. today.

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

The question that the Sitting be now suspended until 1.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

12.24 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a submission on this debate. Sir, I believe it is an important Bill because in principle it seeks to adjust the range with respect to what one would define as compulsory retirement.

Mr. Speaker, while the others were making their presentations, I had the opportunity to sit and to reflect on this particular measure. In relation to the specific measure to the previous amendments that looked specifically at increasing the retirement age over the next decade, I am beginning to have a number of concerns.

Sir, the reason for these concerns is that I have to ask the question why is it that one would need a pension in his or her retirement years. If I ask the question, the answer would be that a pension would be required in one's retirement years so that the pensioner can live an adequate life and can sustain that life until death. In that case, I then have to ask a number of other questions, one of which would be that determination of the pension would be defined on the economic reality that exists at the time of determining whether that pension fund would be solvent or over what time period would it remain solvent. Sir, that determination must be put in the context of the sociological reality and in specific, the demographic reality as it relates to how our population shifts are occurring.

Mr. Speaker, it is on that premise that I am beginning to have some difficulties. Here in Barbados we have, without a doubt, a trend that follows other trends worldwide, with respect to an ageing population or in relation to the deduction in the productive group as defined between the 50 and 60 years grouping. Sir, that needs to be revisited in this context but also in relation that allows for an increase, and significantly so, in the dependency ratio.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of that, if I am going to accept that there is such an increase in the dependency ratio in Barbados, then I must question the logic of taking a defined retirement age of 65 and reducing that age to that of 60, therefore, allowing for a range of retirements from age 60 to 64. That must necessarily mean that a percentage of Barbadians may opt for that early retirement. If that occurs, it must necessarily mean that the number of contributions will also be decreased. That does not square with that reduction in the number of contributions while, at the same time, one is trying to increase the age of retirement. That certainly does not make sense to me. Maybe there is something that I am missing and this is where my concern emanates.

Mr. Speaker, if I am also to hold that during the retirement age a pensioner must have a pension that allows that individual to live comfortably, then I have to look at the data. Sir, in 1996, based on the White Paper on Housing, 12.7 per cent of Barbadians live below the poverty line; 36,000 Barbadians or 34 per cent of the labour force earn less than \$200 per week. Additionally, 27,000 Barbadians or 25 per cent of the labour force earn between \$200 and \$300 per week. Sir, this means that 54 per cent of the workforce is, therefore, earning less than \$300 per week.

Mr. Speaker, with regards to the Green Paper on the Care of the Elderly, 2004, 80 per cent of Barbadians earn less than \$3,100 per month. Therefore, given the present paradigm where the maximum insurable earning is calculated at 60 per cent of that \$3,100, it, therefore, means if they were to depend exclusively on the National Insurance pension, that 80 per cent of Barbadians will have to survive on between \$1,100 and \$1,200 per month. Mr. Speaker, I cannot see that as being a reasonable pension, given the cost of living dynamics in Barbados.

It cannot be accepted that given the cost of food, electricity, telephone, water and toiletries, that the average pensioner, receiving that type of pension, can live adequately in Barbados.

1.35 p.m.

I would also submit if that is true, what percentage of that 80 per cent of Barbadians would have any disposable income to actively invest in the so-called private sector pension plan so touted by this Administration because it simply does not add up.

Sir, I am beginning to get somewhat confused by the prognostications of the Government.

Sir, if one looks at the present determination as to how pensions are calculated, it makes sense that one cannot argue that there is now a double-taxation on pensions. I want to

call for an alteration to that regime because the capital gains tax on the final accumulation of pensions may be greater than the total allowable deductions. If this is the case, then there may be a net negative over the period of deductions to the pensioner. Therefore, it does not surprise me that BARP has been calling for such a measure. When it is evaluated, I would want to wholeheartedly support it, not only because it is double taxation, but in the light of the fact that some of these members would have \$1 100 or less to live on, I would also call for a reasonable increase in the National Insurance pension and not the meagre \$90 increase given by this Administration which I consider to be a slap in the face of the people who built this country.

Mr. Speaker, if this Administration is serious, it would look at its taxation policy with respect to capital gains tax and personal investments of pensioners. If we are going to argue, as the statistics demonstrate without a shadow of a doubt, that given the present situation more than 80 per cent of the population will be living on National Insurance pension of less than \$1 200, then it stands to argue that if there are any meagre investments, they should not be taxed because they would be critical to allow further liquidity for the use of the pensioners.

Sir, given that I cannot see any reduction in the cost of living in the next ten years, anyone who goes to the supermarket would recognise that a little 'sparrow bird' chicken which cost \$9 two years ago, now costs \$17 or \$18 today. When we look at the increment with respect to the allocations to pensions, it is not enough and as a result, many of the pensioners in Barbados are incapable of changing one sheet of galvanise on their roofs, buying proper food and incapable of purchasing all the other goods and services to live comfortably in Barbados. Sir, many Honourable Members on the Other Side know this is true because they have to encounter it on a daily basis in their constituencies but they might be stifling their consciences today because it is Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, when I hear this Administration speak to public sector reform, it must necessarily work hand in hand with pension reform. This Administration should be serious about allowing individuals the opportunity to allow for their own economic rights, as defined under the UN Charter. The reform Committee of the UN Charter met in Barbados but opted not to allow Barbadians to have the right to work in Barbados. Sir, the economic right in this context mean that many of the so-called strictures which now exist within the public sector need to be looked at.

Mr. Speaker, it cannot be wise in the face of a global trade environment in the labour market that we can be restricting our workers to the type of archaic labour strictures which exist. Sir, there may be workers at the

National Conservation Commission earning \$300 weekly but these individuals might require \$500 or \$600 in order to make ends meet for themselves and their families.

Mr. Speaker, we have a public sector set of rules and regulations that is not flexible enough to allow individuals the opportunity to seek to engage in activities without dodging about and without the risk of being fired or in some way censored by their bosses to earn revenue to provide for themselves. Sir, I know many of them and many other Honourable Members also know them as well.

The public sector reform mechanics must allow for flexibility to exist so that the individual has the opportunity to engage in other activities without losing their jobs or having the fear of losing their jobs. It cannot be wise in the 21st Century that we look at a public sector or private sector and delineate their rights based on whether the person is one or the other. Sir, a private sector individual has all the economic rights but the rights of a public sector individual are curtailed by a set of colonial rules and laws which have no place in this modern post-colonial world.

Mr. Speaker, as a result, I am calling for the type of public sector reform that does not restrict individuals from earning a living in Barbados. I am calling for each individual to have the opportunity, whether he works for NCC, National Housing Corporation or wherever to be able to go out there without fear of losing his job and ply a trade or find another type of employment under the laws of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am now beginning to be concerned about the structure of the pension calculation mechanism. If we accept that you qualify for a National Insurance pension after ten years of contribution, I am not too sure that I accept that for the next 20 years or more that I am contributing to the so-called pool and that Government is necessarily the best organ to hold and invest it.

Sir, as I look back at the pieces of legislation which have come to this Parliament, I have looked at the investment patterns with respect to many questionable investments that have taken place and that have utilised funds from the National Insurance. I am also aware of the most recent event where Government's Paper had to be bought by the National Insurance. However, I still want to know when will the National Insurance Scheme see one red cent from the investment in the Warrens project, and there are many other investments like that. This is the people's money that we are talking about.

1.45 p.m.

Sir, I am therefore saying that we are reaching the stage where the individual must necessarily have some option to be allowed to have access to a portion of that 23 years of

contributions to invest as they see fit, even if it is through a Government entity in their name or a private entity. I am no longer convinced that Government is the right institution to manage those funds and invest them.

Sir, we remain Third World countries because of our thinking. We are Third World countries because the third world countries determine for us what we must do. Once you have pension reform going on in the United States of America and Europe, we must have pension reform here in Barbados also.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at our demographic dynamics and the demographic changes that we are now presented with, they did not occur overnight. There were occurring for many years. It bothers me immensely when I hear persons say, well you know this is a world trend. What does that have to do with it? It reminds me of our people.

Mr. Speaker, we wanted to have games on television and before we create our own games, we copy Supermarket Sweep and we come up with Run For Your Money. Sir, when DaCosta wanted a game around Christmas time, before we created our own game we copied the game Wheel of Fortune.

Sir, we remain Third World because of our thinking. I am saying that our own sociological circumstances must necessarily define the type of hybrid public sector and pension reform that is suited to the time period of our development, post-colonial, and with respect to our culture. I do not believe that is what we are doing and that is why I think there is a paradoxical position where if you reduce the retirement age below 65, you decrease the contributions that could be obtained. Yet, while you are doing that, you are saying on the other hand that you are going to increase the retirement age.

Mr. Speaker, I do not understand the logic of that because some argued that a percentage of persons would opt for retirement but it means that there will be less contributions by that amount and that could only mean further problems. As a result I am somewhat confused. I hope that one of the Honourable Members on the Other Side would explain the logic behind the whole thing to me because I guess that I am reasonably daft.

Sir, it is important to me that in 10 years, whatever adjustments that we make today, must allow for a future value situation to exist so that a pensioner 10 years from now can live in Barbados. I am not convinced that the types of measures that we are putting in place will get the job done. I am not convinced that the demographic changes that are occurring and the rate at which they are occurring will get the job done or will allow for the job to be done.

I believe that we are in a dynamic situation and as a result of that, the only premise on which one can work to determine what types of reforms to put in place must be the premise that the individual must be able to eat daily and to pay his bills. It cannot work the other way around where we look at our economic realities and then determine that we can only increase pensions by \$90.00 irrespective of whether the cost of living parameters are such that the individual needs to have an increase of a pension of \$200 or \$300.

I have heard that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy asked the question why is there no reverse tax credit for pensioners in Barbados? They all earn less than \$6 000.00 a year and if employees who earn less than \$15 000.00 – and when the allowance goes up to \$20 000.00, I do not know if the same arrangement will exist, why the over 8 000 pensioners cannot get the reverse tax credit? What is the problem?

Sir, if we do not appreciate that we need, not only to radically increase the National Insurance Scheme pensions as well as the non-contributory pensions in such a way that these pensions are not just subsistence, we will be creating a welfare-type mentality and society where people who are now on welfare get \$50 a week to live on in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, there is no Honourable Member on the Other Side who can argue with me that any individual in Barbados, a child or an adult, can live on \$50 a week. Therefore, it is incumbent on all of us to make sure that we index carefully our pensions way beyond inflation.

I also have to refer to the statements which the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West always makes, that is, the inflation rate does not capture the impact of value added tax and services. The reason why I had to come to this position is because I go into the supermarket and I have seen the increase in food prices over the last year. Yet, somebody is going to argue that we only had a .25 increase when I see the cost of a chicken increase by \$6. These types of percentage arguments are pointless when you see old people and young families have to put back groceries on the supermarket shelves because they could not pay for them.

Sir, I think that this amendment is going to create more problems. The reason why I think it is going to create more problems is because it is paradoxical with respect to the results that are desirable to be obtained. I will wait to see what will happen in the next 5 years if we do not get the sort of influx of non-nationals to bolster the 50 to 59-age group. If we continue to get the returning nationals returning to Barbados to increase those persons over the age of 65, I want to see what will happen in this country.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical to understand that there is a one-to-one relationship between contributions and benefits and currently we do not have that. I do not know how this Administration is going to get it, but in order to get it you have to increase the 50 to 59-age group. I have to ask the Honourable Member for Christ Church East to start producing more children that is the only way out. If he is not able, I will ask the Honourable Member for St. George North to do what he usually does.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: This is a very serious problem.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I think that this amendment is going to create more problems than it attempts to solve in the long run.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.
1.55 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all Honourable Members who spoke in this debate. I think some valuable points have generally been made on Both Sides, although I must distance myself from the extrapolation that we just heard, taking a number of statistics and figures from all kinds of documents, comparing apples and oranges, and then telling us that he has come to a scientific conclusion.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip West knows better. Therefore, I trust and believe he knows that we will not accept those very unfair comparisons as well as wrong conclusions and that, perhaps, he does not live in the same Barbados as all of us.

In the past, I had occasion to say in here that very often when you look at a glass you can determine if it is half full or half empty. I do not expect that the Honourable Member for St. Philip West will say anything other than it is half empty.

Nevertheless, fortunately, while we still have some gaps in relation to poverty in this country, and I believe that the Government is committed to continuing the work towards its eradication, it cannot be said that this country has 80 per cent or 50 per cent of its population living on marginal means and that no one will believe it. It is an unbelievable assertion.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, anyone from the rest of the Caribbean listening to this debate, would wonder

whether we were indeed talking about Barbados. But suffice it to say, it is Christmas and a time to be merry and therefore, I take it in the spirit in which it was given.

This amendment, as I said at the outset, is very simple, and it is necessitated by us having to debate it today by reason of the fact that it becomes applicable from January 1, 2005. We see this not as a single step but as part of many steps that we have taken and will continue to take to reform the pension and social security systems in Barbados, not just in relation to Government pensions but National Insurance pensions and private sector pensions.

It is our commitment that no one should be made to work a lifetime and then be stranded in the sunset years of their life by reason of the inability to live decently. We therefore will do all within our power to put the appropriate policy and legislative framework to protect the interest of persons. There may be some divergence of opinion on occasion as to specific measures, but we would like to believe that there is a national consensus on the fact that it is an important aspect of reform which must be undertaken in the early part of the Twenty-first Century.

With those few words, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, the present Chairman of Committees is not here.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, I would like to move a motion that the Honourable Member for St. Michael East is designated Chairman for the purposes of this process.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: I beg to second, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: If that is the will of the House, so be it.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, the House resolved itself into Committee on the Bill, Mr. T. A. PRESCOD in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

The Schedule became the Schedule to the Bill.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee without amendment, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Pensions (Miscellaneous) (Provisions) Act, 2004.
2.05 p.m.

ORDER NO. 7 – THE ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP WEST INDIES (GUARANTEE) BILL, 2004

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the second reading of this Bill which is intended to provide a necessary guarantee in relation to the ICC Cricket World Cup West Indies 2007. There is also before the House a Resolution which activates the actual guarantee which the Bill makes provision for.

Mr. Speaker, the hosting of this Cricket World Cup by the West Indies Cricket Board and indeed by the people of the Caribbean region is, in my estimation, the most important step we have taken in cricket and perhaps in the Caribbean region since the attainment of test status in 1928. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that in 1928 when the West Indies played England at Lords, it was said by those who have researched cricket and society in that period, to be a defining moment not just in cricket but indeed in West Indian history.

In fact, the great C. L. R. James reminds us in the short forward to his book “Beyond A Boundary” by way of a question: What do they know of cricket who only cricket know. That question really perhaps says a lot about cricket and about the people of the Caribbean region. In fact, the very title of the book “Beyond A Boundary” speaks to the fact that cricket is so deeply woven into the very fabric of our society that it is not just a sport played on the field of play, it is not an addition to the society, but that it is really the society itself and speaks to the fact that this cricket which is so much a part of our West Indian consciousness has dimensions which are political, social, cultural and which are also increasingly economic.

Sir, it is really against that background of the pivotal role which cricket has played in the development of the West Indian society that we have undertaken to enter this hosting of the Cricket World Cup in 2007. Of course, we have a long history in this game which justifies and more than merits the fact that we should be involved at this level. In fact, the spirits of the greats will be very much with us as we go through this exercise of hosting Cricket World Cup.

Indeed, none of us can think of cricket and of embarking on this exercise without considering the dominance of the West Indies Cricket team from the 1975/76 period through to 1986 for sure, although some will argue that it continued at least up to 1995. We have had ten solid years being at the top, 20 years of being there or thereabout and we are already just in an interim period as far as our rightful position as world leaders is concerned. We are all counting the blessed assurance and the hope that the winning of the ICC Cricket Championship Trophy this year is an indication that the West Indies team is up and going again.

Sir, if a picture is worth a thousand words, perhaps the thousand words about West Indies Cricket was spoken in that picture which appeared in a section of the Press recently in which the captain was giving some instructions to a young player in the midst of pouring rain during one of the activities in their camp. Many commentators and persons who observed the activities at the camp are indicating that they are satisfied that a new spirit, but for me I would say an old spirit, in relation to the way that we played the game, the seriousness that we attached to the game and the way that our players comported themselves, is really an old spirit which is now being resurrected into this present group of West Indian players.

Sir, we embark on this exciting journey not just based on recent record-breaking performances like Brian Lara's 400 but also recognising that over the almost 100 years of West Indies test cricket status that there have been significant names. In the batsmen area, there is George Headley, Allan Rae, the three W's, Sir Clyde Walcott, Sir Everton Weekes, Sir Frank Worrell, and the Right Excellent Sir Gary Sobers who is an all-rounder but who is a great batsman in his own right. There are others in the modern era like Vivian Richards, Desmond Haynes and Gordon Greenidge. We can also think of our great all-rounders, with the Right Excellent Sir Garfield Sobers being the principal all-rounder but there are many more. In fact, in the days of the all-rounders, some would argue, was really an important component of a cricket team and that perhaps in our selection policy we need to get back to that point where we had specialist all-rounders who were able to change the course of the game. Of course our history is replete with examples of great men as fast bowlers and we hope to get back to that stage very soon.

Sir, we have history on our Side. We also have a situation that the countries which make up the Caribbean area and are members of the West Indies Cricket Board are countries which, in terms of the way which we measure development internationally, are recognised as middle income countries, as countries in which there is a high level of stability, in which there have been steady economic progress over the last century and in which the quality of life is pretty good by international standards and that our region

is in as much a position to host an international world game in which this West Indies Cricket World Cup is, as in any other part of the world. In fact, in terms of standing, the Cricket World Cup is number three after the Olympics and the Football World Cup. Therefore, it is no small measure and no small matter for the Caribbean region to be hosting this particular sport.

In terms of Barbados, on the basis of our bid submission we have been awarded the hosting of the finals of the World Cup along with six matches in the Super Eight stage of the game. Of course, this choice of Barbados was not by way of any political process, negotiations or of any wielding and dealing, but by way of a most vigorous and comprehensive analysis. In fact, the owners of the franchise for the World Cup hired teams of professionals whose consulting companies work for the IOC with the Olympics and for FIFA with respect to Football World Cup. These professionals go around the world assessing cities and countries which put in bids to host games. Mr. Speaker, therefore, the decision to host Barbados as the venue for World Cup, 2007 was on the basis of an evaluation of the comprehensive bid which we submitted after substantial work was done. In fact, this substantial work represents the volume of work which was involved in putting this bid together. This is a very comprehensive proposal on all aspects of hosting the finals in Barbados, as well as the six super eight matches.

2.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, we are now committed to the delivery of what we have promised. What have we promised? We have promised the hosting of the best World Cup ever. Of course, we want to ensure that the hosting of these games is backed up by a team which is keen on winning as well because not only do we want the West Indies to be distinguished as an excellent event host but also as a team that has also won this game on its home ground.

Sir, we know what winning a World Cup is all about. This World Cup is put on every four years. This is the 9th to be held in 2007 and the West Indies were in the winners circle in 1975 and again in 1979.

Mr. Speaker, we must also remember that in terms of the nature and character of what it is that we are being engaged in, there are approximately 96 countries in the world which play cricket. Therefore, for Barbados to host the final of a world game is both a tremendous honour and opportunity. It is also a tremendous responsibility. Sir, these games have their commercial element. They represent a major revenue earner for the International Cricket Council and in this regard, this 2007 World Cup, like all the others, starts from that commercial perspective. The ICC Cricket

World Cup West Indies 2007 Incorporation has, therefore, sold its rights to the 2007 World Cup to Global Cricket Corporation. That entity, Global Cricket Corporation, has the right to commercially exploit a range of areas such as sponsorship, broadcasting, *et cetera*.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that must be remembered, which is all spelt out in the Bill by way of these parties, is that the International Cricket Council, through its development arm, the International Cricket Development Council has signed an agreement with the West Indies Cricket Board, through its cricket subsidiary, the Council of West Indies Cricket (CWC). The commercial arm of West Indies cricket, has, in turn, been the entity which puts out for tender the hosting of the games by the various venues in the region and has subsequently awarded eight venues in the region the opportunity and right to host various games within the International Cricket Council West Indies, 2007 World Cup.

Mr. Speaker, why have we gone forward with this, apart from the pride, the honour and dignity? Sir, the host signing agreement that we have signed with CWC allows the local organising committee, a registered company World Cup Barbados, to be entitled to the ticket revenue from the sale of tickets, as well as a share in the profits. In terms of a share of the profits, one of the major sources of profit, will, of course, be the matter of what was sold to Global Cricket Corporation by way of sponsorship, broadcasting and Internet rights. As it now stands, those rights that were sold, guarantee a minimum income to the International Cricket Council of some BDS\$460 million. That, in turn, is being distributed by way of a commitment for the International Cricket Council to distribute BDS\$200 million to the West Indies Cricket Board, while the remainder will be distributed amongst the test playing countries of the world. This arrangement is the same of an apportionment which occurred in the South Africa World Cup, so that the host country gets the lion share of the revenue derived from the International Cricket Council. Of course, it is out of that guaranteed revenue that the West Indies Cricket Board, through its company, CWC, has to fund the expenses of putting the games on.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members must understand that whilst as host Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and other countries will fund the cost of the infrastructure to host the game, the CWC will meet the cost of putting the games on, so the matches and related costs would have nothing to do with Barbados, those costs would be met by the CWC. Our cost is in the investment of the facilities at the required standards, in order to be able to host the games.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of what happens after the games are over, whatever profits are made over and beyond that are to be distributed by way of 80 per cent being retained by the

West Indies Cricket Board, to fund future cricket development and 20 per cent for immediate distribution to member countries of the West Indies Cricket Board. Therefore, there are benefits there to be derived.

Mr. Speaker, what would this mean for Barbados? Sir, clearly there are economic and financial benefits to be derived. A conservative estimate of increased revenue from tourism and other related expenditure as a result of this tournament, putting us at a minimum of approximately \$240 million but there are estimates as high as \$400 million. Therefore, we expect somewhere in the region of between \$240 million and \$400 million as a result of tournament – related expenditure by visitors, professional people, the media and other connected parties, who would be here leading up to and during the period, to spend for the World Cup.

Mr. Speaker, this estimate of \$400 million is based on the increase in tourism expenditure, based on the experience which places such as Sydney has derived from hosting the Olympics, while South Africa has derived theirs from hosting the World Cup. In fact, not only is it recorded that there was substantial expenditure at the point of hosting but also that there was a 7 per cent increase in tourism expenditure in the years immediately following the hosting of these major games.

Mr. Speaker, we, therefore, not only expect increased economic activities during the hosting of the World Cup but also in the immediate periods after. We also expect that this would provide increased opportunities for employment for Barbadians during this period in areas such as construction, entertainment and in the other services which are normally needed to provide for tourism. We expect thousands of persons to come into the island specifically for this event, at a time usually when the tourist season would have ended. Therefore, not only are we projecting an extended tourism season but also an increase in the number of visitors. That, therefore, contributes directly to economic activity.

Mr. Speaker, there is also the matter of the longer terms and benefits which are even longer-lasting. Sir, this is the third largest world sporting event and hence the reason why Global Cricket Corporation was in a position to guarantee ICC BDS\$460 million up front. It is also estimated that 2.3 billion people will be watching this sport, especially the finals on television, and would be seeing Barbados. Could you tell me at what point in time we would be able to afford the advertising cost of showcasing Barbados to 2.3 billion people?
2.25 p.m.

Sir, advertising on television is very expensive. Check the cost of advertising in the United States of America

for the Super Bowl and you will find that it cost \$500 a minute and upward and that the cost is phenomenal for advertising at the Olympics. Therefore, we have an opportunity to showcase our island and to engage in active advertising of the island during the World Cup. This benefit is not related to the 51 days of the tournament but an activity which has benefit in the long term.

Sir, in addition, those visitors who come to Barbados and have the experience will advertise by word of mouth. Many of the surveys of tourists leaving Barbados indicate that they had a good time and had heard about Barbados from their friends. Therefore, the increased number of visitors and the television advertising are benefits which justify our involvement in this activity.

Sir, there are other benefits in terms of the improved service standards where businesses heighten their delivery capacity and standards in order to benefit from such activity. The NISE programme is not geared to World Cup specifically because it would have been done in any case but it is timely in that whilst we are being showcased to the rest of the world, we have an opportunity to show how excellent we are in service.

Sir, long after the World Cup is finished, we would be left with an enhanced sporting infrastructure. Kensington Oval has been around for a while and according to an informal survey conducted by *Times of London*, it is the second most popular and second most recognised cricket ground in the world after Lords and perhaps only because Lords was a cricket ground before Kensington. Sir, when people get off an aeroplane usually, their first stop is at Kensington Oval and people have married on the grass at Kensington Oval.

Sir, Kensington has such history that the decision was made to retrofit it in order to preserve the spirit and the recognition of it. We could have built a ground elsewhere but it would have been just another cricket ground around the world but Kensington Oval is special. It is important that we have a new facility meeting all the standards and accommodating not only cricket but a multitude of other sports. There are tremendous benefits all of which I would not seek to mention at this time.

Sir, obviously with the benefits to be derived, there are certain obligations which we have to discharge. I have mentioned the host venue agreement, a legally binding agreement that set out the clear rights and obligations of the parties involved. The nature and form of this agreement was hammered out between the Government of Barbados, CWC and ICC.

We have established a company in accordance with the requirements of the bid which says that there must be a local

organising committee comprised of Government, cricket officials and the private sector. Sir, the local organising committee is a body that is required to be able to enter into contracts and, therefore, a company, World Cup Barbados Inc. was registered.

Sir, contrary to the assertions of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, the company was not established to keep it out of the clutches of Parliament nor to prevent scrutiny but to meet the requirements of the bid. So that the company, World Cup Barbados Inc. functioning as a local organising committee in accordance with the Bid Commission would be in a position to enter into contract for tendering and design services, to tender for catering services, the hiring of staff and to do things as would be necessary in order to fulfill the plans and obligations that we have set out in this Bill and that is the reason.

2.35 p.m.

Sir, the fact of the matter is that it is a government-owned entity and by way of its very construction, the intention of the Government for full disclosure and for the involvement of a wide range of persons and institutions is very clear. It is, therefore, a joint venture between the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., which has a 90 per cent stake in it, and the Barbados Cricket Association. This is not to cast it far from Government. The reality is, a government department, which is essentially still the Crown, could not easily enter the kinds of relationships which one of necessity will be able to enter into.

As a matter of fact, the very nature of the way how these games function requires that you have a stand-alone entity. This is a special purpose company established strictly for the purpose of putting on these games.

Sir, I must tell you that we have taken great care to ensure that the composition of the Board reflect that, both in terms of its institutional representation and the individuals involved. I do not think that we could find a better Board functioning as a local organising committee for the World Cup (CWC) than Christopher DeCaires, as Chairman and Chairman of Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. He is a Chartered Accountant and he is very knowledgeable in these matters. The Reverend Wes Hall, a great former test player, former President of the West Indies Cricket Board, is on the Board not only on his personal background but representing cricketing interest. Mr. Austin Sealy is a member of the Olympic Committee. The Olympic Committee is a body that runs the Olympics. Mr. Austin Sealy has distinguished himself as the head of the Barbados local Olympic Committee for many years. It is Mr. Sealy and others at his level who are involved in choosing locations for Olympics and attending to such matters. He is a former banker and a very distinguished individual. Mr. Patrick Frost

representing the Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados. Sir, before Mr. Frost there was Mr. Robert 'Bobby' Morris who represented CTUSAB.

Sir, there is Mr. Darcy Boyce, former Governor of the Central Bank, a Chartered Accountant and a Venture Capitalist, who is now the CEO of the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated; Mr. Peter Boos, a Chartered Accountant, former Head of the Barbados Chamber of Commerce and an outspoken public figure; Mr. William Layne, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance; Miss Gail Atkins, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Sports; Dr. Allyson Leacock, CEO Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and a person who is experienced in many areas; Mr. Ricardo 'Ricky' Craig, CEO of the Barbados Cricket Association and Mr. Stephen Alleyne, CEO of World Cup Barbados Inc., President of the Cricket Association and a member of the Board.

I do not think that you can ask for a more high level blue ribbon true blue set of Barbadians to plan this very important event on behalf of Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: In terms of the two courses of activities, one relates to the Kensington Oval and the other relates to how we will go about showcasing Barbados. It would not just be the cricket which will be on show but Barbados. There are no two ways about that and we have to take this opportunity of the 2.3 billion people who will be watching Barbados, to put our best foot forward.

Sir, in relation to the redevelopment of Kensington, the building work at Kensington is due to start in June 2005, after the international cricket season is finished because we have international cricket being held there. Mr. Speaker, you would appreciate that with work of this nature much pre-engineering takes place whenever you are building a site where there is ongoing activity as opposed to going to a green field site. All of the structural and concrete work is precast and processed offsite and you move onto your site with full speed.

The bottom line is, all of the cricketing obligations in 2005 and 2006 at the international level, test matches and One Day Internationals, will be honoured and the construction has therefore been phased around those commitments. The Pickwick Club will no longer be using Kensington Oval. They will be moving to their own facilities at Four Square, St. Philip, and the regional first class matches will be held at the other first class venues around Barbados, Windward, St. Philip, 3Ws at the University of the West Indies and the North Stars Ground, St. Lucy, which is well known to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. Speaker, I already adverted to the fact that we made a conscious decision to pursue the redevelopment of Kensington Oval rather than to go to a new location and I will not go through that again. However, in terms of the cost, we are working with a budget of \$91 million. Sir, \$51 million is for the permanent works; \$7.6 million for the temporary works in terms of the temporary seating; \$6 million is for other associated costs and \$21 million is for other fittings and fixtures.

Mr. Speaker, we will get for this \$91 million an upgrade of the existing ground to international standards. For example, as it stands now, Kensington Oval does not meet the ICC standards for the size of the boundaries. Two of the boundaries are too small. The international standards require that you need to have indoor and outdoor practice pitches. There are no practice pitches at Kensington Oval at all. The players may get a chance to knock around the ball at lunch time in front of the Kensington Stand but these days at regular test matches or One Day Internationals, you need to have practice pitches for the players in secure areas.

Sir, Kensington Oval does not meet the requirements as it stands now for the level of media which will be covered. It does not meet the standards which are required now to accommodate, not only the large number of persons but the physically challenged, to have unimpeded access and views of the grounds. There are several areas in Kensington, where the structural columns and other aspects of the building works, prevent you from being able to see what is going on. It does not meet the standards for the numbers and types of hospitality boxes for the sponsors, Heads of Governments and other VIPs and, certainly, it does not meet the standard in terms of the numbers of seats that are required. Therefore, Sir, the opportunity is being taken for a full redevelopment.

2.45 p.m.

Recently, with respect to the English tour of the region, we had to put up a temporary Stand with 4 000 seats, in order to accommodate the large numbers of English visitors who came, and not all of them could have been accommodated.

The opportunity is being taken to do a redevelopment which will give us 25 or 30 years into the future. Sir, we will provide a new cricket pitch and playing field, outdoor practice pitches, new players pavilion, new media centre, cricket administration offices, cricket museum, greater and better facilities for vendors and associated works.

Sir, we will also provide permanent stands with a seating capacity in the region of 15 000 and for the tournament itself, as well as temporary seating of 15 000, bringing us to around 30 000 total seating capacity at Kensington, which will be reduced after the game.

Sir, as indicated, the physical work at Kensington will not start before June 2005, for the very simple reason that we have the International Test Cricket from April 21, to May 30, 2005 which we plan to accommodate, but all of the design work is going on.

There have already been requests for proposals put out in the newspaper, inviting construction companies to indicate their technical competence and level of interest in the construction. Subsequent to that, Sir, formal tenders will go out inviting price quotations for the work to be done. Much of it will be pre-engineered and the work will start with the new players facilities, new members stand and work in that area.

The apposition of the commercial properties around that area will form part of the new Kensington Oval, which will move from somewhere hidden in the back around Pickwick Gap, to having a full front entrance on President Kennedy Drive. All of that work is starting in the first phase, and going anti-clockwise around the ground until it meets back there at the end of 2006.

Therefore, Phase 1 of the construction will be from June 2005 to March of 2006 at which time, we will have International Test Cricket again, during the period April 27, to June 1, 2006. We will then have Phase 2 of construction from May to December 2006, where it all ends.

We will have the Cricket World Cup 2007 between April and May and between June and October, we will then be taking down the temporary seating and converting to the 15 000 seating capacity permanent size of Kensington. This will give us a new Kensington, modern in terms of its facilities, but heritage and vintage in terms of the name, recognition and the interest in the ground which would allow us to benefit from the best of both worlds.

The matters relating to the apposition of land are very much in hand. The commercial properties have already been taken care of, and the Minister of Housing has already given an update on the residential properties. All of the persons have made the option either to receive compensation or to be relocated. The majority of them will go to Barbarees Hill and four will choose locations elsewhere.

2.50 p.m.

Sir, as indicated, it will not only be cricket on show but Barbados will be on show. Therefore, the Government has embarked on a programme of wider infrastructural and other development to complement what is happening with respect to the World Cup. I should tell you as well that some of these areas would have been the subject of some of the proposals that we put forward in our bid.

Sir, we recognise that all of our facilities need to be at a level which can handle the influx of numbers that will come in for the event. In fact, long before we even contemplated bidding for the World Cup, we had an airport expansion plan and a sea port expansion plan underway. Therefore, Sir, the completion of those two programmes before 2007, puts us well in advance and far out front, in terms of our capacity to deal with the transportation logistics.

For example, it is part of the airport expansion project that, not only are we going to have enhanced facilities at the departure and arrival areas, but recognising the vast numbers of persons who come through the airport, exclusively to go to the Harbour for our cruises, there will be a dedicated terminal to deal with those cruise transfers, separate from the normal arrival and departure areas. Therefore this would give us an additional terminal to handle the through-put, Sir, as part of the airport project long before the Cricket World Cup, 2007 is conceived.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Sir, air to sea and sea to air transfers are a regular part of what happens at the Miami Airport. If you fly to Miami for a cruise, you go through a different procedure, in terms of formalities, you go on a bus and straight to the Port in Miami, compared to if you are going to the Marriott/Dadeland to shop at the Dadeland Mall.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in addition at the airport, it was conceived as also having within it, a private facility to handle private executive jets. You know that all of the major airports in the world have a facility where people who are flying in their own planes have their own facilities.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: It used to be done before through the Light Airplane Club.

Sir, in all the major airports in the world, large commercial airplanes go through one part. If you go to La Guardia or Kennedy and you are flying to Boston on a commuter aircraft, as opposed to the jets, you go through an entirely different part of the airport. You go on a bus to the airfield, among those LIAT type planes. If you are flying on somebody's private jet, you go to another part of the airport. At all times, of course, there will be immigration and customs, but there are in physically separate parts of the airport because their needs are different and they pay accordingly. This happens in New York, Boston, Chicago or wherever.

Sir, the reality is that if you check the demographics of our tourism, you will notice that we have a very active international business sector. If you check as I do, certainly when I am on the ground on Saturday and Sunday mornings walking in my constituency – and I believe that when the Honourable Member for St. Philip West is in the southwestern part of his constituency, he can see them just as clearly as I do.

2.55 p.m.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, when he is not keeping noise, when he is walking, he can tell you clearly as I can, the number of private aircrafts that come through the Grantley Adams International Airport whether it be the sporting stars, the Chief Executive Officers or the Chief Financial Officers of corporations who either do not want to be bogged down by aircraft schedules, who have a heightened concern about security and who are on tight time frames. There are people who fly to Barbados for a meeting and fly back out in the afternoon. This is something that the commercial schedules does not allow for. Sir, you see this most starkly on Gold Cup day. If the Honourable Member was like me walking in the constituency he would notice this event. They come in to watch the race in the afternoon. From the Friday they are flying in and on the morning of the race they are landing every couple of minutes to go down to the Garrison.

Sir, we envisage that the same situation will apply during the Cricket World Cup. In fact, it is only in Barbados and these other islands of the Caribbean that we are not used to the concept of people having their own aircraft but in most countries of the world the leaders of the country have their own aircraft. The leaders in those countries of the equivalent of Barbados Shipping & Trading, Goddards Enterprises, Carlton and A1 Supermarkets and construction companies have their own aircrafts. They either buy or lease them. So the concept of a jet centre, though new to Barbados, is not new to the world.

Sir, I am putting it on the table because in terms of managing the through-put of the visitors, whether by air or by sea, it is fortuitous and perhaps just an indication of good planning that even before we embark on this World Cup exercise that the expansion plans by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South for the airport and the seaport already gave us not just capacity but differentiating capacity to allow for the needs of the varying markets. That is part of what would have earned us the right to host the finals as compared to other countries in the region which do not have those kinds of facilities which would be required.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is making the case for an airport in St. Lucy to help

with the traffic during the World Cup, but we will hear him when he speaks.

Sir, matters which would obviously form part of the Government's responsibility will be the matters of ensuring that there are adequate security arrangements and ensuring that Customs and Immigration are able to do their jobs effectively while handling the large numbers. The matter of ground transportation and traffic management forms part of this World Cup planning exercise as well. In fact the planning for all of this has already been done.

Sir, Honourable Members who attended test cricket and one-day cricket this year would have recognised that the Park and Ride arrangements and the change in traffic movement around Kensington was part of the testing of the first phase of that plan. Sir, by all accounts it worked pretty well. The Honourable Member for St. George North would know very much about that.

There is also the matter of accommodation. As you know, Sir, much of the hotel sector is already gearing up, and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South may want to speak to those matters. Sir, part of what would be of benefit to Barbados is the expansion in the number and quality of rooms.

Sir, let me respond to some mutterings that I have heard in the public domain. There are some people who are wanting to suggest that any expansion in room capacity will just be to host people over the period of a few days. The experience of South Africa with the Cricket World Cup, Sydney with the Olympics, Manchester with the Commonwealth Games and any of the locations that have hosted the World Games is that there was at least a seven per cent increase in visitors in subsequent years and that the benefits in terms of the advertising and promotion benefits lasted a minimum of ten years. Therefore, not only will we be having more people for the event but on an ongoing basis from thereon as a result of the event.

Sir, that is really why countries around the world line up and bid, shove, fight and push, and some even do things under the table, in order to be able to host games. Ask the people in Salt Lake City, Utah that was in a big scandal in relation to hosting the Winter Olympics about that. If these things were not of benefit to the locations, they would not do them. So we must not let the mutterings out there fool the public of Barbados that expansion will be done and that you will only get these visitors on the few days of the cricket and then from there on the place would be empty. If that were going to be the case, then it would not be worth it.

Sir, the matter of the general beautification of our country is every much in hand. In fact, there are a number of projects which are already in train like the expansion

and enhancement of our beach facilities. For example, the call by the Senior Minister for beach facilities at Browne's Beach is already included in the work programme of the National Conservation Commission to be coming up very soon.

Sir, the project which was done at Silver Sands is not just for the wonderful people of Silver Sands but is part of the patrimony of the country because the people from the north and the west of the island come to excursions up there. The people from St. Andrew do not go to the East Coast Road for excursions because that is too near so they come to Silver Sands as well as the people in St. Thomas.

Sir, the facility at Silver Sands is no little bath for people who do not have baths at home to bathe in as the Opposition has been seeking to suggest. It is part of the commitment of this Government to provide not only enhanced beach access as we have done consistently over ten years by acquiring land to make sure that Barbadians have access to their beaches but when they get there to ensure that there are safe, modern and decent conveniences there for them where they can change their clothes, rent a locker to put up their clothes and have a shower.

Sir, the bathroom includes facilities for persons with wheelchairs and the physically challenged. So it is not like the little bath you used to put down behind a grape tree once upon a time if there was one at all. That kind of facility is the kind of facility which, thanks to this Government, is now at the beach by St. Lawrence near by the sluice gate at the Graeme Hall Swamp what they call Sandy Beach. This is a lovely beach but for many years not a facility was there and if you did not go behind a bush, you could not relieve yourself.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Sir, the plans include provisions of such modern high quality facilities in and around Bridgetown. In fact, much of the infrastructural development would be focussed on the Bridgetown area because we recognise that within the environs of Bridgetown and indeed the areas on the West and South Coasts is where a lot of the activity is concentrated.

Sir, I must salute the Honourable Member for the City because long before there was any contemplation of a Cricket World Cup and before the start of this Administration in a previous Administration, she had developed a plan which was ignored for the eight years we were in Opposition. Sir, not a thing was done in Bridgetown until the Honourable Member for the City was in a position to return to Government and to execute the plans for the Bridgetown Development Plan with things like the

Boardwalk and Swan Street. Mr. Deputy Speaker, last Saturday morning I dressed casually and walked Swan Street and was able to have walked in comfort. I felt as though I could have been in the Souze Ho areas in London. I visited the Palmetto Market and bought a shirt, a pants and a number of other things from vendors on the street. Sir, as I looked around, I tried to look at it from a stranger's perspective and realised that this is a City that anyone, anywhere in the world, could be proud of now.
3.05 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I looked and saw the Christmas lights were up, I remembered going to Piccadilly Circle, Regent Street, London and Fifth Avenue in New York, where, in those cities, not only the residents of those countries but people from all over the world would know where to go for the lights. Sir, I am sure that even the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, when he is in New York in December, will go down by Radio City Music Hall or the Rockefeller Centre, to see the Christmas tree and the other lights.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy prefers the lights in Moon Town but Bridgetown is at the level of those other places. Sir, note well that what you see in those cities are that the lights and things of that nature will attract families because people come to enjoy the ambience. In fact, how different a City Bridgetown is, since the Parish Independence activities and the lighting of the City and the roundabouts. Bridgetown is a romantic fairytale City.

Sir, there are many persons, including myself, who will be sending out Christmas cards this year which feature the lights of Bridgetown at nights. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has one here, which I should probably make a document of the Honourable House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the bottom line is that even before the World Cup, the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown had a vision for Bridgetown to be a major centre for service, quality and its heritage. Sir, it is only we in Barbados who do not appreciate the historical significance of Bridgetown but Bridgetown has a rich history to it. It is an older City than many in the western hemisphere. It has many buildings of architectural significance.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown has her way and the Walk-In Tour of Bridgetown programme is fully underway, more people will have the opportunity to go around and to learn about its history, when the project for the signage and the trails are developed. Therefore, Bridgetown and its environs are a key part of what we have. There are a number of projects such as the continuation of the work around

the Careenage, for example the work of the Constitution River at the centre of Bridgetown.

Sir, there are other projects such as the Pierhead Development Project; the Inner Basin Rehabilitation Project, the replacement of the Swing Bridge; the Bridgetown Beautification and Enhancement Project, which would begin from the Fairchild Bus Terminal up to the Globe Cinema. Sir, in Barbados we are not the only people, who, other than on the beach side, have not made as yet full use of our waterways.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, like I said, it was based only on the initiative from the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown that the Careenage and the Lewis-Wickham Boardwalk was turned from what used to be a backdoor-type place because its history was that it was used for cargo, to that of having buildings, restaurants and recreational activities facing the waterfront.

Sir, I remember back in the 1980s the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown presiding at the official opening of the Waterfront Café. That was one of the first businesses that responded to her call and opened a business on the Careenage, which was even before all these improvements have been carried out.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will be engaging in other projects to enhance Bridgetown such as the restoration of the Empire Theatre; the restoration of the West Wing of Parliament; the continuation of an aggressive and attractive housing programme in Bridgetown, with London Bourne Towers and Country Park Towers being two good examples, where, in building those two Towers, good architectural designs were taken into consideration. There are other plans for housing in the City, which I am sure the Honourable Member would want to speak to briefly.

Sir, there are other projects that are well underway such as Greenfield Rehabilitation Project and Cats Castle Rehabilitation Project. Sir, both the Caribbean Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank will be funding a number of these housing projects and related investment activities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bridgetown will be well dressed up. These are not speeches being made for the World Cup because our intentions were shown well in advance of the World Cup. Another example is that of Queens Park, which has been reopened. Sir, every morning as I enter the Ministry of Education, it is a wonderful blessing to glance over to the right and to see Queens Park. I am sure that on Christmas morning, it will be brimming over with many happy Barbadians. Sir, much care has been taken in the restoration of these works.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the infrastructural component and the services in relation to the preparation for World Cup 2007, are very much in hand. There has already been public discussion concerning the plans for improvement to the other services, whether they be telecommunications, sewerage or water, they are all in the works to make sure that there would be nothing which would stand in the way of our successfully hosting this Cricket World Cup. We intend to make sure that our visitors and Barbadians are safe and comfortable but also that there is much to do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if ever the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West has made one point in his political life – which might be the only one – with which the Honourable Member for St. Michael South and I would agree, would be that one of the important statistics that we must always manage, is that we always have to watch our expenditure on tourism. Therefore, when we quote tourism arrival statistics, yes they are important.

Sir, I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West would agree that they are important too but like him, we check the tourism spend. Therefore, when we put on more attractions, they are for the specific reason of saying that when the tourists are here with us, that there are a number of other things in which they can participate and spend money. We do not want them to come and simply lie on the beaches all day. That is why we encourage, not just Government investment but private sector investments. Therefore, whether it is the Ashford Bird Park, the Flower Forest, the Crafts shops or entertainment, we have added more attractions. Sir, in relation to entertainment, this Government has created the Bay Garden at Oistins, thus transforming Oistins from a sleepy little Town, into a premier entertainment centre.
3.15 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a thrill to my heart on any day of the week but especially on Friday to see thousands of visitors and Barbadians at Oistins. Sir, if you are trying to go east or west, you cannot use Oistins at night because there are tour coaches dropping off thousands of visitors from all parts of the island for part of the Oistins' experience. They go by George to get dinner which includes grill fish with tartar sauce on the side and during the week there are various forms of entertainments like 'karaoke' at Angels on Thursday night and the locals can dance to oldie goldies at Lexies any night at the week. Sir, these are a variation to the tourism product.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a mischievous rumour going abroad where people are suggesting that the only people who would benefit from the World Cup are 'big' people. Sir, before World Cup, Government very strategically invested in opportunities for small people to participate which gave them a 'leg-up' for World Cup 2007.

There are no 'big' people in Oistins who operate those stalls but profitable people who make more money than the so-called 'big' people. These entities which we have assisted in establishing themselves long in advance of World Cup 2007, are in a position to benefit.

Sir, there has been the revitalisation of Baxters Road and I was pleased a few weeks ago after leaving a function to go to Pink Star to have chicken and a few beverages. I went back another night and bought fish from the ladies who fry fish and dessert alongside the road. Sir, those vendors are a key part of the economic environment of the small working class people in Barbados and no one can overturn them during World Cup 2007 because they are not going to be cleared off the road to put down a big restaurant. Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are going to be in big business because, as a man on the ground, you know that when many people leave Kensington, they go through New Orleans or through Broad Street onto Baxters Road.

Sir, people will not go by bus from here to there or be prevented from moving around but will be encouraged to move around by foot. In fact, the work programme in preparation for World Cup 2007 will be about recognising the reality of that lived experience by our visitors and merely enhancing it. The roads in New Orleans, Pickwick Gap, Kensington New Road and all those associated roads would be fixed to ensure that people can travel safely and comfortably and that the residents in the area can all be a part of this because it has always been the policy of this administration when we do big projects to carry small people along with us.

Sir, when the Central Bank of Barbados was conceived by us, it included the redevelopment of the residential community as well because the Democratic Labour Party abandoned that part of it. When this Administration redeveloped Grantley Adams International Airport, the residential community was also part of it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, rest assured that the Government has no intention of imposing a spick and span new facility at Kensington Oval in the heart of a residential community without addressing the matter of improvements to that residential community as well. In fact, the Prime Minister and the Honourable Member for the City have both insisted and we all agree that there has to be a strong element of urban renewal and rehabilitation as part of the plans for World Cup 2007 so that all that is planned for the hosting of the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2007 is really all about giving us a new city. When we speak of a city, we are speaking of a commercial location but as a community where people live, go to church and play and all aspects of city life will be strengthened and enhanced.

Sir, I have said enough to let the House know that what we are asked to undertake by way of this guarantee in support of World Cup 2007 is not limited to putting on an event for two days. It is not about expenditure just to put on a cricket day but that cricket being part of our culture, society and our very being, that this activity associated with cricket would also have the effect of fully and positively transforming the economic life and activities of our society, not for two days but for the future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in that regard, I want to close by letting you know that not just the physical infrastructure around Bridgetown has been addressed but also the buy-in with groups, businesses and civil society and that World Cup Barbados, as part of its mandate has met with a range of private sector groups, the Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Association, the vendors and the craft persons to inform them about what is happening to help them to build capacity for involvement in hosting World Cup 2007 to make economic gains.

We also recognise the need to involve civil society and a number of service clubs and the like. I can tell you for a fact that meetings have been held with a range of organisations including presentations to the Democratic Labour Party lunch time series and their executive council, to the Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Association, the Canadian High Commission, the American Ambassador, the Rotary Club, the Soroptomist Club, the Cadets and Scouts, the North Star Sports Club, the Council for Disabled, the tour operators and a number of businesses in this country because we want to involve the entire society in all aspects.
3.25 p.m.

Sir, as the work goes on, there are approximately 18 advisory groups which have been established under the heading of World Cup Barbados which will draw on the same level of cooperation and expertise where over 200 volunteers were involved in the preparation of the Bid. These are advisory teams in terms of tourism, culture, environment, media, public relations, security, medical services, disaster management, business development and things of that nature.

Sir, all that is being asked of this Honourable House today is to fulfill one of the standard requirements related to the hosting of games of this nature. I am satisfied that, one, we will not need to invoke this Guarantee, which we are required to provide, and two, the benefits to be derived far outweigh the obligations which we are required to vote.

I, therefore, commend this ICC Cricket World Cup West Indies 2007 (Guarantee) Bill, 2004 to this Honourable House and I beg to move that it be read a second time.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a contribution to this debate fully conscious that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East has indulged in some very wide-ranging discussion on the potential impact on World Cup 2007 but he took note of the intention to develop the wider Bridgetown area. I wish to say in today's debate that there is a pearl waiting to be developed at Brandons.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: It is a fascinating facility that has tremendous potential for development. In fact, during the last test match, the area on the opposite side of the beach was used for parking but I will now describe the potential of that area.

Sir, first of all there is what used to be a yacht club that needs now to be abandoned and that area can be used to assist persons in the Brandons/Deacons Farm areas to develop businesses. Sometime ago I spoke to the issue of cruise ship passengers using the extensive beach facility at Brandons. I think that Weisers came out of a suggestion and government leased the land sometime back and it has now been developed and a few persons are using the area to offer beach activity. This area needs to be further developed.

Sir, for a long time the residents of Brandons have not been able to take full advantage of Crop Over that passes through the district on the Spring Garden Highway. I think that it is only but fitting that Brandons becomes part of the inclusion. We have seen what has happened at Silver Sands, Brownes Beach and St. Lawrence. I think that it is now time to include Brandons as part of this process.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Brandons is located below Kensington. We have had visits from Ministers in the last few months but we have not yet seen any activity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me explain a pressing need because the Brighton residents have complained for a long time, and rightly so, that during Crop Over there is one access, entry and exit, and is across the road from Workbench Furniture. There is need to have another road that would allow for freer entry and exit for the Brighton residents. In the event that there is an emergency in that area, next to the four crossing, there is no other way out and, therefore, it can cause a considerable catastrophe in that area.

We need to note that from the top to the bottom of Spring Garden is filled with hazardous material, an oil facility by Texaco at the top and Barbados Light and Power, and in between there are some facilities that can be of a dangerous nature along the entire Spring Garden Highway. I am really making the call for that area to be considered as an area for development in 2007 and that the residents, particularly in Brighton, be given a road that would allow an alternative exit point for them because it is a very important matter to be resolved. It cannot be allowed to stay as is because it can present a very unfortunate situation for them.

Sir, in fact, the suggestion has come from the residents of Brighton that there is need for consideration for lights to be installed at the junction of Workbench Furniture.

We know of the hazardous nature of Spring Garden Highway. You cannot cross Spring Garden Highway unless you take chances.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: There is need for an over-pass. Perhaps, in having traffic lights at the four crossing, you may be able to better control the traffic along the Spring Garden Highway. Since the highway was opened, it has claimed a few lives and it is going to become more active as beach volleyball is now taking place at Brandons Beach. Weisers Restaurant is also becoming very popular but it is, in fact, a potentially rich area for entrepreneurship.

Sir, creating such facilities in this area would allow the residents in Brandons to get an opportunity to sell to the cruise ship passengers in particular and obviously to Barbadians through the year. I am hoping that there is not just consideration to expand wider Bridgetown without considering going to the north of, what is, in fact, part of the wider Bridgetown area as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has been stated that the Democratic Labour Party has expressed support for World Cup 2007 but the thing is, once you make any remarks that do not appear to be in full support of a venture by this Government, you are accused of being anti the particular issue or policy. I want it to be made quite clear that the Democratic Labour Party had a message in the Bid document for World Cup 2007. Therefore, any comments made after now would not be intended to pull down World Cup 2007. The intention is to offer critical support wherever possible.

Sir, that has to be made clear because as I said, similar to Caribbean Single Market and Economy, once you express an interest or appear to be part of the process, you are therefore gagged and not allowed to make any comments

that appear critical to the process. We have to make it quite clear where we stand with respect to World Cup 2007.
3.35 p.m.

Sir, cricket, as we know is the greatest team sport in the world. In fact, the beauty of cricket is that as you get older, it becomes an even more important game to you so that the further you go away from the cricket field, the more appreciative you are of cricket. It is vital because it is perhaps the greatest character builder that I can think of as a sport. It does not end in 90 minutes. It is an ongoing process so you must have commitment to cause. You have to be patient and devote time and effort. Perhaps, having said that it is the greatest character builder, soccer perhaps is the greatest team sport, when you look at it from the point of view of excitement.

Sir, let me explain what I mean. As a youngster playing cricket, you do not quite understand its beauty because the sacrifices that you are asked to make on a cricket field, the commitment to team spirit, even as I said before, when you are batting with another batsman who is obviously a better player, or playing better in that particular innings, you can sacrifice.

Sir, you know how it is because you simply know that when someone is on the attack, perhaps it is better for you to defend. You know when to bowl defensively. You know when to get aggressive and be more attacking. You know about field placing. It teaches you all you want to know about life and that is where cricket to my mind is the greatest sport in the world.

Sir, you can have a situation during a session of cricket, where you turn from complete offence to defence because of loss of the wicket or because you recognise that one bowler has come on and now is far more consistent in line and length, so you make the necessary adjustments.

I wish, however, to carry it even further. I think that we missed the transition that has occurred in cricket. I have written about this issue when I had the opportunity to write in the Barbados Business Authority. I spoke of using Lara as an economic good in cricket, as compared with the Rt. Excellent Sir Gary as a cultural good.

What do I mean by it? During Sir Gary's period, it was all to do with character, developing the West Indies, and playing for Honour. However, in more recent times as we recognise across the world in every sport that finance is becoming more important, money is becoming critical, advertising and the ability to get contracts are all now changing the character of the game.

Therefore, in Lara, we have more of an economic good. He is the first Caribbean cricketer to really be in control of

his own financial state. He is the first Caribbean cricketer to have been able to make such gains from cricket. He is the first Caribbean cricketer that was able to go outside of cricket and develop even a jewelry line. He is the first Caribbean cricketer really to become a millionaire out of cricket. Therefore, I think that in many respects we fail to nurture Lara because Lara was not just now an outstanding cricketer, Lara had become way beyond the boundary, in terms of what he could bring to the region as an economic good.

Sir, you would hear that if Lara is not going on a tour of Australia, then the Australians may wish to reduce the amounts of tests being played. If Lara is not available on a tour, then you get a different sort of contractual arrangement. This is the sense in which I want to suggest that cricket now has changed its character and we in the Caribbean have not been able to make the necessary adjustments to manage the game called cricket, in light of its changing dimensions, and not just being cultural any more, but an economic force.
3.40 p.m.

In fact, in recent times, I marvelled at the recent dispute where the WICB could even begin to ignore its responsibility in telling players that they have an obligation to let us know what they are involved in, with respect to sponsorship. The responsibility rests squarely with the WICB to inform cricketers of their responsibilities and to how far they can go, in terms of securing sponsorship, but the cricketers have every right to be able to sell whatever property they have in their own interests.

It should have been the WICB to look after that and to let its employees know exactly what are their limits, with respect to the ability to acquire and accept sponsorship. It is simply that the WICB is not equipped, as yet, to deal with the changing character of cricket within the region. It has changed completely.

Sir, we see it in other sports where white soccer players who may not be the best in the world, but because it is a white market, they are able to get much more out of it than outstanding black players. We see it now with Beckham. He is certainly not in the streets of a Ronaldino but is able, because of his pigmentation, and the market is that large, to sell himself adequately across Japan, China and other parts of the world.

We understand the influence of young men on basketball across China. Therefore, I am saying that the whole character of the game has changed in the region within the last 20 or more years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we engaged in a similar type debate before, so I want to bring some issues to the

table today. There is supposed now to be a new spirit in Caribbean cricket, caused by an old fuel. The truth is, even though we do not wish to say it publicly, the fact that we now have a white person coaching the West Indies Cricket Team may very well make a difference to the performance of the cricket team. Therefore, the new spirit is really being fueled by something old.

What we are really saying is that even though we are now in 2004, to have acquired a coach from beyond the boundaries would, in fact, engender the kind of discipline that we were longing for, into our West Indian cricketers, for the last ten years. A home-based coach regardless of his qualities, may not have been able to put such discipline into our cricketers.

It is the influence really of a sort of back handed neo colonialism. This has to be respected for what it is and even though we may not wish to admit this, it is believed now that our team will, in fact, respond more to an outward impetus than it would respond to a local. The very individual that we were seeking to control for a long time can now be controlled, because he is not now only an economic good as I said at the start, but can very much now be influenced by an outer influence, rather than what we had over the last couple of years.

In short, the most recent coach we had out of Trinidad, was not able to put the kind of discipline because, perhaps, he did not get the kind of respect from the individual.

Asides.

3.45 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to understand that the process up ahead as it relates to Cricket World Cup 2007 is as much to do with the financing and the economics of cricket as it is to do with the cricket itself. Therefore, Cricket World Cup is an opportunity that we can benefit from, but it will be controlled and managed effectively by the International Cricket Council which is really going to be in charge of Cricket World Cup 2007. That is something that we cannot deny.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it therefore means that what we are seeking to do in marketing Cricket World Cup 2007 is to put in place the product called cricket as effectively as we can. The product called cricket not only has to do with the players who we would like to see reach the point where they can now be classified as among the greatest in world cricket but with the larger product that we refused to embrace over the last 20 years. What I mean by that is that when we were on top of cricket we never recognised that the use of technology, the use of management skills and everything else could convert ordinary or perhaps talented cricketers into great cricketers as is being proven by the Australians.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is similar now to what is happening in golf. We have young men now who are actually carbon copies of Tiger Woods in their swing because of the technology. You can actually put players on a computer, analyse their body mechanics, do everything, correct what is needed to be corrected and bring them back to a point where their body mechanics is almost like Tiger Woods. However, the truth is, they may not have the mental toughness to be able to go beyond that.

Sir, the point I am making now is that the technology and coaching is critical to producing the goods called a cricketer. Whereas before we expected that our cricketers may just be naturally talented, the cricketers need more than that now because as we speak, it is quite evident that according to the very standard by which we evaluate a bowler's action that there has only been one bowler in the history in cricket, that is Sarwan, who has been able to maintain his elbow position from start to finish throughout his delivery, so that when we look to the past...

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Sarwan is the only person who has been able to maintain his bowling position from start to finish. All the other bowlers have had some degree of flexibility in their elbows. Sarwan is not known but according to action he is the purest of all bowlers in the history of test cricket. All the other bowlers including some of the greatest we have had have been suspect for their ability now because of technology.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I am saying is that we have to admit that West Indies cricket at this point needs help. It needs the sort of help that perhaps can come from the recent changes that have occurred. The other thing that is extremely vital to note is that, even for Cricket World Cup 2007, several aspects of the business arrangements of 2007 would not be controlled by the West Indies Cricket Board. In fact, several of the contracts will be international in nature and more than likely local companies or even Caribbean companies will not be able to get access to certain contracts that will be lucrative and available in 2007.

Sir, because Cricket World Cup is an international event and because the ICC would be controlling and determining, based on criteria, who gets the contracts, you can anticipate that down the road, several of the returns we were anticipating from Cricket World Cup may not be derived because of its international character.

Sir, I was told that even in terms of getting spectators to the region, there may be some difficulties with tour

operators being able to get enough access, that is from the region, to make sufficient benefit or gain from Cricket World Cup 2007. So someone in India may get the contract for tourists coming to the region to watch Cricket World Cup 2007 and then the tour operators would have a say in determining ultimately what is paid, the price it has charged and who gets access. So it may not be significant when you look at it in terms of the benefits in that particular area for regional tour operators.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I therefore would say that when all is said and done there is the question of an investment that may be able to immediately give the sort of returns to justify it in the first year or two. When it comes to sports, you cannot see it purely in economic terms. The importance of cricket to the Caribbean is such that it is really a social good. When you classify it, it is about what does it do for me as a Caribbean person.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can tell you my own experience. I so much love cricket that I would not miss cricket regardless of where it is being played and what time it is being played. I do not make sport with cricket. For me, cricket is almost like a heartbeat, therefore I do not miss cricket. If the West Indies are playing in Australia or South Africa and the timing is an unfortunate timing, I still watch it because I do not mind being sleepy the following day.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: There may be an opportunity cost because I may have to be engaged in something other than in watching cricket that may derive pleasure.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: But even then I am willing to forego, because I can always at some other point. That is the extent to which I am willing to give in.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am really concerned therefore about how we are now going to structure this process because I understand the involvement of the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated. It does appear that the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated will be the vehicle through which Cricket World Cup 2007 would derive its finance. That seems to be the model. I discovered this when I came into contact with an annual report from the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated.

Sir, again I hope that it is for the reasons stated, that is, that perhaps it may be easier to execute the project going through the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated. I also note the very wide involvement of the Barbados

Tourism Investment Incorporated in the execution of projects across Barbados whether it is in Speightstown, St. Lawrence Gap or wherever. It is tourism investment but again it has a way of not being clearly identified. Therefore, in terms of being able to process it from within the walls of Parliament it becomes increasingly more difficult over time to do so. So when you stop and reflect on it, you are never quite sure where this financing comes from. Sir, if you take it for granted that the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated exists, you are going to take it for granted that a World Cup 2007 company would exist but we have got to be more in contact with the way in which the resources are being spent and are being utilised.

Sir, I have already said not too long ago that I know that the increase in the local loans limit had to do with the desire to raise money for World Cup 2007. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if, as is being stated, we are not going to borrow on the foreign market, then are we saying that we are going to borrow this money on the local market? Sir, have we yet secured the money required for World Cup 2007? Do we expect to be able to generate these funds from the local finance market? Therefore, I would like to know what is the planned model for financing World Cup, 2007, and whether or not that information will be shared in this Parliament because as yet it has not been fully shared. Sir, it is obvious to note that if Government is not going to borrow from a foreign entity, then it has to borrow from a local one.
3.55 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, since the Government has admitted that it was only \$67 million away from the Local Loans limit, then the increasing of the recent Local Loans limit must bear some relation to the desire to raise funds for World Cup, 2007. Sir, I hope that when the time comes that we will be privy to exactly what and how this money will be used.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have had a situation where not out of malice but out of a request, the Democratic Labour Party has sought to represent some residents within the Pickwick Gap area. Sir, the commercial buildings were acquired through private treaty, which really means that we will never get to know what was paid for those commercial buildings. The private treaty talk is about Government being able to engage in giving whatever funds by way of there being cordial discussions and where a determination would be made but that determination never comes to Parliament and, therefore, Parliament is never aware of what Frank B. Armstrong and the other companies who would be relocated, would have been paid.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I find it difficult that, at the same time, there would be commercial buildings being acquired through private treaty, that 13 private individuals would have to go through all kinds of contortions, in order to

know precisely how they would be compensated for their properties, to the extent where there is one resident who would have put in a claim for in excess of \$300,000, only to be offered \$170,000.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is inadvertently misleading this House. It is not to say that a transaction by way of private treaty means that this Parliament, and by extension the public, would never know because there can be no secret deal in the affairs of the Government of Barbados in any of its administrations, either by way of the Crown or by way of any Honourable Member of the Crown.

Sir, the transaction with respect to the acquisition of commercial land is that the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment will, by way of private treaty, purchase those properties. All that means is that the Land Acquisition Act does not have to be invoked but the purchase of those properties by the Crown cannot be a secret deal. The reports of the Accountant-General and several other reports will provide the information concerning exactly what has been done. The conveyances and other documents will be available, therefore, to say that the public will never know is to inadvertently give hints or suggestion of a secret deal, which is not the case.

Sir, what the Honourable Member is suggesting is that there is no need for a Parliamentary Resolution but that does not mean that it is a secret matter or that the public will never know. In fact, before taking my seat, I should say that in many cases the acquisition of land to build roads and do many things, that private treaty is the first option. It is only where there are other issues involved, that would cause the Government to have to use the Land Acquisition Act.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a public matter that will be known two years later when a report would be published.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: The Honourable Member is misleading this House. The Honourable Member knows or ought to know that any land transaction has to be recorded and/or registered, depending on whether it is in a registration area. Therefore, apart from the powers that he will have, two years later as Honourable Leader of the Opposition, under the Public Accounts Committee legislation there is immediate access to the information by the very simple act of asking the Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment how much the Government has paid for it. On the other hand, if he does not want to ask the Minister, by determining when the deeds are stamped and the stamp duty is paid and it goes to be recorded in the Land Registry, he can do a search on the land.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is, therefore, evident that like the private sector, like the Public Sector, like the adjustments that we all have to make to this new world, that the time has come for some adjustments to be made by Government, in terms of making some things more transparent. Sir, in all fairness, in discussion with the residents at Pickwick Gap, they were the ones who told me that others never had to go through all of this. The people of Pickwick Gap said that the others met with Government and negotiated what they could have gotten for their businesses but that they did not have such a privilege. They said that they were instructed to get a valuer, while National Housing Corporation would give its own valuation and that if there was any contention, then both parties would seek a resolution to the matter. Sir, but the sort of cordial environment which Frank B. Armstrong and other private sector people got was not the same for some residents of Pickwick Gap.

Asides.

The Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West went into Pickwick Gap with other Members of the Democratic Labour Party, to run interference in a matter that was going perfectly well. There were a number of Town Hall meetings. In fact, at my initiative, I took Mr. Stephen Alleyne and other officials to a residence at Pickwick Gap, where I invited a few others to initiate discussion. I offered myself to be available to facilitate in whatever way I could have in the process.

Sir, this is not the first time this has ever happened in Bridgetown or anywhere in Barbados. Sir, the truth is that the residents, except one at Pickwick Gap, were very pleased with alternatives that are going to be made available to them. They all are going to be living in enhanced properties, as has happened when persons were relocated to Claphams, to Lower Burney, and to a number of other relocations. This is nothing new. We have moved people from Spring Farm to Sion Hill. There have been many occasions during the past 40 years where this has been done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this was just an attempt by the Honourable Member to make mischief but people are wiser than those who would want to pretend to be representing their interest and have, in fact, made their own choice. In fact, in my presence in one of the Town Hall meetings which was held in the Kensington Oval, I was privileged when a number of persons told me that despite all the talking, to put their names down for relocation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, those persons are not disadvantaged in any way. Everybody is advantaged and that has been so wherever the Government has moved people from one location to another. Sir, for a public purpose, the

Barbados Labour Party, in an earlier Administration and now, has insisted that people must be better off than they had been.

4.05 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am grateful to the Honourable Member for giving way. This was the purpose for the first introduction because there are a number of people in Pickwick Gap who have done good business and, on the basis of the test match each year, can make an excellent living. In fact, some of them have enhanced their properties through this.

Sir, in my presence the undertaking was given that those people would have first access inside a renovated and refurbished Kensington Oval to carry out the business which they formerly carried out on the outside so that they would not be disadvantaged in any way from a business point-of-view. Mr. Deputy Speaker, every detail was looked at.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are very happy to hear that because it was a major bone of contention because some people at Kensington Oval were concerned about the loss of business. Sir, according to the tight restrictions, we are told that it is going to be hard to conduct commercial activity within a mile radius of Kensington. It is also my understanding that concerns were expressed about the ability of the sponsors and their heavy rules to come to Bridgetown to restrict individuals who have benefitted for years from the commercial activity that cricket gives off within the area of Kensington. There were legitimate concerns that perhaps, given the arrangements being proposed that they would not be able to exercise their legitimate rights to earn the kinds of profits they earned during cricket.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: I do not know of any other reasons but these were the reasons given at the meetings which were held after the Honourable Member for the City and the Minister of Housing met with the residents.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, if that were the case, then why should 11 out of 13 owners affected, attend the meeting which they asked us to convene. What do we have to share out other than to give sound advice and put an alternative position to the residents of Kensington area? Sir, we had to put the perspective of the Democratic Labour Party because we were requested to do so.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in all fairness to the situation, this is going to change the character of Kensington Oval forever.

It is also going to change the whole culture of cricket as we know it because it is going to be a far more regulated environment. The whole issue of safety and security has become a buzz word around the world and I expect, sooner rather than later, that international institutions lending money are going to put restrictions or criteria in place with respect to security arrangements when you go to secure a loan as has happened when the protection of the environment was the issue ten or 15 years ago when the World Bank and other institutions put into their clauses for the raising of loans, matters pertaining to the environment. These are the kinds of restrictions that can be put in place to deny developing countries access to fund they deserve and with the increasing emphasis on security, there may be further restrictions coming on board as a result of these kinds of measures.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have already spoken to this matter and I want to repeat that in terms of the acquisitions, we have to make sure they are as smooth as they can be so as to remove any fear or suspicion that commercial entities are being treated better than private citizens.

We also have to be concerned that we do not expand Bridgetown in one direction only when in actual fact, there is substantial potential to move Bridgetown in a northerly direction towards Spring Garden and truly develop the area of Brandons as far as Pile Bay with respect to ensuring that the constituents of St. Michael North West get an opportunity to be part of the process of World Cup 2007.

Sir, the facilities are there but the constituents of St. Michael North West must be given the opportunity to be part of the process. We have not been seeing the same kind of development of facilities that we have witnessed to the south of Bridgetown. Sir, there is even greater opportunity for expansion to the north of Bridgetown because there are no limits but there are limits to the west and south of Bridgetown.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we on this Side will support any initiative to carry forward the process of Caribbean cricket but do not expect the Democratic Labour Party to say that it is simply supporting a policy or initiative without having the freedom to express reservations or concerns. Sir, once we express any reservation or concern, the Other Side is quick to tell the public that the Democratic Labour Party does not support an initiative which it obviously supports in the big document in its pronouncements on the matter with reservations, as has been stated, that perhaps there could have been an alternative venue but given that the mecca is there, you want to retain the character of cricket as associated with Kensington Oval, therefore, you develop Kensington Oval even though it would have been more prudent to put a brand new facility somewhere else across Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have expressed a few reservations and I have stated my position. I am clearly a cricket fanatic, I am in support of 2007, and would like to see its effective execution. Therefore, I would ensure as has been stated, as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, that we will be ensuring the adequate spending of the resources of the people of Barbados for the good initiative of promoting cricket and bringing it where it should be, at the top again.

Let us not believe either that our success in ICI is any indicator of any upward movement. Cricket is a very discreet thing. The first game bears no relation to the second game. You can get your luck in cricket. You can get all types of opportunity that you might exploit at that particular time but let us not feel that because we were able to get a trophy and become the Champions of ICC that we are yet ready to become World Cup Champions because we have a long way to go. There is very clear evidence that the West Indies cricket is no way close to where it should be in terms of its cricketing talents and its consistency and I will not be hoodwinked into believing that success is the beginning of any major streak.
4.15 p.m.

Sir, it was good. I praised it. I enjoyed it particularly because our two sons of the soil were able to make the sort of contribution at the end, fully conscious that cricket is, in every sense of the word, the greatest team sport there is and we should never forget that no one man can make a cricket team win any match.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one man may be outstanding but cricket requires other players to take catches and other players to win matches.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to speak on this amendment and to say from the outset that it is clear to me that the Honourable Members on the Other Side cannot appreciate the ability of the expansion of an economy.

Sir, we have heard on many occasions prior to this debate and any mention of World Cup Cricket, that urban Bridgetown is under pressure and that businesses had to be removed from Bridgetown and relocated to the Warrens and Green Hill areas. All of a sudden now that World Cup Cricket is here, Kensington is known for test cricket but we will be having One Day Cricket, instead of building a facility outside of urban Barbados that can be multipurpose, we are

taking a different type of cricket into Kensington Oval when we can preserve it for test cricket and build a multipurpose complex somewhere else in Barbados.

Sir, after the World Cup Cricket we could use that facility for many other purposes. Instead of doing that we have to hold on to our old ways. Mr. Deputy Speaker, because Kensington Oval has a long history we have stuck with that old facility without looking at progress of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South is saying that Kensington Oval is known for One Day Cricket and that it has made its name through One Day Cricket. The history of Barbados would not show that. History would show that Kensington Oval is known for test cricket and its great acclaim came through test cricket and not One Day Cricket.

I am saying that since the goodwill has been created at Kensington Oval for test cricket that we had an opportunity to develop somewhere else and make it the number one place for One Day Cricket. Instead of doing that, they have decided to put all their eggs again in one basket the same way that we have one hospital and one airport as though Barbados is so limited that we cannot expand it to accommodate two international cricket playing fields. It is regrettable to see this type of argument coming from a Government in a progressive 2004.

I also want to congratulate the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown for making the point that they moved the people from Spring Head to Sion Hill, that is a fact. Do you know that the land at Spring Head is now the best piece of real estate that you can find anywhere in Barbados? The land at Kensington before and after World Cup 2007 will be better than any other land that you can find to resite the people who own that land. Previously, it might have been a house spot but because of what has been going on, the commercial value has now increased. This means that you are depriving people of the appreciation of the value of their land and resiting to a location that does not have the same value.

I said from the beginning that there is nothing wrong with relocating the people from Kensington but you have to make sure that if you do that, you should adequately compensate those persons for what they are giving up. I am saying that the land at Pickwick Gap could not be regarded as the same land as where you are now relocating these people and additional compensation should be rewarded to them.

Sir, that is like giving up royalties...

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. The City of Bridgetown is 376 years old. A century ago Kensington was agricultural land. It was under sugar cane. It was a plantation two centuries ago. The city is growing and there should be change of use. You get more rapid change of use in inner cities than anywhere else in the world. What point is being made here? We will have to give compensation where Nelson is too.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, you and I would agree that you cannot take something from someone that is growing in value and replace it with something that does not have the same value or the significance.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. This is what you call running interference. You can only give people what is today's market value. When you pay them to develop it into something else that is your capital gain, not theirs.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown is telling me that if I have land that has oil on it and that the Government wants it...

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member knows that if he has land and it has oil on it, he now evokes the Crown and he will get royalties for that.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, World Cup 2007 is like having oil on your land. It is very important.

I listened to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East preaching and he even convinced me how valuable this project is to Barbados. All I am asking of you is to let the people of Pickwick Gap understand that they have value and that they are giving up value and they are entitled to compensation. All I am asking for is adequate compensation for the people of Pickwick Gap because they are giving up a right.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is a legislator. We can get in here and make fun and so on as Christmas is coming and so forth but we still have to mind our business and be responsible in what we say. The impression cannot go out into the public that you can take the taxpayers money and pay more than what is today's market value. Everybody is getting an enhanced value.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member is telling me that we are taking taxpayers money and putting it

into a private company. That is a very interesting point. Under the Land Acquisition Act we know that we cannot do that. This brings me to another vital point which was made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East made the same point today that they cannot do that under the Land Acquisition Act. I am saying that if the Ministry of Housing and Lands is carrying out these land acquisitions that something is wrong. The Ministry of Housing and Lands can only get land for themselves. If they intend to vest it somewhere else under another name, maybe that is what they are entitled to but I want to know if the Ministry of Housing and Lands is getting this land and it will be vested to the company and then the company will give them shares in return for the land that they are giving.
4.25 p.m.

Sir, the Ministry of Housing and Lands cannot be acquiring land for CWC. The same way that the Ministry of Housing and Lands could not acquire land for the GEMS of Barbados when they were requested, they cannot do it for this private company either. It is separate and distinct from the Government of Barbados and that is the point. Sir, that is why I would have preferred the Minister to have said today that everybody has agreed that the company was the one buying the land and not the Ministry. If it is the Ministry, we have some serious legal problems. I would advise the Minister and I know she would advise the company that it is for them to pay and not the Ministry.

Sir, we also have to be very careful because I watched the rush when the Minister came in here and mentioned that all of this land would be acquired. The Minister of Sports was given a request to acquire land in St. Lucy at North Stars over three years ago to be used for an expansion of a cricket ground for the Government of Barbados.

Some people believe that the land at North Stars belongs to Denis Kellman and the people of St. Lucy. This is not true. It belongs to the taxpayers of Barbados and for over three years, because of the position of North Stars and the unique way it operates, it has been trying to get the Government of Barbados to acquire land for the expansion of the grounds so that they can properly fence the grounds and build stands for the Government of Barbados.

Sir, whatever they do on that ground, is not because of North Stars. It is for the Government of Barbados who owns the land. I am saying that World Cup venue cannot be the only important thing that is going on and, if the Honourable Member for the City is saying that North Stars will have no share in the World Cup activities, that is another matter.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You said that it has nothing to do with World Cup because there are also practice grounds, and if you are saying now that North Stars can forget about it and all the money they have invested to make the Government look good....

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am saying, Sir, that North Stars is the best example of how a community can help a Government. It is the example that the Government should have followed and rushed to this Parliament to make sure they got the additional land.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, would you believe that the same land I am speaking about was compulsorily acquired when the Democratic Labour Party was in Government? At the time I was not in Parliament to float the idea that North Stars would be an official cricket field.

Sir, when I first spoke about this in Parliament, all of them laughed at me and I have witnessed that now it is about to move forward a step, jealousy has stepped in and all of a sudden you hearing of the 3 W's. I am in favour of the 3 W's and all of the other facilities, but I am saying, Sir, that when you have a good example of a community prepared to do something, you should step in and aid that community.

Sir, instead of aiding the community, all they are getting is frustration. There is no way that any group of people, community minded as they are, willing to do the things they are doing on Government land without asking the Government for one cent, should be frustrated in their efforts. This is what would frustrate young people in communities in Barbados.

Sir, we need to get the North Stars example across Barbados to show communities how they can help themselves, instead of frustrating North Stars in their efforts.

I am also saying, Sir, that if we are going to be serious about CWC, we also have to understand that something has to be done about our hospital. Sir, if we do not do that, we will not be able to market Barbados as a place to visit. We have to get back our hospital like it used to be, and we cannot afford to have our hospital that when you are driving on the road, and you see somebody sick and tell them you are going to call an ambulance for them that you hear, "Oh no, not that". We need to bring it back where it was and I have that living experience.

4.30 p.m.

Sir, one day when I was driving on the Highway 2A going north, I saw a white lady like she was having a heart

attack and I said, let me call the ambulance and she said, "Oh no, not that place". I am saying that we have to be careful...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, we have to understand that there are groups of people here in Barbados who are scared of our health institution and that is a slap down to the Government. If our own people are scared of our institutions, you have to think of how other people would think about it. We are a tourism country and none of us in here should feel proud about this particular point. I do not feel proud about it, Sir, for my people or would I feel proud about inviting people here for our services.

If we are going to be truly discussing services, the first place we have to look is at our health institutions. This is one of the most vital places and that is where we have to start because once we get it right, we will get the tourist.

There was a time, Sir, when the Queen's sister used to come to Barbados to get her medical attention. The Honourable Member for the City will confirm that point.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: She used to come to Dr. Haynes everybody knows that because it used to be all across the papers of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I read it and I believe it so if you are saying that what is printed in the Press is not correct that is another matter. I believe what is printed in the Press is correct and I would like to believe that I could continue to think that way.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, we also have to understand that now we are getting into CWC and understand the implications, hoteliers must understand that they stand to gain a lot from this tournament. They must also understand that when people come to Barbados, they cannot hold on to them as if they belong to them. They must be prepared to advise the people to move across Barbados.

Sir, we take the taxpayers money, we advertise Barbados, we encourage people to come to Barbados and we do not tell them which hotels to go to but when they go, the hoteliers believe that the people belong to them. I am saying that if we want people to appreciate Barbados, they must

allow them to roam Barbados and find the true Barbados. This belief that people can only come and be treated by a hotel as if they are in Glendairy is stupidity. They need to understand that the tourists come here to appreciate the qualities we have in Barbados and they need to maximise the advantage they have which they cannot do other places.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The best aspects are the people of Barbados. The Honourable Member is saying that is only one aspect but I am telling you, Sir, if you get the opportunity to see how tourists mingle among Barbadians, they are excited to know that they could come to a country like Barbados and be among the local people and have the 'feel good' syndrome. I am telling you, Sir, that there is a 'feel good' syndrome that goes on and I witness it on a daily basis. We must understand that to be the good will which has built Barbados.

In the Sunset Crest area, Sir, there is a lady named Sheila, and I am not speaking about her in bad terms, the Honourable Member for St. James North can confirm this. There are generations of people coming back to Barbados just because of one woman. Whenever they come back to Barbados they ask for this particular woman because she knows how to deal with them and she looks after their affairs. Sir, if we allow all-inclusive tourism to deprive people of that type of lady, it means that those persons could be in any other part of Barbados.

Asides.

4.35 p.m.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House and misleading the people in this country about the nature of the tourism product. All-inclusive is only one component within our product offering. There are people who come back to Barbados 15 and 16 times, there are people who come here and bring their families and there are people who want to stay on the property and just relax all day long. Sir, nobody is a prisoner anywhere. It is wrong to give that impression. Because you are an all-inclusive, it does not mean that you would stay on the property 24/7; please!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed Honourable Member.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it must also be said, if we are going to be serious about Cricket World Cup 2007, that the bathroom facilities which were closed by the other Government because they could not appreciate or understand the importance of those bathrooms

throughout Barbados must be reopened so that when the tourist is traversing Barbados and they have a nature call there would be some place for them to go. I have argued this point over and over and I will continue to argue it. It was a bad decision to close those bathroom facilities.

Sir, I was very happy to see that the Honourable Member as usual is out front and up front being the first to call for those facilities in his constituency because he understands the importance of those facilities to tourism development in Barbados. He is not the only one that has them, because we have them here.

Sir, we have to understand that these facilities are not only important for the tourist but also for Barbadians who are now traversing the country and learning the country and the good quality of the country, so we need to have them back. Sir, it might be better to refurbish those that are not sold as yet to enhance the tourism product. If that is done maybe some of the private sector people would be quite prepared to look after these facilities and make sure that the cost does not land...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to understand that we are not discussing Cricket World Cup if we are discussing it for a 'two-few' group. This must be a project that will touch every single soul in Barbados. Everybody in Barbados must believe that they must have a share in this.

Sir, whether you call it bread and breakfast or community tourism, at the end of the day it is still community tourism. Sir, there are some people who believe, just because they are in control of ministries, that they could use words and then get up and speak to them and talk about 'I men' when in truth and in fact all they are alluding to is that they are photocopies and that the people of Barbados should understand that they are copying a good idea.

Sir, I am saying the Cricket World Cup and the linkage between bed and breakfast is a good idea. So I want to congratulate the Minister of Tourism for coming up with an original idea that was floated on the Floor of Parliament already under a different name. Sir, I must admit that this Minister of Tourism listens well and photocopies well too and I am proud of him. The Minister of Tourism is now making another vital point by saying that for 2007 we do not need brand names because we have the opportunity to develop our local brand. Sir, one thing I must admit is that he is a very fast learner. One thing that he says two months ago, he can switch and get in line very quickly. That is what makes him one of the best Ministers in Cabinet because he changes to suit the time and he does it quickly without

any fuss or fanfare. Sir, I am very proud of this Minister because if he continues like this, he will be the most successful Minister with all of my ideas, that is why I am going to copyright them for him.

Sir, he was absolutely correct when he said that I am an 'I man' because all he was admitting is that he has not moved too far away from George Street and still like the ideas that are coming out of George Street more so than the ideas from Roebuck Street and I congratulate him for that.

Sir, there is no doubt that there must be a very strong relationship between World Cup 2007, the Ministry of Sports, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Social Transformation. In other words, there must be a policy formulated for World Cup 2007 because it is so good an idea that no one ministry can take responsibility for it. I am saying that if we do not find a policy for it, we might find ourselves in trouble. Sir, at the same time we have to accept that whenever we are given raw material by people and we cannot access this raw material any other way, we must fairly compensate those persons for the raw material that they are putting into the manufactured item.

Sir, other people might have lawyers to argue their case about loss of usage, potential growth and things like that, so it is in the interest of Government and the Members of Parliament to make sure they are padded to get these particular things for the poor residents of Pickwick Gap who would not be able to get someone to argue that for them.

Sir, Cricket World Cup 2007 is not too far away from here and somebody must tell the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) that they cannot continue to treat this as a secondary matter. To hold back the development of Kensington Oval now that they are stuck with an idea that should never have been there just to get a test series is what I would call utter foolishness. Sir, when you do not have foresight, this thing occurs to these persons. The Barbados Cricket Association (BCA) and the West Indies Cricket Board should have had an alternative ground for playing the test match while they are developing and looking forward to 2007. Instead of creating problems for the 2007 planners, we should have been able to go forward with Cricket World Cup 2007 without any hindrance from the West Indies Cricket Board or the Barbados Cricket Association (BCA).

Sir, they are jealous of certain people somewhere in Barbados and because they do not want somebody to be able to out-manage them in showing how test cricket can be managed and displayed in Barbados is the reason why they want to stop the development of the programme for 2007.

Sir, I am saying that selfishness and jealousy will not be able to stop the progress of the North Stars Cricket Club because they have been able to promote all the matches they

had through the BCA and managed them well and there were no complaints. Even when the players complain that the players area was not big enough, they undertook the development and expanded the players room to satisfy the players, something that you do not get coming out of the West Indies Cricket Board or the BCA. They are proactive. They understand where they have to go and they are doing it.

Sir, the BCA seems to be playing a game between the Windward Cricket Club, North Stars and Cave Hill, but there is no need to do that. They must stop playing off people against each other. They must understand that North Stars took the lead and the frustration cannot continue because we have all the parking facilities. Everything that is requested for the right cricket atmosphere, we have in the north of Barbados but jealousy is preventing Barbados from being developed to its true potential.

Sir, I am saying that the BCA and the West Indies Cricket Board is frustrating the Cricket World Cup just because they do not want anybody to prove that they made a bad decision in putting the one-day cricket for the Cricket World Cup at Kensington Oval because they knew that had they allowed someone else to develop the area and show the true potential of Barbados, people would understand the particular point being made at Kensington Oval.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to understand that Barbados does not belong to North Stars or the BCA, but that it belongs to the people of Barbados. So when we set about to do something, we must maximise our efforts.

Sir, because of the critical nature and the importance of this particular tournament, we should do nothing to frustrate the development and the building of that programme that we have to put in place.
4.45 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am told that next year there is the possibility that it might occur again. Sir, when we start the construction, there should be one thing going on at the Kensington Oval and that should be construction to get the complex finished.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: It is already in, so we cannot do anything about it. All we can do is to admit that we have made a mistake. Sir, the Barbados Cricket Association and the West Indies Cricket Board must understand that they have to give up something in order to receive something and that they must stop interfering in the development of the programme for 2007 in this process.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we must understand that even though we have not started out correctly, that there are

some mistakes that we can still try to correct, in order to maximise everything. Sir, we must understand that we will not get our true benefit out of 2007 because we have put all of our eggs into one basket.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was admitted a number of weeks ago in this Parliament that we have a traffic management problem, yet Government is putting double the number of people into Bridgetown, therefore, Government needs to tell us how it is going to be able to get that solved.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am going to preface my statement by saying that I believe all Barbadians are particularly proud of the fact that we have been afforded the opportunity to host the finals of World Cup, 2007. I believe that Barbadians will give their full endorsement to all of the plans that we are putting in place, to ensure that this experience is a rewarding one for all Barbadians.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I give my full endorsement to all of the efforts that are going on with regards to the World Cup, 2007, and with the stated intentions and objectives of hosting the World Cup, 2007, in this region and in particular Barbados. I believe that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East would have already outlined most of the issues relating to the development of the World Cup, 2007, such as its organisation to date, *et cetera*. Those things are matters of record in the Honourable House and need no going over.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will also tell you that the one thing that is of concern to tourism planners, not only in Barbados but in the region, is the issue relating to whether or not the event is going to redound to the benefit of every citizen of the region. Sir, I believe the World Cup, 2007 is an opportunity for us to change our attitudes, productivity patterns, and to build our confidence as countries and as citizens of the Caribbean.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even if the International Cricket Council are the people at the centre of the World Cup, 2007, its development must be constructed in such a way that ensures that it redounds to the social and economic benefits of all of our citizens. Sir, there is much symbolism and cultural importance in hosting the World Cup, 2007 and in cricket itself to Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West talking about the issue with regards to the Australian coach. I do not know Mr. King personally and do not need to know him. It is not his fault that he is in the region but as far as I am concerned, that is a matter for the West Indies Cricket Board and Mr. King.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am particularly concerned that at this stage of our development, that at a stage where cricket seems to be going upwards, as we have just won the International Cricket Council Tournament, and the fact that the cultural symbolism that cricket represents for us in this region, we can suddenly have someone from outside the boundaries, to be our coach. Sir, this is especially so as we are in the midst of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, the Free Trade Area of the Americas and with regards to issues of consumption patterns and what we do as a people, to be able to deal with our own likenesses, products and services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, personally I am not against Mr. King. It is not his fault that he is here but I wonder what message this is sending to the people of the region, particularly to our people at this time in our development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that World Cup, 2007 creates the best opportunity ever made available on a global scale for us to showcase Barbados as a tourism destination. I believe this is the greatest opportunity we will ever have in any one space to expose Barbados as a tourism destination. Sir, that goes to the influx of visitors who will come to Barbados and to the exposure of Commonwealth nationals, wherever they are found, for the first time to concentrate on the Caribbean and on Barbados. Sir, for example, if there is an Indian who lives in Madison, Wisconsin or if there is a concentration of Indians, Pakistanis or Australians who have never heard of Barbados or of the region for leisure or for business purposes, this may open up an opportunity for them to see Barbados as an opportunity to come.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is going to be a demand for additional rooms for the World Cup, 2007 and some of us in the industry are concerned about its timing, even at this stage. I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church East speaking about its timing and stating that it is coming at the end of our tourist season. Sir, in essence, it is, but given our patterns, that is the traditional peaks in throw-offs that we used to have in the tourism sector which we have no longer. As a matter of fact, there are a number of special events that have filled that void and have, therefore, changed those patterns. Therefore, tourism planners are concerned about the fact that the World Cup is coming very close to our traditional winter season.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we, in Barbados, have determined that we need about 12,000 hotel rooms and are now trading on 8,000. Sir, getting the 4,000 is going to be a big issue. That is why the initiatives that were spoken about last week with regards to the bed-and-breakfast options; the option for improving small hotels; the 500 rooms that can now be traded, are all matters of concern.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, persons have talked about cruise ships. I would like to say for the record that cruise ships should be the last option that we should put on the table with regards to how we deal with the development of rooms in Barbados. I believe that the bed-and-breakfast option, the option for modular accommodation where such accommodation would be brought in and assembled up to high luxury standard for use, then for it to be dismantled and shipped out.

Sir, this issue of the cruise ship is not a good option because of the fact that the itineraries of cruise ships are already planned. In addition, when a ship berths, as far as I know, the workers, the food, everything remains on that ship. Therefore, persons may come here and sail away with our profits and we might get very little from that option.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is an opportunity to create a catalyst from which all of the other sectors can fire but we have to ensure that if we create a basis for them to be able to participate, that they truly can get the opportunity to participate in the World Cup, 2007.
4.55 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk about food, we have to ensure that planters get the benefit when we speak of the World Cup. In addition to that ancillary offering increase, the advertising and public relations component is immense for Barbados. Sir, Barbados would now be exposed to places which never heard about it before. The opportunity for our tourism industry to grow at the level dealing with those new markets including those people who have put their homes into the pool would now become the future real options for the tourism industry and bring more people into the accommodation pool adding to the public relations and advertising of the industry.

Sir, a service delivery upgrade should come out of this which should be able to help us move forward. In addition, there will be direct benefits from the upgrade of the infrastructure of the country, our airport and our seaport.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, although all seems rosy, there are still some concerns because at almost every meeting I have attended as Minister of Tourism, Barbados raised more concerns relative to all the other islands in the Caribbean. Sir, I attended a meeting in November in London and it seems as if the CWC is putting on a tournament in our backyards over which we seemingly have little control and it is a bothersome thing and a concern to everyone. This does not mean that it will not work itself out but CWC seems to want to take little risk.

I want to bring the issue of a designated travel partner to this Chamber. CWC, in a very transparent way, wants to designate a travel partner through an open bidding process to

give them the rights to control all the travel coming into the region. This may mean that our traditional tour operator partners may not be one of the people to get the contract to be the designated travel partner. It may so happen that John Smith or Mohammed Smith out of India may get to be the partner and a lot of traditional travel partners who control seats and rooms are concerned that if this happens, it may shut them out of an opportunity to control the rooms they hold. Mr. Speaker, in other words, all the rooms reserved now through tour operators may suddenly be offered at a higher rate and people are concerned about what would happen to our tourism industry after the World Cup is finished since it will last for only 21 days.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the industry, we felt it would have been a better option for CWC to have cherry-picked from our traditional operators coming to the region, advise them of the available room and let them through their sports division and other partners get those rooms made available for the World Cup. Sir, this issue is troubling tourism partners not only in Barbados but across the region. We are concerned as to how we will deal with the designation of rooms and seats through one partner who may not have done traditional work with Barbados and the region. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope we could ensure that we get a consortium of our traditional partners as those designated partners.

The other issue has to do with the provision of hospitality like catering, subcontracting and the like. Again, there is a concern in the industry that when people are designated and contracts go out that many of the traditional hospitality providers may not have the opportunity to do as well as before. When it comes to subcontracting, I know that if someone out of London gets the catering contract for Kensington, we hope that he or she would subcontract within the region or in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am only saying that we have to guarantee that our people become part of these things because our people are looking to this event as a wonderful opportunity that would redound to them commercially and if this does not happen, a lot of our people would be in trouble. Sir, the economics of World Cup 2007 must drip right down to the bottom of this society.

I have heard people talk about the fickleness of tourism but it is the only industry which allows a person to put up a small hut on the beach, create an indigenous souvenir, sell it to someone with very few inputs and make money to support his family. Sir, in Grenada, after hurricane Ivan, in a few days time a cruise ship went back to Grenada and people were able to make money again but the nutmeg crop will take seven years to come back again.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, World Cup 2007 must work in such a way that allows every citizen in the Caribbean to have their rightful place in it and as representatives, we

need to make sure that the World Cup drips down to the fabric of the society. I know we are doing the best we can, I have confidence in everyone but I am simply raising the concerns we have as tourism officials and hoping that World Cup 2007 redounds to the good of all.

Mr. Speaker, when I went to that meeting in London, Ministers of Tourism and Commerce were concerned about what they would tell vendors about licensing, merchandising and the like and to assure them that they would get their piece of the pie. Sir, in many instances, some of our suppliers have already said that in the initial stages, the resources and the technical expertise necessary for them to be able to bid, the timing of the bidding process and submission did not give them equal opportunities *vis-à-vis* larger established entities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say it clearly that this is a matter of concern. I believe there is a way to work around it but these things have to be put on the table.

Sir, we spoke about the movement of people as legitimate tourists in the region yet we do not see people from Guyana and the Caribbean as legitimate tourists like those from Australia and Britain and when the time comes, I hope we would see all people of the region as legitimate tourist.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe we need to host the World Cup within our own competencies and raise the standard. I keep hearing reference made to Australia and South Africa but Barbados cannot be Australia, South Africa or England. I had an experience once when Jamaica hosted a World Junior Track and Field Championship and I sat on one of the subcommittees of the International Amateur Athletic Federation. When the bidding process was going on, the Germans and other people asked how it was possible for Jamaica to host a track and field championship but, at the end of the day, Jamaica hosted the championship and it was great. They did not have the big screen and camera around the ground like other places but they hosted it within the competencies of what was available in Jamaica and it was successfully done. Sir, people argued at the end of the event that it was the best championship that they ever had.
5.05 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that it is a dangerous thing to start setting up straw men to knock them down. When we start to talk about the competencies that we have, we need to host this World Cup within the competencies of what we have in the region and allow our people to derive the greatest benefits from it.

Sir, I understand all the restrictions and merchandising from my experience in marketing but I believe that the transport plan that works for us must be one that we dictate.

The security and health plans must be ones that we dictate. The allocation of stall space must be done the Bajan way and that is how I feel about it.

Let me say something about the BTI's involvement. I believe that the BTI is the best way for us to create the opportunity to invest in the World Cup. I disagree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West and many of his mouthings that were meant to be provocative. The issue through the BTI is an easier option for us to execute.

Sir, tourism investment stands to benefit more from the concept of the World Cup and, therefore, I think that the BTI is a perfect vehicle to create investment. The BTI's reports are laid in Parliament and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West has the Public Accounts Committee at his disposal. I do not know why he does not use it and stop complaining. Sir, every time something is being done he complains.

Sir, if the Honourable Member feels that something is wrong, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West should call the Public Accounts Committee and deal with the issues that are before the Honourable House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the BTI's record to date is a good record. You only have to look around Bridgetown, St. Lawrence Gap and Speightstown and see the work that the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated has done for this country in terms of tourism investment and the development of the infrastructure of our country that will create a better basis for overall tourism for Barbados. I believe that the bond issue that the BTI will be putting out is the perfect source of funding.

I believe that World Cup 2007 is a wonderful opportunity for us and I think that all Barbadians need to get onboard and we need to know all the opportunities that are available to us very early.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me say something about the issue of all-inclusive which was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is always lost when he speaks on tourism issues and he is more lost on the issue of all-inclusive. Sir, for his own edification and enlightenment I would like to tell him some factual things that will work, particularly within the context of how we deal with the World Cup.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, first of all, less than 20 per cent of the rooms in Barbados are inclusive rooms. When we hear the talk about all-inclusive, we would think that Barbados is overrun by all-inclusive hotels. It is interesting to note that the fastest growing component of the tourism

industry globally is the package component, whether that is all-inclusive, cruise or otherwise.

The concept of packaging in tourism is not a new concept and it did not originate with all-inclusive. For many years people were visiting the West Coast of Barbados to something called a Modified American Plan (MAP). Anybody who knows about the industry would tell you that water sports, three meals a day, entertainment and everything were included in this plan. This is not a new thing in the development of tourism. However, what is happening now is that the concept of safety and security, born out of the concerns in Jamaica, created this concept of this all-inclusive package.

Sir, let me say a few things about all-inclusive. The package business allows you to control your cost in a way in which you were unable to do before. It is like volume discounting. The greatest concern that visitors have when taking a vacation outside of their physical security is their financial security. People estimate at times that they spent as much as 40 per cent more than they had originally estimated when they came on vacations. The all-inclusive creates a basis for packaging in a way that ensures that you know what you are going to spend before you go on your vacation.

Sir, the people putting together the component, whether that is food or otherwise, are now in a position to create a concept of volume discounting for them. This means that when they are sourcing their business they can get it at discounted rates and it encourages year-round tourism.

Sir, all-inclusive is packaged and sold in a way that puts the onus on the all-inclusive operator to keep his doors open all year round and not in the concept of seasonality as existed before because they have to get a volume to be able to create a basis for margins of profits in the industry.

The other thing is the security issues. These security issues that are now surfacing, financial and physical, are concentrated within that area. Our all-inclusive package is not one that encourages people to stay in the hotel. One thing that is clear with all-inclusive is if you have already paid for the meal and the operator can get you out of the hotel to do other things, they do not have to serve that meal because it is already paid for. This is the same concept that drives the cruise ship.

Asides.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Barbados' major all-inclusive hotels are Almond Beach Resort, Mango Bay, Escape and Turtle Beach and they are the ones that are encouraging people to go off the properties. There are dine around programmes and transportation that take the visitors to Bridgetown.

Sir, the all-inclusive hotels also ensure service providers of a guaranteed amount whether or not the hotels have guests in them. Let me explain this, Sir. If a woman braids hair at Almond Beach Resort, they would guarantee her 2 or 3 heads to braid a day which they would pay for. If she does not get the guaranteed heads to braid a day, she would still be paid. That is what all-inclusive provides for taximen and transport providers. Sir, do not mind people who talk about all-inclusive that do not know about it.

All-inclusive has also now created a basis where the occupancy levels that have been observed in the all-inclusive hotels in Barbados are even higher than the ones in the European Plan (EP) hotels. This tells the whole tale.

Sir, if you are telling me today that Almond Beach Resort is not more productive than it was when it was Heywoods I would tell you to analyse the numbers, and if you are talking about 40 per cent averages as opposed to 80 per cent that is a different thing altogether, than if you are talking about the number of people employed or the number of the percentages is higher.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us get off this hobby horse. The all-inclusive product is one component of the tourism industry which people are demanding from our major markets. Who are we to say that we are not going to provide that particular aspect of the tourism industry to people who are demanding it? Sir, if we do not provide this aspect of tourism, we would be crazy people.

I am saying that the same way that cruise tourism, European Plan (EP) and Modified American Plan (MAP) make up components of tourism, all-inclusive has its plan. You do not want them to overrun the entire country but you want them to have the opportunity to provide to the overall pool of tourism development that is necessary for Barbados.

Again, I say that this is an opportunity and an education for the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who speaks very loosely about these things. He does not understand these matters and mostly confuses himself and others when he speaks on these issues. I will say that he learns well and we will soon hear him speaking about this somewhere else.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even with the concerns...

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House by saying the Honourable Member for St. Lucy when he meant the Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Asides.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that concerns have been raised today concerning the tourism industry relative to what is happening in the sector, I am sure that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East will respond to a number of issues raised.
5.15 p.m.

I close by saying that this is the most important opportunity that we have ever had to showcase Barbados to the rest of the world. I really think that it goes beyond tourism. As I said, I believe it would do a lot for our attitudes, productivity and our confidence as a people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the only thing that is left to be said is that the Final game is going to be hosted between the West Indies and team yet to be named.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really just want to make some comments in the context of the role of the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment in getting the area of Pickwick Gap ready for the expansion of Kensington, and to speak about some of our wider roles. The matter of the relocation of the residents at Pickwick has attracted much public attention, some controversy and a considerable amount of misstatement and misrepresentation. I wish to speak about some of the initiatives by the Government in preparing the residents for relocation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I became the Minister of Housing, an informal town meeting was held at the property of one of the residents. The Town Hall Meeting was attended by residents, Steven Alleyne of the BCA, and the Member of Parliament (MP) for the area. I am giving these details, Sir, because part of the public allegation has been that there was no communication with the residents and they were in a state of confusion.

Sir, a second Town Hall Meeting was held on September 10, in the Challenor Stand with the Member of Parliament, residents and members of the BCA. On October 30, a third Town Hall Meeting was held in the Board Room of the BCA. Present were the Member of Parliament, residents, officials from the BCA and officials from the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment.

Sir, in November 2003, there was another Town Hall Meeting, also conducted at this time, were a number of surveys by the Housing Planning Unit of the Ministry. They went to every property in the area, both commercial and residential to do the initial assessment, such as who owned property, who owned land, who owned both house and land, who was tenant only, who was tenant of land, who was tenant of house only, who was tenant of house and land.

There are multiple housing relationships and situations existing in that area, and throughout urban Barbados, and we needed a very clear idea of whom the properties' owners were, and what kinds of arrangements we would have to make, in respect of the relocation of residents.

Sir, letters went out to residents from the Ministry and in September 2004, a Town Hall Meeting was held, hosted by the BCA at the Garfield Sobers Pavilion. Present were residents, the Member of Parliament for the area, members of the BCA, members of staff from the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Environment from the level of Permanent Secretary, to the Chief Legal Officer, to the Officers of the Housing Planning Unit. I was there, and the General Manager of the National Housing Corporation was also there, making it six different Town Hall meetings that were held at various locations and attended by the majority of the residents. Letters were also sent to the residents.

Subsequently, however, I read in the newspapers, led by the Democratic Labour Party looking to get some political mileage out of something that should not have excited controversy, that there had been no communication, and people did not know what was happening to their businesses or homes.

Sir, I want to speak to the status of the matter and I have with me, the documentation that speaks to exactly where we are in this process and since there are few, I will start with the commercial properties.

Let me say that outside of this setting where we had Town Hall meetings, a presentation was made to me in my capacity of Minister of Housing and senior officials at the Ministry, at which time I made it clear to the BCA that the Government expected the residents would have been treated with respect. And, if we are doing a major upgrading of Kensington, it is very important that the people who live in the surrounding districts be allowed to derive some of the economic benefits which would accrue to the big businesses.

More than that, Sir, it was important that BCA should invest in some degree of community and neighbourhood upgrade, so that you do not have world class sports facilities with people living in the shadow, in less than acceptable conditions, and that the BCA needs to make that kind of investment as part of the project development.

Sir, you have by extension where the Central Bank went in and the Honourable Member for the City consistently and persistently indicated that we had to deal with the Church Village residents and the majority of them have gone to comfortable relocations. Some are resisting,

because they are making revenue from nocturnal activities and feel that in new locations, they will not have the same degree of human traffic that they have in the area of the City. The point is that upgrading has been done for them.

Moreover, Sir, the Ministry of Housing and Lands will, jointly with funds available from the Inter-American Development Bank, be soon conducting a neighborhood upgrade programme, in the Garden Land at St. Michael. There has been substantial commercial development by the Government, in the form of the ICB commercial developments of property there and the National Housing Building.

We did some greening of the area and we are going to follow up now with some upgrade to the neighbourhood. NHC also has residential development on the far end of Country Road and there is private commercial development in the area. It is the philosophy of the Government that wherever expensive commercial development goes in, the people who are living in close proximity must not feel that this is an us and them, with them living in the slums or getting the sow's ear, to use the Bajan expression, while others get the silk purse.

Sir, there were four commercial properties in the area, the relocation of which has to be relatively soon, in terms of the redevelopment of Kensington. Therefore, the relocation of the commercial properties, in terms of the timing, is far more important because of how the redevelopment project will start, than the relocation of the residents.

We would want to have the residents relocated roughly by the middle of next year, but we need to get access to the commercial properties as soon as possible. A. S. Brydens and Sons, Armstrong Agencies and the estate of Lillian Hinds which consists of Woodville Guest House and some of you may see the old plantation type house which used to be a very elegant building, opposite the Da Costa Mannings/Knights property. Those are the four commercial properties which are to be relocated. Two are owned by Armstrong Agencies, one owned by A. S. Brydens or A. N. R. Temprow and one by the Estate of Lillian Hinds. Sir, in respect of those properties, if my memory serves me correctly, Armstrong Agencies is buying commercial land from the Government at Lower Estates for the relocation of their properties. A. S. Brydens is relocating to their headquarters at Barbarees Hill. The estate of Lillian Hinds is taking financial compensation and is relocating, but I do not know what decision they have made in respect of their business.

5.25 p.m.

Sir, much has been said about whether or not the residents are being fairly treated and I would wish Parliament to be aware of the options that are available. A

decision was taken by the residents to relocate to the site at Barbarees Hill because it was in close proximity to their existing residential area and it was the ideal location for those who did not want to move far from the City or from urban Barbados. Also because of its proximity to Kensington Oval, it allowed those who were carrying on commercial type activity to continue to engage in that kind of entrepreneurial activity where they could have shops and where they would still be close to Kensington.

Sir, the Cabinet has made a decision and we have approached multiple land owners at Barbarees Hill. There is an old great house which is owned by Sir David Seale at the moment and we have approached Sir David to purchase that land. There are lands adjoining that which is owned by the Medford family and they have been approached for the purchase of that land. There are lands further afield adjoining that, we are going up Barbarees Hill now or east, which is owned by Lloyd Alleyne of Shamrock Trading. Mr. Alleyne approached us in respect of the purchase of that property. There are lands on the southern side of Barbarees Hill which is opposite these now which is owned by the Barbados National Bank. I believe that it was formerly owned by Budg Buy Supermarket.

‘Sir, we have approached all of those property owners in respect of the purchase of all these lands because we intend to create a quality residential development not only for the people of Pickwick Gap but for the residents of Emmerton who are now complaining. We will be putting primary homes, one, two and three bedroom wood and wall houses there. There would be opportunity for commercial enterprise and micro businesses, small shops, hairdressers, aestheticians, perhaps a cyber café, maybe a shoemaker and somebody who might want to repair suitcases. So there will be a new development and Barbarees Hill will take on a completely different appearance to what it now has. The lands that adjoin Strathclyde will have very nice houses and as indeed all of the housing in the area. It is going to be a mixture of primary homes and homes at above the primary level.

Sir, there was a lot of talk in the newspaper about people not knowing what was going to happen to them and so on. Sir, there are 22 residential properties, several of which are owned by the same people. There are persons who own three and four houses and three and four parcels of land which they have rented out to various others. Of the majority of the people who own properties and are resident there two have asked for compensation. They have said: “Hum hum, I ain’t want the Government to carry me no way bossy, you put money in my hand.”

Sir, we are buying enough land to have a wonderful new housing development with shops and micro-enterprises at Barbarees Hill. Remember I said that Emmerton residents will go there as well as the Pickwick Gap residents.

Sir, I want to make the point that the City is a constituency which has been shrinking in size because people are moving out of the city, but cities must live. If you go to London, Europe or the United States of America some of the best most high-valued residential properties can be found in the cities. We believe that it is important to bring residents back to the City and to make the City a thriving bustling place where there is commercial activity during the day, where people are within close proximity of it and where people have an opportunity to invest in commercial enterprise within the city area.

Sir, 13 residents said that they wanted relocation to the proposed Barbarees Hill site. Four persons said they do not want the money, they want to be relocated but that they do not want to live at Barbarees Hill, they want to move out of town altogether. There are two people who have businesses in the area but they do not live there and they have said: "Look I ain't able with the business no more, I am not worrying to carry on business anymore, compensate me for my business". One property owner is transferring his property to a family member.

Sir, the residents were given options. They could get financial compensation if they do not want to be relocated. If they do not want the compensation but prefer the relocation, they will be given the kind of house that they currently have. In other words, if they had a two-bedroom house they would get back a two-bedroom house and if they had a three-bedroom house, they will get back a three-bedroom house.

In fact, the houses will be newer and in some instances they will be on larger parcels of land than those that the people now have because in the Pickwick Gap area people would have built on small house spots which are not within the rules of the Town and Country Planning regulations and therefore Government cannot build on lots that the Town and Country Planning Department does not find acceptable so many of them will have larger lots. They will have bigger houses as well because Town and Country Planning regulations require houses of particular sizes and there are houses in this area that were not built within the scope of the regulations.

Sir, people with businesses will receive compensation for their commercial enterprise. We have indicated to those persons who do not want to go to Barbarees Hill that they can be accommodated on other lands owned by the National Housing Corporation. As I indicated earlier, there are four persons who have made that decision.

Sir, people who do not own property in the area but rent from others will be put in rental properties owned by the

National Housing Corporation. So if you are now a tenant, your landlord will receive compensation for their property but you would be given a property to rent by the National Housing Corporation. Those who now rent land but own their own house would be given the opportunity to relocate. If they wish to buy land and own the lot on which their house is going, it will be sold to them at \$2.50 a square foot. So they are getting land at the cheapest possible price available in Barbados.

Sir, I really hope that the Press that has given a tremendous amount of coverage to how unfair the residents were being treated would at least be good enough to give coverage to what the facts in the matter are because very often we see things in the media giving only one side of the story.
5.35 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the meeting, we also made it clear that residents who were now renting properties but wish to upgrade their circumstances, could apply for the purchase of a home in the Primary Homes Programme and consideration would be given to them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was to my amusement to see that one of the persons in the newspaper claiming that they did not know what was going on, was one of the very persons at whose residence a Town Hall meeting was held. It was also to my amazement, which tells us something about the nature of our society, that when there are opportunities to be in the media and to agitate others, that persons would come out and be willing to do it. Sir, there were people in the newspapers who were agitating but who had already said where they wanted to go.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in some instances, except for a few residents, the reality is that as one looked at the Democratic Labour Party's meeting, which is said to be on the behalf of the residents, they had gotten together a collection of Democratic Labour Party's supporters who live everywhere except in the City of Bridgetown and brought them to meetings to say that they were agitating for the residents of Pickwick Gap.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what does the process involve? These residents all have lawyers who are in discussion with the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment. Sir, as is consistent with the principle relative to compensation, the Commissioner of Land Tax must give an evaluation of the property. If the land owner disagrees with that valuation, he or she can hire his/her own valuer, at Government's expense. Sir, it has been pointed out to them that they are entitled to disagree with the values that we give and that they can have a valuer of their own, which would be paid for by the Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know all of this because I have sat at the meetings and have taken very detailed notes of what was said. When persons got up to ask questions, I was very careful to make a note of their names, the problems that they were experiencing, what solutions we needed to put in place and a reminder to ask the Legal Unit and the Housing Planning Unit to look out particularly for these individuals who would have raised the various points of concerns. Sir, in fact, there was one person who was so intent on quarreling and going to the Press, that when I offered that person a primary home, that person never returned to discuss this matter further.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think we have to be concerned, as a Government and as an Opposition, when there are no legitimate issues but where we appear to fuel problems for the Government. Sir, there are legitimate issues on which Government can be criticised but I believe in this matter on which there has to be consensus for the national good, that since the Government has not attempted to disadvantage any individual, that the Opposition needs to bring matured leadership to the matter.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that we are going about the matter of compensation and re-location in a fair, just and equitable manner. I am going to oversee, as I am sure the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown will, the redevelopment of Barbarees Hill, to make sure that it is a beautiful development of high quality and that people will get what they deserve.

Sir, that is the commitment which I am giving to this Honourable House in respect to that matter. Sir, in the context of the rumors that were out there, in the context of the statements being made by the media and the misrepresentation that was abroad, I felt it important to give detailed information on the status of this matter and to let the public know that we are dealing with it with sensitivity and with fairness.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would be remiss of me in a debate of this sort, if I did not make a few additional points. Sir, permit me, first of all, to be parochial and to make the point that in the constituency of St. James South, there are two cricket grounds. The Melbourne Cricket Club, which is one of the oldest cricket clubs in Barbados, has had several outstanding players, both at national and regional levels. It has men of respect within the community, who give guidance to others. It has also been a nurturing ground for cricketers in this country. Sir, people come from all over the world to play cricket at Melbourne.

Equally, the Desmond Haynes Pavilion, Holders Hill, St. James, is one I think of only two cricket grounds, outside of Kensington, which is named after a living cricket legend. I believe that it is possible, and it is my dream, to see the site

at Holders Hill and at Melbourne becoming practice grounds for the World Cup. I believe they both can be upgraded. At the Desmond Haynes Pavilion, Mr. Haynes has donated memorabilia such as gloves, shoes, bats and autographed items from some of the very exciting matches in which he has participated, for them to be displayed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that it is possible to have a cricket museum at that location because of the number of persons who have played cricket at very high and successful levels and because of the frequency with which that ground is used for local, regional and at a lower level, internationally. Sir, I think that given the number of persons who have come out as successful sports persons from the constituency of St. James South, something needs to be done to upgrade these two grounds.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are very fortunate in some of the sporting facilities in the constituency which I have worked hard to see but more can be done. Therefore, I am urging the National Sports Council not to ignore the scope, the potential or the social and historical worth of these two locations.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael South speaking about the tourism product. I share his view that if we are to have a successful World Cup, that success cannot only be defined in relation to the quality of the organisation of the game but to the extent to which the benefits to be derived from the events would touch a majority of Barbadians of all social and ethnic backgrounds.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression that that comment originated by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South. That comment originated with the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and as usual, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South has repeated it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is following in the Democratic Labour Party's tradition of blowing one's own trumpet. A former Member of Parliament on That Side had a similar view and I would urge the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to remember that Honourable Member did not last much longer after he kept praising himself, and that maybe the same fate awaits the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is very important for us, as a Government, to ensure that all of the rights and benefits are not purchased by large foreign entities but that black

Barbadians and the man in the street can benefit from an enterprise of this sort because it would be wrong to bring an event of this magnitude to Barbados, and to have the benefits remain with a few, rather than seeing the wider society benefitting.
5.45 p.m.

Sir, in relation to the tourism product, I have observed this before in this Chamber and would wish to do so again. When I travel in the Caribbean, I frequently see indigenous foods being served in hotels and restaurants. At this moment, hotels and restaurants in Barbados should be changing to reflect our indigenous culture. We should be seeing more tropical and local juices like tamarind, passion fruit, golden apple and not canned juices imported from overseas. Sir, old Ma Jones who has golden apple, lime and passion fruit trees can get a dollar directly from the activity of the World Cup by supplying hotels and restaurants. I remember going to a restaurant in St. Lucia and seeing a poor version of Barbadian corn meal pap which did not taste as good as my mother's pap with coconut. Sir, the point is that there were bakes, fish cakes, corn meal pap and then a range of sausages, bacon and so. Sir, there is no reason why we cannot have more traditional Barbadian fare even if it is no more than at breakfast in hotels and restaurants.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have one more minute.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: It should reflect more black belly lamb as opposed to New Zealand lamb because our black belly lamb is of a much higher quality. Sir, if we are truly to promote an indigenous product and really want to showcase our culture, then Cricket World Cup has to be a time when our foods are on display, our music is heard everywhere and there are opportunities for average Barbadians to get something out of this.

Sir, the Ministry of Housing and Lands beyond the role that we need to play in respect of the acquisition is also implementing a number of activities.

We are going to be moving to Eagle Hall where there is open land owned by the Government to beautify it and make the urban corridors of Barbados look better. We are putting money into our budget to provide funding for our communities that want to develop green scapes and landscape their communities but may not have the resources or the technical skills to do it. We will be promoting a bread-and-breakfast village at St. Thomas for community tourism as well as a number of other activities.

Sir, I wanted the House to have a clear idea of the role which we are going to be playing. I believe we can promote Barbados as a world-class destination out of which all of us can benefit.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be brief because others have exceeded their time. This Cricket World Cup finals to be held here in Barbados must be seen as a national project not only because of the historical and cultural connection to cricket to Barbadians because 99.9 per cent of Barbadians love cricket. In fact, whenever cricket is played in Barbados some of the best students and historians of the game can be found in villages across the length and breadth of Barbados. Therefore, cricket is the heart throb and passion of the ordinary Barbadian which the Honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke about. Nevertheless, there are going to be some disruption in the lives of Barbadians in 2007. I know we like to paint a rosy picture of all our endeavours and even though it is recognised as a national project, it does not mean that some people may not become irritated as a result of what is happening on the ground in Barbados.

Sir, we are still a small country and I believe that the Honourable Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Sports would want to see tens of thousands of visitors coming to our shores because the economic spinoffs as a result of the presence of World Cup Cricket here within our lands.

Sir, a few months ago there was a hue and cry because of the presence of an individual enjoying his matrimonial bliss here on our land and persons, because of their exuberance to see or protect might have been considered to be going overboard. Therefore, I want at the outset as we move into this very significant national project that we do not make our people feel like strangers in their own land. I want to make this point upfront and clear. I might not be caught up in the crush of persons moving from across the length and breadth of Barbados and going to Kensington Oval or what it might be named after it has been reconstructed, but there are going to be thousands of Bajans and Caribbean people who would be seeking to go to that venue and we hope that the West Indies cricket team will truly rise to their abilities and be there at the finals of this World Cup activity. There is no greater feeling that one can get especially when one is hosting an event, than to be in the finals and to be successful in those finals.
5.55 p.m.

Sir, one only saw the manifestation of Caribbean pride and joy and people holding their heads up, not only in the Caribbean but among our citizens who live in England at the ICC Championship when we so successfully made the final journey. Therefore, right within our homeland would be an activity which could cause a surge of feeling and

passion and the celebration of success which this country needs. Sir, this country needs to celebrate more and more successes and we will be resting our hopes on a successful West Indies cricket team to lift our spirits and assist us in increasing productivity in Barbados.

Do not let us push aside those ordinary Barbadians who will be going about their legitimate business in the way that they are accustomed to. We need to find a happy mesh between those who are strangers within our shores, as a tourism destination, that we have always sought to make welcome. In fact, we will continue to extend those warm arms and facilities to those persons who will be coming to our shores to enjoy excellent cricket here in Barbados.

It is important that we try to minimise both the pre and post disruptive activities of World Cup here in Barbados. Much talk has already been placed on the disruption of business activity around Kensington Oval and the lives of the citizens who currently reside there.

I want to say to the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands, the representative for St. James South, that the Democratic Labour Party had no intention and neither will it be caught in providing any mischievous behaviours or acts which will stop the development of this activity. However, at the same time the Democratic Labour Party has a responsibility to listen to any person across the length and breadth of Barbados who might perceive or feel that they have some difficulty or grievance.

Thus far, this Party has been supportive of this national project, as we support most national projects, that will redound to the benefit of the people of Barbados. I want to put that particular claim to rest. There are no mischievous acts on the part of the Democratic Labour Party to stop persons from being relocated to other areas.

However, one must understand that people become comfortable with a particular space in which they had their navel strings buried and had their lives nurtured. Therefore, in that context any time that you have to move, persons see it as disruptive, changing their lives and lifestyles.

Sir, even though in front of whom they call officials they might say one thing but in front of somebody else they will obviously say something else we have to come to grips with that kind of reality. Eventually, there will be a settling, as there has been a settling of people who were moved over time in order to accommodate projects such as this.

Sir, this is a massive activity, not only a sporting activity, because cricket is a business. Various activities under sports are businesses and as such it is said that tourism will benefit quite substantially from the movement of persons into this country. However, I heard the Minister of

Tourism and the Leader of the Opposition speak to some exclusive zone around Kensington Oval.

Sir, let us understand that it is not just a matter of going for 6 or 7 hours, cricket being played and buses coming and taking the persons back to their venues. Persons will walk beyond that one mile space and I hope that enterprising persons will utilise activity along that one mile space. There are going to be opportunities and we have to help people realise those opportunities.

Sir, one would hope that outside of the issue of security and safety, which are very important in this endeavour, that persons who want to traverse Barbados outside of that one mile space around Kensington Oval to conduct their businesses would be allowed to do so too with relative safety and security.

Sir, when an event like this which generates substantial income for countries, such as the follow on effect of the presence of these events within the country, Barbados will have some type of impact such as this, and there have been experiences across the world. Of course, it is a costly experience because we are talking mostly of constructing or reconstructing Kensington Oval, but in order to facilitate the easy movement of people to Kensington Oval our roads must be in pristine condition, coming from as far as St. Phillip, Christ Church, St. George, and gutters, if I echo the sentiments of the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown.

It is the responsibility of the Honourable Minister of Public Works for maybe some acceleration because we are only two years away from that activity. If we do not want the kind of disaster to ensue, that means that the Ministry of Public Works really has to get the job done in time and to get it done well.

There are too many instances of slackness as we work on our roads. There are too many instances of persons procrastinating as they seek to work on our roads. Therefore, it is not only a challenge for the Minister of Sports but it is also a challenge for the Minister of Public works. It is also going to be a challenge for the Minister with responsibility for transportation in Barbados. These are the kinds of challenges because everything is linked together for the satisfaction of that particular national product.

Sir, everybody has to be onboard. Even though we have World Cup Barbados Inc. and all the related paid and voluntary functionaries in the project, every citizen, particularly those charged with specific responsibilities has to ensure that those responsibilities are adequately carried or we can end up creating a mess of what we are doing.

It is not only going to be the money spent for the redevelopment of Kensington Oval, but the mass amount

of the flyovers, transportation, the redevelopment of the tourism infrastructure and the development of other services relative to this activity. I want to make it absolutely clear that the Democratic Labour Party wants to see its success, not from any partisan position because I am well aware, Honourable Members on the Other Side, that such a product like this, once successfully executed, can be used in a partisan way to thump chests and to say how good we are and therefore, give us an X the next time.
6.05 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that this national product is not construed in such narrow, partisan, political interest but I leave that to them. I know that the good Barbadian people, because of the successful conclusion, will not say to the Honourable Members on the Other Side that come thou good and faithful servants, we will put you there again.

Sir, it is important, as well that as we continue to develop our sporting infrastructure in Barbados, we get other pieces right and not only for cricket. Cricket is our national game. It is our pride, it is our joy, it is our passion, but we also have other major sports in Barbados that cry out for assistance and infrastructure to help with the development of gaining a product within Barbados. I would not want to make a call for football, but if I do not, I might be seen as treacherous to that particular activity.

Sir, for about two or three years now, we heard of the redevelopment of the national stadium. I have not heard much in the last year so I do not know exactly where that project is and I hope that the Minister of Sports would be able to say, as soon as possible, when we would be able to commence the redevelopment of another major multifaceted infrastructural sporting area in Barbados.

Sir, we all recognise in that area we have three major sports in Barbados, cycling, soccer/football and track and field, which is a heavily utilised area of activity. In fact, if one is able to market these particular sports correctly, there will be great economic returns to Barbados, since it would not be a one-shot activity. Can you envisage an activity, maybe a grand-prix event in the track and field arena, being located at the National Stadium of Barbados? Think about the thousands of people who would come to Barbados to be part of that activity. This is the same for football and I do not need to accentuate the point.

It is known that the particular sport, even within our small country, generates more spectators possibly, outside of test cricket in a cumulative way and, maybe as we are discussing here, these world cup cricket activities in Barbados, the challenge to me therefore is also the infrastructural development, relative to these particular sports.

I know that we might be talking, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of scarce resources, and resources are always scarce, but there must be a timetable put in place, relative to bringing all of these projects to fruition and on time and within budget. When you have massive projects such as this, some people lick their lips with great hope and joy, hoping that their pockets would become fatter than others. Let us hope that this will not be the case as we work with the Kensington Oval Redevelopment Project, or any other sporting or development project in Barbados.

I heard others speak in a very parochial manner, relative to cricket facilities in St. James South. I am not giving my colleague from St. Lucy a knock here because it is his right to speak of relations...

Asides.

Mr. R. D. JONES: That is not true, Mr. Deputy Speaker, St. Lucy is quite close to me and, therefore, I know the area extremely well for nearly 35 years of my life and, therefore, it is not accurate to say that but let me say as well that football has been played in our communities since 1998 and I hope the Minister of Sports hears what I am saying.

Asides.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Sir, since 1998, a football facility was being developed at Cane Vale in Christ Church, not in the constituency of Christ Church East Central, but in the constituency of Christ Church West Central. It is utilised by players of tape ball cricket, but football cannot be played because it does not have the space, facilities or the pavilion. Sir, we can have the first mini-stadium in Barbados at Cane Vale in Christ Church.

Asides.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Before you go down Cane Vale Hill, look across and you will see that area. Part of the land was acquired by the Government some time before and there was another piece to be acquired.

Asides.

Mr. R. D. JONES: The Gall Hill football team uses that area and other teams from Christ Church. Sir, if you are able to develop that mini-stadium, it might be the impetus, because you are able then to get a dollar or two from persons coming through the gates so that you can start developing the playing of soccer in a professional way in Barbados.

The Honourable Member for St. George South, we are talking about sports development and sports tourism. We

are not being narrow in our focus for the development of this country. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we only talk cricket, we are narrow and our limited vision will stop this country from developing. The Barbados Football Association in 2007, hopes to benefit from the thousands of people coming here to Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Sir, the twin approach, using multi-focus activity, because they are not only coming here for cricket, going on our lively beaches and into our night clubs. They also want to come to enjoy another activity. Many of them will be coming from England and other places where they play excellent football and soccer.

Therefore, when cricket finishes, why should they not venture to a redeveloped national stadium or some other football stadium to watch excellent football. We would benefit more in terms of cricket, tourism, ancillary services as well as football. This is how we link the process so that everybody is part of the pie.

The linkages must be important because we should not bring people here for cricket and then tell them to go back, thank you. We bring them here and we demonstrate to them all that we have, in every area of sports. If they want to go to the Astroturf at the Garfield Sobers Complex, let them go and play hockey and swim.

I am talking holistic utilisation of the people who come to Barbados for cricket, and as stated by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, the money which one expects to be spent here in Barbados will not somehow become stifled half way, but will trickle down to impact on each and every person within this country.

Asides.

Mr. R. D. JONES: I see that the Honourable Member for St. George South wants to become the Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have another five minutes.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Thank you very much.

Sir, the role of Speaker and Deputy Speaker must be a demonstration of competence, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and therefore everyone cannot claim that particular Chair in which you sit. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important that we move as one nation, one people, towards the realisation of this particular activity for the people of Barbados and not for any particular interest group. We know that large multinational entities, because of their organisational

strength, their marketing strength, their control of the media and that kind of stuff, are able to hold almost 90 per cent of the pie. Therefore, when you are looking for host countries and host institutions to benefit, at the end of the day they do not benefit. So, in agreement with the Minister of Tourism, we would want to see Barbados and the other Caribbean countries benefitting from this activity which is here within our shores. Therefore, I would want to join with all Honourable Members on This Side who have spoken on this issue to continue to support it.

6.15 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to see not only the large players, but the small man, the taxi operators and the people who rent hired cars making some kind of money out of this activity. I recognise that in every society you would have large, medium and small players but it is important that everyone benefits from whatever is tossed up. Nevertheless, I am hoping that we do not consider this as the cash cow or the saviour of Barbados. I am hoping that we do not seek to put all of our economic eggs in this particular basket but that this is only one segment of a total pie which this country should be utilising as we move forward further and deeper into the 21st Century.

Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to give my full support to this issue that is before the House. I recognise that the Honourable Members who spoke, spoke fairly full, so I would try to be brief.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, last week the Honourable Member for St. Peter provided us with a economic statement and one of the key things in that statement was the challenge to all Barbadians to recommit to developing this country. Apart from the specific issues that came out in that presentation, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, as a way of setting the strategic objective of the Government going forward in order for us to develop our export potential to the fullest and to increase the production of those commodities which we used in abundance, spoke of the importance of us striving to achieve a higher level of sectoral linkages and indeed asking all Barbadians to become part of the national exercise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, economic development is indeed a national enterprise. It is not the business of any particular set of individuals or any particular set of businesses. It begins in the hearts and the minds of those of us who aspire to greater mastery of our destiny. That reminds me of what is the challenge here before us with the Cricket World Cup because I heard a lot being said in here about how Barbados needs to prepare for the Cricket World Cup and the benefits to be derived from the World Cup.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while I agree with most of what I have heard, the important point that has to be

made – and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central came close to making it – is that what Barbadians do should not only be in preparation for the Cricket World Cup to showcase Barbados in the best possible way but that we have a commitment to building up this country day by day by day.

Sir, if I appeal to the adage which says that practice makes perfect, if we as citizens of this country do not seek to perform acts in a very perfect way and seek to ensure that we get all the strategic linkages in place going forward and we do it only with the Cricket World Cup in mind – I am going to be very provocative now – the benefits to be derived for this country might only be temporary in nature.

So I want us to say that we need to put proper structures in place to make sure that come World Cup 2007 we could be justifiably proud that what is in place is what will propel us well beyond the Cricket World Cup. That is the fundamental point I want to make because there is a lot to be gained from the legacy factor, but the legacy factor will only be of tremendous benefit to us if we have systems of operations in place that would take us well beyond the World Cup in a very professional way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while I do agree with the need for us to literally redevelop and transform the area in which the main event is taking place, that is the Bridgetown and the greater Bridgetown area, I do submit and I do agree that there must be some major development in that area. If we all agree that what is on show is Barbados and not only Kensington and the Bridgetown and the greater Bridgetown area, then while keeping an eye on what the Government can afford by way of spending in the build up to the World Cup, we need to take a broader look at how best we can prepare Barbados for its best possible showcase.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this brings me around to orderly development from a social, economic and cultural viewpoint. As a matter of strategic direction, we need to look at those things and those places in Barbados which are more likely to provide the major sources of attraction for these large numbers of persons that will descend on Barbados for only a short period.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been listening to Honourable Members on Both Sides throwing in this, the next and the third to give the impression that the Government should have its focus only on the Cricket World Cup not recognising that the build up to the Cricket World Cup involves a number of months, a number of events and a number of activities even beyond the World Cup. When we are in the post-World Cup period we also have to take the country forward along very strategic lines. So while we recognise that the Government's pockets are not as deep as Honourable Members who spoke would want us to believe,

we need to identify those areas and those activities which are not confined in the greater Bridgetown areas that could attract large numbers of persons. As I said the finances are not limitless and we have to make very strategic decisions and the Government through its coordinating team will be doing just that.

Sir, I want to put in a plug here, but it is not going to be expensive. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is an attraction called Sunbury Great House and whether or not there is a World Cup, most of the tourist coming into Barbados find their way up to Sunbury Great House. Sir, I want to encourage the Honourable Member for St. George North, the Minister responsible for Public Works, to see that that road gets fixed well ahead of the World Cup, 2007. I do not want the fixing of the roads leading from all sides to Sunbury Great House, to be treated as a World Cup project. Sunbury Great House is one of those major attractions, to which most people find their way.
6.25 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. George North has assured us that plans are in place to start the rehabilitation of the road running from Six Roads to Sunbury Great House. I would, therefore like the road to continue from Sunbury Great House to St. Philip Parish Church. That part is no longer in my constituency but all of us who want to go to St. John and to St. Philip Parish Church must pass that route in order to get over to St. John and, therefore, over the years, those roads would have done untold damage to our vehicles. I would also like to see the road on the other side coming off Hamptons Road being fixed as well. I do want that to be a World Cup project. Sunbury Great House is too important a part of our tourism offering not to be repaired.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South also made mention of the fact that, around the time of the World Cup, there will be the need for approximately 12,000 hotel rooms, while at the moment we have 8,000. I also want to agree with the Honourable Member that the use of the cruise ships should be the very last option, and that we should explore all other options before arriving to that of cruise ships.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while exploring all the other options, I want to take this opportunity to remind the Honourable Member that there is a lovely property, the Sam Lords Castle, which continues to lie idle, which, over the years, has served the interest of persons living in St. Philip and the interest of the Barbados tourism product.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the refurbishing of the Sam Lords Castle is to be treated as a World Cup 2007 project, I am in favour of that. I want to see it being put back into operation, whether it is done during the build up to the World Cup 2007 or specifically for the World Cup 2007. I want to see that when the World Cup 2007 comes that Sam Lords Castle would have been back into operation and that after the World Cup 2007 that there could be some continuity and consistency in the use of that property in St. Philip.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, putting Sam Lords Castle out of operation, through no fault of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, has caused untold dislocation to families in the constituency of St. Philip and elsewhere. Sir, there are persons in my constituency who would have worked at Sam Lords Castle for all of their working lives. Some would have acquired specific skills such as cooks, waiters, *et cetera*, while working at Sam Lords. Therefore, the dislocation has been on a scale, for some of them, not to get themselves re-engaged in full-time employment elsewhere and that continues to cause some difficulty.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South is very optimistic that some action will recommence there in the not-too-distant future and I want to encourage him to press on with those discussions and negotiations, to ensure that some time ahead of the World Cup 2007, that Sam Lords Castle would have been put back into operation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to touch on the cricket component part of the World Cup 2007. I think that while we are very happy that the West Indies Cricket team would have won the International Cricket Council Trophy in England, we must recognise that there is no group or no collection of part-time sportsmen who would be competing in any international sporting discipline, that can defeat a team of disciplined, full-time professionals, on any consistent basis.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, therefore while we are still relishing in what we have been able to achieve in England a few months ago, I think we need to take that success as a way to build and to ensure that whichever set of cricketers we are able to put on the field when the World Cup 2007 starts, that every individual is a full-time professional cricketer. Otherwise, the World Cup sponsors are going to bring a number of professionals down here and the West Indies cricket team would make an early exit, which is not what we want. Sir, we do not want the psychological disadvantage that is created for the West Indian people being occasioned by an early exit in the World Cup, as this would be a very difficult pill to swallow.

Therefore, all those administrators at the regional and local levels, who have an input to ensure that there is a

higher level of professionalism engendered in our planning for the cricket, must ensure that we can get a group of persons who are full-time professionals in their own right. Whatever it is going to require, I think that at this stage of our development as a region, and the type of glory that cricket has brought to this region over the many decades, we must see it fit to put the right systems and structures in place, to ensure that we put a very professional unit in the World Cup 2007.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to conclude by saying that while we need to do what is very much within our control as the build-up to the World Cup, we need to recognise that Barbados still has to function after the World Cup has ended and that development of a country along very ordered, social, cultural and economic lines, could only be facilitated, if we have systematic and very structured planning. Therefore, we should try not to 'overheat' the economy simply for a Cricket World Cup because afterwards, the same persons might have to come and do the repair job on it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there must be financial prudence going forward. We must be very selective in which projects we will aim to do for the World Cup, while recognising that we need to showcase Barbados in the best possible way. We should also ensure that the country gains the best from the legacy factor.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to speak on this matter for only five minutes because I was drawn into the debate by the Opposition's Members.
6.35 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must say that World Cup Cricket 2007 is incidental to the whole development of the scheme of things and that we cannot isolate it from our normal programme because Government's programmes will still continue. Sir, I have the utmost faith that professionalism will persist. In fact, from the outset, I never doubted that Barbados would have won the right to hold the finals because we had a good team.

The Minister was very full in his presentation. He said that all the Ministries and various agencies are involved. I have no doubt that we will continue to put our best foot forward, that it would be a successful event and that afterwards, we will have a legacy of good infrastructure. Sir, this does not mean that only the city would be prepared because recently we had a number of complaints from Honourable Members for the constituencies of St. Philip and I want to give them the assurance that a lot of work is being done in St. Philip. We will pave the entire stretch of road from Six Roads to St. Philip Parish Church and

Honourable Members must remember that money was voted in the Estimates this year for Sunbury. It is unfortunate that Union Road is taking long but it will be paved next week. I want to give the House the assurance that the programme for the Ministry of Public Works will continue as though there was no Cricket World Cup because Government continues to spend \$50 million each year on the rehabilitation of roads and the Government will continue this each financial year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Honourable Members must not lose hope because there are 13 depots which continue to work. It is true that more emphasis will be placed on the city but we will continue to provide infrastructure wherever it is needed.

Sir, every year at this time, most of the workers at the Ministry of Public Works go on vacation but this is the first year that they have worked day and night until Christmas. I want to give Honourable Members the assurance that money has been voted, that there is no lack of resources and that we have a programme in place for continued road work. Also, Honourable Members must understand that heavy rains during the last month have retarded our progress, yet still every weekend work was done in the St. James and St. Peter and Christ Church in order to rehabilitate the roads not only for World Cup Cricket but for Barbadians.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central spoke about the traffic management programme. We have a full programme to ease the traffic within the Bridgetown area and on the highway. This is a comprehensive programme and the public will know within a few weeks what we plan to do to facilitate the traffic.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to assure the House that work will continue throughout the Christmas season in order that Honourable Members would be facilitated.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take the opportunity to make my contribution. I do not know if the Honourable Member is in a position to respond to queries on the issue of schedule of works but I have some concern in terms of the schedule of works which has to do with the second phase of construction re the development of Kensington Oval which is due to start in May 2006 and conclude in December 2006 for a tournament of this magnitude which is due to commence in February of 2007. Sir, this seems to be cutting it pretty close to the deadline and I have some concerns about this schedule.

Sir, there are a few things that I hope would come out of the Cricket World Cup experience for Barbados. I hope this opportunity would be used to seriously explore and develop models for community tourism initiatives. I think this is the perfect context in which this should be explored and since it is the intention to mount workshops to engage the interest and stimulate activity among the formal business sector, I hope this occasion would also be used for similar workshops to sensitise the informal business sector, those at the lower end of the scale, whom we hope could benefit from the exercise as well.

It is anticipated that the West Indies Cricket Board and by extension the Barbados Cricket Association coffers would be augmented through receipt derived from Cricket World Cup and related activity. My concern is that the augmented resources will not necessarily mean the further development of Barbados' cricket and I am suggesting that this experience puts us in a proper position to better further the effort to develop our cricket.

Lastly, I think we all admit that the soul of Caribbean cricket has been lost in recent years and I hope that World Cup Cricket would be seen as an opportunity to re-soul the psyche of Barbadians around the game of cricket.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to thank Honourable Members for their contributions in this debate. I want to assure Honourable Members that it is the intention of Government to ensure that there is no Athens Night atmosphere or controversy in this World Cup. I say that in answer to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. The completion of the project in December 2006 is really the completion of all works including the screwing on of the seats, putting on of door handles. Sir, December 2006 would not see any construction activity. The Honourable Member from St. Michael South Central would certainly appreciate that in developing a chart or other project management display tool that one would list the outer limits of the project and that the items along the critical path would be identified so that a conclusion of December 2006 is not in relation to heavy work but in relation to any and all matters.

Sir, the Government does not intend that Barbados attract the kind of attention in terms of a lack of confidence as to whether this could be pulled off or not.
6.45 p.m.

Sir, let me also say that the Government does not intend to proceed along the line of World Cup mania.

There will be a steady and studied approach. There are many things to be done in Barbados and there are many that would have been done were there not a World Cup. There are, therefore, some things that will be done as part of the World Cup 2007 project. We have identified those, packaged those and we will proceed along with those.

This Government has started on a programme for the strategic repositioning of Barbados as a services economy, as a centre of excellence for service to build infrastructure consistent with the high quality of services entitled in our tourism and other services, the improving of our roads' infrastructure, rehabilitation of our schools, enhancement of our health care and a range of redevelopment, even outside of the World Cup. We intend to proceed on both tracks but we will certainly not use World Cup as an excuse to do things that should have been done or just to get the public into believing that 2007 is either the beginning of time or the end time. Therefore, I want to assure Honourable Members that the Government will proceed along those lines.

I thank Honourable Members for their contributions, suggestions and points which have been well taken and as we proceed further into the preparation for World Cup 2007 Members will have several more opportunities in which to express their view and the World Cup Barbados Inc. will certainly take the opportunity to update this Parliament from time to time on the progress which it is making.

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

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

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, before we do the clauses I want to propose two small amendments in the Objects and Reasons and the Long Title. In the Objects and Reasons I beg to move that we delete the word "of" appearing in the second line after words "with respect to". In the Long Title I beg to move that we delete the word "of" appearing in the second line after the words "with respect to".

The question that the amendment to the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

*Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive, were called and passed.
Clause 4 was called.*

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Sir, with respect to Clause 4, I want to move an amendment to Clause 4 (1) that we delete the words "in the event that any of the terms and conditions listed in Part B of the guarantee are not complied with".

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

Clause 5 was called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. R. R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the DEPUTY SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill as amended in Committee and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Hon. R. R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the ICC Cricket World Cup West Indies 2007 (Guarantee) Act, 2004.

RECOMMITTAL

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve a Guarantee by the Government of a payment in the sum of \$12 million in the currency of the United States of America. The conditions contained in the Guarantee set out in the Schedule to the ICC Cricket World Cup West Indies 2007 (Guarantee) Act, 2004.

I further beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of nineteen million, four hundred and two thousand, four hundred and sixty-four dollars from the Consolidated Fund to be placed at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 2004-2005 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates No. 6, 2004-2005 which form the Schedule of this Resolution and that the Explanatory Notes to Head 28 be amended as set out in Schedule II to this Resolution.

ORDER NO. 9 – TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PAYMENT OF \$12 MILLION IN THE CURRENCY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE CONDITIONS CONTAINED IN THE GUARANTEE SET OUT IN THE SCHEDULE OF THE ICC WORLD CUP WEST INDIES 2007 (GUARANTEE) ACT, 2004

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a continuation of a matter in which we have already had a very full debate. This is the corollary to what is set out at Clause 4 of the just passed ICC Cricket World Cup West Indies 2007 (Guarantee) Act, 2004. In the circumstances, Honourable Members are familiar with the issues at hand.

I simply wish to beg this Resolution do now pass.

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

The question that this Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
6.55 p.m.

ORDER NO. 10 – TO MOVE THAT THE HOUSE
RESOLVE ITSELF INTO COMMITTEE OF
SUPPLY TO CONSIDER THE GRANT
OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE
SERVICE OF THIS ISLAND

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply on the Bill, Mr. R. D. MARSHALL in the Chair.

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

ORDER NO. 10 – RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$19 402 464 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 2004 AND 2005 AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 6, 2004 AND 2005 WHICH FORM THE SCHEDULE TO THIS RESOLUTION AND THAT THE EXPLANATORY NOTES TO HEAD 28 BE AMENDED AS SET OUT IN SCHEDULE 2 TO THIS RESOLUTION

HEAD 28 – MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
– \$564 466

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, these requests that are constituted here, range from requests to supplement other personal emoluments, supplies and materials and other operating expenses and to amend the Explanatory Note to allow expenditure to take place where there were some mistakes.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, I have a Parliamentary Secretary in this Ministry and I propose to allow the Parliamentary Secretary to speak in a more fulsome manner towards these matters before the House. Sir, with your permission, I will now ask the Honourable Member for

St. Michael West to give the House the full details, but speak in this House only because of the Standing Orders of the House.

Hon. Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Chairman, there are various small sums and some not so small being requested, as part of this supplementary for various departments under the Ministry.

An amount of \$7 500 is needed to supplement expenditure with reference to supplies and materials under general management and coordination services at the Ministry.

There are some other amounts with respect to other personal emoluments and the related National Insurance Contributions which are being asked for, with reference to operations at the Immigration Department, in the amount of \$281 and \$40 respectively. The amount of \$65 000 is also requested for other operating expenses at the Immigration Department.

There are some amounts being requested as well for the Fire Services. They relate to utilities and supplies of materials in the first case, in the amount of \$74 403. In the latter case, a smaller amount of \$1 000 to go towards supplies and materials at the Fire Services.

There are a few amounts also being requested with reference to the Penal Services of Barbados and it goes across all three departments, the Probation Department in the amount \$2 500, for supplies and materials, the Government Industrial Schools two amounts, a large amount of \$71 000 for other operating expenses and \$18 000 for supplies and materials and a very small amount of \$2 500 being requested with reference to the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control project, supplies and materials, care and support.

These amounts are made necessary in some instances, Mr. Chairman, because of the roll over of some encumbrances to the expenditure of this third financial year, with respect to the amount of \$7 500 for supplies and materials for general management and coordination services. The roll over encumbrances accounted for \$4 859 out of the current amounts provided for in the Estimates currently laid. The monthly expenditure, if one includes the encumbrances to be serviced will average \$2 472.38. The available balance therefore of \$1 393 approximately, will be inadequate to meet the necessary expenditure towards the end of the financial year. Therefore, it is in that context that the particular vote is being requested.

The biggest issue with respect to the Immigration Department, has to do with other personal emoluments,

because of increases in rates of remuneration for Data Entry Officers, as well as to meet the expenditure occasioned by overtime and the associated allowances. Additional funds are being requested for payment of salaries to officers, who will be employed to fill the newly created posts which will take effect from January 2005. Provision under the current Estimates will also be inadequate to meet the expenditure and, therefore the amount of \$281 000 becomes a necessary request.

Of course, there will be National Insurance Contributions associated with those expenses to meet our statutory obligations on the part of the Ministry. Consequent upon the increases mentioned above, the related National Insurance Contributions of \$40 190 are therefore being requested to supplement this year's Estimates.

There are some other operating expenses to the tune of \$65 369, occasioned in this case by the increased cost of passports. This has obviously impacted upon the provision of the amounts which are currently providing finances to the Ministry under this subhead. This will be inadequate to cover the cost of meals and airline tickets for deportees as well as uniforms for Immigration Officers. A Supplementary provision is therefore being sought in the amount of \$65 369 to help defray the increased costs.

Mr. Chairman, in terms of the Fire Fighting Services and Fire Service Department, we anticipate that the bigger requests will go towards utility payments. The average monthly expenditure on the utility payments is \$24 000. The amount available of \$93 597.67 will therefore not be adequate to take us through to the end of the current financial year hence, the request for \$74 403 for the purpose of meeting utility payment obligations.

There is also a small vote of \$1 000 being requested towards supplies and materials for the Fire Service. This will help in the acquisition of 11 new computers which will enhance the department's technological capacity. Therefore, this Supplemental funding is being requested to meet the cost of these 11 computers which are very necessary at this time. The vote, thus far, with reference to this, as set out at the beginning of the financial year, has been exhausted at this point.

With reference to Corrective and Rehabilitative Services in the Probation Department, there are amounts totalling \$2 500 being requested for supplies and materials. There are \$4 236.29 in encumbrances which were rolled over at the end of the last financial year. Of course, the roll over of encumbrances would be impacting upon the use of this year's estimates of expenditure. This monthly expenditure includes encumbrances averaging \$2 057.56. Since the available balance is only \$597.05 this would also be inadequate to service the needs with respect to supplies and

materials when you take into account the roll over expenditure into this year's financial issues.
7.05 p.m.

With reference to the Government Industrial Schools the amount being requested is \$18 000. This is occasioned by the growing number of juveniles both males and females on remand at the Government Industrial Schools. As you know, Sir, juveniles on remand at the schools are incorporated fully into the school system and therefore they have to be taken care of, their needs have to be met and they are enabled to avail themselves of all the amenities provided to those who are full residents of the Government Industrial Schools.

Mr. Chairman, given that the rate of spending is projected to be approximately \$309 000, it is anticipated that \$18 000 would therefore be needed to supplement the expenditure going toward the servicing of this Head particularly with respect to meeting the needs of the juvenile population which is augmented by the presence of a growing number of remands.

The sum of \$143 760 was included in the current estimate of expenditure for security services also at Summervale. This amount has proven to be inadequate. This service would have to be funded by a supplemental vote, and the amount being requested is \$71 882. We have had some occasion to ensure that the security provided for our juveniles at Dodds and Summervale is such that we can offset some of the danger which is thought to be existing in and around the facility and coming from sources external to the facility. Therefore, there is a standing arrangement for security services to be provided there and this amount of \$71 882 is needed to supplement the original vote of \$143 760.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to the care and support under the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Project, a very small amount of \$2 500 is being requested. The sum of \$3 000 had been provided, but this amount is inadequate to purchase stationery and supplies to the end of this financial year, and a supplementary provision is therefore being sought to meet this small expenditure item.

These are the amounts that we are requesting, Mr. Chairman, with respect to the supplemental expenditure which is necessary to carry on the programmes of these various departments, the Fire Service, Immigration Department, the Probation Department as well as the penal programme at Dodds.

Mr. Chairman, in that respect I therefore beg to move that Head 28 stand part.

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

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO HEAD 28

Hon. Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Chairman, there are some errors and omissions in the Explanatory Note in the Estimates and Expenditure for the current financial year which were not corrected before the official document was printed and circulated.

Under item 625 – Plant and Equipment with reference to the General Management and Coordination Services at the Ministry, we would want to move that an amendment be made to the Explanatory Note and that the Explanatory Note should now be amended to read as circulated.

There is also an amendment under Item 211– Maintenance of Property for the Central Emergency Relief Organisation at subprogram 201. I want to ask that this amendment be read and noted as circulated. Under Item 625 – Plant, Equipment and Furniture with reference to the Fire Service Department, that note should be amended as circulated. Under Item 626 – Professional Services in the Fire Service, that amendment should be read and noted as circulated. Under program 243, Item 624 – Purchase of Vehicles, the amendment should be the purchase of vehicles rather than purchase of a vehicle.

In respect of the Prisons Department Programme subprogram 252, Item 623 – Structures, that note should also be amended as indicated in the document circulated.

I therefore beg to move that the Explanatory Notes to Head 28 be amended as set out in Schedule II to the Resolution.

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

HEAD 46 – MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND
PUBLIC UTILITIES – \$18 450 000

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, the funds of \$18 450 000 which is being requested under this Head are to assist the Transport Board in defraying its operating cost to the end of the financial year.

Mr. Chairman, the Government of Barbados provided the Transport Board with a subvention earlier on of just under \$5 million. My colleagues would recall that towards the end of the last financial year the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities made a request for the sum of \$12.5 million which was granted in this Honourable Chamber to defray the operating cost of the Transport Board to the end of the last financial year.

Mr. Chairman, the Government's commitment to the Transport Board by way of provision of support over the last

ten years cannot be doubted. Indeed, it cannot be argued that the Government has not been in full support of the Transport Board.

Mr. Chairman, over the last ten years or so the level of subsidisation of the Government to the Transport Board had varied. In the financial year 1994-95 it was \$6.4 million; in 1995-96, \$1 million; in 1996-97 \$1 million; in 1997-98, \$26.6 million and through to 2003-04 \$4.93 million and indeed this year just about \$5 million. In total, Mr. Chairman, the level of subsidisation would be in the region of about \$60 million.

The Government has also been carrying the shareholder responsibility by servicing the loans which the Transport Board would have acquired for the purchase of units both in 1997 and 2000. Mr. Chairman, the Government has also carried back other loans for the Transport Board to carry its operations.

7.15 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, it would not come as a surprise to any one that given the environment within which the Transport Board has been operating and the level of competition which it has been up against, since the decisions of the early 1990s, that the Board has been under some level of financial strain and stress over the years.

Mr. Chairman, when one looks at previous decisions which were taken, one would get an idea of the genesis of the problems of the Transport Board. Sir, in 1991/1992, the previous administration took a decision – some would say misguided – to take a number of buses off the short routes, which were considered and are still considered to be the more lucrative routes. Sir, in doing so, it has opened the way for a large number of operators to ply those routes.

Mr. Chairman, that was clearly demonstrated in a study conducted on public transportation during the early 1990s. That study was reviewed by the Transport Advisory Committee which was established by this administration in January, 1995. When that Committee submitted its report, it noted, among other things, that the net revenue in the system at the time was \$8.2 million, with route taxis making an overall profit of \$3.6 million and minibuses making a profit of \$3.2 million, while the Transport Board was making losses of \$1.2 million.

Sir, the report of the Committee advanced a number of reasons why that would have been the case. The Committee indicated that the route taxis were operating exclusively on short-haul routes, where the economic fare was less than \$1.00. Whereas the Transport Board operated almost exclusively on the long-haul routes, where the economic fare was greater than the fixed rate of \$1.50.

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members will remember that the last occasion there was a fare adjustment at the Transport Board was in 1991. Sir, in 1995 when the report was submitted, there was the recognition that the Board was operating exclusively on the long-haul routes and that the cost was estimated to be \$2.85 a trip coming from St. Lucy to Bridgetown, which was well in excess of the fixed rate paid for such a trip of \$1.50, while the route taxis in the main were operating on the shorter routes where the economic fare was less than \$1.00.

Mr. Chairman, if we were to try to trace the difficulties, it could be traced back to the decision of the 1991/1992 periods when a decision was taken by the Democratic Labour Party's administration to pull the Transport Board buses in the main, off the shorter routes. Mr. Chairman, as a matter of fact, I have been reliably informed that things were so bad at that time that there were times when the Transport Board's Officials were literally mandated to run a midnight service to Eden Lodge, with one passenger.

Mr. Chairman, I should also say that in those days when the operating deficit was not as high as it is today – because it is fairly sizable – and the amount requested would indicate that it is a fairly sizable operating deficit. Sir, in the early 1990s and culminating in early 1994 before the General Election, the Democratic Labour Party's administration at the time had given detailed consideration to an adjustment of the fares. Sir, at a Cabinet Meeting on March 3, 1994, following a meeting on February 18, 1994, it was agreed that a Sub-Committee of Cabinet should be established to examine various proposals on the introduction of zoning fares and to recommend the appropriate zoning fare structure. Sir, after various models were considered, the Democratic Labour Party came up with a zoning structure which they thought was appropriate. It was agreed that for persons travelling on the long-haul routes, St. Philip and St. Lucy, that there would have been an upward revision in the fares, which meant that it would have moved from \$1.50 to \$1.75 for those persons.

Mr. Chairman, recognising the strategic importance of the Transport Board and the type of service it has been providing, notwithstanding the escalation in the cost of providing the service, the Government has held fares fixed up until now. Sir, if I were to give some indication as to how the cost would have moved over the last 10 years, in 1994/1995 the expenses of the Transport Board would have been in the order of \$32 million and at 2003/2004, the expenses reached just under \$53 million, giving a figure of losses before loans interest and depreciation of about \$21 million.

Sir, the operating deficit which is expected for this financial year is upwards to \$22 million. That could easily be determined when one notes that we have gotten

\$5 million subvention at the beginning of the financial year and are coming back to Parliament for \$18.45 million, to carry the operation until the end of the financial year.
7.25 p.m.

This is not to say that the Transport Board has not been trying to introduce cost-cutting measures, aiming to improve its operational efficiencies and introduce revenue enhancement measures. The reality of the situation is that the element of cost that the Transport Board has had to deal with over the years contain some costs that are fixed like the repair and maintenance programme and the wages component of just under 700 persons which accounts for a sizable portion.

Mr. Chairman, while we recognise that the Transport Board will continue to meet a fairly sizable operational deficit, you would have heard the Honourable Member for St. Peter saying recently that the Government has taken a decision that it would not try to deal with any portion of the operational deficit through adjustments in bus fares and that it would seek other ways of dealing with it.

Sir, the commitment of the Government to the Transport Board cannot be disputed. As I have said earlier, the level of subsidies have been very handsome and we have also taken on the shareholder responsibility of servicing the loans of the Transport Board. This must be compared with what was contemplated in the period of 1994.

Mr. Chairman, we have to face reality so we said that in the case of the water rates that there would be an adjustment which was justified. We said that at this time we would find other ways of continuing to deal with the operational deficit of the Transport Board. Mr. Chairman, I must also inform you that seeking to access this \$18.4 million from the Consolidated Fund would not push the anticipated deficit at the end of the financial year beyond the 2.6 per cent of the GDP that was projected.

Sir, the deficit has to be made up from various sources. If we are going to deal with it by an adjustment in bus fares then it would come through revenue enhancement measures, cost containment measures, expenditure reducing policies, through higher level of subventions to the Transport Board or through a return to this Honourable Chamber for funds to support the operation via a supplementary.

Mr. Chairman, as we look ahead, the Transport Board would be looking at various measures in order to enhance its revenue. It will be looking at improved service delivery because the board currently operates about 98 routes and it proposes to increase the frequency of these routes once the board can avail itself of the necessary financial resources to put some of the buses which are not working back into operation.

Mr. Chairman, I want to give the sheer facts to this Chamber. The sheer fact is that the Transport Board has 240 buses on its books. The board engaged in two procurements in 1997 and 2000 and then it procured an additional five which were earmarked for the disabled community which took the size of the fleet up to 240 buses so the availability of buses on the road on any one day should be 185 but the financial state of affairs presently at the Transport Board does not allow this to happen.

This is why we have to give our support to the measure before this House because we all recognise the importance for national development and for us to have a properly functioning Transport Board. This is why we need to access the resources in order to get bus availability higher to the appropriate size, given the fleet size of 240 on the books.

Mr. Chairman, there are 40 seriously defected buses and 15 seriously cannibalised buses. Sir, seriously defected means that these buses suffer from transmission, engine and electrical problems and there are another 50 buses with running defects which are the normal things that would require a bus to come off the street for short periods, like tyres, lighting, brakes, wipers, leaking roofs, etc.

Mr. Chairman, we need finances in order to move the bus availability from hovering around 130 or so up an amount in excess of 160 and if this does not happen, all Barbadians are affected.

Sir, in recent times when we had heavy rains all the routes in St. Philip, Bayfield, Sam Lords Castle, St. Patricks, those which I have a particular interest in, were suffering and I take no comfort in commuters not being able to get a bus on time and having to endure a wait for two hours. I am saying that going forward would need the Transport Board to have access to buses that have already been purchased but also as part of its procurement plan, which was determined about a year-and-a-half-ago of which the first 30 of the additional 100 buses and which the Transport Board said it should procure at the time, that we need to move with some dispatch in order to purchase the other 70 buses.
7.35 p.m.

Sir, the optimum fleet size at the Transport Board is somewhere in the neighbourhood of 305. Approximately 20 or 25 per cent of these buses have been off the road for a number of different reasons at anyone time.

Sir, we are some distant away from the desired point and this \$80.45 million would allow us to get more of what is available back on the road, and that is step number one. Step number two would allow us to acquire an additional 70 buses to prove an improved delivery of service.

The Transport Board currently operates 98 routes and it proposes to increase the frequency to these routes. There are some routes that are crying out for units with increased frequency. For example, the Silver Sands, Howells and Ivy, Workmans, Edey Village, Lowlands, Wanstead and there are some long-haul routes traveling to the north and east of the country. I have just stated the predicament that commuters in St. Philip and elsewhere are suffering.

Sir, I am not going to paint any rosy picture of the Transport Board because there is none. That is why I need the support of this Honourable House so as to get more buses, which have already been purchased, back into active service.

We also have to look at recapturing some of the short routes. I said earlier that the decision taken by the Democratic Labour Party in the early 1990s to pull buses off the short routes was a little misguided but we have passed that stage. We need to recapture some of the short routes. We are not talking about recapturing by displacing people off these routes. We are talking about recapturing by providing some fierce competition and quality service but we need the financial resources in order to procure the buses, put them in good working order and we need additional resources to purchase more buses in order to provide the quality service and get back onto the shorter routes.

Some of the shorter routes which come to mind are areas like Rendezvous Gardens, Bush Hall, Fordes Road and The Pine. We must also respond to the demographic changes that are taking place in Barbados in areas like Shop Hill and Church Village via Ellerton and Brighton Housing Areas. There are some other areas where the Transport Board should go into from a financial viewpoint and these areas are Groves Housing Development and Mount Wilton via Clifton Hill.

I must say that when a void is created, some person or something must fill it. There are some routes which are being pirated at the moment. I must say that, to the satisfaction of some of the commuters, the Transport Board is not in a position to provide the type of reliable service occasioned by the lack of financial resources.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: The Transport Board will also be looking to increase its revenue from increased advertising sales.

Once again, and I do not want it to be treated as a small point. Limited bus availability does not provide the type of conducive environment for persons to want to put their advertising business with the Transport Board and that is a very significant point.

As a matter fact the last budget that was provided by the Transport Board to my Ministry for its review had projected revenue from this area of approximately \$1 million and because of the out-turn position, as it relates to the bus availability and the Board having engaged potential businesses, they did so via some very intense negotiation, the Board was unable to write that business because of the unavailability of the requisite number of buses. Sir, it is only when we are able to gain access to the requisite financial resources in order to improve bus availability and be consistent with how we do it. If we improve it and we are not consistent we might get the marketing business but may lose it the next day.

Sir, the charter service is important to the Transport Board. Some may argue that they should not be involved in this juggling act in having to release valuable buses so as to provide this charter service. I can assure you that this is a very valuable source of revenue for the Transport Board.

Once again, we are saying that we need to gain access to these financial resources in order to put into active service more buses so that we will have a higher number of buses which will allow the Board to improve service delivery, recapture some of the short routes, increase its advertising sales and charter services. Mr. Chairman, I will stop here and I could always return later.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, I want to say from the outset that it is wrong for the Transport Board to step out of its remit. When the Transport Board was established, it was not established to transport tourists from one destination to another unless it fell within that route. The Transport Board is depriving the taxpayers of this country, who pay high fees to provide the service of transporting tourists from one destination to another.

It is interesting that this Honourable Minister makes no bones about seeing the Transport Board competing with the ZRs and minibuses because the Honourable Member claims that is their right and they should do it. The Honourable Member used the argument that the Transport Board is losing money and they should be allowed to return to the short-haul routes. Sir, I am saying that cannot be an argument on behalf of the Government because the Barbados National Bank was making money and they sold it because they did not want to compete with the other banks. So, this cannot be an argument here.

Sir, I want the Honourable Minister to understand that his remit is not to depress and deprive the small man in Barbados.

It is interesting listening to the argument of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South. It is clear, Sir, that he has now become the biggest capitalist in this Parliament. He has now made the Prime Minister of Barbados, the biggest socialist in the Parliament. The Prime Minister is arguing for subsidy, and the Minister is arguing for an increase in bus fares. The only time I hear this argument is when the capitalist is putting down this argument that bus fares should increase and the Transport Board should be profitable.

7.45 p.m.

Sir, everybody knows that the Transport Board was set up to subsidise the cost of transport for the masses of people in Barbados.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. At no time did this Minister responsible for the Transport Board say that the Transport Board will be restored or would achieve profitability. It is always the case that the Government will have to provide some level of subsidisation for the Transport Board. I stood here earlier and said that the operating deficit of the Transport Board for this year, is going to be upward of \$22 million.

Mr. Chairman, for the Transport Board to become profitable, raise \$22 million in operating deficit, and meet the debt service payments that are being met by the Government, as its shareholder responsibility, would require us to go to a level that nobody can pay. Therefore, the Honourable Member is trying to mislead the House when he said that this Minister said that the Transport Board would be profitable.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, do you know what is even worse, ten years after, this Honourable Member is now blaming the Democratic Labour Party for the Mercedes that were imported to this country. They knew that the buses had problems, because when they first came to the country, I said they were not new to Barbados because of the problems that they were encountering.

Sir, on top of that, they came back and bought another set...

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. This Honourable Member has not blamed the Democratic Labour Party for Mercedes that were purchased in the Barbados Labour Party's time. At no time did I mention anything about the Democratic Labour Party and the purchase of buses. You need to strike that because I never said it.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The reference to 1994 would have given the impression, Sir, that the deficit we are now seeking to deal with, is one that was accumulated, when

in actual fact this is a current deficit that we are speaking about and there should have been no mention of the Democratic Labour Party. This is why I felt he was blaming the Democratic Labour Party for the buses that created the deficit.

I want a commitment from this Minister, Sir, that we will not again purchase buses that are new to Barbados but not new to the place they came from, and the next time they are purchasing buses, they purchase them to suit the conditions in Barbados.

Imagine, Sir, I have known minibuses in Barbados that were on the road for more than ten years and they are still on the road, without problems. For some reason, Sir, the Transport Board seems to purchase bigger buses which should operate longer but yet, they cannot survive two years on the road. The Minister wants to blame the commuters for the deficit when it was not the commuters who bought the buses.

The Minister went on air and put a case for the management when it was the Minister who would have purchased the buses, committed the error and then asked the commuters to pay increased bus fares. There was evidence, not only in Barbados but in Trinidad and Tobago because the Transport Board wrote their counterparts in Trinidad and Tobago about the Mercedes buses, and the same complaints they sent to Trinidad and Tobago came back in the positive light. Therefore, it was known within the Caribbean that the Mercedes were giving trouble.

I hope that the 17 buses that are required are not Mercedes. Sir, all of a sudden, we are supposed to be getting better outputs, but the end result is worse. I am saying that I could understand why the Prime Minister reversed his Minister, and why he kept the increase in water rates, even though the efficiency of the Barbados Water Authority needs to be addressed. Sir, one thing I would admit is that the Barbados Water Authority ...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, we were at the Barbados Transport Board, and the Barbados Water Authority came in while we were there, because the buses were bursting up the pipes.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I can understand why the difference has been made, Sir, and that is because the over time elsewhere has been cut off. The efficiency, I am told has increased at another department, but at the Transport Board, according to the calculations of the Minister, you can only account in any one bad day for 75 buses being used.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I do not think that he is experiencing that level of difficulty with doing the arithmetic. I would put it down to his brain being a little tired, he having been here for such a long time.

Sir, I never said that on any one day, the bus availability is 75. I said that the bus availability in recent times has been hovering just under 130.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have some figures here written. The Honourable Member said that the fleet is 240 and then you could expect 60 to be off the road, 40 were defective, leaving 140. He gave an excuse for 15 and then he gave an excuse for another 50 that might have general complaints which have to be taken up. My end figure is 75.

Sir, I wonder whether or not the Honourable Member meant to give a higher figure, but I have the figures here. You may have to call for the records of Parliament to find out which one is correct.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. The Honourable Member should realise that the categories which I spoke about, the 40 seriously defective buses, the 15 seriously cannibalised buses, and another 50 or 55 with running defects, are all buses which will be off the road. Sir, when you add those buses 40, 15, and 55, you get 110 buses and when you subtract the 110 from 240, you get 130.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: No. What I said is that the 20 to 25 per cent would be somewhere captured in the 40, 15 and 55, as those buses off the road.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: What you are saying, Sir, if the Honourable Member had owned a minibus, he would only be able to travel with half the minibus at any one point in time. It is a good thing, Sir, because 50 per cent of the fleet at the Transport Board is off the road at any one point in time. This is a serious problem and it has to be addressed. What worries me, Sir, is when we then seek to recognise that the problem has nothing to do with the commuters and then we seek to transfer the problem from the Transport Board to the commuters under the disguise that the commuters are causing the Transport Board not to make any money and we seek then to increase bus fares.
7.55 p.m.

Sir, based on the evidence produced here today, I can now support this subsidy because it is clear to me that the Government has appreciated the inefficiencies of the Transport Board and the Ministers, who went previously and

have recognised that the only option was to come to the Parliament of Barbados to get a subsidy and not to punish the commuters for something they are not guilty of.

Sir, I am surprised that the Honourable Member who I always thought was a liberal would make a justifiable case in the interest of the Transport Board and not in the interest of his constituents who had nothing to do with the bad roads, the bad buses or the bad purchasing at the Transport Board, through the Minister.

Sir, I am saying that the Minister should apologise to the commuters of Barbados. The main fact that the Honourable Member was the same Honourable Member to bring this subsidy to Parliament is an admission that the Minister is aware now that he was wrong in bringing the suggestion about the increased bus fares and is now admitting that the best thing is in subsidy. I want to congratulate him for stepping down from his previous position and appreciating that the Transport Board is a social service and it should be subsidised. However, we need to increase the efficiency in the management at the Transport to make sure that these things...

Sir, I have said in a Press Release that it does not make sense to have a bus with a good body and the only problem is the engine and we cannot recognise that the cheapest thing in the bus is the engine and that all we need to do is to get rid of the engine and buy another engine and put it in the bus and get it back on the road. If they do not want to do that, the other option is to sell the bus body to the people who now run the minibuses and let them buy the engine and put it in and then we could easily solve the transport problems in terms of moving people in the early morning because once you do that and remove the ZRs and make them minibuses we would double the number of people we are moving at any one point in time. Also if we do that, we would not have to worry about this subsidy.

Sir, on top of that we also need to bring the Transport Authority in place and give the same minibuses that were ZRs and the bigger buses a commitment and a contract that they must run their buses especially in the middle of the day when they will not have the capacity to move and give them a fee for running those routes at the particular point in time. Sir, I would swear that if that was to happen, there would be no need for this subsidy. It is \$23 million and it would grow.

Sir, one of the reasons we used to have a proper transport system in this country is because previously every vehicle had to go to the Pine to be inspected and we knew that when a bus left the Pine it was in good condition to go back on the road. I want the Minister to tell me if this is still occurring. Sir, we are having a situation now where the buses are not going to the Pine anymore to be inspected and

they are being passed as road worthy but before they get through the gates of the Transport Board, they break down again.

Sir, I am saying that we need to send them to the Pine for inspection once more. We also need to have more control over the fuel and the spare parts. What they need to show me is the cost of the spare parts and the fuel over the years so that we could make a solid judgement of what is actually happening at the Transport Board.

Sir, we are having less buses on the road, yet still the cost of the fuel is increasing in the number of gallons used. We have to understand that we cannot blame or punish the commuters for this by seeking an increase in bus fares. What we need is to have some linkages and once we have some linkages, we need to correct those linkages and not blame the commuters.

Sir, I know that the Minister has the figures and I know that it would have been a bit hard for him to come out and admit to the public what the real problems are, but I have solved the problem for him, so he now has a better wicket to bat on and he can better present a case to this Parliament.

Sir, what is also dangerous is that we have a ratio of seven persons to one bus working at the Transport Board. If you thought that was bad, you need to find out how many were working in 1994 when they had more buses on the road, you need to find out how much happened when the Minister changed, and then you need to find out how much happened when the other Minister changed because as the Ministers change the number of people employed by the Transport Board increases. We need to find out if we can blame the commuters for those things.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member you have two minutes more.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Thank you very much. That is all that is required, Sir.

Sir, all I am going to do is to beg for a couple of the jobs that are increasing at the Transport Board because that seems to be one of the problems at the Transport Board. We recognise that once we have social services that we have to pay for them. If the Minister wants the complement of people working at the Transport Board, you cannot ask the commuters alone to pay for it, the total Government would have to pay for it. If we want to run it as if we can make a profit out of it, then we have to do some restructuring which we do not want to do. If we do not want to restructure and we recognise that the Transport Board is an employment agency then the Consolidated Fund would have to pay for the number of people employed, it cannot be the commuters. You have to share that cost among the total population and

not among the number of people travelling within the transport system. Socialisation, or capitalism, one has to decide which one, one wants to be.

My recommendation to you, Sir, seeing that you are from a rural constituency is that your interest would be better served being a socialist and not a capitalist.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Chairman, I would be very short. The supplementary requirement is \$18.45 million of \$23.45 million for the fiscal year.

Sir, in listening to the Minister I thought he conveyed the impression that the Board could begin to purchase 70 additional buses over some specified time period, but when last I checked the 2003 Annual Report, the cost of a bus to the Transport Board is about \$240 000 each. I have upgraded it to \$250 000 each. This would mean that if you want to purchase 70 buses at that price, they would cost approximately \$17.5 million. When that is added to the \$23.45 million in subsidies, the Transport Board in the short term appears to be looking for as much as \$40 million to get out of its present predicament rather than the \$23 million in supplementaries or in subsidies.

Mr. Chairman, I see that the Shadow Minister of Transport has more than taken care of the present Minister, so I would just wish to find out where this additional \$17.5 million would come from to purchase the required 70 buses to make the Transport Board more efficient and more financially viable.

Asides.

Hon. Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a very brief contribution to this debate. I do not know how much comfort it would offer the Honourable Member for St. Philip South but I simply want to support the view, which I have heard expressed elsewhere, that in addressing our transport problems Government must always feel an obligation to provide public transport services for those who, in spite of seeming affluent in Barbados with respect to vehicle ownership, are unable to provide for themselves.
8.05 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I think that in the context in which we operate, perhaps one is always going to find that there is need to engage in a level of subsidy which some might find difficult to bear.

Mr. Chairman, I want to support the view that I have heard elsewhere that those involved in providing public service transport from private sector sources, that is, the

Public Service Vehicles (PSVs), should be allowed the opportunity to own bigger vehicles. I believe that must be part of the response, and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has spoken to that issue, which I do support. We need to allow for greater carry capacity on the part of the PSVs, so that they might find the long-haul routes more attractive.

Mr. Chairman, as a layman in these matters, the second thing I want to suggest is that I believe there must be less rigidity in the licensing and route allocation systems for PSVs. It seems to me that if part of the problem at the Transport Board in providing a service is due to the fact that a substantial portion of the fleet is out of service or off the road at any given time, then that speaks to a demand which is not being met, at a time I believe where there are those who are involved in giving service in this sector who, if allowed, would be prepared to help to provide for that demand.

Mr. Chairman, I am suggesting that, for instance, if on a given day the Transport Board cannot service the Bathsheba or Sam Lords Castle routes, which are long-haul routes, that there be licensing arrangements and conditions which would see private sector entities being allowed to take over those routes for that given day or period. Sir, as a lay person that seems to be a very reasonable position which I have not heard espoused.

The licensing system or the route allocation system is so rigid now that if someone has a permit to operate on the Howells and Ivy route, they can only do that. Why can there not be a situation where because there is a slack by the Transport Board on the Bathsheba route, a man operating a vehicle be allowed to come onto that route by an arrangement. I believe this would help us, in addition to the other initiatives, to respond to the demand which the Transport Board, from time to time, is unable to meet.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I think we have to place the Transport Board in a given perspective. I am sure that the competent staff at the Transport Board would have done a number of studies. I have not seen them for I cannot see everything but I believe these studies would have looked at the economic value of providing this very most important social service. Sir, there must be some economic value relative to that and I believe that something can be worked out. There are economists in our midst or at the Transport Board, I believe, who can work that out.

Mr. Chairman, for argument's sake, let us say that the movement of workers across Barbados would generate \$500 million. If we can work out, in an economic way, that

value, then a sensible subsidy to the Transport Board would make sense to us and not necessarily an increase in bus fares. Nevertheless, there must be room for an agency such as this to add to that particular subsidy or to become engaged in some form of cost recovery, which is in the sense of \$1.50 per person or whatever is the current rate. Therefore, we are not talking about a capitalist or a socialist orientation. I do not know if that makes a lot of sense within our current reality. It is operating within a reasonably good business sense to make sure that the Transport Board or the transportation sector in Barbados works well, efficiently and effectively.

Mr. Chairman, presently we have a mass of frustrated commuters who use both Transport Board buses and the PSVs. On the one side, the Transport Board is being accused of not getting the buses to the people on time, and the fact that there are 130 buses being used for all kinds of things such as moving persons from the airport to the seaport, transporting school children, moving workers, *et cetera*, as the Honourable Member has recognised, that number would not be enough to satisfy that demand.

Sir, on the other side, there are the PSVs providing public service, where there is a high level of frustration by commuters as well, which has been brought about by something else, maybe it might be the loud music or the manner in which these vehicles are driven.

We believe that the Government owes the country, from a position of safety and security of the movement of people and from the point of view of enhancing the economic product, to ensure that persons get to work and get involved in the commercial sector relatively safely.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Transport is a trained and competent economist and, therefore, would have done the work which would have said that we would have needed an increase in bus fares. Therefore, I know that it was not easy for him, especially during the last several weeks, as an Honourable Member of pride in his economic knowledge, to be told that he was perpetuating a rumour. That is an extremely difficult apple to swallow but as a big man, the Honourable Minister took it because he has recognised that he does not stand alone in any given activity. Therefore, he took it and has come to this Honourable House, even though shaking a bit in his boots from the onslaught from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that transportation is not a political yard fowl or political football. Transportation services in any country are extremely important and there is need to have those figures showing the economic value of the very important social services. Sir, if we say that the Transport Board is to generate that amount of money, then we need to put more into it so that it can generate such funds.

Therefore, as a Parliament, we must pass and support the various measures brought to this very important service.

Mr. Chairman, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has said, we want effective, sensible and professional management at the Transport Board, and as I said, I believe that there is that management. I believe I know a number of persons there of long-standing and, therefore I consider them to be sensible and professional.

Mr. Chairman, there is the need for drivers to handle those buses with care and with caution.
8.15 p.m.

I know our roads are not the best and that is why we must work hand in glove with the Minister of Transport to ensure that we have better roads so that damage to buses will be less and the high bill paid out for maintenance would be minimised. Sir, persons who work for \$150 to \$180 per week who use the buses of the Transport Board were going to be asked to pay increased bus fare but the notion of the increase was recalled. The Honourable Minister should claim the recall as his own and not let it be seen as the recall of the Prime Minister. I gather from the speech of the Honourable Minister that he was painfully trying to distance himself from the Honourable Prime Minister who is his leader but, Sir, sometimes we have to follow our leader.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make a brief intervention in support of the supplementary expenditure. I believe this is an important aspect of public expenditure against the background of the need for us always to ensure that there is an adequate and effective transportation system in this country. The wheels of commerce, education, sports, social and cultural activity turn on the ability of our people to move freely and efficiently across this country.

Sir, there has been a lot of static analysis made particularly by Honourable Members on the Other Side who sought to compare what happened in 1994 to what is happening today, especially the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, without realising that several things have changed. The reality is that the demand on public transportation today is even greater than ten years ago.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. It is clear that if we have the increased number of vehicles on the road, privately owned, that the demand on the public service vehicles cannot be of the same magnitude as previously. The Honourable Member needs to check his figures and rephrase what he has said.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member seems to have been couped up in Moon Town for

too long and needs to come out for a little airing sometimes. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy nor the Democratic Labour Party in general do not realise that while there were only 105 600 employed in 1994, there are now 134 600 persons employed.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. He means to say that he is calculating the number of tourists now using the buses of the Transport Board in his figures and putting a particular slant to it not recognising that tourists and the public of Barbados should not be added together.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member has taken to the bad habits of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition in terms of casting aspersions on the accuracy of the reports of the Central Bank of Barbados. Sir, on page 100 of the Economic and Financial Statistics of November 2004 it states that in 1994, the number of employed persons was 105 600 and that in the second quarter of 2004 those employees were 134 600. In addition to the vast increase in the number of persons employed, if you consider the tremendous number of housing solutions provided both in the public and private sector, you will have additional issues. In fact, Sir, if you take a casual drive around the island on a Sunday afternoon, you would come across houses in places where there were none before. Sir, I am making the point that this has put additional strain on the demand for public transportation not just in terms of the overall numbers but in terms of the geography.

Sir, there are places where the Transport Board did not need to send a bus previously which now require a bus service so we have an explosion in the number of persons demanding to be moved around the island as well as the geographic configuration. What is required now is not only support for measures such as this and the discharge of the shareholding obligations by the Government by increasing the number of buses but there needs to be an aggressive set of actions taken as far as the changing of the routes is concerned. Sir, many of the routes are still based on the same geography in terms of where people live and travel.

Sir, except for the innovation of the Bridgetown Bypass bus, the Oistins to Speightstown bus, the Silver Sands to St. Judes and so on, there really has not been a lot of changes. Sir, in my estimation there needs to be a radical change in the way buses are deployed. This will help to make sure that buses are more effectively utilised. Sir, no matter how many buses we provide they need to be moved in accordance with where people live and where people have to go.

Sir, we need to recognise that in Barbados we build our houses wherever we live and we go to work wherever we

like. This is one of the advantages of having a flat topography without mountains or rivers to cross but it wreak havoc in terms of transportation. There are many parts of the world, including the Caribbean, that people have to physically move their houses when they change jobs because there is no means of criss-crossing the country. This is why people tend to be concentrated in town and public transportation is a matter of moving around the city or the wider municipal area because no transportation is provided between town other than perhaps a train line.

Sir, check where there is housing, at London Bourne in the City, Country Road, Groves, Coverley and Fairy Valley. Also take the case of some persons, well known to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, who have moved from Fairy Valley.... and have gone to the section of Coverley, East of Leadvale, an entirely different bus route, whereas a bus to St. Patrick's would have been satisfactory 10 years because nobody lived too far off the main road. In addition to Lowlands and Leadvale, we have additional members of households living in Coverley. Therefore, the Transport Board recognises the demand for a new route because there are workers and students living in those areas.

8.25 p.m.

Sir, let us not forget that there is approximately 60,000 students in Barbados at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Sir, between 22,000 and 25,000 students at the primary and secondary levels and approximately 13,000 at the tertiary level. Sir, even if their parents have cars, they are not always available.

Sir, I left this Parliament today during lunch break to give my daughter a ride home. She has 5 exams in 3 days and she was up from 2 o'clock this morning studying. Sir, for her to better manage her time, I decided to give her a ride home so that she could get some sleep in the afternoon and would be able to study during the night. I cannot promise you that she could have depended on the availability of a bus service to make that short trip home.

Sir, the reality is, we have an increase in the dependancy for transportation. I look forward to the day when we can make sufficient public investment in the Transport Board in order to ensure that we are able to have a dedicated school bus service. A dedicated school bus service does not necessarily follow the conventional route because all of our information in our schools is available in digital form so that routes can be planned, which are able to consider the locations, the addresses of each member of the student body. Therefore, we are able to bring persons in reasonable proximity to their homes. This will not be a door to door service but there will be appropriate pickup points.

I will be happy to take my child to a convenient and safe pickup point to meet the appropriate school bus. We need to look at this matter of public transport as a public good. I am not saying that I do not subscribe to the school of thought, which is prevalent in the international financial institutions, that the solution to this would be to privatise the transport service.

I strongly support the involvement of private investors in providing public transportation but you and I know that there are times of the day and week when it will not be profitable for private operators to function and where they will obviously base their routes, not necessarily on convenience but the sole determinant of profit.

I believe that a mixture of a public and private system but where the public sector operator operates efficiently and with creativity is really the solution to the problem.

Sir, I am putting it to this Honourable House that we need to support this investment and further investment in the Transport Board to make sure that we have an adequate fleet of buses on the ground. We also need to mandate that there will be a radical reform of the routes to take account of the realities.

For example, the Transport Board in its planning needs to recognise that places which people consider to be new developments still have a need for public transportation. There are cases where young couples have sold their cars in order to make the down payment to invest in a good investment.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Sir, dogs do not mark their territory by urinating on the corners of the house.

The reality is, there are couples who will sell their cars to raise money to make the down payment on their homes. Sir, for a while, until their incomes improve, they use the public transport. They also have children in university and school who have a different time schedule to their parents and who would need transportation. Even in some of the upmarket neighbourhoods there are persons who are employed in those areas. There are helpers in homes, gardeners and baby sitters who need public transportation as well.

Therefore, I make the strong call for a bus service to places like Lowlands and Chancery Lane where there is no bus service that goes into the deeper recesses. Sir, if you are a student or an elderly person who no longer drives, you have to disembark at Roy Smith Corner. If you catch a ZR van you might reach as far as the road near Buffy's shop but

you have to walk all the way up to the Kyack Club or the old Chancery Lane North and sometimes you might be carrying groceries.

I believe that because the Transport Board planners might see wall houses in the areas, they assume that these folks do not need any buses in those areas. We really need a better deployment of our resources.

Sir, I favour the system in which a number of hubs are identified around the island. There was a time when a number of services used to come to Oistins and you were able to make a transfer from Oistins to a bus going to Bridgetown. I do not see any reason why on the Warrens/Bridgetown, Oistins/Bridgetown, Holetown/Bridgetown and the Glebe/Bridgetown routes there could not be a local bus and an express bus where the bulk of the people who are going directly to Bridgetown there would be no stops beyond that point. This happens with the subways in the United States of America. Then there will be a local bus that will make all the stops along the way.

Sir, we would be able to use smaller units in the areas surrounding Oistins, Glebe, Warrens, Holetown or Speightstown. The smaller units will be able to go into more communities and we would use a collector system to transfer at a point at no additional cost. It means that you are able to deploy your large and small buses adequately.

Sir, it pains me to see at times people traveling to St. George in a small bus because that is the only bus that is available and some of the passengers are left behind because the bus is too small. Perhaps, it seems more like in the last days when some will be taken up and others would be left staring up into the air wondering where they have gone.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: I make the point that we must continue as a country to support the provision of public transportation because at the end of the day it is an important input and there are the persons, usually at the lower end of the economic spectrum, our students and our senior citizens, who are no longer driving who depend on this service. Also, in terms of our commitment to our young people to get them to school in the best possible condition for learning and to ensure their safety on the roads, we need to, once we have taken care of the wider public, be able to supply a dedicated school service.

I therefore support this additional expenditure for the Transport Board.

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Mr. R. L. SEALY: I want to make a single point in relation to the address that we heard earlier by the Honourable Member for St. Philip South.
8.35 p.m.

I believe that my colleagues from Christ Church East Central and St. Lucy dealt with the issue from the point of view of the commuters. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East spoke of the need to be creative. I would just want to say that I see nothing further from creativity, than the suggestion that the Transport Board should recapture the market share from the private sector vehicles on the shorter, more profitable routes.

In fact, the Minister described it as a mistake on the part of the Democratic Labour Party administration. I see it being far from a mistake. It was an excellent piece of social engineering. We saw the creation of the ZRs, where young black Barbadians had chances to be entrepreneurs for the first time.

Mr. Chairman, the sector has its difficulties. Clearly, there is a need for regulation. It needs to be better ordered but I think that for the State, through the Transport Board, to be going back to recapture the market share to choke out these entrepreneurs is backward and regressive in its thinking, particularly in this day and age, Mr. Chairman, when there are precious few activities where we can see ordinary Barbadians having a chance to own a real stake in the economy. This area of transportation has proven to be an area of serious mobility for several members of the Barbadian community.

I understand there is a serious problem with an operating deficit at the Transport Board but, I believe there are other things they can look at, such as proper regulation of the sector, and the Transport Authority that has been promised for ten years. I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church East talking about the Democratic Labour Party but perhaps he should talk about these Barbados Labour Party promises that are now a decade old. Sir, if the Transport Authority is functioning, and the sector is properly regulated, those same business people will be paying taxes and could help subsidise the same Transport Board on the less than profitable routes because we recognise it is a social service.

Sir, there are other areas I think we could look at, such as the Public Sector Reform. The Transport Board was to be one of those areas where that was to be reformed. We heard about the Shorey Report as well for restructuring and reordering the work of the Transport Board.

Mr. Chairman, I know that these things would be known to you personally. Have these things not been put in

place to make the operations more efficient? I would like to suggest that is what we should do and not go after the entrepreneurs. The exact words he said were recapturing the market share and I think this is backward and regressive. The Democratic Labour Party is opposed to that, I can say that when we were in Government we did not believe in that and now we are in Opposition we cannot support that kind of thinking.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East mentioned the problem of the need to deploy resources, and manage routes properly. Sir, by way of anecdote, every morning between 5.15 a.m. and 5.45 a.m. three buses come north, ascend the hill East of St. Lucy Church, go up that road to Josey Hill empty, one behind the other. They come down from Josey Hill at 6.00 a.m., one behind the other empty. Sir, at 6.45 a.m. ZR 99 and ZR 100 come down full.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: The reason why I mention ZR 99 and ZR 100, is because they are known to Honourable Members, and you know that I am accurate in matters affecting St. Lucy. There is also ZR 235 down there.

Mr. Chairman, if the Barbados Transport Board could religiously send three buses to run a full route empty almost right away and the buses return from destination empty, and a private sector operator 45 minutes after, can operate full, it indicates clearly that the private sector operator is alert on how to time. He obviously is in touch with the market.

I raised this matter deliberately without in anyway recommending that the Barbados Transport Board increase its bureaucracy. Clearly, the time has come when the Barbados Transport Board behaves like Toyota. The first car made could have been a Ford. There are few who would doubt whether a Toyota is inferior to a Ford, although a Toyota emerged years after.

Sir, I may not be putting it well enough but look at the performance of the ML-529 against any Ford car. ML-529 is a Toyota of class, the result of research and development. When you match that against an old broken down Forde car, despite the fact that Ford was there years before, somebody came after and improved.

I am saying that a lot of the private operators have come after the Barbados Transport Board. They watched the mistakes of the Barbados Transport Board and are doing better than the Barbados Transport Board. Why I am going

to support this is implied in what the Honourable Member for St. Philip South is saying, that is, if this Parliament is minded to giving the resources, he is going to increase the frequency with which certain routes are served. Sir, in increasing that frequency, elements like timing, the state of the market and such like, must be taken into account.

Sir, to some degree, we also have to wonder why the Honourable Member for St. Lucy can say correctly that there are particular vehicles on the road working efficiently for ten years, and some of the Barbados Transport Board fleet do not work well.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East also raised the very interesting point of what type of transport system is suited for Barbados. It is a fact that years ago, international financial agencies were trying to suggest that small states like Barbados, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica should not have buses the size of what the Barbados Transport Board has, but that we should privatise and at the same time, use smaller units. The best public transport system in my experience is a discrete blend with private sector vehicles, along with public sector vehicles serving the general public.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South has to be given the support and the encouragement because, implied in what he is suggesting, he proposes to do a measure of capacity building for the Barbados Transport Board and ultimately, deliver by improving efficiency.

At this stage, Mr. Chairman, I want to look at two very good things that happened in the Barbados Transport Board in recent times. One is that even in the absence of resources, there is some evidence of creativity in deciding routes.

For example, in the deep north coming out of Boscobel, you can actually now get a bus leaving Boscobel to go to Oistins, whereas ten years ago, you never got a bus leaving Boscobel. Around the country, you can see that the route management has improved. Sir, even when route management has improved, we have to take a leaf out of the pages of private sector management because clearly a case has to be made out for the Transport Board not expending money unwisely in instances where buses run when there are no commuters on routes. So a deployment of routes must be sensibly taken up. I do not know if the Transport Board has a research department, I am not urging the establishment of such a department, but if such a department does not exist, existing staff resources can be used to study and to manage routes.

8.45 p.m.

Sir, this question of public transport has to be looked at carefully. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West

made mention of Bathsheba. Historically, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East said, when people could not get to destinations they physically move to destinations. If you were to ask the people of Brittons Hill, the Bay Land, Carrington Village and the suburbs of Bridgetown where their parents and grandparents came from several years ago, they would tell you St. Joseph, St. John and St. Andrew. People moved from what they perceived to be far away districts to places close to where the work opportunities were because of an absence of proper transport. This has had an effect on the demography of St. Andrew and St. Joseph which carry relatively small populations because many people from those parishes have now moved to St. Michael. Historically speaking, that is a manifestation that there were problems with public transport in Barbados. However, in this modern era we need to look at the question of: Are we adjusting to the times?

Mr. Chairman, a case can be made for an improved Barbados Transport Board. Things happen at the Transport Board that are not good. The quality of driving at the Barbados Transport Board is definitely showing marked improvement. The drivers are driving better and are being more careful. I sense that efforts have been made by the Transport Board to ensure that the driving staff do better than ever before.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: My colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, is telling me that driver courtesy has also improved, that is true. However, as a Government, we need to ensure that any gains made are increased. We also need to ensure that if there is any wastage or any inefficiency in the system, whatever the history, whatever their cause and whatever systems would have been, that we deal with them to decrease them.

Mr. Chairman, we need to look around the region to see where there is evidence of a proper public transportation system. We can learn a lot from mainland Trinidad and Tobago where you get public transport state-owned wisely deployed and where you get many other types of vehicles.

I conclude, Mr. Chairman, by lamenting the fact that an element of piracy has been going on in Barbados close to 15 to 20 years. The amount of pirates would hardly number more than 10 but the difficulty there is that when people risk their lives in these vehicles that are not properly covered by insurance to carry the travelling public and things happened, then all type of suffering and losses occur which could have been avoided if the law was followed.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to support my colleague the Honourable Member for St. Philip South but clearly we

have to do an ongoing review and an assessment of the operations of the Transport Board. Indeed, we have to look at the whole system of public transport with the ultimate intention of ensuring that the commuter is properly satisfied.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Acting Chairman, R. St. C. Toppin vacated the Chair and the substantive Chairman, Mr. R. D. MARSHALL, resumed the Chair.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I just rise to make a very brief contribution to support the request of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South. I also wish to say that this process which is before us for this supplementary is to allow the Transport Board to do the things that are necessary to pick up some of the reduction in service which the public has been experiencing. There is no doubt that there has been a diminution in the service provided by the Transport Board in recent times. However, what is important is that the Minister, the Board, the management and staff of the Transport Board are committed to treat to the problem in a way that would lead to benefits to the ordinary public.

Mr. Chairman, I have heard Honourable Members speak in here about new routes and the need for changes and it would be remiss of me if I did not register my appreciation to the Transport Board for ensuring that routes were put in, in Jackson Terrace which is a middle-class housing development with a lot of wall houses but where there were a number of persons who did not drive or have access to transportation because on my bringing it to the attention of the Transport Board, they responded.

Equally, in Friendship Terrace, off Green Hill behind Manor Lodge, they were able to reinstate the bus service that had been stopped for many years. Again, you are talking about a development with over 200 wall houses. It may not seem that way to those who traverse Green Hill but in truth and in fact it is a fairly densely populated development. I would say that the ratio of persons having cars is not necessarily high up there and the Transport Board has really been trying and responding. However, the reality is that the time has come, as with almost every statutory authority that we have, for a re-engineering of processes: changing the work flow, changing how we do business and changing how we relate to the public.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot associate with the views of those who would feel that the Transport Board should not offer an option to those who would want to see Barbados in a leisurely manner. In the same way others can offer that service, I believe that the Transport Board has a right to offer that service.

I also believe that the time has come for the Transport Board to look at the size of the buses they are putting on our roads. Mr. Chairman, the buses almost look imbalanced and very often I fear that they are going to turn over because of the height off the ground and what appears to be a lack of gravity in relation to how they move along the road.

Sir, you know that I do not normally quote the United States of America as a model for us to look at, but I must confess that the buses in New York have a low centre of gravity. These buses appear to be far more appropriate for the kinds of narrow roads and curves that we have. I am not talking about who makes the buses now, I am talking about a bus that sits low on the road. I feel that there would be a greater sense of safety in relation to how those buses move.

Mr. Chairman, like the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, I also feel that the time is really upon us where there needs to be a greater use of a hub and spoke system. It is done in international transport and it is done across airlines. Everyone knows where American Airlines hubs are in Miami, Atlanta, Puerto Rico and Dallas, Texas. We all know that there are times when you would like to go direct to New York on an American Airlines flight but you have to go through Miami to get there and nobody quarrels because that is the only option or you would have to go with a different airline. If you do not want to go that route, then you use a different form of transportation whether it be private sector transportation in terms of ZRs or minibuses or some other form of private transportation. Sir, I really do feel that greater reliance has to be made on the hub and spoke.
8.55 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I know that at one stage the Transport Board used to run the City Circle route. I do not know how effective it is but I think that as part of the overall transportation solution for Barbados' traffic problems that the Transport Board, along with the private sector, needs to be at the centre of ensuring that they offer the quality of service, such that persons do not feel uncomfortable about getting out of their cars, getting into a Transport Board bus and going to the centre of Bridgetown, so as to relieve the pressure of internal traffic in Bridgetown.

In those circumstances, it means that they will have to do a lot more marketing and quality assurance, to ensure that persons would feel safe, comfortable and confident and that there will be punctuality in relation to the maintenance of those routes.

Sir, if we are talking about persons who are prepared to put down their cars, to take a bus to get to a business meeting, for example, punctuality is going to be a salient ingredient as to whether those persons choose to put their fate in the hands of a third party transport carrier.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say to the Transport Board that recent times have been difficult but I want to commend the Minister in particular who has been forthright and steady in his views and who has made it clear that the situation cannot continue. Sir, the Honourable Member was quite correct that the only issue was ultimately what would be the source of financing.

Sir, the Government, as a whole, has determined that we would not want to impose two sets of rate adjustments on a public at the same time, particularly recognising that there will also be some other level of consequential increases because of the increase in oil prices in other areas of activities. Therefore, in those circumstances, central Government will hold its commitment on the transport sector, as we seek to work with others, to be able to make the other adjustments in the utility rates in respect of the Barbados Water Authority.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that it is the sign of a compassionate Government. I believe that it is the sign of a Government that recognises that it is not prepared to bury its head because having said that there will be no increases in bus fares, we have done the responsible thing and not stranded the Transport Board in relation to its investments. Instead we have come here to be able to properly equip it, such that the Barbadian consuming and travelling public, will in no way suffer as we move into 2005.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that as we vote today, we commend the Honourable Minister in bringing this matter here as expeditiously as possible.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. James North mentioned a point earlier, which I need to clarify, that is, if you find on the Josey Hill route that persons do not now tend to travel on the Transport Board buses, it has nothing to do with commuters but with a system that was put in place previously by the Transport Board, where commuters travelling to Josey Hill had to go on an excursion in order to reach their homes, which created frustration for them.

Mr. Chairman, what happened is that the ZR owner lives in Josey Hill and can now properly plan with the commuters to assure them that when they leave Josey Hill on mornings and evenings, that they do not have to go on an excursion. But it does not mean that the passengers travelling to Pie Corner do not have this very problem because the Pie Corner bus now goes to Indian Ground, then to Boscobelle, then to Foster's Fun Land. It then comes back up to Boscobelle, then to Date Tree Hill, then to Cave Hill, then to Grave Yard, then into Pie Corner. Sir, this frustrates commuters because both mornings and evenings commuters have to go on an excursion before reaching their homes.

Mr. Chairman, this means that if the PSVs were allowed to enter the transportation system, one would see the same thing occurring on the Pie Corner and Connell Town routes. Sir, passengers do not want to travel for such long periods and would tend to go with the more effective and efficient mode of transportation.

Mr. Chairman, if the Transport Board needs to get back the long-haul route, which, in my opinion, can be profitable because if they were to leave for a destination with a full load, there would be no need to stop and move constantly. It would therefore mean that Transport Board buses could travel to their final destination like how taxis operate. Therefore, the Transport Board has to understand that in the same way that taxis and ZMs move to a particular destination without stopping, that if they had a full load, it would allow them to turn around more effectively. They also need not to see the long-haul routes, especially at peak hours, as non-profit making routes.

Mr. Chairman, it also has to do with the relationship between the system of moving people and the reliability of that system. Sir, the day that minibuses and ZR vans go into Pie Corner with the same frequency like what occurs in Josey Hill, we would see the same thing occurring with the Transport Board buses. Sir, every morning I get complaints. On some mornings, people would go to the bus stop and would get a bus but on the following morning, there would be no buses and therefore people are not going to continue accommodating that level of bus service, when there are alternative sources of transportation.

Sir, if the Transport Board believes that is the only service it can offer the people of St. Lucy, then it means that the Minister of Public Works and Transport needs to issue some more permits to those persons who can better service my constituency. As I have said, the people of St. Lucy are happy with the service they are getting from the PSVs and if you had ever doubted me, the Honourable Member for St. James North has just confirmed it.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Chairman, I share the view of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East that the Transport Board has been making an effort. I well remember that it was only since 1994 that, in fact, we were able to have the reintroduction of buses into Eden Lodge, Grazettes, Husbands New Development, Phillips Road, St. Stephens Hill, and Cave Hill, which subsequently has been discontinued in Cave Hill. Sir, I would like to see Transport Board reintroduce a service going into Well Gap, Cave Hill.

Mr. Chairman, prior to that, the service offered by the ZRs and minibus operators was very inadequate and unsatisfactory. We have heard strong defenses being made of ZRs and minibus operators. Sir, I have no emotional attachment to them whatsoever. When they are allowed to

operate alone on those routes, they do exactly what they feel like. Those areas to which I have spoken, when people who had to rely on the ZRs and minibuses operators found that most times, admittedly at peak hours, they would have provided a service but whenever a lull period occurs, when people still needed transportation, those ZRs and minibuses operators would pull themselves off those routes, so that people were unable to get around at those times.

Mr. Chairman, I have no sympathy for those who are of the view that by reintroducing Transport Board on the short-haul routes that we would be putting ZR and minibuses operators out of business. In fact, I would like to advocate that the Transport Board takes a firm resolve and goes and recapture lost markets on those routes because that is the only time that commuters in Barbados can be guaranteed of proper service.

Mr. Chairman, I also believe that, quite frankly, the ZRs and minibuses operators have not earned the right to have us feeling sympathetic towards them because they have failed to develop the kind of culture of which we can be proud. There is out there, as we all know, a strong ZR and minibuses subculture, which is a very negative influence on our society. I believe that if they want us to share their plight and to feel any sentiment towards them, they need to eradicate that subculture that they have brought into being. 9.05 p.m.

I do not believe, contrary to what some people may wish to say, that they have a great love for commuters because as you drive behind them on the road, you are subjected to their lack of discipline and they will curse you if you make a comment about it.

Recently when it was suggested that school children be allowed to ride on the bus for \$1.00, they saw it fit to put school children off their buses. Sir, no one who has an interest in commuters would behave this way towards school children who are on their way to school. Mr. Chairman, I will continue to speak frankly on these issues even if others speak for narrow political gains.

Mr. Chairman, I also believe, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West alluded to in his presentation, that there is room for the granting of conditional licences to minibuses operators. The Honourable Member took the view that there would be days when the Transport Board cannot service a particular route and in those circumstances, a ZR or minibuses operator could be called upon to service this route even though he might prefer to do a short route and make more money rather than a long-haul route.

Sir, I believe that these conditional licences should be made with the understanding that when called upon,

they agree to service both short and long-haul routes. Mr. Chairman, once these things are brought into the picture we would find a better and comprehensive service to the commuter.

Sir, ultimately we are looking to benefit the commuter and I am not going to allow any sentiment about preserving small entrepreneurs to cloud my judgement on this particular issue because they have not shown that they have earned the right to have our love and sympathy.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to bring those few thoughts into the debate. I am indebted to you.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, I first want to thank Honourable Members on Both Sides for making their contributions to this debate. Since I have been in this Honourable Chamber, I have not heard Honourable Members agree to many things but all Honourable Members seemed to have agreed with the route this administration has decided to take in respect of providing the additional finance to carry the operations of the Board.

Mr. Chairman, the Opposition took issue with what was said about the revenue-enhancing measure which the Board proposes to take. I understand the reaction because they saw it fit back in 1992 to remove buses off the short route and a few months after engaged in a series of discussions at Cabinet about increasing bus fares.

Sir, if elections were not called prematurely in 1994, we might have seen an increase in the bus fares because this measure was agreed on by Cabinet.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. He said it was agreed at Cabinet at that time but the Honourable Member agreed at Cabinet that bus fares should be raised, they were not raised and Government is now subsidising bus fares.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, it was agreed at a meeting held in 1994, that there would have been an increase in bus fares by the Democratic Labour Party. As I have said, I am happy that Honourable Members agreed that this route should be exercised in order for the Transport Board to get the revenue it needs.

Mr. Chairman, I want the Honourable House to know that in recent times the Transport Board has been engaging in a series of measures to improve its operational efficiency and reduce its expenditure. Between financial years 2001/2003, a number of initiatives were taken which saw expenditure being reduced by under \$3 million.

Sir, the Board revisited its preventative maintenance programme in such a way that it was totally overhauled. It also introduced a programme of on-the-road assessment training of its drivers and brought representatives from Chrysler who provided extensive technical assistance with regard to the Mercedes buses in the fleet.

Mr. Chairman, within the last two years, the Board introduced a number of initiatives as well. For example, it installed electronic ticketing machines and fare boxes and there was full computerisation of the cash handling operation. These initiatives were done with a view of improving the functioning of the Board.

The Board also contracted out the cash-counting collection and deposit facilities, thereby improving the efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism with respect to the cash-handling and transport aspects.

The Board also purchased and installed vehicle monitoring systems on all buses to monitor performance and improve efficiency. It engaged in the installation of speed limiters on all buses safely limiting bus speeds and reducing the probability of accidents due to speeding, hence reducing vehicle repair cost as well as fleet insurance cost. In addition, once the units are operating in a more efficient manner, the fuel cost will also be addressed.

9.15 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, a lot was said about the way in which the buses were redirected so as to service certain areas in constituencies in a better manner. I can commend the Transport Board for the response that I got to the various requests during the period 1999 and 2003. I asked them to improve the service in areas like Ruby Park because there was a limited service there. They have subsequently extended the service to include Union Development.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: I also asked them to include the Oldbury area, which is very close to the depot at Mangrove. This area is now included. Sir, I asked to direct the buses through places like Kirtons No. 3. Some of my constituents live in the Kirtons No. 2 area and for some reason the buses were not going through that area and many of the folks do not own vehicles. The same thing obtains for the area of Highlands at Four Square. Sir, I also asked the Transport Board to redirect the buses that run from Oistins to College Savannah to take in the Foul Bay/Heddings/Rices areas.

The Transport Board has been responding with the limited availability. I can also assure that the Board has undertaken a fairly comprehensive review and rationalisation. This work was started in 2002 and the Board is refining the results of that exercise.

Sir, if time had permitted, I would have given the decision that the Transport Board has taken in respect of new routes and extensions. Some Honourable Members spoke to how the Board is responding to their requests for additions and extensions in their areas. The fact is, these things can only be achieved if there is an increase in availability of buses. We are saying that once the bus availability improves, we would be able to give very practical effect to this route rationalisation exercise.

Mr. Chairman, let me end by thanking all Honourable Members for the support that they have given to the request for the additional \$18.45 million to carry the Transport Board to the end of the financial year. Honourable Members would also understand that the Transport Board recognises that it must play its part in trying to improve the delivery of service. Once we get the availability of buses there are some things that will have to be done internally.

As the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East said, we are committed to ensuring that the Transport Board is in a position to deliver a more improved service.

I thank you.

I beg that this Head 46 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative.

HEAD 50 – POST OFFICE – \$387,998.00

Mr. CHAIRMAN: the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Hon. Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Chairman, the amount of \$232,874 for the payment of substitute acting on behalf of officers on various types of leave. The National Insurance Contributions in relation to that amount is \$7,342. The amount requested in respect of utility payment is \$97,617.00 occasioned by the increase in the average monthly cost of telephone bills and fuel charges attendant to the provision of the electricity service.

In addition to that, with reference to structures an amount of \$48,000.00 is requested to supplement that provision to provide a lift for the Postman's Branch at the General Post Office. The tender exceeds the provided amount and, therefore, an amount of \$48,000.00 is being requested. With reference to the Philatelic Bureau, a small amount of \$2,165.00 relates to National Insurance payment on the employer's side, which were underestimated in the original provision.

I beg to move that Head 50 stand part.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, seconded by Hon. Dame Billie MILLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Money Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, seconded by Hon. Dame Billie MILLER, the Resolution was read a first and second time and passed.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, this not only brings us to the end of Government Business for today but it also brings us to the end of Government Business for the year 2004. It has been a very long year and one that has caused the House to work very long hours and almost every week since we have been in Session other than the break for summer and the Christmas break which would have marked the beginning of the calendar year.

I, therefore want to use the opportunity to thank all Members of the House, all members of staff in particular those who service us in Parliament, those who service us in relation to the entertainment of hospitality facilities, those who service us from Cabinet Office, those who service us in terms of the reporting section, those who service us in terms of our security, namely the police, and those who are responsible for communicating what we say to the broader Barbadian population.
9.25 p.m.

I want to say that the Clerk and Assistant Clerks have, in particular, been forced to work very long hours this year, not just in terms of the meetings of Parliament but indeed, Mr. Speaker, for the work which has been done behind the scenes.

We have now put ourselves in the position where the Parliament website in fact now has debates from 1976 to 2000, and the Acting Clerk assures me, that by the end of January, we should be at the...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: If the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would come to the Management Commission meetings, we might be able to get the quorum to make wrong things right.

Nevertheless, I am assured, Mr. Speaker, that by the end of January, we should be down to 2004 and, indeed, in the course of the next year to 18 months, we hope to go right

back as close to 1937 as possible. It will be available to all Members of Parliament and ultimately to the wider public, but we are going to work out kinks with the Members of Parliament first, before we go to the wider public.

I am sure that all Honourable Members would agree that this will greatly enhance their research capabilities in preparing for debates in this House and hopefully will be reflected generally in the standard of debate.

In addition, there have been a number of papers prepared for our consideration. I am serving early notice that in early January and possibly before Parliament resumes, there will be a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee. We have two substantive papers to consider, the draft Standing Orders, as well as a paper that speaks to unifying the Estimates and Budgetary process. I do believe that as Members, we owe it to ourselves to be able to do the necessary work.

The last major overhaul of the Standing Orders and the Estimates process, would have come in the early 1970s and we have now seen the passage of some 30 years. I believe, Mr. Speaker, you are keen to have this work accomplished within the course of the next six months and we therefore set ourselves that target.

We also feel that in that context, this House must come to see itself having three major debates a year, not just one on Economic Statement, but a major one on social policy and a major one on foreign policy. This should be incorporated into the Standing Orders of this Parliament, such that there will be a full and comprehensive debate, in respect of these sectors, in the same way as we did last week, with the Economic and Financial Statements emanating from the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, we had a long hard year, but the forecast for next year is not much brighter, in terms of any diminution of the work load. What I can give Honourable Members the assurance of and I think that we have brought expenditure into line in relation to aspects of hospitality here and I do assure Honourable Members that there would be greater leniency in respect of the arrangements for supper and dinner next year, than they would have had to endure during 2004. I have listened carefully and I take note but it may well mean also that we may have some longer days and longer sessions.

I want finally, Mr. Speaker, as I said before to wish all Honourable Members and staff supporting a very Merry Christmas, a blessed, prosperous and healthy New Year. I also use this opportunity since it is almost midnight, two and a half hours away, to wish the Leader of the Opposition

in addition a very happy birthday. I trust that he would enjoy his day and that would lead him into the general merriment of the Season, and he would not engage in any excess that will lead to his having any form of regret, but I wish him all the very best of health and, certainly, all the very best in the next year of his life.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, January 18, 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, I rise, not only to wish each and every Member of Parliament a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year but certainly to thank all the members of staff of Parliament, the Clerk and his staff in particular, for having given us a year of adequate supervision. A year in which I think the Opposition certainly can boast of having grown substantially in this August Chamber, and I think the evidence is quite clear.

I also wish to thank the security of Parliament for having secured us over the last year and the reporters for having covered, quite adequately the contents of the debates from this Chamber.

In light of that, therefore I just wish to say to you, Mr. Speaker, and certainly to your staff to have a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous and exciting New Year. I can assure the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East that I will be up but not necessarily out of bed tomorrow morning.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: I will enjoy my 45 years on earth. I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, just before I move the adjournment, I would like, on behalf of the Officers of Parliament to convey our best wishes to all Members and the Staff of Parliament. Thank you for being, in spite of what you read and what you might hear, for being very co-operative.

The question that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, January 18, 2005 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
9.33 p.m.

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MILLION IN THE CURRENCY OF THE
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KELLMAN, Mr. D. St. E. (St. Lucy)
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