
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2003 – 2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 27, 2004

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, July 27, 2004.

PRESENT

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P. (Deputy Speaker)
Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.)
Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A. (Oxon.)
Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., J.P. (Minister of Labour and Social Security)
Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc., J.P. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)
Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Ministry of Public Works and Transport)
Hon. 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 M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Deputy Prime Minister) (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs) (Leader of the House)
Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, B.A., B.Sc., J.P. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)
Hon. N. A. LYNCH, B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Tourism and International Transport)
Hon. A. P. Wood, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil., J.P. (Minister of Energy and Public Utilities)
Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE, L.C.P., J.P. (Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)
Dr. D. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B., B.S.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance) (Leader of the Opposition)
Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., (Minister of Industry and International Business)
Mr. M. A. LASHLEY, LL.B. (Hons.)
Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)
Dr. W. F. DUGUID, B.D.S. (Comm.), F.D.S., FDRCS, J.P.
Mr. R. L. SEALY, B.Sc., M.B.A.

Prayers were led by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minutes of Tuesday, July 20, 2004.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minutes so cited be confirmed, subject to any omissions, observations and/or corrections.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, then let those Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am to report that I am in receipt of the accounts and statements for the month of March 2004, as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Erskine Griffith) Order, 2004.
2. Value Added Tax (Barbados Defence Force) Order, 2004.
3. Annual Report of the Barbados Transport Board for the year 2002-2003.

REPLIES TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, replies to Parliamentary Questions, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 asked by Dr. W. F. Duguid, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West are ready.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, reply to Parliamentary Question No. 7 asked by Dr. W. F. Duguid, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government Business is now the order of the day. Order No. 4.

ORDER NO. 4 – THE CIVIL AVIATION
(MONTREAL CONVENTION)
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2004

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I speak this morning with the specific purpose of tabling a piece of legislation which is intended to be incorporated into Barbadian law.
10.20 a.m

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Montreal Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation is an important step for continuing to ensure that Barbados has all the necessary legislation in place to maintain its air transport links and to safeguard our airport and other civil aviation operations and obligations.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Montreal Protocol is supplemental to the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation which was concluded at Montreal on September 23, 1971. The Convention was signed by Barbados on that date and we acceded to it on August 6, 1996 with the enactment of the Civil Aviation (Montreal Convention) Act, Cap. 123A. The Convention came into force on January 26, 1972 with 69 signatories and 107 Contracting States.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while I will speak specifically to the Convention, I believe this debate gives the opportunity to raise wider and broader debate on many aspects of our international transport policy in Barbados. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would specifically speak to our civil aviation policy direction as framed in law. I will speak to links of international transport and the development of our tourism industry, the expansion of air services into Barbados in recent times and what the future portends for expanded air services into Barbados.

Sir, I will also speak to the expanded role of international transport in our economic development as it manifests itself not only in its relationship to the development of tourism but also the expansion of the other trading sectors of the economy.

Additionally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will speak to some critical infrastructural developments under the Ministry of International Transport which are also fundamental to the development of any international transport policy.

Sir, most specifically I think debate on this Bill gives the opportunity as well to raise some issues on the status of the Grantley Adams International Airport, the expansion project that is going on at the airport and the facility that will house air transfer facilities for cruise transfer into Barbados. I will also speak more specifically to the development of the Concorde project at the airport and some other specific physical developments at the airport which influenced our future prospects for expanded tourism development and by extension further economic development for the country.

If time permits, Sir, I will also speak about the expansion of regional air services and any other critical issues that might arise. Sir, the civil aviation environment globally is a much changed environment from what we knew it to be, and a very dynamic environment has now stepped up its pace of change in recent years. Mr. Deputy Speaker, any casual observer would tell you very easily that the international civil aviation environment of which we speak has changed substantially in recent times.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the last two to three years more specific global attention has been paid to international transport and civil aviation than may be at any other time

in the industry's past. The industry of international transport, particularly civil aviation, has been under threat in a way it has never been in the past.

Sir, given the fact that our major economic earner is the tourism sector, I believe that if we are to clearly seek out a future for Barbados and for the Barbadian economy that it is critically important for us to truly begin to recognise the true economic value of the civil aviation environment and how it relates to our continued socio-economic development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the most recent development which has put a lot of pressure on the international civil aviation environment has to be the terrorist act of September 11, 2001. Like other nations in the world, we must therefore pay closer attention to the industry's policy direction, to the changes that are taking place within that environment and to keep ourselves up-to-date on the development of international transport.

Sir, as a tourism dependent country, more so than most of the other countries in the Caribbean, we must ensure that we move with the times. That obviously means compliance with the international laws and pacts that speak to securing this new civil aviation environment and to ensuring that our overall civil aviation environment in Barbados and in the region is safe and sound. It also speaks to looking after some other issues relating to our physical facilities, to our laws, to ensuring that there is competent personnel and to ensuring that the regulatory environment that governs the same inspires a certain level of confidence for our workers, for our locals and obviously for visitors to our country.

Sir, as I said, the Protocol of this Convention was done at Montreal on February 24, 1988. It came into force internationally in August 1989. Sixty-nine States have signed on to the Protocol and 15 States have ratified the Protocol. The Protocol specifically addresses acts of violence against civil aviation. It speaks specifically about acts of violence against persons on board aircraft in flight, aircraft in services and air navigation facilities.

Sir, given the time that the Protocol was done there were a number of omissions and oversights given the expanded civil aviation environment and the concerns in this civil aviation environment today. The Protocol does not speak to acts of violence against airports, against persons at an airport nor against aircraft which are not in service which are found in an airport. The Protocol addresses this oversight by addressing acts of violence against airports, safety of persons using the airport and the safety of operations at an airport. It also addresses the issue of any person who destroys or damages facilities or aircraft not in service, which are located at the airport.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Protocol states that if a person uses any device, substance or weapon at an airport serving

international civil aviation and intentionally commits any acts of violence which cause serious injury or death, seriously damages facilities or aircraft and disrupts service such as to cause injury or death has committed an offence and the Contracting State can take the necessary steps to establish its jurisdiction over the offence. The penalty for this offence is life imprisonment.

Sir, the Protocol can also act as an extradition treaty for persons who have committed unlawful acts of violence against signatory States where no formal extradition treaties exist. In the case where an alleged offender is present in a territory, a State can establish its own jurisdiction over the person committing the offence, therefore there is no need to extradite him to the State in which the act took place.

Sir, these come with certain provisions such as that the offence took place against aircraft registered in that State, that the aircraft on board which the act took place lands in that territory or the aircraft has been leased to a lessee whose principal place of business is that particular State.

Sir, the action today, as it relates to the civil aviation policy direction that I spoke about, is just one in a series of simultaneous developments that ensures the overall sustained development of this very vital sector. In terms of safety oversight, this Ministry speaks to the mechanism that ensures that the aircraft operators and registered personnel meet minimum international civil aviation safety standards and that there is legal, technical and operational air worthiness and an administrative framework that allows that environment to grow and to strive. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we must continually monitor the practices and the standards that go on, in relation to the operation of aircrafts, to ensure compliance with specific standards, particularly when aircraft are leaving Barbados and flying into other developed jurisdictions, and when aircraft are coming from those developed countries into Barbados.

10.30 a.m.

Sir, in December, 1966, the Federal Administration of the United States of America, as they do for all international environments in which aircraft registered in the United States of America fly into, did an audit of the oversight capabilities of Barbados. In that particular state of operator on-site audit, they determined whether or not one's particular jurisdiction is compliant with a number of the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) rules which govern all of these issues relating to legal, technical, administrative, operational and air worthiness matters.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even though Barbados is not being categorised like many of the other jurisdictions that have been audited – because we do not have registered

aircraft in Barbados that fly into the United States of America, there were a number of areas in Barbados that were audited. Seven main areas were audited including:

- (a) our aviation legislation;
- (b) the existence of adequate aviation regulations;
- (c) the adequacy of the Civil Aviation Organisation that governs this environment;
- (d) the presence of qualified personnel in the environment;
- (e) the adequacy of the guidance materials that are used;
- (f) the level of our record keeping at the Grantley Adams International Airport, and
- (g) our continued surveillance in the sector.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even though we were not characterised, it was determined by that audit that our civil aviation environment, including our laws, were indeed outdated and needed serious amendment to bring them up-to-date with a very changed aviation environment.

The Civil Aviation Act, under which we regulate our industry, is more than 20 years old and there are a number of deficiencies in meeting modern safety oversight standards. Sir, the civil aviation regulations were also modeled on the old British Colonial (Air Navigation) (Overseas) Order. The regulation haphazardly set out processes for the enforcement of the provisions under the regulation but the bulk of the provisions are schedules which are complicated and confusing, with many deficiencies being identified.

Sir, when these rights were put in place, what was important was that we needed more British regulations. In recent times, many USA influences have now crept into our civil aviation administration. In addition, technology has been evolving so rapidly in the industry that a lot of the regulations and law do not speak to the issues of these new technological developments. Sir, as we are now flying into many countries with aircraft out of Barbados, it has become necessary for us to harmonise many of the standards and regulations that exist in many of those jurisdictions.

Sir, what is clear is that we do need a new Civil Aviation Bill, which is expected to be tabled before the end of this calendar year, 2004. In addition, there was a Civil Aviation (International) (Safety Oversight) Audit which was also done in March, 2001, which identified a number of deficiencies, including a number of deficiencies in our system which were more than outdated. It also spoke to the

same issues of technology and harmonising standards across different jurisdictions, which we intend to cover with the tabling of the new Civil Aviation Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what does this mean in terms of the development of Barbados, particularly our tourism industry? What does it mean to the average Barbadian when we speak of issues relating to safety oversight, to the civil aviation environment and its future development? Sir, how does the same play out in the everyday lives of every Barbadian? I believe in the last four years that we would have seen critical changes through the development of our civil aviation environment, particularly as it relates to the number of new airline services that have actually come into Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of the expansion of air services coming into Barbados, the number of aeroplanes landing everyday at the airport, the number of new jurisdictions and new gateways that have been opened into Barbados during the last three or four years, it is incumbent upon us to continue to improve the civil aviation environment.

Sir, in recent times, we have come to the conclusion that the critical path that we must go to if we are to have growth, not only in arrivals in Barbados under the banner of tourism but if our yields are also to continue to rise in the tourism industry, this could only be achieved through the development of new and expanded air service opportunities for Barbados. Sir, the last two or three years have perhaps been the most turbulent times for seeking to develop new air services into Barbados.

Sir, against that, even in a very turbulent and difficult period, we have been able to see many new air services coming into Barbados during this period. In the last four years, we have seen as many as 14 new services or services which have returned to Barbados from gateways across the globe. I think that in an environment in which airlines are not looking to expand, in an environment in which most airlines are facing serious economic challenges, that it speaks to an administration that is more than working hard to ensure the livelihood of all Barbadians through the development of the sector but more particularly to ensure that we have the airlift possible to keep Barbados' tourism afloat, to keep our economy buoyant.

Sir, a decline had been identified in the first quarter of 2002. Since that has been corrected in the third quarter of 2002, our industry figures have only been going North. The recent growth pattern suggests that there is some consumer demand for returning travel but I believe the yields in this industry are still low and would, therefore, take some time to return.

Sir, the strategy must hinge upon the diversification of our tourism markets, first the expansion of services in existing larger markets, opening up new gateways and then old gateways getting expanded services out of the existing gateways. Sir, the strategy has been working well, has been bearing fruit, and has been able to produce 14 new services into Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will speak to a number of these new air services that have come into Barbados and what the future holds for expanded services. Sir, CONDOR airline, in the last year, came back out of Frankfurt once per week. This is a service which is shared with Tobago. As all of us are aware, US Airways flies into Barbados four times weekly from Philadelphia; LOUDA Air flies into Barbados during the week from Milan and Rome. This is the first time that we have established a non-stop service from Rome into Barbados on LOUDA Air. The Monarch Service showed limited service during the period 2002, non-stop from Gatwick into Barbados. As EXCEL charters also flew five rotations during the winter of 2003-2004, there is the probability that they could return for 2004-2005.
10.40 a.m.

Air Canada introduced double-daily flights for the winter of 2004 and also flew a charter once a week in February 2004 and will do so in 2005 out of Halifax.

American Airlines introduced a double daily flight service from Miami in 2004 and it is expected to do so in 2005 and Virgin Atlantic used to have a shared service between Antigua and St. Lucia. Sir, just to show the confidence that these airlines have placed in Barbados, the service was stopped which we shared with Antigua and St. Lucia and a dedicated service non-stop was given to Barbados seven days a week. In addition to that, in the winter season they flew eleven services per week into Barbados.

Virgin Atlantic also flew four rotations non-stop from Manchester into Barbados this winter and this exercise is expected to continue this winter season.

BWIA introduced a Manchester service twice a week in 2002 and British Airways flew an additional flight over Gatwick on Saturdays, Tuesdays and Thursdays during the winter and also replaced the seats lost on the Concorde with a 747 from Heathrow International Airport. This meant that we saw eleven services on British Airways per week flying into Barbados during the winter season and this is expected to continue this winter.

Britannia Airways commenced a weekly charter service out of Manchester into Barbados in May and this goes on until October 17, 2004. It will happen again from November 2004 to April 2005.

Continental Airways out of New Jersey now flies four times a week into Barbados. During the fall period beginning September to November, the service will be cut to two flights a week. As usual, the demand during that period is slow and most airlines will cut back on their services.

Budget Travel from Dublin commenced service here on June 7, and will continue until September 27, 2004. Then it will come back to Barbados again on November 7, 2005, operating on Mondays.

Sir, I have just spoken about fourteen new or expanded services which came back to Barbados during the last two to three years and this speaks of the hard work that goes into ensuring that we get expanded airlift for Barbados as a part of our strategy to expand the industry. It also speaks to the confidence that airlines have in Barbados as a destination.

Sir, I could also cite for you areas in this region where airlines have cut their services. Barbados is not a perfect environment but it speaks to the confidence placed in us by our tourism and airlines partners through the work that has been done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the first time this winter, British Midlands flies into Barbados beginning their service in November 2004 for the winter season with 244 seats and three classes of services.

US Airways will fly non-stop from Charlotte, North Carolina to Barbados once a week in January and February next year. The announcement will be made officially next week and will open up a new world in the south again for Barbados because, in the history of the development of our industry, we have never had non-stop service from the southern side of the United States of America, except from Miami.

Continental Airlines is expected again this winter to fly a non-stop 737 with 123 seats from Houston, Texas into Barbados and this opens up the mid-western side of the United States of America that we did not have before.

Sir, it would be virtually impossible to have the world's greatest economy at your doorstep and not take advantage of what it provides because in recent times we could not open up these services.

Sir, a number of other services are being negotiated. Delta Airways will fly non-stop out of Atlanta for the first time and we will share this service with Grenada. A joint Barbados Tourism Authority and Grenada delegation recently met with Delta Airlines officials in Atlanta to put the finishing touches on that deal.

BWIA has announced that subject to the approval of the Government of Trinidad & Tobago they will also open up Glasgow and Belfast shared with the Manchester service from October 2004 as well.

American Airlines is currently negotiating to fly a service from Dallas with one stop in San Juan bringing back a jet service from San Juan into Barbados.

Sir, again this speaks to the level of confidence that most of our partners have placed in Barbados as a tourism destination and their willingness to work with Barbados to develop these air services. This debate also offers the opportunity to speak to the airport expansion project in short form to bring Parliament and the people of Barbados up-to-date with the project.

Sir, to date, the expansion project is completed 60 per cent. The original cost of the project was expected to be BDS\$123 million but has been increased to \$139 million to pay value added tax and the inclusion of a section of sites and services that was not originally included in the project.

The objective of the project was to expand the useful life of Grantley Adams International Airport into 2015 and to increase passenger handling capacity from 800 passengers per hour at peak time to 2000 passengers and so establish Grantley Adams International Airport as a truly viable commercial entity.

There are two components of works. The pavement work component achieved substantial completion in September 2000 and was delayed only by one month which means that in twenty-one months we were able to do all the pavement works including the runways and parking aprons. The contract value was \$50.02 million compared to the original contract valued at \$44.5 million.

The Caribbean Development Bank of Barbados provided a loan for \$44.4 million for the project. The money has been disbursed to Government or already paid directly to the contractor by that institution.

Sir, the other component is the terminal and associated works and the contractor commenced work in March 2002. The project completion date was originally stated to be October 2004 for a duration of thirty months.
10.50 a.m.

Sir, it is our estimation at this time, with the 65 per cent completion, we are delayed by four to six months on the airport expansion project. Even though we are delayed by approximately four to six months, there are some components of the work that when completed, would allow for easy passage and greater use and expansion of the airport

in terms of passenger flows without disrupting any of the operations of the airport. We expect that the new arrivals hall will be completed by December 2004. Therefore, this means that the arrivals terminal should be open for the winter season.

Sir, the arrivals terminal is 80 per cent completed, the sub-contractor is committed to completion of the mechanicals and electricals by November 2004 and we believe that by November 2004 that particular area would be handed over and the new arrivals terminal will be open for use by December 2004.

Sir, the new Gates 7–10 are about 55 per cent completed. There are some bus bays on the western side which are used for air and sea transfers which are about 40 per cent completed. The departure lounge is completed and was taken over about six months ago and it is already in use. The mechanical room is about 80 per cent complete and Gates 14 to 16, on the eastern side, are approximately 45 per cent complete. The main retail area at the airport is about 50 per cent complete and the food court is about 75 per cent complete.

Sir, if you visited the airport recently, you would have seen that there is a new ticketing area that has been opened. There are some technical flaws with that particular area regarding the awning, floor and some other areas which are being corrected but that area is about 97 per cent complete and is already in operation and has been taken over. The certificate to take over was issued by the contractor on May 18, 2004 but there are still some defects, especially the remedial work to the roof covering which is to be completed.

Sir, the business lounges and the sites and services programmes are about 97 per cent complete. The testing regime for fire mains is to commence. The repavement of the taxi stand, excavation and installation of conduits for the structures are to be completed.

Sir, as at May 2004, the expenditure was BDS\$81.5 million, which is about 58 per cent of the contract value. Currently, the project is about 65 per cent complete. At this time we still expect the project to be within the budget that I stated earlier.

Sir, there are some other areas of that project which are important. The Fairy Valley road realignment has been satisfactorily completed. The contractor and the airport expansion project team carried out the post warranty inspections on July 22, 2004 with only two minor defects being noted. The current expenditure on that programme is \$1 million against an original contract value of \$1.8 million.

Sir, the Parish Land realignment road is still under construction and the airport expansion project team

continues to liaise with the Ministry of Public Works. Some residents have been affected by the construction but there is still some work to be done on this project. The land acquisition and housing relocation programme is ongoing. The supply of the security equipment at the airport is about 85 per cent complete and current expenditure is approximately \$2 million on new and updated security equipment which is vitally important in meeting our international obligation. The contract value on that was \$5.5 million.

The other areas of that expansion project, the installation of the common user terminal system, which is known as the 'Cute System', has been installed and is operating. It has added substantially to the quick movement of people at the airport. Sir, an airline can now occupy almost any counter at the airport. That is ongoing and should be completed soon.

The only other issue that is of particular importance to the Grantley Adams International Airport in terms of its corporate status is the issue of the status of employees. It is an important matter which this Administration takes seriously and will operate in a manner that would not disadvantage any of the employees at the Grantley Adams International Airport Inc.

Sir, the Grantley Adams International Airport Inc. and the Ministry have already complied with all the requests that have been received from the National Union of Public Workers. The last request which we received was for the organisational chart and the personal emoluments for the new company and its personnel. This was done about approximately three weeks ago through the Ministry of Civil Service, which is the proper channel and the Ministry of International Transport has requested a meeting to sit with the National Union of Public Workers to discuss the issues.

Sir, we expect the transition period to be completed by April 1, 2005. In other words, between September 2004 and March 2005 is the transition period and this is where we would exercise all the options and give practical ventilation to all the options that have been put on the table.

Sir, so far during the negotiations, some persons have requested to go to the new company, Grantley Adams International Airport Inc. given the information that had been supplied. A person can also be given a comparable post in the Civil Service and for persons who are not going over to the new company, the provisions of the Pensions Act will kick in and this would deal with the abolition of those posts whereby gratuities and pensions will be paid immediately or persons who have reached retirement age can opt for early retirement if they do not want to go any further. These are the options which are on the table and the negotiations are

ongoing and we believe that by April 1, 2005 we will complete this exercise to the satisfaction of both Sides.

I believe that I have to speak to the draft Bill which has six Clauses and which seeks to amend the Civil Aviation (Montreal Convention) Act, Cap. 123A. Clause 1 is the short title of the Bill, Clause 2 amends the long title of Cap. 123A to include references to the 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation. Clause 3 amends section 2 of Cap. 123A to insert a definition of airport, unlike the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Protocol relates to Unlawful Acts at Airports. Clause 4 inserts a new section into this legislation, Section 4(a) describes acts which would endanger safety at airports and indicates that no person should undertake such acts and provides that if such acts are committed, that the person is guilty of an offence. Clause 5 deletes subsection 5. (3) of Cap. 123A substituting a new Clause, 5. (3) (a), which takes into account the 1971 Convention and the 1988 Protocol. Clause 6 amends Cap. 123A by inserting a new Schedule, the Second Schedule containing the 1998 Protocol. The 1971 Convention remains as a Schedule to Cap. 123A and becomes the First Schedule to the Act.

11.00 a.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that this more than covers all that is relevant to this particular amendment to the Civil Aviation Act. What it also does, Sir, it gives an opportunity for us to speak to some issues of international transport development, and how those developments are continuing to affect the development of our tourism industry, and our expanded economic progress in Barbados.

Sir, I wish to say in closing that, I believe, it is necessary for us to ensure that under the civil aviation environment which we operate, all the necessary legislation is in place to maintain air transport links and to safeguard airport operations and by extension, the tourism industry and our economic development for Barbados.

I believe, Sir, this is a critical piece of legislation. As I said, it is only one piece of many pieces of initiatives that are coming under a new Civil Aviation Act, which is scheduled to be tabled here in this House before December of this year.

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

I am obliged to you.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, recognising that it has to do with issues of terrorism around the world, and the question of being able to protect our shores such that there is a threat to

our overall tourism product, if we do not take the necessary measures to ensure that our travel and airport are well protected, not only in Barbados but throughout the region. There is, in fact, a very strong correlation between the question of civil aviation and by extension, airlift and the performance of the tourism sector.

I wish to make the observation up-front that an increase in airlift by itself, does not automatically translate into more arrivals. Therefore, the work of the Barbados Tourism Authority (BTA) in ensuring that there are effective marketing programmes to fill the additional seats such that any such initiative can translate into substantial benefit for our tourism product, is extremely vital.

Sir, this therefore leads me to query the premise upon which I have based my opening remarks that airlifts alone cannot translate into more arrivals. It therefore leaves me to question the ability of the Barbados Tourism Authority at this time to implement the necessary programmes to guarantee that additional airlift in Barbados will, in fact, translate into additional arrivals and by extension, benefit for the tourism sector, not only hoteliers but small players and small businesses within the sector.

The concern that I honestly have at this stage is with respect to our planning for the future. It is known in the industry that by June of a particular year, the forward planning should come into place in order to deal with the upcoming Fall and Winter seasons. Unlike most other businesses, tourism requires a very long leading period so that people can organise their vacations and plan to accumulate enough income to be able to afford a holiday or an experience in some destination. Therefore, it means that before you can see any particular benefit by your industry that some months, perhaps a year before, of planning have to be gone into to ensure success.

Mr. Speaker, the current state of the BTA, with the known withdrawal or departure of the CEO will, in fact, give me cause for concern, in the foreseeable future, of the extent to which the industry can benefit from the additional airlift that we heard of this morning from the Minister.

We also know that under his stewardship, no less than five senior officers of the BTA have departed over the last few years. In that regard, one would therefore have to question the experience and competencies of the existing staff of the BTA in delivering the necessary marketing programmes that will give true expression to the increased airlift that is proposed by the Minister.

In fact, over the last two to three years, under the stewardship of the current CEO of the BTA, we lost Mr. Hugh Foster. We lost Mr. Calvin Hope. We lost Mrs. Brenda

Edwards. We lost Mr. Stetson Babb. We lost Miss Yvonne Hall. We have lost an abundance of experience and expertise within the bosom of the BTA, over the last two to three years.

Therefore, I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have concerns, on This Side, in terms of the ability of the BTA to deliver the effective programmes to ensure that the additional airlift that we are hearing about, would translate into greater arrivals.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, not only have we lost these individuals, but we have seen substantial finances being put to separation packages for Mr. Hugh Foster, Mr. Calvin Hope, Mrs. Brenda Edwards, Mr. Stetson Babb, and Miss Yvonne Hall. In addition and most hurtfully, they also have received early pension plans. These are individuals that are not even of the age but yet still, the BTA, as a result of the several difficulties they have been experiencing over the last several years, had to commit substantial sums to pay individuals. For example, we saw a situation in which Mr. Stetson Babb was released of his duties a full year in advance of his contract. Therefore, he along with some others had not only received a full pay out of severance, but were also entitled to early pensions.

In fact, let me repeat because I want to be quite clear on this. Mr. Hugh Foster stood there in excess of 15 years. Mr. Calvin Hope was also in excess of 15 years. Mrs. Edwards was in excess of 15 years and they are all entitled to pensions. The truth is, Mr. Stetson Babb, let me correct myself, did not stay around long enough to be entitled to any pension, but he was paid out, a full year before his contract ended.

11.10 a.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am therefore saying that in light of the recent departures, the experience at the Barbados Tourism Authority has diminished substantially and the competencies can therefore be questioned.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that gives me grave concern with respect to the tourism industry in Barbados because you cannot separate the performance of civil aviation from the performance of tourism. You cannot separate increase airlift from the performance of tourism, the hoteliers, the arrivals or the finances. Therefore, I must express grave concern with respect to the capacity of the Barbados Tourism Authority at this stage to deliver in terms of marketing packages to be able to fill the aeroplanes that we are hearing about with respect to the increased airlift as was mentioned by the Minister. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a major area of concern for me and I know that it would be a major concern for several other persons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the first acts was to remove the Financial Controller at the Barbados Tourism Authority. She has not only enjoyed a good severance but

she is also enjoying an early pension. Sir, you can imagine the amount of pressure that is being placed on the Barbados Tourism Authority at this time when most of our resources are going towards...

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Barbados Tourism Authority has never had a position called Financial Controller. It has never had anyone in a complement or any Financial Controller that has left, has been fired or has been severed. The Barbados Tourism Authority does not have a Financial Controller.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is not a major point for me whether or not the title is Financial Controller. Sir, let me say that even the much maligned Miss Sylvia Lynch is now benefiting from an early package that the Barbados Tourism Authority has given her. We all know the circumstances surrounding that particular individual. Sir, the point I wish to make is that since that occurrence we have seen several other persons who have received not only severance packages but early pensions. So that kind of pressure is being put on the finances of the Barbados Tourism Authority where people are being paid early for early withdrawal from contracts but we are not going to see any benefit with respect to work.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Now, that is a major area of concern for me. Therefore, I am asking the Minister of Tourism and International Transport to make public the recent findings with respect to the audit that is apparently responsible for the departure of the current Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister is in charge of the Barbados Tourism Authority and he is supposed to report to the people of Barbados. The Ministry is supposed to be one of accountability and transparency. Therefore, in the midst of all the confidence of which he speaks, he needs to tell the people of Barbados whether or not the Chief Executive Officer's departure is in any way related to the findings of the Auditor in August of last year. Sir, it must be a concern of the public of Barbados that at the time when tourism is supposed to be performing at its highest level, we are seeing from the organisation the departure of a so-called successful Chief Executive Officer.

Sir, I have never said this because I have never believed it. Unlike the Minister of Tourism and International Transport I do not believe that you can gauge the performance of tourism on the basis of tourist arrivals. Unlike the Minister of Tourism and International Transport, I do not believe that numbers alone could determine whether

or not we are doing well in the tourism sector. Therefore, there must be other indicators of the issue with respect to the industry.

Sir, in this regard, let us look at some of the other indicators that could possibly be used. The revenue yield within the hotel sector has declined as a result of September 11, 2001. Therefore, we understand the importance of the Civil Aviation Amendment which is to ensure that there is a greater level of security at the airport and to ensure that we do not suffer any further damage as a consequence of terrorist acts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can therefore understand the amendment being brought to this Chamber this morning but let it not be said that 'pompasetting' on the issue of airlift would mean any substantial gain in the industry in the absence of an entity such as the Barbados Tourism Authority to be able to provide the necessary marketing plans and programmes and to execute them in such a way that they can redound to the benefit of the industry. Therefore, you cannot separate civil aviation from the Barbados Tourism Authority because airlift alone will not guarantee us any major benefit or substantial gain in the tourism sector.

Sir, I have a genuine concern with respect to the existing staff at the Barbados Tourism Authority and its experience in delivering the kinds of outputs that we need at this point in time. I have no problem with their capability in terms of their academic qualifications but I have concerns because this industry requires experience. Sir, over the last four to five years we have lost in excess of 100 years of experience within the tourism sector as a direct consequence of square pegs being put in round holes. I well remember being castigated for asking whether or not a particular individual had the marketing skills with respect to tourism as opposed to public relation skills with respect to the Barbados Water Authority.

Sir, these are two completely different issues. A man who does a good job in the area of service and making sure that the water mains are well-kept and that the customer concerns are taken care of is not a marketing person. The very individual to whom I refer at the time has now departed the shores of the Barbados Tourism Authority. It was indicated to me that he was a recommendation from on high and was not sought through any real process. At the time, it was said that I was unfair to make certain comments about the individual, but all I was inquiring of was his training and experience with respect to the area of marketing and not with respect to the area of public relations.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I therefore want to continue on this course because we are hearing a lot of talk about the success of the industry and a lot of discussion with respect

to how well tourism is doing. Sir, I think that the Minister of Tourism and International Transport honestly knows, as is being said by hoteliers, that the industry is not performing as we would wish. The GEMS of Barbados has certainly failed to deliver. It was extremely expensive to provide a room under the GEMS of Barbados and then what we had were highly discounted rates that only serve to compete against other small hoteliers but has not delivered to the tourism product in Barbados. This is not my finding. This is the finding of major small hoteliers in Barbados who are on the airwaves and in the daily Press, making comments with respect to the true performance of the industry.

11.20 a.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I understand the question of the airport and making it better but only this morning in his speech, the Honourable Minister said that we have already spent \$81 million and that the project has only reached a 58 per cent completion. Sir, by extrapolation, therefore, it is going to cost in excess of \$160 million if we have the one-to-one correlation.

Sir, the Minister has also said that the project is now four to six months behind time but he has never said whether or not this delay has been translated into dollars and cents, and I think that we in Parliament require that kind of information. Is it the case that a delay of six months has, in fact, meant an increase in spending on the part of Government on this project? Is it going to mean that since only 58 per cent of the project is completed that by the time we finish the entire project, there would be a further six months of delay, meaning that the entire project would be about one year behind time? Sir, I think it is fair to draw that kind of inference because we have not been provided with the information by the Minister of Tourism and International Transport. We are only half-way through the project and it is six months delayed, so therefore by the time it is fully completed, it would be an entire year and what would that year mean in terms of the efficiency of our finance? What would be the implication of the overall project? This is something that has to be dealt with.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, more importantly, the staff at the airport needs to be told what would happen to them in the not-too-distant future, with respect to the proposed company that has to be established. Would their terms and conditions be better? Would they be worse? Would they be sent to other parts of the Public Service? Would it require less staff to operate the airport? What would be the implications for one's constituents who are, in fact, employed at the airport? Sir, this has not been outlined and the reason why I wish to make this comment is that there is a current situation at the National Conservation Commission in which staff members were taken from that Board and carried to the Caves of Barbados and are not now certain about their future within the organisation of the Caves of Barbados. Another issue is

that they have experienced a decline in their terms and conditions, having been seconded to the Caves of Barbados, which is another tourism entity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the other thing which is of greatest concern is the fact that under the proposed programme of converting casual workers to permanent workers by this Government, many of the workers who were, in fact, seconded to the Caves of Barbados have not become permanent members of the Public Service and, therefore, they would have been seconded at conditions hoping that they would, in fact, have derived benefits, only now to find that they are not benefitting as a result of the measures of this Government in making casual workers become permanent workers. Therefore, they continue not to know what their future is really.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that would have implications also for staff members at the airport, who may have to be switched to a company and, therefore, are not sure what their terms and conditions would be, in the event that it actually happens, and it does seem that it will happen.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we have not had any report on to date is whether or not the lucrative package which was to be offered to the Chief Executive Officer is still on the cards, whether or not a Chief Executive Officer of the airport would be paid the kind of lucrative salary that was being bandied about in Barbados sometime last year. No one has yet come back to report to the people of Barbados or to this Honourable House with respect to the terms and conditions under which a Chief Executive Officer would be hired, and no one knows whether or not there is still contemplation of filling that post.

Sir, there was, in fact, a serious outcry across the length and breadth of Barbados when it was suggested that the Chief Executive Officer of the new company would have been given a substantial remuneration with which we had all disagreed, and no one could have justified it at the time.

Sir, at this stage, we have not been told whether or not that person would be hired. What happened is that out of the clear blue sky, a Barbadian who works at the Miami airport came to Barbados and made comments about whether or not in the circumstances that package was appropriate. When it was calculated, even in United States of America dollars, it was established that the post being offered at the airport, a similar type was paying in excess of what was being offered at Miami airport. Sir, and no one could have justified it.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Misleading! The evidence was made available to the people of Barbados. The evidence was

put into the public's domain. We heard of the lucrative package. We have not been told since whether or not there has been any revision. We do not know and, therefore, we need to be told the truth with respect to that particular posting, and more importantly what would be the plight of the security guards at the airport; what would be the plight of the red caps at the airport; what would be the plight of the janitors. These are all serious matters that have to be addressed if, indeed, our civil aviation is to come up to marks.

Sir, importantly too, since the emphasis would be on security, we should be told what are the kinds of security plans that would be put in place in order to execute and to enforce the amendments that are being made to the Civil Aviation Act, Cap. 123A. These are the kinds of issues that we would like to see being raised in this debate. These are the kinds of concerns that we are going to express.

Let us not again get into a situation, as has happened at the seaport, where when we raised issues which were authentic and genuine, we were given impressions that were not correct and when we brought the necessary information here to show that there was, in fact, an attempt to privatise the seaport, we were told that we were lying, only to reveal the evidence in the appendix of a budget speech that clearly showed Government's intention with respect to the seaport.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we wish to ask, therefore, what is Government's intention with respect to the overall management of the airport at this point in our history. There is no doubt that there are concerns with the overall tourism sector but Mr. Deputy Speaker, I took the latitude because it was given to me by the speaker on the Other Side, to speak to some concerns that we have in relation to this legislation, knowing fully well that it focuses mainly on questions of violence, the suppression of unlawful acts of violence at airports serving international civil aviation; knowing fully well that it was inspired out of the desire to do something about tourism, not only within Barbados but across the Caribbean.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know the importance of these issues but to have confined ourselves to a simple cryptic treatment of this issue, without understanding the implications for our aeroplanes and by extension the implications for the tourism sector, would have been to deny the Minister an opportunity to do what he does with glee, that is, to get up and to give the impression that the industry is now in its most successful period ever in Barbados, when the Minister knows only too well that on the basis of information other than tourists arrivals, that the industry is not in its heyday.

11.30 a.m.

Sir, we are yet to return to the halcyon days of 1989 in tourism when we not only got substantial arrivals but the

yield in the tourism sector was substantially greater than it is now. We only need to ask the workers in the industry whether they are enjoying a better time in terms of their take-home pay than they did ten years ago.

Sir, the truth is that they are not enjoying a better take-home pay and if you were to measure the overall performance of the industry, you cannot confine it to tourism arrivals alone but you have to look at the profitability of the industry. It is clear, according to all the reports, that the profitability within the hotel industry is not what it was in earlier times. Sir, this is not a position that I hold but has been cited by the players in the industry.

If you look at the question of revenue yield per room in the industry you would have to conclude that this is not the highest point of the industry.

If you look at the overall operational cost of the industry, it has gone beyond what it was twelve years ago and, therefore, it cannot be the high time of the industry.

If you look at the ancillary services provided within the industry, you would have to conclude that this is not the high point.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have to admit that the Barbados economy is one-legged and depends more on tourism now than in any other period because the other areas of our economy have suffered. The international business sector, the manufacturing sector, sugar and agricultural sectors have all suffered and, therefore, the overall capacity of the economy has declined over the last ten years under the Barbados Labour Party Administration and we now have an economy that is more dependant on the tourism sector than it was ten years ago. Sir, this is the only thing that can be concluded and drawn from the Minister's information. When it was said that Barbados is standing on a one-legged economy, the Government tried to deny it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while we are hearing from the Minister in his usual language of success and confidence about the best ever performance and the highest level of arrival and prosperity, the reality is that the industry is no longer what it was. Sir, one can attribute part of the difficulty to the experience of September 11, 2001 but we should not continue to fool ourselves that the tourism industry is at its highest level of performance in Barbados.

Sir, the Minister on the 19th December, 1999 at Grand Barbados Hotel indicated to the people of Barbados that he was not a man of numbers, that he could not assess the performance of the industry strictly in terms of arrivals and that he had to look at other indicators and the robustness of the industry. Sir, now the Honourable Member for St. Michael South is using those same indicators to give the

impression that the industry is at its highest level in the history of Barbados but that is not true, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have concerns that there are some marketing tools that we have used for the last seven years that ought to be, at this time, giving some kind of return on the investment. Sir, if we want to fill airplanes then the Jazz Festival has to start yielding its own real revenue. Sir, I do not mind the man who benefits from it but when I raised the matter, the individual who benefits gave the impression that the Jazz Festival brings a substantial return to Barbados but nobody was able to identify in numbers or revenue what the festival does for Barbados. We know that we spend an awful lot of money to bring a few artistes who are not high profile because most of the time they are artistes who did well ten or fifteen years ago and cannot draw anybody to Barbados.

Sir, it was said in the Press this morning by someone from Canada that the Government ought to spend more time and devote more finances to promoting local artistes abroad. Sir, it is my belief that rather than put all this emphasis on the Jazz Festival to spend millions of dollars on individuals who have not had a record published for several years and have been wiped off the charts in North America that we should be expending that money on local artistes....

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I have allowed the Honourable Member to rant and rave but he is misleading the House again. The Government of Barbados does not spend millions of dollars on the Jazz Festival, that is incorrect. The Jazz Festival is a private sector event and, like with other events, the Barbados Tourism Authority gives some level of marketing support to the event.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, last year, the Government of Barbados through the Barbados Tourism Authority did not contribute more than \$75 000 to the Jazz Festival. The Honourable Member is making the public believe that we put millions into the Jazz Festival. Sir, as an entity, we are not responsible for putting on the Jazz Festival or promoting it.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is known that the Barbados Tourism Authority puts millions of dollars into what was the Best of Barbados programme which is not yielding any major benefits at all. Sir, the Best of Barbados is lacking in marketing creativity and has not delivered because a lot of its energy has been spent in subsidising airlifts rather than promoting the real product. This has not only been my criticism but the criticism of the players in the industry. In fact, a well-known hotelier makes it his business to talk continuously about the Best of Barbados package and what it has not done for Barbados. He brings information to demonstrate what he is saying and has clearly shown that the Best of Barbados package has not

yielded the benefit for Barbados that it should have. Sir, he is the person to be criticised because he is the one directly involved in Peach & Quiet and knows only too well what is happening within the industry. It was supposed to be a one-off package and it is now being used extensively and the junior Minister of Tourism, who is projecting the industry very well as compared to the senior Minister, would know that what I am saying is correct and that the Best of Barbados package was not supposed to be a long-term strategy but a strategy.

11.40 a.m.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member could you address the Chair?

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in all seriousness, I am concerned that while we have an opportunity to increase our airlift, we do not have the necessary competencies and experience at the Barbados Tourism Authority, given the exodus of individuals over the last few years. The Chief Executive Officer is now about to go to the FirstCaribbean Bank.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: We have fired Hugh Foster, Hugh Riley, Brenda Edwards and Yvonne Hall.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: We even fired Miss Yvonne Hall who had done an excellent job in the United Kingdom and it is well-known that she did an excellent job. I do not know why they are reacting like this. My information is always accurate.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: This is why I expect not only the Chief Executive Officer to depart. In the not too distant future we may see other departures within the high ranks of the tourism structure.

Sir, let me say that Miss Jennifer Barrow...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I gave you a lot of latitude with regards to calling names. I would like you to desist from that.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Jennifer Barrow made a sterling effort in London and was removed from that responsibility and replaced by other people. She is now a Director for Marketing for Elegant Hotels in Barbados.

Sir, the organisation is, in fact, losing its capacity to do adequately the marketing necessary to ensure that the increased airlift is taken care of.

Therefore, I am saying that while I can understand the amendment and support the Civil Aviation Amendment, I also wish to impress upon the Minister of Tourism that just to boast about increased airlift is not going to translate into any increased arrivals in the absence of an effective marketing programme to guarantee that we fill the seats on the aircraft. If that is so, then the primary institution for marketing the product in Barbados, which is the Barbados Tourism Authority, cannot continue to hemorrhage the way in which it has over the last five years.

In fact, that offers a significant critique of the authority. A critique that is well intentioned. A critique that I hope will be absorbed by the Minister in planning for the next two to three years because there must be something fundamentally wrong at the Barbados Tourism Authority if in a so-called period of success, if in a so-called period of high confidence that the Chief Executive Officer of the organisation could now be running from the organisation at a time when we are supposed to be experiencing our highest level of tourist arrivals. Then there must be something wrong structurally within the organisation called the Barbados Tourism Authority. That is a fact and it has to be addressed because we cannot continue to put the kind of resources into the Barbados Tourism Authority and expect that we are going to get the necessary delivery if the experienced staff members are being pushed out of the system repeatedly. Sir, that is a major concern which I have.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all Barbadians thought that since the Barbados Tourism Authority was supposed to be the centre of controversy previously that by now, ten years later, we would have settled that organisation's structure, the staffing of the organisation and be able to get it to focus on its mandate to get a proper marketing programme in place. That is all that we are saying on This Side.

Sir, I close by saying that I am supporting the amendment. It has obvious implications for our safety. It has implications for us to deal in a small way with the issue of tourism but it is essential. Let us not fool ourselves that every time we get an opportunity to speak about tourism that we can gloat about its performance and not understand the constraints and concerns that are obvious within the industry.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to support this Bill which speaks to the central issue of ensuring

that Barbados joins the community of nations in ensuring that air transportation continues to be a safe and viable means of traversing this world of ours.

Sir, the flights of which I will speak today are real flights, not flights of fancy like the last Honourable Member who spoke. I will take off with a clear flight plan, a known altitude, a predetermined flight time and a clear objective for my travel in this debate.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: I have a direct interest in any and all matters relating to civil aviation, not a casual interest like the last Honourable Member who spoke. I speak from the floor of this Parliament on the mandate of the people of Christ Church East. There are parts of the constituency of Christ Church West Central which are directly affected by matters relating to civil aviation. In fact, in the region of Thornbury Hill and Scarborough, where Christ Church East meets Christ Church West Central, that you and I have a direct interest, there must be real concern in matters relating to safety of air traffic. To the extent that there is a clear and present danger, as evidenced by the events of September 11, where aircraft can be used as weapons of mass destruction, then it is clear that Barbados has to pull its weight.

Sir, we need not even have waited until then because it was in 1976 there was the crash of the Cubana aircraft, just outside of the territorial limits of Barbados, a result of a bomb being placed on that aircraft which was clearly a terrorist incident. As peaceful and tranquil a place as Barbados may happen to be, matters relating to aviation safety are critical to us.

Sir, this Civil Aviation (Montreal Convention) protocol is not an abstract matter. It is not a matter of merely lying prostrate before international organisations to implement concepts and mandates that are foreign to us. Implementation of these enhanced security measures are, indeed, vital to our strategic interest.

11.50 a.m.

In fact, Sir, during the previous year, 2003, there was a 5 per cent increase in the level of passenger traffic through the Grantley Adams International Airport. In November last year, there were 30 744 passengers more than the previous November and for December, there were 42 236 passengers more than the previous December. This was phenomenal growth but for the year in total, we had 2 130 333 passengers passing through our airport, and this is expected to grow rapidly.

Consider, as well, Sir, the preparation and execution of the World Cup 2007, what a significant larger number of

persons that would be passing through our airport, and we could see why this particular measure is so important.

Sir, as I said, in relation to air safety, the people of Christ Church East have a direct interest. In fact, planes coming into Barbados usually approach over Oistins, pass Thornbury Hill, right at the start of the constituency of Christ Church East, going over Gibbons Terrace, Parish Land, Thyme Bottom and onto the runway. Part of the redevelopment work which is going on at the Airport is an effort to enhance the safety of persons, living on the flight path. In addition, Sir, as you would no doubt be aware, matters relating to airport security also are important.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, the Minister of Tourism and International Transport, for being able to attract the greatest number of additions, as far as international airline traffic is concerned. Sir, of any Minister in history, with the economic downturn around the world, even after the concerns with civil aviation after September 11, 2001, he has been able to attract new airlines and have existing airlines increase the number of the flights to and from this country. Sir, at the end of the day, his ability to get his job done, will depend on whether the Federal Aviation Authority in the United States or the Airport Authority of the United Kingdom, continue to allow those aircraft to travel and therefore, Sir, these measures are very critical.

In fact, Sir, many of the people in my constituency, who benefit economically from the presence of the Airport, such as taxi men, maids, redcaps, and those who run successful business establishments adjacent to the airport, like Frankies and Pugs – wonderful places, Sir, for turkey wings and other culinary excitement – their safety is also put at risk by the presence of an airport. Therefore, Sir, matters relating to safety and civil aviation are not abstract. They result in benefits for the people that I represent.

I also want to congratulate the Honourable Minister for the changes that he is making. He has responded, in a very positive way, to the need to make sure that Barbados continues to receive some of the highest international ratings. In fact, the Grantley Adams International Airport has been winning awards in the world travel industry, for being one of the best airports in the Caribbean area. I believe it has won that title three times, since the year 2000.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Sir, that is a fact. Those are not Bajans, or people paid by the Honourable Member. Those are people in the travel trade and in the civil aviation industry, but the airport authorities have not rested on their laurels. They have improved security lighting. They have

expanded close circuit TV monitoring and other forms of electronic monitoring for security purposes. They have updated their passes and access control systems to tighten security in this modern era. They have installed additional passenger screening, baggage screening and other security measures that we cannot discuss here on the Floor of this Parliament.

I want to say, though, Sir, that even today, before the completion of the work on the expansion of the Airport, all of us have been able to see and experience what is to come in the future. The new check-in facilities on the East of the Airport for American Airlines, is tasteful and comfortable. The new departure area, even under construction is better than it was before, where one can now relax in comfort in an airport.

Sir, I want to urge the Airport authorities to ensure that all other aspects move along as speedily as the expansion of the Airport terminal building, and the improvements in the comforts there. I speak especially, Sir, of those matters in the wider airport property area, which have a direct bearing on the constituents of Christ Church East.

As you know, Sir, one of the major concerns with respect to safety, both the safety of aircraft and residents, has been the fact that planes pass, even now, Sir, a mere few feet, directly over the roof tops of persons living in the flight path. Particularly, Sir, in Thyme Bottom where, if you were to stand in the road there, the wind of the wide body aircraft, may clip the hair on your head, as it makes its final approach into the Grantley Adams International Airport. Sir, if you were to stand by the last house, as you get to the sign which reads, “no stopping between these signs”, pass the vegetable stand...

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Those people are being relocated.

The fact of the matter is that this aspect of the work has gone on for too long and needs to be speeded up. It is important for the residents there, although they have been given the assurance and know what the arrangements are. Again, Sir, I must congratulate the Ministry of International Transport for being very considerate in ensuring compensation for persons who are affected. For example, those persons who already had the benefit of relocation, have been able to construct all wall houses, irrespective of the condition of the house that was to be relocated.

Therefore, already in Fairy Valley, Sir, on a lovely slope, overlooking Long Beach and Chancery Lane, there are new houses into which the residents of Fairy Valley, particularly those on the left side of the road going up to the

Regional Police Training Centre, have been relocated. The houses are well constructed. They are comfortable. There were one or two hiccups as far as the moving of one or two residents. Those residents on the left side of the road going to the Regional Police Training Centre have to be relocated. Unfortunately, there are those residents in Thyme Bottom who are still waiting to have their situation made more certain.

12.00 noon

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all I am saying is that the airport expansion project is a wonderful project, it is well conceived but in the execution there has been some element of imbalance such that the work needed to complete the relocation of residents with which they all agree is not in my estimation moving at the same pace as the expansion of the terminal building.

Therefore, the simple plea from the Member of Parliament for Christ Church East on behalf of the residents there is to ensure that speedy use is made of the \$3 million in additional funds that have been provided in the Estimates of Expenditure this year by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South to ensure that the project is completed. In fact, with the Government having provided the necessary resources, I look forward to the situation where by Christmas of this year all of those persons affected by the relocation would be able to enjoy their Christmas drinks in their new comfortable accommodation. So far some 50 per cent of the residents have already been relocated and are very comfortable. Sir, I am merely making the point that the officers at the Management and Development Unit and others concerned must move heaven and earth to make sure that by Christmas of this year the residents are settled and are comfortable. This is both for their safety and security as well as for the security of aircraft using the Grantley Adams International Airport.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one should not think that this is a frivolous or whimsical move because the safety infringement is so serious that aircraft of foreign jurisdictions could be banned from travelling to Barbados' airport if we do not make these improvements. Thankfully, Sir, work is very much well in hand.

Sir, the other issue is that the management of the airport needs to pay more careful attention to the discharge of its responsibility for the maintenance of its wider environment. As a result of the acquisition of land and the relocation of residents, there will now be larger open areas which will provide a natural safety zone for aircraft. The reality is that the two most dangerous points in flight for an aircraft are the points just before landing and just after taking off. So the area of Thyme Bottom where the aircraft are going to be landing and at Gemswick for the take-off are the two most serious danger points. Sir, I cannot agree that the condition in which the areas find themselves now where with

a little rain bush grows on Cow Pasture – Cow Pasture is well-known now in Barbadian poetry by the fact that Barbados' leading poet has an interest in the area. Sir, for those who do not know the area well, Cow Pasture is in Thyme Bottom. You know the area well, Sir.

Sir, the reality is that the land which is now under the control of the airport has become a dumping ground for construction debris which is not put there by the airport authority. The reality is that with the relocation of houses from the area, there is no longer the kind of community surveillance which would have prevented Cow Pasture and other now open areas from becoming waste lands with an overgrowth of vegetation. Therefore, the airport authority needs to put a programme in place to protect the interest and to restore the pristine nature of the environment for those residents who remained living in the wider area.

Sir, at the end of the day while the airport may just be a transit point for Barbadians and visitors to get on and get off an aeroplane and get where they are going, there are people for whom the area around the airport is home and we must never forget that. Sir, I know that I can have the assurance of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South that he would do all that is necessary. The fact that the funds have been provided in this year's Estimates are to me clear enough testimony of that fact. Sir, I just wanted to make sure these matters are read into the record of the House.

Sir, there is one other matter bordering on the corporate and the community responsibility of the airport on which I think I need to speak. There is also the similar situation in which there used to be a playing field which was used by a Club in the area that was located near to Terminal Two, the first airport building. Sir, that is the area which is now being used for the construction of the new cargo facility. Construction of the playing facilities on the other side of the road has already started. In fact, the playing field is now completed and the members of the club there are preparing to play cricket on it during the course of this season. Adjacent to that is a football field which will be made ready in time for the next football season. The football field at the airport has been the home of the Christ Church Football League and their competition for many years. Sir, in the initial stages the redevelopment of those two playing fields was being handled by the Airport Authority. However, that has been changed and it is now under the responsibility of the National Sports Council. As Minister of Sports I would want to give those with an interest in the area the assurance that steps would be taken to bring the construction or the development of those fields to completion.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the cricket field is ready and the football field is in the works.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that area will not only provide for the cricket field and the football field but also a multi-purpose pavilion with changing and meeting facilities as well as hard courts. Therefore, this airport expansion and relocation have not yielded just a replacement field which is just a small field by the Roundabout but having relocated on the other side of the road they are having a large cricket field, a large football field, indoor facilities as well as the hard courts.

Sir, I am not sure if the Honourable Member for St. Philip West knows where it is because I am not sure if he knows his constituency, but it is behind Frankie's. It used to be a part of Christ Church East but with some realignment of boundaries it has now fallen temporarily into the hands of the Honourable Member for St. Philip West. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reality is that in relation to Christ Church, the area around the airport is a major catchment. It is a natural location for a major sporting complex in the Christ Church area, easily accessible to persons in Walronds, Charnocks, Gemswick, St. Philip; Parish Land, Fairy Valley, throughout Christ Church. Anyone who can get to the airport to travel can get to the airport to enjoy their sporting facilities.
12.10 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the Airport Relocation Project, we have taken the opportunity, not only to enhance passengers safety or passenger comfort, to increase passenger through-put, or to relocate persons and give them better housing and amenities both at Fairy Valley and Coverley, but we have taken the opportunity to improve the sporting infrastructure in the constituency. Therefore, over the course of the next six months or so, I look forward to the completion of the facilities there and in other parts of Christ Church.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in closing I want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael South for making adequate financial provision in this year's Estimates, to ensure that the work being done on the Grantley Adams International Airport also includes the completion of those aspects of the work that directly affect the people of the Christ Church East. The people of Fairy Valley and of Thyme Bottom thank him and we look forward to the speedy completion of this work.

Sir, they all look forward to the enhanced safety of being free from being directly under the noise of aircraft, from the threat relating to any early or premature landings of aircraft, and from things of that nature. Sir, Barbados, as a nation, stands to benefit from being compliant with full international regulations and, therefore, protecting our strategic interest as we move through an enhanced tourism season, as we move through to the World Cup, 2007, in the full and blessed assurance that our civil aviation facilities are second to none in this part of the world.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I commend this Bill to the House.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I listened to the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South in this particular debate and based on his presentation, anybody would believe that all matters are rosy and comfortable at the airport, particularly under the new corporatised arrangement that this Government ushered in some years ago as part of its new legalese, to give the impression that it was doing something, when, in fact, it was doing nothing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government has created an awful anomaly in relation to company law that is unknown anywhere else in the Commonwealth where company law, as practiced in Barbados, is common. Government has created a situation where it has established private companies to run what previously were either statutory corporations or other kinds of para-statal organisations and, under legislation, has given Ministers the power, not as shareholders but as Ministers, to give directions to the Board of Directors of these so-called private companies.

I hope that all of the directors of these Boards have indemnities because very often Ministers take it upon themselves to meddle and to intervene in Statutory Boards. Sir, the whole reason for setting up private companies was to give persons the authority to be more transparent and efficient. I know there are some persons who do not like the word transparent. That means honesty. I heard on the radio this week, a Minister complaining that he does not like either the word accountability or transparency. I heard that with my own ears but I like honesty and clarity.

I believe that in this day and age, if the purpose of so-called corporatisation is to ensure that there is greater efficiency, better streamlining of operations, and all of the other fancy talk that we have heard from Honourable Members on That Side, who, one gets the impression were twiddling their fingers until the Honourable Member for St. Michael South became Minister. We heard that all of these changes were going to usher in a new era of public accountability and transparency, and then lo and behold, in the middle of that, there is this anomaly in Barbados where a Minister of Government is able to give directions to a Board of Directors of a company established under the Companies Act, where the responsibilities of those directors are very clearly defined.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on that occasion when these things were introduced, I begged the then Honourable Member for Christ Church South, God rests his soul, to intervene and to counsel his members on it. Sir, the Honourable Member had remained silent because on That Side, there is a perception that Ministers should have

complete paramountcy; that they are the fonts of all knowledge; and that all experience and authority derives from them. That is why there would be an anomaly like that being created in Barbados where men who have the experience, the qualities and the abilities are put to run an entity but then Government puts a clause in the legislation, authorising a Minister to give directions to the Board of a general nature.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, those directions are never laid in this Parliament, therefore, the Minister could very well come up with a policy directive, and I am saying that by this debate today, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South has come up with policy directives that have been communicated to the Boards that he has established, and that these policy directives, whether verbal or written, which are given to those companies in undertaking their mandate, are absent from any consideration by this Parliament.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before this debate is over, I am challenging the Honourable Member to tell this Parliament what he has told the Board of Directors of the Grantley Adams International Airport Authority, the Board of Directors of the Barbados Port Authority, or all of those entities for which he is the responsible Minister.

Sir, that is what policy making is about. It is not about fancy language. It is not about extolling the virtues of an increase in airlift. It is not even about regurgitating the effusions of your supporters who are placed in strategic positions. It is about telling us the direction in which the Minister has mandated the Board of Directors under this awful anomaly, to undertake their duties in relation to the entities that are under their control.

Sir, in this Parliament some years ago, it was announced that the Chief Executive Officer to be appointed at the Airport would have been receiving a fantastic \$500 000 salary.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It was announced!

Asides.

12.20 p.m.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. It was never announced in this Parliament that anyone was going to get half of a million dollars. The Honourable Member is used to saying these things, then he withdraws when they are already in the public domain. Sir, the Honourable Member does this deliberately and has been doing this too often.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central has

demonstrated on this occasion that he has more intelligence than the Honourable Member for St. Michael South. I never said that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South announced it. It was announced on This Side as a result of a newspaper article. Sir, I never said that it was announced by the Other Side. Imagine the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, now relegated to the Backbench, having to explain a simple and minute point on which the Honourable Member for St. Michael South is detaining us from getting to the substance of this debate.

Sir, it was announced and a Board said they had the right to do it if they wanted to and the then Honourable Member for Christ Church South, God rest his soul again, got up and said that, in his view, no Board which was under the hands of any Minister could have the right to get up and say that it could appoint somebody in Barbados and give it such a nonsensical and absurd salary but, Sir, it was being contemplated.

Sir, you cannot enter the precincts of the airport in Barbados without being detained either by a security officer, being stopped by a member of the ancillary staff or being counselled by persons working for private entities which have contract or tender operations in the airport who do not raise some element of concern, fright or fear, about the manner in which the restructuring in the airport is taking place without giving due contemplation to their status to the length of period to which they have been working at the airport, for the yeoman service they have given that has ended up making our airport, according to the Minister, one after another, the best airport in the region since they came to office. Sir, that is their boast.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Only since they came to office. When the Democratic Labour Party built that airport, there were not even airports to compare it to. It was pointless even carrying out such an analysis, that is a fact, it was foresight, ingenuity and creativity. Sir, if it is the best airport in the Caribbean, then it means that the people who worked in that airport should be given due credit, compassion and understanding in relation to their status, rights and obligations as a result of restructuring. Sir, this Government carries out restructuring programmes under the guise of greater efficiency and then gives Ministers a backdoor entry to meddle and interfere in those entities but does not give the workers in those entities who they say build the enterprises the opportunity....

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He is suffering from political Alzheimer's and amnesia...

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House when he says that the airport was built by the Government of the Democratic Labour Party. The airport was built in 1978/1979 by the Government of the Barbados Labour Party and the Honourable Member said that because he knew that the Members Sitting in the House are new.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has never been any doubt about the genesis, conception, funding or copyright to the Grantley Adams International Airport. I am glad that the Honourable Member for St. George has spoken now because there will be no intervention from him for the next four weeks and it can now be recorded that something was said by him this month to earn his keep.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not hear a ruling. The Honourable Member for St. John said that the airport was built by the Government of the Democratic Labour Party. It is not true and I would wish to hear a ruling on that.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, the airport staff....

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I am again saying that the airport was not built by the Government of the Democratic Labour Party. The Honourable Member said it was, he is misleading the House and I would like to hear a ruling on it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. John, please proceed.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, thank you. I am concerned that staff at the airport at all levels....

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of privilege. I believe that the rights of a Member are being infringed. An Honourable Member of this Chamber, has risen, made a point of order and has asked for a ruling. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is up to you to rule that it is not a point of order but a ruling must be given, particularly given the fact that the Honourable Member who spoke is the most senior Member of this Chamber. The Honourable Member who is speaking wants to goad and reduce this debate to referring to people about political Alzheimer's but that is where his head is at this point in time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if he wants to carry on in that way, we may have to look as well at his behaviour but we need a ruling even if it is against the Honourable Member.

Clearly, what happened to him last night is still in his blood system today.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. John, please proceed.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker....

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of privilege. I asked for the privileges of an Honourable Member of this Chamber to be protected. An Honourable Member has asked for a ruling. It is the right of an Honourable Member in this Chamber to have such a ruling, whether the ruling is negative or positive, Mr. Deputy Speaker.
12.30 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The ruling of this Chair is that the Honourable Member for St. John has a right to speak and as far as I am concerned whatever he said could have been challenged. As far as I am concerned he has a right to say what he wants to as long as he does not say something unparliamentary or he is not imputing improper motives.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, a specific request was made of the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I have made my point.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of privilege. An Honourable Member's rights are being infringed in this Chamber. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you feel that there is no point of order then you must say that there is no point of order but to say that the Honourable Member can say what he wants so long as he is not saying something unparliamentary, is still to infringe the rights of the Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take serious umbrage to the behaviour of the Honourable Member for St. John and I am asking, as Leader of the House, that this House be suspended once you rule for us to continue, and the Honourable Member can continue his speech thereafter.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, the point of order which was raised by the Honourable Member for St. George South has been taken and I will now ask the Honourable Member for St. John to proceed.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of privilege, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am asking for a clarification of what it means for you to say that a point has been taken.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I would like a clarification to ensure that Honourable Members' rights are not being infringed on this point of privilege. I do not understand, as Leader of the House, what is meant by the point has been taken. I know that the point or order is either in order or it is out of order.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This Chair has already made a ruling and that is final. Proceed Honourable Member.

Asides.

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

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you.

Mr. L. R. TULL: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rose earlier on a point of order and I have heard a lot of exchanges since then but I have not yet heard what is Your Honour's ruling. Sir, you said that you have made a ruling and all that I am asking is that I am informed of what that ruling is.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me repeat. I stated that your point of order has already been taken.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: On a point of order. I, like my colleague from St. George South, have been in this Honourable Chamber, not for the length of time that he has been but would like to know what is meant by the statement that the Honourable Member for St. George South point of order has been taken. In the context of Your Honour giving a ruling, I certainly would like to know what that means.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have no point of order. A ruling has already been made.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of privilege. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the record is that the money was borrowed by the Democratic Labour Party prior to losing the Government of 1976. Sir, it is like going to the bank, borrowing a loan to construct a house...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: If it is going to be said in this Honourable House that the Democratic Labour Party was not instrumental in building the Grantley Adams International Airport in the 1970s, then the Barbados Labour Party cannot claim the ABC Highway because it was the Democratic Labour Party that executed their plan.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have made your point Honourable Member. Please, proceed Honourable Member for St. John.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. At last...

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. John made a statement that the Democratic Labour Party was responsible for the building of the Grantley Adams International Airport and subsequently I heard the Honourable Member for St. George South make a point that it was not built by the Democratic Labour Party. In view of that, it seems to me that if the Honourable Member for St. John was misleading the House, then it should be struck from the record.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to move that this Honourable House be suspended until 1.45 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. John, you cannot refer to any Honourable Member as he or she.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, if I give way the Honourable Member can get up. Is the Honourable Member asking me to give way?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. John would you be willing to give away so that we can go to lunch?

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Who is asking me that, Sir? Is it the Chair? Since it is a request from you, Sir, I will give way.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, Leader of Government Business.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to move that the House be suspended until 1.45 p.m. today.

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

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 1.45 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.
12.38 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

Before this House was suspended, I said that I would review the decision which was taken earlier. I have accepted the Point of Order that was made by the Honourable Member for St. George South.

The Honourable Member for St. John did not break any rules. He did not say anything that imputes improper motives, neither did he say anything unparliamentary. This is my ruling.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, prior to the interruptions, I was making the point and I reiterate it that the so-called process or corporatisation which was to bring on stream new levels of efficiency and new approaches to governance in Barbados has, by and large in almost every instance where it has been undertaken by this Government, been heavy handed and oppressive, and had a very negative impact on the productivity and the morale of the workforce, in those particular departments.

I was making the point that it is hardly possible to pass through the Airport in Barbados, without people from almost every section of the ancillary staff, security officers, red caps, people who operate shops under tender, *et cetera*, raising concerns about the changes which are about to come upon them, and the lack of fairness and consultation.

Sir, all of them know the so-called options that the Minister puts, such as, if you do not accept the arrangement, you revert to some position in the public service. Everybody who has reverted, in those circumstances their career path comes to an end, and they remain stuck in those positions until they retire, because there is a sense in which they get victimised by the process. They go back into a department in which they are not easily accepted and, because they did not comply and stood up for their rights, they are very often left to waste away in some innocuous position in Barbados.

Therefore, you are not putting any option to anybody. You are not creating better terms and conditions of service for them. You are in fact reducing the level of security which they currently enjoy and very often they often lose benefits in the process. Sir, because of that fear of being victimised, and the pressure which this Government exerts from its

satellites within the various organisations which either represent workers or influence the decision of workers, people are often forced to make decisions which are against their best interest. That is the Barbados in which we live in the year 2004.

Sir, the impression would be given in this debate that the workers have been brought along in the process. These are the same workers that made our airport the best airport in the world for some on that Side, but by other standards the best airport in the Caribbean. The same workers that brought it to that point are now being told that they are not good enough to continue that process and therefore they either have to accept their terms and conditions or they would find alternative employment for them in a similar position within the public service of Barbados. That is one area.
2.00 p.m.

Sir, I have noticed as a secondary issue that more and more complaints are coming from returning nationals who are being victimised and with sanction by some departments of Government. They are finding that the process of resettling in Barbados has become more and more difficult through the Government chopping and changing its policies week after week and that the very programme that was put in place to facilitate their return is basically being destroyed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Facilitation Unit for returning nationals was a complete gimmick. Once the gimmick was over and it had achieved its objective, the Government in 1999 then abandoned the process and is now placing conditions that are more onerous and procedures that are more time-consuming than those which existed prior to 1999 on returning nationals.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people have items stuck in our ports of entry for months on end and in some cases for years as a result of the failure of Government departments either to make decisions in relation to concessions to which they are entitled or to hear appeals in a timely manner. So that Facilitation Unit was another smokescreen, another trick, that was played out not on the people living in Barbados but on Barbadians living overseas. That is what makes it so bitter a pill to swallow. Therefore, I am calling on the Minister responsible for the various ports of entry in Barbados to ensure that no further victimisation is meted out to returning nationals simply for standing up for their rights which this Government said it was giving them to concessions, to facilitation, to faster processing and to special arrangements which would facilitate their swift resettling in Barbados.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. There is no evidence of any functionary of Government

victimising any returning national at any port of entry in Barbados. The Honourable Member should not be allowed to make statements like that without substantiating them. He just cannot get up in the House and make those kinds of sweeping statements over and over.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have made your point of order.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, it is my view that there are returning nationals who are being victimised. The Honourable Member can say what he wants, there is still democracy in this country. The Honourable Members on the Other Side may not like it but it is still a democracy. I have rights in here. All of us on this Side have rights. Members of the public have rights. Returning nationals have rights.

The Honourable Member must not assume that everything I say in here is all that is happening in Barbados because there are people out there who are being victimised. If the Honourable Member wants to ignore it and remain in his ivory tower detached from what is happening on the ground in Barbados, so be it, but he cannot force me to go along with the codswallops that I have to hear from Ministers of Government giving the impression that all is rosy, that procedures are being streamlined and that things are swifter and then you can still hear that returning nationals have things stuck in the ports of entry for months in this country as a result of a failure by designated officers to make decisions to facilitate the entry of their items into Barbados.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have two more minutes.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It is the job of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South as a Minister to find out what is happening in Barbados. What makes it worse is that some of the people are from his constituency and he does not even know it.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, safety in Barbados is a relative issue. This Government knows more than anything else that there is only so much that we can spend on securing our borders. There is no point fooling ourselves that we are complying with any international standards in relation to what is required by the larger governments of the world, particularly the United States of America, in relation to safety and security at our airport. We had this debate already in here and at that time the Government was saying that some of these requests are unreasonable. I want to know which of the requests or demands that were made of Barbados that this Government rejected and which they accepted. I need to know that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because at that time much hue and cry was made of the fact that previous governments used to lie down and allow people to

do as they like in Barbados, that when the Americans issue their edict, we accepted it hook, line and sinker and when the International Monetary Fund said something, that we laid prostrate and allowed them to rape this country. All of that was said on that Side.

Sir, what is remarkable is that I am told that the vast majority of recommendations that were made that this Government was railing against had been recommendations that were implemented. This Government railed even against the parking arrangements and the pick up and drop off arrangements at the airport and said it could never accept those arrangements, but almost every one of the recommendations that were made have been followed in the new design of the current airport.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is about to expire.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Sir, and I hope that you have made accommodation for the several interruptions that I received in my presentation. I am only asking, Sir, but I am most grateful to you in any event.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise also to speak on this particular Bill. I want to say from the outset that if the number of aeroplanes flying into a country could increase the revenue of a country based on percentages alone, this country Barbados would have been the most successful country in the world. There is no doubt, Sir, that we have seen many aeroplanes, some familiar to Barbados and some not familiar to Barbados, coming into this country. Sir, at the end of the day, it is not the number of aeroplanes coming to a particular country, it is the number of passengers on those aeroplanes that will matter. What I fear is that the outfall is going to be tremendous for a country like Barbados when you can have a situation where you are able to attract a large number of aeroplanes to come to your country, but at the same time you do not have a plan in place to bring the passengers to be associated with the number of aeroplanes coming in.

Sir, some time back I mentioned that if the Minister of Finance was to continue to budget using the statistics given by the Minister of Tourism and International Transport that the Minister of Finance as well as the owner of American Airlines would find themselves in trouble. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is no doubt that the increase in flights into Barbados has had an adverse effect on the major carriers coming into Barbados. There is also no doubt that anybody travelling in the peak period, which is February, would have recognised that major airlines were having flights coming into Barbados but one could not find the matching numbers of passengers to suit those flights coming in.
2.10 p.m.

Sir, based on the statistics that are brought to this Parliament, it is clear to me that if we have the increase in capacity as it relates to airlines, if that were converted into passengers, we would have had an occupancy problem in Barbados and would have had to be fighting to find someplace to source our people.

Sir, even though we have these numbers of aeroplanes coming into Barbados, even though we have homeporting, the capacity that is being filled has not increased in any significant way in the hotel sector. Sir, the question is: "Are we maximising the number of flights that we are receiving in this country, or is it that we are now counting the number of flights without recognising that in the interest of the masses, that we need people and not flights. It is clear to me that this Honourable Member is interested in the number of flights coming to Barbados and not in the number of passengers coming on those flights.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is why if it is based on the number of flights and it is prorated to the number of passengers, then one should have seen a massive increase in the tourism output but it is not being seen. Therefore, the Minister of Tourism and International Transport needs to call an emergency meeting with the Barbados Tourism Authority and make them put a proper plan in place to make sure that there are enough passengers on those flights to Barbados, so that it can be beneficial to us. Sir, at the end of the day, it is not the number of flights coming into Barbados, it will be the number of passengers coming into Barbados, multiplied by the amount of money spent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have already written about this. The plan used by the Barbados Tourism Authority in sourcing...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have always respected the Honourable Member for St. James Central as being somebody and I know that he reads my columns and says that nobody reads what I write.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is clear that the programme put out by the Barbados Tourism Authority to source people to come to Barbados was wrongly structured and badly implemented.

Sir, when entering the discount market, one does not discount overseas travellers but should discount locals. What the Barbados Tourism Authority should have done is give everybody a voucher to be spent in Barbados instead of discounting the amount of money that they had to pay on their tickets in overseas hotels. In other words, they should be paid the full amount coming into Barbados but that there

be a voucher to offset the cost so that the gains could be had by both tourists and locals alike. If the Honourable Member does not understand what I am saying and needs me to explain it for him, I would advise him to consult with the Honourable Member for St. James North, who would be able to advise him while I speak.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, if one wants to maximise the full benefit of the discount for one's country, it is better to give them the voucher so that they can spend it in Barbados, instead of spending the voucher to reduce the cost of their ticket and, thereby leaving that money overseas. Sir, any tourist who understands that he or she would be given a \$500 voucher to come to Barbados, would go for it. That is why I am always saying in this House that it is clear to me that this Government is a one-footed Government and does not lend itself to looking at alternative plans. That is why the concept of opportunity cost which one would have thought would have been a good point at which to start, one which would have been familiar to the Front Bench, it is clear that it is not.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been saying in this Honourable House on many occasions that in order to expand its development, this country must appreciate that it cannot be standing on one foot. If one looks at paragraph 3 of this Bill, one would recognise that after this Bill has been passed, we would not have one airport but that we would have many airports in Barbados, and by the stroke of a pen. Everybody on That Side was before saying that it did not make sense in having more than one airport in Barbados but by the stroke of a pen, we would now have a number of them.

I want them to explain to Barbadians what is the reason that they have now understood the importance of having more than one airport in Barbados. Sir, one of the things they must tell the people of Barbados is how many dollars have been spent on revenue expenditure on the Grantley Adams International Airport and that when one looks at the opportunity cost, if that amount could have given us another airport and would have, therefore, put us in line with that of St. Lucia.

Sir, even St. Lucia and other smaller countries seem to understand the importance of tourism to their countries. If we have a major problem at our airport, and we are supposed to be a country which depends heavily on tourism, and I am not speaking to tourism at the seaport but at the airport, and we are operating on one foot. Sir, we have to create alternative opportunities in the interest of Barbados.

I am told by the Other Side that tourism is the mainstay of Barbados but when one looks at the policy of

the Barbados Labour Party, it is clear to me that they do not understand what they are talking and preaching about because they talk one thing and do another because the infrastructure is not there to match their doings. Sir, at the end of the day, it is the masses who would pay because of the Barbados Labour Party's failing to execute the plans that should have been executed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was much talk in Parliament about who built the Grantley Adams International Airport, and this is a point to which I would have to come. Sir, everybody in Barbados knows of the relationship between Canada and Barbados and the relationship between the Prime Minister of Canada and the late Right Honourable Prime Minister of Barbados, Mr. Errol Barrow. Sir, everybody knows that when Errol Barrow was Prime Minister of Barbados, he had borrowed the money from Canada to build the airport. Everybody knew that plans were drawn and left there. Sir, on the call-in programmes in this country, when the Democratic Labour Party completed programmes which were started by the Barbados Labour Party, some persons went on the call-in programmes and said that it was the Democratic Labour Party who had built the ABC Highway. Everybody in the Barbados Labour Party said it was not so, that it was the Barbados Labour Party who had built it. Sir, it seems to me that there should be no credit given to the Democratic Labour Party for doing anything in this country. Despite whatever we have done, the Barbados Labour Party claims it as theirs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the things I recall saying to my comrades, was that anytime we have a project to complete, we must make sure that it is completed because to leave it for the Barbados Labour Party to do, they would destroy it. Sir, do you know what is interesting? The Grantley Adams International Airport was started since 1976 and this is the year 2004, and it is still being worked on. They have not been able to complete it as yet. That is why I continue to write and to say that this Government is caught up in revenue expenditure and that if one were to continue keeping this Government, all one is going to get is revenue expenditure and no expansion of the country.

Sir, the Democratic Labour Party, the party that believes in capital expenditure, cannot continue to be in the wilderness because one would get real development under the Democratic Labour Party administering the affairs of this country. We cannot, in this competitive and globalised world, continue to have a Government which cares only about revenue expenditure. It must be replaced with a Government who cares about capital expansion, which allows one to increase one's capacity, increase employment, increase the inflows and increase the economy. If we continue to have one way in and out, what type of expansion would that be? Sir, there are people in the Caribbean who do not have the resources or the capacity building as we do

but they have done what we should have done a long time ago. We are lagging so badly that we now have to link with St. Lucia to appear to be doing something. Sir, the people of St. Lucia should be congratulated because there was a time when St. Lucians had to source work in Barbados but now Barbadians have to source work from St. Lucia.
2.20 p.m.

Sir, if we are talking about development, we are not increasing our capacity at the rate we should. We used to brag that we were the leaders in tourism in the Caribbean but if you look at our hotel rooms, it seems that we are stagnated and do not understand the importance of expansion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make a personal comment and I want it to be noted as such. In the beginning it was good to have a relationship with the Barbados Hilton when it had something to offer Barbados but the new hotel project which is being constructed will stop community tourism from expanding because of the way the hotel was built, people cannot access the beach as they used to because the hotel is now closer to the beach and would block the passage of the people.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member is imputing false motives to the Government and people of the Hilton Hotel. No one has built any hotel to stop community tourism or prohibit anyone from accessing the beach. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe those words should be struck from the record. Sir, we are going in the wrong direction. The Honourable Member cannot continue to make broad sweeping statements without the evidence to substantiate them and, Mr. Speaker, we have reached the point where this cannot go on because we are at Ground Zero.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, the accessibility of the people to the east of the Hilton Hotel will not be the same as when the first Hilton was built. I will also make the point that Hilton International went to Tobago, built a hotel and help financed it. A few years after they are in Barbados but we have to finance the hotel for them to run. If they are so interested in the hotel, they should have put a substantial amount of money up-front. Sir, this foolishness that exists where offshore companies are involved in the hotel industry is nonsense.

If this Government was interested in promoting the Barbadianised name of which they speak, after spending so much money they would have offered the hotel to Almond Beach, a company which has a track record in Barbados and operates at 100 per cent occupancy most of the time.

Sir, the Minister of Tourism has to understand that tourism is the main player in Barbados, that it is not his toy to play with but that the lives of the masses of people depend on it. He has to understand that when we put a building where the Hilton Hotel used to be, that it is not the right of the Government to give it to who they like but that we must maximise it, stop believing that everything foreign is good and everything local is bad.

Sir, we have a private sector that has the capabilities of managing the new site and based on the track record of Almond Beach and the fact that the present Hilton International was not keen of putting any capital in the building, they should not be given the management contract.

Sir, I am not 'bad-talking' Tobago, but when we compare the alleged contribution that was made in Tobago that is not as attractive a destination as Barbados, we would understand of what I speak.

Sir, they must understand that we are not tourism players begging for anybody to have mercy on us. We have grown and come a long way and the Minister of Tourism must understand that. We knew since the 70s that we have grown but the type of management that we have now makes me believe that we are going past the 70s. Sir, we should be going forward, not one step forward and two steps backwards.

Sir, in the 90s this Government accused the Democratic Labour Party of playing with tourism by having too many Ministers but every second a senior officer is chopped from the Barbados Tourism Authority.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is better to shift a Minister from the Ministry than to move workers from senior positions in statutory corporations.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, one minute it is a statutory corporation, the next minute it is a company, then it is the Minister's toy. It is better to keep your management structure, even if the Minister is changed, because we need consistency. Sir, what is lacking is consistency as it relates to management of the Barbados Tourism Authority and it is filter down to the other staff because there will be the belief that if it happens to the ones at the top, it can happen to those at the bottom too and this decreases the morale in the institution.

Sir, I understand the pressure the Minister is under. He has tried hard to take the pain out of tourism but at the same time we need to understand that tourism is the breadbasket of Barbados and must be protected by all of us. Sir, tourism impacts on every life in Barbados and I am in Parliament to make sure that the masses get their share of it.

Sir, this is why I must protect the masses from the Honourable Member because when I first spoke about community tourism the Minister asked about what madness I spoke as if poor people could not get a share of tourism.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the same way they asked why we want more than one airport and are now sneaking through this Bill to get more than one, we have to watch them because they are deceiving the eye by the stroke of the pen and the writing must be monitored carefully.

Sir, at one stage, I also criticised community tourism and rightly so but the tourism players who practised community tourism understood what I said at that stage, that it makes more sense to get the tourists out of the hotel on a daily basis into the villages of Barbados. If they continue to do that I will continue to support them but if they continue to behave as though the tourists are prisoners when they are in Barbados, I am saying that it is not in the best interest of Barbados. A tourist must be a person who is able to traverse the entire country and interact with Barbadians.
2.30 p.m.

Sir, there is a lady by the name of Sheila Headley, who lives in St. James North. She is one of the best marketing agents that can be found in Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. James North can confirm this. I do not know another person who has brought more people to Barbados single-handedly without charging the government anything than Sheila Headley. When we want to prevent the tourists from interacting with people like Sheila Headley we are reducing the number of people that come to this country.

Sir, if you check the records you will find that generation after generation of tourists have been coming to Barbados because of one lady, whom some people would regard as a nobody. This lady is a working class woman who has contributed significantly to the tourism industry without recognition. I am saying that community tourism lends something to the tourism industry of Barbados and we have to protect it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am going to advise the Minister that we have to be careful not to overplay this Bill. I remember that after September 11 the Minister of Tourism came to this Parliament and painted a very negative picture of the future of tourism. I said to him that instead of painting a negative picture, you have a good platform to promote a very positive picture because Barbados does not suffer from the same effects of other countries. I asked him why he wanted to link Barbados with countries that terrorism is known to. Barbados is not a country known for terrorism and I do not know why we want to promote it and behave as though it is. We have to

do what we have to do but do it in a way without giving the impression that Barbados is a place to be scared to visit.

Barbados is a paradise and we must preach that. When people want to push things down our throats without understanding the culture of Barbados, we must tell them that we in the Caribbean are peaceful people and that this type of legislation, even though we have passed it, is only being passed to accommodate them but it is not anything that we need. We will do it because of globalisation but you do not find these practices within the local concept. If the world is becoming negative, we must be positive.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: We are at the age where we as an independent country must behave as an independent country.

Sir, if I were permitted to quote from a newspaper I would do so but I cannot quote anything from the newspaper saying that Mr. Blair's second visit boosts tourism. However, when we want to be popular we hook onto the coat tails of Mr. Tony Blair but when we want to play to the local audience we go down Broad Street and tell the hero there to move without understanding that we have something called heritage tourism. I am saying that we have to maximise everything that we have in this country and stop getting caught up in small talk because small talk is not going to pay the bills in Barbados.

Sir, if you see an enemy you should be able to bring him on board and use him to your benefit. Two years from now the same enemy that we want the masses to believe is an enemy, the rich and famous would use the enemy for their heritage tourism and make mega bucks from him.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would have deprived taximen who operate outside of a restaurant, not too far from here, from having a collection point because the tourists gravitate towards that area and the taximen earn a living by transporting the tourists.

The Honourable Member for St. James Central cannot support something like that. If he continues to acknowledge his roots, then I cannot understand why he would want to deprive the taximen and vendors from making a few bucks from the people that they claim mistreated them years ago.

We have to understand how to use our assets. I see the statue of Nelson as an asset that can build community tourism and heritage tourism. I do not have to look back. I only have to look at what will happen tomorrow because what happens today is past. We have to look at the opportunity cost of Nelson being located where he is. If it cost the Government money to have him there, then move

him but if it is helping the poor people to make money then leave him there because he would be making a significant contribution to the masses in this country.

Sir, we cannot ignore the views of the taximen because they believe that the statue of Nelson is making a contribution by being there and they also believe that it is pay back time and if they believe that it is pay back time, who are we to stop the taximen from believing that it is pay back time.

I am saying that the masses have a right to benefit from heritage tourism the same way that other people can. If it means we have to share the gold between the rich and the poor I have no problem with that but I do not believe that we should take from the poor to give to the rich. I have no problem with Nelson being on Broad Street because my people stand to benefit from Nelson being there.

Mr. K. D. SYMMONDS: On a point of order. I really do not want to interrupt the Honourable Member while he is in full flight but he keeps on repeating this and it is obviously misleading the Honourable House and himself.

Admiral Nelson, hero of Naval Britannia, as he was, when the statue is removed it would be taken to a place not far from where it is now, which will be the naval museum. In its place will be the statue of the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. If the Honourable Member is saying that he has a difficulty with that because in his view nobody would want to see the statue of the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow, then he should say so. We on This Side do not agree with that but if that is his view, he is not the only person on the Other Side who would have come to this Parliament in recent times and denigrated and castigated the memory of the Right Excellent Errol Barrow. If that is his view he should say so but he must not misrepresent the fact that the masses of the people of Barbados would still have an opportunity, as he said, to profit from the presence of Horatio Nelson's statue.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, anybody who knew the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow doubts that if he were alive today he would allow any political party to play politics with him. That is why his ashes were scattered across the Caribbean Sea so that nobody could play politics with him. If the Barbados Labour Party believes that by moving Nelson's statue and replacing it with the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow in that space that they are doing something for him they are wrong. If you are saying that it is wrong for Nelson's statue to be where it is, then you cannot put a statue of the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow there because something would have to be wrong with that spot too.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could you wind down please?

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am saying that we should stop playing politics and get on with the true history of the country.
2.40 p.m.

Sir, we have to be very careful that whom we see as heroes today, ten years from now, another group of people would say that they are not their heroes. We must allow history to be continued. Whom we see as heroes, that is ours. Whom the past people saw as their heroes, that belongs to them. We have no right to judge whom people previously saw as heroes. We are now behaving as if we want to live in the present, in the future and also decide what happened in the past.

This group of politicians must ask themselves if they have the power to do that, because to me, they have not consulted with the old people. They would do good to ask the old war veterans and the old people in Barbados, if that is their view. Clearly, Sir, it could not have been their view. They grew up and had a belief, and now the young people want to change the belief of the old people, and that is morally wrong.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would have been in 1958 at Geneva, Switzerland, when there was a meeting to look at the question of threats to ocean going vessels. Arising out of that meeting, a decision was taken that there ought to be an international convention to deal with the threats, primarily of the ships.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at Tokyo in 1963, the whole question of piracy was looked at and by 1972, Barbados had very much started to show a very keen interest in the suppression of crimes against ships and aircrafts. The first piece of legislation passed, Sir, would have been what is now entitled Chapter 123B and that was passed in 1972. The title of it, "The Civil Aviation Tokyo Convention Act of Barbados", dated 3rd July, 1972.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Act, Chapter 123B, came into being six years after Barbados' Independence. Four years after this Act came into existence, Barbados suffered the very cruel misfortune of seeing an aircraft bombed very close to Barbados' territorial space. It would have been a Government coming into existence in September 1976 that had to face the very testing and challenging experience of aircraft being brought down very close to our territory. In fact, because of subsequent changes to international law,

nowadays if it happened, it would have been in Barbados' territory. I am using the 12-mile territorial extension today, but in those days, we used the three-mile territorial extension.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Cubana crash of 1976 has brought into sharp focus, the fact that Barbados is a sovereign State, a State that is very much a friend of many and a satellite of none, and the fact that Barbados is not known to procreate terrorists, Sir, the hard fact at the end of the day is that although there is no terrorist organisation in Barbados, and Barbadians do not want to get involved in terrorist and clandestine underground organisations, the question is, to what extent can we think that we are so immune from a terrorist attack, as to lie back in complacency and behave as though it could not happen here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what has transpired is that internationally, since 1976, there have been several incidences involving aircraft and, ships in some instances, which have concerned a number of nations, including Barbados. What is being proposed here, Sir, is for Barbados to give legislative effect, within Barbadian municipal law, to a piece of international law, considered so important for our purposes, as to be part of our local law.

Time was, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when international law subsisted at one level, and municipal law miles apart. The debate was, if international law is in conflict with municipal law, which should prevail. There can be no question, Sir, that in those days where municipal law conflicted blatantly and flagrantly with international law, that municipal law prevailed.

Sir, a lot of legal theorists and judges have looked at this question closely and, going back some 20, 25 or 30 years, a habit developed where a municipality would decide that if an international obligation was so important to its purposes, as to be given the effect of full law, then it should be enacted into the local municipal law. Therefore, for a piece of international law to be a proper law, it has to be enacted into the local law and, since it becomes municipal law, it is law. This is precisely what is happening here today.

Honourable Members who are interested in the evolution of these things, can start with a case called Black Clauson which sets out the extent to which a country that is serious about its international obligations, should really enact into the local law, what the international obligation is.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to get to the substance of the debate, the whole question of where we were before today, is also of some significance. Time was, Mr. Deputy Speaker, prior to today, where the tendency was to pass

law, protective of aircraft and ships, and law protective of persons on aircraft and persons in ocean going vessels. Time was, before today, when there was no protection for airports and for traffic parked at airports.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, considering the era in which we are living, and the tendency of those who would want to terrorise people, we have to come to the sensible conclusion that persons given to terrorist activity, will not necessarily want to confine their ways of operating to solitary acts, or single particular acts, and that to the terrorists of this world, the sky is the limit for them. Sir, to the same degree that they have, over time, targeted ships and aircraft, they could easily target an airport.

The very busy Airports worldwide always have human beings on them. Even when the Barbados Airport is not highly active, it is unthinkable that our airport, even when no flights would be leaving and coming, would be entirely unmanned. A threat, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to our airport and to all who occupy the airport at the level of security, management, and even what people might call casual workers, have to be dealt with.

In addition to what I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must identify and associate myself with the comments made of Honourable Members, who have considered our civil aviation in its wider context.
2.50 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you consider the character of Barbados' economy, there can be no doubt that with tourism being so very important to Barbados that the measure which we are bringing here today is trebly important, so we should ensure that we always have legislation in place to protect our general well-being and general safety and that we protect our ports. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in a situation where our ports mean so much to tourism, this measure becomes exceptionally important.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not go down the road that has already been trodden by the Speakers who have preceded me, but clearly this country has to keep its systems that pertain to civil aviation under review.

The Right Excellent Errol Barrow and the former Honourable Member for Christ Church South, Sir Harold St. John, even before it became fashionable for us to look at tourism the way we look at it now, were always of the view that the time would come when we would not only have to review our systems of airport management, our systems of rights or our systems of increasing what people call load factors in terms of the number of people travelling on aircraft but that for Barbados to be properly part of the modern world we had to have a policy toward civil aviation that would be

effective enough for Barbados to properly assert itself in tourism and touristic related activity in this modern era.

I take it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is clear to all Honourable Members that what had obtained prior to this most recent piece of legislation had been a regime that had been designed to protect aircraft and people on aircraft but had not gone far enough to protect every component part of our civil aviation culture.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, having earlier outlined the historical position, I take particular pride to commend this legislation. I refer Honourable Members to particular Conventions and international obligations that appear in Chapters 16, 17 and 18 of the Laws of Barbados and all the major conventions pertinent to foreign policy that have been adapted into local municipal law. We are putting this into our municipal law so that it cannot be challenged as a vague or abstract international observation that lack laxity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some countries the world over would go to conferences and sign a convention or a treaty and then refuse to adopt it into their local law. Mr. Deputy Speaker, consistent with its desire to be a responsible member of the community of nations and consistent with the policy of This Side of Parliament, we are so serious about our international duties that in addition to going to international meetings and agreeing in principle, we came to Parliament and enacted legislation to show how serious we are.

I conclude, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by challenging all Honourable Members to see how consistent we have been especially as regards this Government's decisions over time to properly incorporate our regional obligations to CARICOM and to the Caribbean Single Market and Economy.

In circumstances, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where some CARICOM countries are yet to codify into their local municipal law, matters to do with CARICOM and the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, Barbados is a pioneer State in the context of putting on the front burner matters of policy and matters of law which for prosperity and for the avoidance of doubt, we make sure we enshrine in our laws to ensure that it cannot be said that we were not serious about what we were doing.

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

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I rise to support the matter before the Chamber and to say that it is in fulfilment of a range of obligations that other Caribbean governments and administrations internationally would have to fulfil to meet the requirements for the very difficult and dangerous times in which we are living.

The Honourable Member for St. James North spoke volubly and well to the fact that Barbados, though we may have thought ourselves safe at a time when we least expected it, saw an attack on an aircraft in flight. I was at university at the time and you could stand at Cave Hill and watch the aircraft come down after the explosion. Several students of Cave Hill at the time saw it. So we must be cognisant as a people that because we are the recipient and the host of large numbers of tourists out of the United Kingdom and the United States of America that we could ourselves be a target of those who view the United Kingdom and the United States of America as their enemies and who would be cognisant of the fact that an attack on our shores because of our security measures may be easier to execute than on the United States of America or on British shores, although we have seen how very effectively – and I do have to use the word creatively though I would wish that I did not – and very creatively an aircraft could be turned into a weapon of mass destruction.

Sir, I think we have to concede that we are to a certain extent in a situation of war. As the fight continues, we are going to see other initiatives executed over time seeking to strike at the heart of the various combatants on either side.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the debate has ranged fairly wide. I want to focus on two particular issues. One relates directly to airlift and the other to the speech made by the Honourable Member for St. John who, as is his want to abandon the Chamber early, is no longer in his chair but I think the statements that he made do warrant a response. However, I want to start at the level of airlift. I have to congratulate the Minister and the preceding Minister of Tourism and International Transport who conceived of this project to redevelop the Grantley Adams International Airport because in that redevelopment will be seeds of our future revenue generation.

The redevelopment project comes at a time when, because of the event of September 11, 2001, we are well positioned to receive large numbers of visitors to our shores. In fact, the tourism arrivals have been supporting the increased numbers to our shores. It is critical therefore that we are positioned to effectively cope with these numbers from the perspective of the size and quality of the physical plant used as the transit point and equally that we have in place the kinds of security measures needed to cope in light of these arrivals.

3.00 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even with this physically and financially substantial redevelopment project, one has to wonder to what extent are we truly ready for even greater numbers and to what extent are we going to cope, if we are being flooded with an influx of people during the Cricket World Cup, 2007, that we are anticipating. Have we put in

place at the Grantley Adams International Airport the kinds of systems, whether it is to do with security checks, with immigration, or with luggage? It is not simply the quality airport we have in terms of the physical plant. It is not about how beautiful it will look or how very well-redeveloped it will be. It will relate to the kinds of systems for managing the airport, the numbers and the kinds of stress that there will be while processing thousands of persons in a very short time, who would want to commute today to see a cricket match and fly back out this evening to go somewhere else in the Caribbean. I think we need to know how we are going to cope. I think we need to hear some kind of broader discussion, not only on the physical plant of the airport but to the kinds of measures that we are going to be using to process the numbers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as it will impact on the rest of us, we wonder to what extent would the rest of the Caribbean be ready because if Barbados' airport is ready, to what extent would the other countries be ready, to have the capacity to provide the processing and service that would be needed, as we seek to attract high revenue activities such as the Cricket World Cup. Sir, I congratulate the ongoing effort for upgrading.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is important too is that first point of contact with the visitor, both in terms of the aesthetic appeal, the visuals and the total visitor experience, which can impact significantly on the way an arriving tourist views Barbados and how he assesses the quality of the visitor's experience. Sir, implicit in that are issues relating to service and the way in which we service people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have spoken to this before and would not wish to do so today but it seems to me that there are some ongoing efforts by the Barbados Tourism Authority to exploit existing gateways. I am heartened therefore, to hear that this winter we will have 2000 new seats coming out of Manchester. Equally, the new charters coming out of Italy and the rest of Europe are to be encouraged, and more need to be promoted but we must not only open up the existing gateways and increase the numbers from existing gateways but the opening up of new gateways is also critical to the success of our tourism product.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, questions such as these must be asked: Where are the emerging economies that we must start to tap and to market from now on? Which are the countries that will have the kind of visitor whom we would want to attract and, therefore, where do we have to position our airlift to create the bridges into Barbados that would be critical to our success?

I have watched, for instance, if one listens to the news or reads, one would be aware that large numbers of

millionaires are emerging in China. There were more cars sold in China last year than anywhere else in the world, not just in terms of numbers but the most expensive cars per capita were sold in China more than anywhere else. It is interesting, therefore, as one begins to look at these economies, how do we attract visitors from China and Japan who have income and are not our traditional target market? In particular, we are not the first point of appeal if they are looking for a tropical island experience. Barbados would not be the first choice because we are too far East and South, relative to their own location for us to appeal to them. Therefore, their first choice may be Hawaii or the Islands of the South Pacific.

If they want to come to the Caribbean the first stop, especially because of their love for reggae music, might be Jamaica. How then do we encourage those tourists to take the next step to come from Jamaica to Barbados? Do we have enough airlifts? Do we have the product? As globalisation increases, the world's boundaries collapse and as travel increases, there is going to be intense competition for the tourism dollar. Therefore, we not only have to continue to diversify our product and make it appealing to a wide variety of discriminating tastes but we have to ensure that we have the airlift and the capacity to bring people into Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in particular it seems to me, though I have not heard much discussion about it, that there are two major international events which we have an opportunity to exploit, one being the Cricket World Cup. Despite the arrangement between South Africa Airways and Trinidad and Tobago, there is no reason why Barbados cannot get into an arrangement with British Airways, British West Indian Airways and other flyers because Anglophone Africa is a cricket-playing nation. Therefore, if there is going to be a Cricket World Cup, then Barbados should be the first choice as a hub to move people into the Caribbean. I would want to hear discussions on what our plans are for exploiting the revenues during that period.

Sir, equally the World Cup Football will take place in South Africa. Latin America is a football-loving continent. Again it is almost at the stage of a religion in places such as Brazil and Argentina, where people get killed over football games in these countries. Again, in terms of the geographical location between Latin America and Africa, Barbados could play a pivotal role in moving people from between Barbados and Latin America, even though some of them would be inclined to go to Miami, then on to Africa or fly to the United Kingdom from Africa. Equally, we have to put measures in place to link Barbados, whether we do the link through the United Kingdom or fly people direct. We have to look at what would make Barbados an attractive transit point for Latin American visitors during the World Cup Football. It is a great opportunity for us to make money

by providing the services and by providing a hub for these two events.

Sir, we must not only think of our tourism product in terms of bringing more and more numbers, we have to look for the niche opportunities to do marketing and to generate revenues by the sale of goods and services, even if it is just a one-off event or for a short term.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are my thoughts on the question of airlift, since we are talking about international transport today. I did say that I had some other views which were directly opposite those of the Honourable Member for St. John and would I wish, in the time remaining, to speak to them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, by training I have become an Attorney-at-law. By my choice and that of the people of St. James South, I am a politician. By the choice of the Prime Minister, for however long that lasts, I am a Minister.
3.10 p.m.

The speech of the Honourable Member for St. John today disturbed me because it has become very fashionable in Barbados to curse politicians, to speak of them in pejorative terms that suggest whenever politicians do something, it is with dishonourable intent, improper motive, for their personal benefit and aggrandisement and not for benefit of the country. The tone and tenor of the speech of the Honourable Member for St. John today fed and nourished that particular sentiment. I am deeply concerned about it as a politician, who serves faithfully my country, when people speak about ministerial interference as if ministers are peripheral persons who have no role and every time a minister seeks to make an intervention in some way, it is either that they are micro-managing or interfering with the management process. Sir, it is to this matter that I wish to speak.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the public elects you, they hold you as Minister responsible. I have never heard the public quarrelling about the Chairman of any Board, I have always heard it said that it is the fault of the minister. When you listen to the call-in programme or hear people in any forum, they always want to know what is the minister doing about the matter. When one speaks of ministerial interference, one casts the conduct of a minister in pejorative language. Sir, ministers have responsibility to the taxpayers to intervene where they see the interest of the public about to be prejudiced.

Sir, I firmly believe that where a minister has appointed a Chairman whether of a statutory corporation or a Government company, it is the responsibility of that Minister to have some oversight of what that particular agency is doing in order to guarantee that the public is not

prejudiced and that taxpayers' money is not wasted and acts are not committed by that authority which runs counter to the policy of the Government.

Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for St. John say that if you appoint competent persons you do not have to look behind them but I respectfully disagree with that. I do tell the Chairmen of statutory corporations under me what to do but, ultimately, the legislation makes the minister responsible for giving policy directions and for general oversight. In fact, the legislation of the National Housing Corporation ascribes to the Minister of Housing an authority to even intervene in management and operational matters which goes wider than legislation for statutory corporations which tend to give you a role in terms of policy formulation. As long as the Minister remains responsible for policy, then the Minister has a right of intervention to protect the taxpayers.

Sir, it does not matter how competent the Chairman is because if you leave the Chairman to do what he or she wants to do you may read in the newspaper one morning that a Chairman is about to quadruple the salary of a Chief Executive Officer at a company without any discussion or knowledge of the Minister and the Minister and Cabinet will be cursed on the call-in programme, by the taxpayers, even though they would have read it in the newspapers like any other citizen. Sir, as a Member of Cabinet I see it every time. You pick up the newspaper and see new policy initiatives being announced which you do not know anything about and this runs counter to the policy of the Government. If there is not ministerial intervention sometimes there can be very serious errors made.

Sir, I am familiar with one situation where a bright and competent Chairman proposed to fire the entire staff of a statutory corporation if not for the intervention of the Minister. Sir, when we talk about ministerial interference, it is always seen in a bad light but my experience has been that very often Ministers intervene in a positive way to prevent horrendous errors for which Government would then be held responsible or would cause a number of ordinary private citizens to suffer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the role of the politician is different to that of a Chairman because the politician has obligations to those persons who have voted for him or her to keep them employed hence their perspective would be totally different from that of a Chairman or Director so I entirely disagree with the Honourable Member for St. John.

Moreover, in seeking to say that the Minister should not have a role, the Honourable Member for St. John, in my view, made a critical error because in a private company owned by private individuals, the shareholders would have a right to dictate policy, discipline directors and remove

chairmen where errors were made that created problems for the private companies. Is the Honourable Member for St. John saying that where the company is Government-owned by the taxpayer that the Minister should have no role in protecting the shareholders' interest?

Sir, the Minister who is voted for by proxy, usually through the Permanent Secretary, must stand in the place of the shareholder and must protect the company and the taxpayer in situations where a Board or Chairman seeks to carry out a policy approach that runs counter to the interest of Government policy.

Sir, when we consider the matter we have to consider the positive role played by Ministers and the extent to which their intervention is not analogous to micro-managing but is legitimate policy direction and guidance given to Chairmen.

Sir, some Chairmen do not communicate with the Minister. The Minister appoints them and they behave as if they are entirely autonomous entities who have no responsibility to the Minister, the Government or taxpayer. Sir, this cannot be allowed because they did not run for office or made any commitment to the country. Therefore, one has, as a Minister of Cabinet, to ensure that the conduct of Boards are consistent with the policy direction of the Government and the policy which the Government is committed to executing.

Sir, this is the simple reason why Ministers must intervene and it is not meddling. Sir, it is not interference or meddling. When I say that I will concede that there are Ministers who would pick up the telephone and speak to Chief Executive Officers or Chairmen on every matter and do not allow them to do their jobs. I do not support that. That is not my style but I do think that there are situations in which intervention is required and necessary and, in fact, if the Minister failed to intervene, that would be more a wrong than intervention itself.

3.20 p.m.

Sir, in making these statements, I believe that Honourable Members on the Other Side need to be very careful because there is going to be a point, very long from now, when they would come to Government themselves and the kind of statements that they are making will at some point come back to haunt them.

Sir, sometimes some of the newer Honourable Members on the Other Side, who are not as familiar with government processes, make statements that are out of an abundance of innocence but I would expect better from the Honourable Member for St. John who has been a long-standing Member of Parliament and a Member of a Cabinet and, therefore, should have a better understanding of the

role of Ministers, Chairmen and the opportunity and role for intervention to prevent some difficulties arising for the Government and the intervention is critical.

Sir, let me use an example that was used in here today. If a Minister said that he did not know that there was any plan to increase the salary of the Chief Executive Officer at X organisation and that the Chairman did not raise it with him, the public will not believe it. Once it is published as a fact and the Minister comes back and says that Cabinet has not signed off on this and that this is not a confirmed policy position, the Government then has great difficulty in defending that position or seeking to set it right. Sir, because you are a politician and it would be encouraged by Honourable Members on the Other Side, people are then encouraged to believe that you are lying and that you were caught in some degree of wrong doing and now you have been caught, you are seeking to change your mind, opinion or view. We need to be careful.

Sir, I hear too much abuse by politicians in this Chamber. We must be careful how we speak to each other because the public is listening, forming opinions and making judgements that are not favourable to any of us. Even those who are making the pejorative remarks, negative opinions are also being formed against them.

Sir, the view is not that one side is good and the other side is bad. It is a taint which will attach to all politicians. Every time you enunciate some new policy or articulate a position, somebody on the other side accuses you of being dishonest in some way or seeking to betray the taxpayers' confidence and so on.

Sir, what then is the role of a Minister? Do you as a minister intervene or not? Do you let the Chairman or the Board act in a completely independent and autonomous role and after a problem is created for the Government, you then say that this is not what the Government wanted to do and we never agreed to that; or do you intervene when you are aware of it before it becomes a public event and say that it cannot be allowed to happen? Sir, that is a decision that I think we all have to make and it is a decision which I am inviting Honourable Members on the Other Side to consider before they get up and speak negatively about ministerial intervention. As I said earlier, I concede that there can be intervention that is negative, unnecessary, harmful and inimical to the interest of a particular organisation and, maybe, even to the taxpayers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, however, at the same time my experience has been that in many instances it was ministerial intervention that has saved actions which could have caused problems for the Government and for the average member of the public and that is not a healthy thing.

Sir, I close by going back to the point on which I started and congratulate the Honourable Member for bringing this measure and for the whole airport expansion but urge the Honourable Member to ensure that we not only put in place a beautiful physical plant but that we also have a system that is properly regulated and that we deal effectively with the human resource issues.

I admit that some of the points made by Honourable Members on the Other Side about the level of discomfort which members of staff are experiencing as a result of uncertainty of their future is a legitimate complaint. Perhaps, there has not been enough communication but it is also true that we are living in a changing work environment. The notion that you should work at the airport from the time you leave school until the time you are ready to retire, that notion is entirely false. The labour force is not like that.

We in this Honourable Chamber have had, as individuals in our professional lives, to look at changes in the marketplace and reinvent ourselves. The very fact that we are here means that we have all had to do some adjustment to our own career development.

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

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Thank you, Sir.

We have to educate the labour force to be multi-skilled, to be capable of performing several different types of tasks and to have the flexibility, as job descriptions change and the job markets change and become more interesting, that they should have some basic skills to allow them to move from one position to another with great ease. Organisations will continue to change, not only in the government and the public sector, but in the private sector as well. We are looking at a labour market that is now more dynamic and that is responding to international economic change at a very rapid rate.

Sir, the notion that the labour force remains stagnant, stable and has security of tenure and you just have to stand up and mop one place for 33 1/3 years and then go home is false. We have to educate the public that notion is changing and we have to give our people the skills to equip them to change with the marketplace.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Sir, I am starting where the Honourable Member for St. James South finished by congratulating my colleague, the Honourable Member for

St. Michael South, for bringing this item to this Honourable Chamber.

I am going to start at the outset by letting this Honourable Chamber know that unlike the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, we on this Side, and certainly based on the discourse given by a few Honourable Members on That Side, this Bill, important as it is, is not only going to be agreed here today to accommodate the large countries where terrorist acts are being committed. Sir the Honourable Member for St. James North put this particular point in proper perspective when he issued a word of caution, or I can say advice, that this country, even though up to this point might not have fallen victim to a terrorist act, we should not be complacent.

3.30 p.m.

Sir, we come to this Honourable Chamber and hear one of our Honourable Members seeking to give the impression that we should not be sufficiently concerned about what is happening on the globe, and the threat that is there for all ports of entry, be it international airports or sea ports. They also indicated that we should not, even if it is only at this stage a type of insurance measure, bring such a Bill to this House to deal with security threats at our ports of entry, and that we are only doing it to accommodate some large country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take a completely opposing view. I, like the Honourable Member for St. James North and the others in here, know the importance of doing this, in case the Honourable Member for St. Lucy does not know, and that the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation was signed by Barbados on September 23, 1971.

Sir, when the Democratic Labour Party signed this Convention in 1971, they obviously knew the importance just as This Side knows the importance, of joining with any band of countries seeking to suppress unlawful acts of violence at airports serving international civil aviation.

I would want to go further. If the Honourable Member for St. Lucy thinks that this country does not need this at this time, he should say so by indicating to this Honourable Chamber that he does not agree with the Bill. He cannot be saying that we do not need it, we are in a safe haven and terrorists' acts would not reach us, but he is still agreeing with it.

He also said that it is being agreed to by him, not the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, in the name of globalisation. He likes to give the indication in this Honourable Chamber that everything is wrong about globalisation and that this does not accord well with his concept of localisation. He is an advocate of localisation and

if that is the case and he is true to his conviction, this is all the more reason why he should say that he is not supporting the Bill.

Therefore, I do not know where he has been coming from today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He has been saying things and he has been disagreeing with himself, without even realising that he is disagreeing with himself. He got it wrong today, but let me get on to make the more important points.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have allowed a lot of latitude in this debate and it was healthy in the end. A very important linkage was established in this debate from early by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South and that is the linkage between civil aviation and tourism. A lot was said about airlift and us seeking to increase our airlift capacity, and the potential that holds for the development of our tourism sector.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to dwell on that point a bit. When those who are in charge of the macro-economic policy making for an economy, takes some very decisive action in order to prevent an economy from slipping into a recession and, indeed, staying in recession for any extended period, and good results are achieved, I really think that we owe it to ourselves to say that we introduced some policy measures, and we expected some level of results. If we get the results that are good enough to have taken the country forward, then we could be honest with ourselves and say that things were very well done.

When we took a decision a couple of years ago to put more emphasis on tourism, given certain events that were taking place in the international environment, one of the things that was extremely important in the package, was the issue of discounting. The point was made back then that the whole idea was to get persons into Barbados. We said that the market was becoming a little soft, given the threats occasioned by the events of September 11, 2001, and so as not to be taking any chances unnecessarily, that we will introduce, as an element in the package of the Barbados Tourism Association, our margin on this issue of discounting.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is enough evidence to indicate that this policy of discounting has actually worked. Once again, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would want to give us the impression that we should not have discounted in those countries from which we draw our tourists and our visitors, but more so, we should discount in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that obviously would have defeated the purpose of the policy, because the whole idea was to get the people into Barbados. Therefore, it was an

additional incentive to ensure or to lure visitors into Barbados. Could you imagine if the discounting only took place in Barbados and the fears remained an inhibition, you could do all the discounting and give all the vouchers that you want, then you would not have gotten the numbers into Barbados.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, whose constituency was fairly close to the tourist belt and, indeed, includes a part of it, would have felt the pressure at his constituency office, day in and day out. Therefore, I am quite comfortable and I supported back then, the policy on discounting on fares, so as to attract or draw the persons into Barbados at the time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have before me, the *Annual Report of the Central Bank* and I do not have to go through this because it is common knowledge. It is no secret to anyone that tourism has been leading us. The performance of the industry last year does indicate that there has been a rebound in the industry and there has been strong growth which has continued into the first six months of this year. Sir, I have been reliably informed that the arrival figures for the first six months of 2004 show an eight per cent increase relative to what they were the previous year.
3.40 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the investment that is taking place in the refurbishment and the upgrade of the tourism plant in Barbados was to give some indication of the confidence that remains in the tourism sector and indeed how tourism officials, managers and strategic decision-makers at some of the establishments in Barbados are repositioning and indeed positioning their plants to help with the further contribution to a mature tourism product.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all know about the substantial investment that has gone into the Hilton Hotel and the investments in the upgrade of plants that are taking place at Almond Beach Resort, Glitter Bay Hotel, Elegance Hotel and Mango Bay. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West spoke very conclusively about the contribution a member of the tourism sector has been making to the discussions on tourism. He is a member of the small hotels group and I wonder if he is taking some time out to follow the lead set by those who plan for the development of Almond Beach Resort, Glitter Bay Hotel, Elegance Hotel and Mango Bay and is doing a similar thing to improve the physical condition of his property in anticipation of the good things that are well on the way for tourism.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to join my colleague from St. James South and look ahead to a couple of years. I was expecting that more of the Honourable Members from Both Sides who spoke earlier would have touched the important subject of preparing Barbados and the region for World Cup

2007. Sir, what I am going to say here is not specific to Barbados but to all those countries in the region that are hosting matches and even those countries in the region that are not hosting matches because from a tourism and civil aviation perspective there are certain preconditions that must be realised so as to ensure that this region is able to put on the best World Cup to date. That is the issue I want to address because for it to be successful notwithstanding how we have to prepare all aspects of social and economic activity in Barbados for it, the one that can be singled out for specific treatment in this context is civil aviation and tourism.

That is why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is even more important for us to give full approval to this Bill because we are going to get increased numbers flowing into Barbados through the airport and the seaport, a substantial portion of whom will be coming here for the World Cup. We need to make sure that those persons before they leave where they are coming from to come here are coming here in the knowledge that Barbados is on board with international efforts in trying to provide adequate security provisions for them when they come to Barbados. That is what the Honourable Member for St. James North was hitting at, even without being as expansive as we might have wanted him to be, when he said that we should not be complacent. That is what those who run this country in 1971 knew when they signed on to the Convention.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us look at the importance of airlift. We must make sure that over the next two years we stick with our efforts to increase our airlift capacity. We need to get adequate airlift to get visitors to the region. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is not only about adequate airlift to get them from extra-regional points into the region because all the cricket matches are not taking part in one country, but what is just as important is that we are able to iron out all the difficulties that stand in the way of interregional travel. We must be able to move these people from one country to the next when they come into the region to see the cricket.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, given the fact that some of the visitors might have already fallen in love with particular countries in the region, they may want to come and be based in a particular country, for example, in Barbados, Jamaica or St. Lucia. They might just want to hop on to an aeroplane and go to another country, look at the cricket match and come back to the country in which they are based. Therefore, we have to make sure that we plan meticulously for interregional travel that those persons who want to come and move around during the World Cup are able to do so with a certain degree of comfort. We also have to make sure that the scheduling of flights is done in a very precise and clinical way and that there is enough capacity for interregional travel so that the ordinary business of the region which require persons to move fairly freely and at

very short notice is also accommodated. So adequate airlift is extremely important.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this House is treated to some fairly colourful discussions on the importance of community tourism. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is on record on numerous occasions of speaking to the importance of community tourism. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South has a very clear plan for the role of community tourism in the advancement of our tourism product.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Barbadian economy like all the other economies in the region must be better sensitized to the role that community tourism can play in allowing the region to put on the best World Cup to date. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to use this opportunity to thank those persons who have participated in the planning for the Cricket World Cup, 2007, for the wonderful work they have done to date, in providing the best possible bid which has allowed us to get the World Cup Final's bid. Those persons have taken this into serious consideration and this Government has resolved to make sure that the greatest participation of all Barbadians is felt, as given to the World Cup. Sir, we must make sure that when it is all over, that Barbadians, small and large, white and black, would have been able to gain in some tangible way from us hosting the World Cup in this region. 3.50 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. James South did allude to the fact that it is more than simply providing rooms and vehicles but we all have to understand that when that time comes, it is Barbados that would be on show. Therefore, it is every aspect of Barbadian life that would be on show. That is why all of us in this country must understand that we have our part to play, however minor it might seem at this stage but the legacy of the event is such that Barbados, if it is able to prepare itself properly for the World Cup, would be able to benefit in tangible ways, long after the World Cup, the so-called legacy factor, has ended.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a few minutes ago I spoke about the refurbishment which is taking place in some of the hotels in Barbados but there is one hotel in particular that is dear to my heart and is extremely dear to the heart of the Honourable Member St. Philip North as well, and it is Sam Lord's Castle. As we seek to increase our room stock, and as we seek to modernise and upgrade much of the existing plant in Barbados, as we seek to bring on new hotels, I want us to understand that Sam Lord's Castle holds a very important place in the tourist industry of Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, nothing would please me more than in the buildup to the World Cup,

2007, to see sections of those persons who come to Barbados for this event, staying at Sam Lord's Castle because from a community tourism view point, there is still a lot in St. Philip to be given in any community tourism development plan. Of course, there is massive expansion going on at the Crane Hotel, and we thank the investors and owners of the Crane for that. There are other tourism-related projects that are planned for along the coasts of St. Philip but the one which has international recognition, the one that has served St. Philip extremely well, even before I was born, we need to get that back into operation sooner, rather than later.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to encourage all those persons, whether they have played a central or a peripheral role in the planning that is taking place for the re-engagement of that particular operation, to press on and to bring the planning to a conclusive point, so that Sam Lord's Castle could be back into operation.

Sir, I would want it done in such a way and with such comprehensiveness that long after the World Cup, the hotel would remain in operation. Those persons in St. Philip have depended on Sam Lord's Castle to a considerable degree over the years and I dare say the closure of it has brought with it some difficulties for some families. It used to be an establishment that allowed for localisation of employment, which was always a good thing and we need to get that going again. It was like a pivot. If we can get that going again, we would see some of those persons who are very well trained in various aspects of the hospitality industry being re-engaged.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to close by once again congratulating the Minister of Tourism and International Transport for bringing this particular Bill to this Honourable House. I do not think that anyone would disagree that it is of tremendous importance, given what has been taking place in the international environment as it relates to the movement of people across borders, in preparation for this major activity that is to take place in 2007, in preparation for the tourism industry to continue to lead the economy in Barbados.

Sir, any move to suppress unlawful acts of violence at airports or seaports is worthy of our support in this Honourable Chamber. I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I listened intently during the course of the contributions made today and was particularly heartened at the intervention made by my noble, learned and distinguished friend, the Honourable Member for St. James North.

I think he has placed the debate in a very much appreciated legal context, desperately needed I might add, given some of the types of contributions to which we had

been previously treated. Sir, I think that the protocols to the convention to which we are addressing our minds, is important because of the fact that the convention itself was deficient.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was deficient in the sense that it did not address the question of violence against persons at an airport. It did not address the question of violence against aircraft while not in service and, of course, it did not address the question of violence against the airport itself.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, why should that become important? It becomes important because unless we bring ourselves into line with the international standard, then we fail to be in a position where, instead of being a country with an airport that can seek to have a categorisation improving upwards, we may have a categorisation which is being negatively reviewed, which would go against the grain of everything that we are trying to achieve in the tourism industry today. I should also add that the protocol becomes important in my view as well, because it can act almost as if it were an extradition treaty. In lieu of an extradition treaty with respect to persons who have committed unlawful acts of violence to which I referred, what we now have would be the protocol being made part of the law of Barbados which, in the event that something that unfortunate ever takes place in this country, would empower us to be able to have persons extradited so that they may face justice, wheresoever that needs to happen. Equally, if a Barbadian was negatively affected in some other part of the world by an act of violence such as I have alluded to, then we would stand to benefit as a result of being signatory to this treaty.

4.00 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it assumes an importance in international law and in terms of our international relations. It assumes another kind of importance because of the fact that it is not just a legal device but a foreign policy device which keeps us in sync with the rest of the world.

Sir, two weeks ago in this Parliament we spoke at length about the Caribbean Single Market and Economy. It is a source of some concern that two weeks later, Honourable Members would be heard to pooh-pooh the question of what, in the language of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is revenue expenditure at the airport. I want to make it pellucidly clear that we have to recognise that out of this globalisation process not only bleak things are being sent to Barbados and the rest of the Caribbean but that there are benefits as well. We have to be bold, brave and sincere about that which this country has been able to achieve during the course of its short period of independence to say to the world that we are ready to take it on in the areas of our strength. One such area is touched in this piece of legislation before this House.

Sir, Barbados does not have to be afraid of Europe because little Barbados holds a trade advantage in services with the United Kingdom and Europe as a whole. This is largely as a result of the huge level of success which we have reaped in our tourism effort. The tourism product of Barbados, successful as it is, when you break it down, the bulk of them are coming from the United Kingdom and Europe. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South spoke about charters which come from Ireland, we have long benefitted from visitors out of Germany and this is part of the trade advantage in services that we hold with Europe.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, therefore, it makes simple sense that a critical part of what we are about must be the building of capacity and we have to begin with the port of entry. Sir, I worked part time at the Grantley Adams International Airport and at that time they had ten gates but today there are sixteen gates. This is the kind of expansion about which we speak. This last year the airport serviced 1.2 million passengers. I know of a departure lounge at the airport which could only turnover 600 people per hour and then moved to accommodating 800 people but the projection at the end of this exercise is to accommodate 2 000 passengers per hour.

Sir, as I said before, Barbados has a trading advantage in the tourism aspect of services. It is the same thing when we say that this little region of the Caribbean controls over 50 per cent of the world's cruise services. We have to look at those realities and the things that make us special and strong in our own right and are genuine economic achievements and build on them as best as we can.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one is tempted at times to excoriate the Opposition but this debate might usefully be engaged in if we could look to how best we can think about further infrastructural development at Grantley Adams International Airport in an economically sound and feasible a manner as possible.

Last Sunday the British Prime Minister arrived here. I recognised then as I did before, a serious and glaring deficiency that we are going to have to come to terms with as a country. Sir, many times at the airport I came off an aircraft, walked from the aircraft to the terminal but had to pass in front of traffic which is a risk to pedestrians coming off the aircraft. The time has come for us to think about having bus bays so as to ensure the safety of passengers. The time has come when Barbados, given the density of the traffic we are now attracting, should be thinking about air bridges to take passengers directly from the aircraft to the terminal. This Parliament should be addressing issues of further and future development but we are lambasted by a former Leader of the Opposition in a manner akin to a person who is intoxicated when we should be talking

about how best we can improve on this most fundamental resource that we have.

4.10 p.m.

Sir, we cannot have a debate of this nature without also addressing the question of the totality of the tourism product. I have often had difficulties with the views expressed by the now Leader of the Opposition on his interpretation of what we have been able to achieve at GEMS of Barbados in particular and across the south coast in general.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say again for the record that the south coast and west coast of Barbados are our tourism product. That is where the bulk of the plant is located and that is where we have to address our minds when we are talking about the bulk of housing of our visitors. Having said so, look at the two coasts and they are the tales of two cities, particularly the effort made in terms of the south coast, redeveloping and refining the plant. The GEMS of Barbados made a key and developmental role in that exercise.

Sir, it was not only done for the economic benefit of the people of the south coast because I know a lot of people who have left my constituency on the west coast to find work in some of the hotels on the south coast, including those owned and operated by the GEMS of Barbados and that is true for other parts of Barbados as well.

Sir, why should a debate like this be used as an opportunity to cast an aspersion on what is really an issue of fundamental importance for the economic development and well-being of this country. When the election exercise took place here in Barbados, just over a year ago, GEMS was thrown up in the air to ridicule and castigate the Government. It failed. It was resoundingly rejected at the polls, the people sat in judgement and the verdict was abundantly clear but the prosecution goes on and on *ad nauseam*.

Sir, what do we have for the south coast? We have a St. Lawrence Gap which is now the entertainment Mecca of Barbados. We have, as a result of a Tourism Development Act, not only a Savannah Hotel but a stream of hotels on that coast, for example, the Amaryllis Beach Resort, where, to the best of my calculation, approximately \$20 million might have been injected into that development. That is the kind of money that we are talking about in terms of developing the product in Barbados. Sir, we also have the Hilton Hotel.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not know if the Honourable Member is aware of the fact that financial assistance was given to the Hilton Hotel International project this time around and when the Hilton was first created. I am not sure what the reference to the Tobago Hilton is about. The

Barbados Hilton will be part of a Caribbean Hilton project the same as the Hilton hotels in Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Tobago and the Bahamas.

Sir, I said in this Honourable House before, and I will say it again, that it makes good sense for us to put this ongoing dispute about localisation and internationalisation to bed. There is room in this country for both and if we believe for one minute that the Barbados Tourism Authority or the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated will ever find the kind of money to market this country as effectively and adequately as could be done if we were to have one or two international chains here in Barbados, who would be spending their money in ensuring that their investment promoted Barbados as well because it is not only in their interest, it would also redound to our credit, so that when, for example, the Wyndham or Sheraton hotels or whatever hotel chain indicates to the rest of the world that they have a property in the Cayman Islands or Miami and they want them to go to that property, they are advertising those properties for Cayman Islands and Miami. Sir, the city of Fort Lauderdale can make money out of their Sheraton hotel and the same principle can apply in Barbados.

Sir, we hear a self-made expert on tourism who manages his own product in St. Lucy, and one can debate forever the level of success with which he does it, relentlessly going on about the need to have this localised thing, when a mixture can only serve Barbados in good stead. If that does not accord with the best of commonsense I would sit now and forevermore hold my peace.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fact is, we also have to look in the context of the benefits which we have as a result of locals being able to immerse themselves in the tourism product of this country. The Tourism Development Act, which has been wrongly criticised as a knee-jerk reaction, throwing money down a dark hole from which we will never see any results. Sir, even today condemnation was heaped and scorned on the incentives that are given overseas but not an Honourable House Member got up and admitted that the Barbados Tourism Authority's incentives, under the Best of Barbados package, created substantial discounts and incentives on the ground right here at home.

Who benefitted from those discounts? The local restaurateurs, water sports operators, and car rentals. This was the subsector of the tourism product that benefitted under the Best of Barbados arrangements. Sir, if it was left to the Honourable Members for St. Michael North West, St. Lucy and St. John we would never hear about that. We would only get the impression that we managed to negotiate discounted fares to Barbados.

Sir, when the whole economic framework associated with tourism and air travel went into recession, we

discounted fares as did Antigua, Jamaica and the Bahamas. What is wrong with discounting fares? Is it not true that within twenty-four hours of September 11 virtually all aircraft around the United States of America were grounded? Is it not true that since that time almost every airline doing business out of the United States of America went into serious economic decline?

Sir, the industry as a whole went into a recession to the tune of billions of dollars and we had to find a way to creatively keep tourism as the bread basket of Barbados full of bread, keep Barbadians employed and send our children to school so that we can continue to enjoy the quality and standard of life that we now enjoy. I do not know what is wrong with having discounted fares but when they were merged with the attractive package and the Best of Barbados it only served to accrue to the everlasting credit and benefit of those who were in charge of trying to operate local industrial effort in this economy. Sir, that is what government must be about.

Sir, you are tempted to ask the question because the Opposition does not like me to point at them but you have to ask, who are you here to serve? If the water sports operators are not to benefit from a creative and imaginary package, why does the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rent premises in New York and Miami? Are we only to have the representatives of the Barbados Tourism Authority there to enjoy air-conditioned comfort? Are they not supposed to be getting into the marketplace and create linkages that would make Barbados a destination that is exciting, economic and feasible so that people would want to visit? Sir, that is why we have representatives and when they bring people to Barbados we should be brave and decent enough to say congratulations on a job well done. But what comes to the Parliament? Ridicule, criticism, cheap shots and you ask where is the developmental initiative coming out of the Democratic Labour Party?
4.20 p.m.

Was the columnist in the last Sunday's newspaper right when he spoke about paralysis, lack of focus, laziness? The Honourable Member for St. Philip North enjoys himself and laughs because he did not write about him yet, perhaps because he writes about his neighbour to the left, whom he does not love as much as others love him.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are issues which we have to deal with. I want to say that there should have been nothing in this protocol for the kind of unlawful violence that attacked us, which came from the Honourable Member for St. John today. There should have been nothing in it, Sir, that would have caused the unwarranted attack on the GEMS of Barbados that we heard today. It is a protocol, Sir, which brings us entirely into line with the best of international practices.

In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the protocol states that if anyone uses a device, substance or weapon at an airport serving international civil aviation to cause serious injury or death or serious damage to facilities at the airport or to aircrafts, Sir, then that person has committed an offence. It is a protocol, Sir, which is aimed at the well-being of people. You ask yourself what the Government has come to?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you go to a Parliament, anywhere else in the world, the first objective of any Government must be to institute law and order, to protect the interests and well-being of their people.

Chapter 67 of our Constitution says, to institute peace, order and good government, that is what it is about. Sir, that is what we call in law, the grundorm. You begin with peace, order and good Government. If anything was peace, order and good Government, it is this legislation, but focusing on a place which is the economic artery of this country, and we are hearing an Opposition ridiculing it. Sir, you ask yourself what interest do they serve?

Sir, I want to congratulate the Honourable Minister of Tourism for bringing this piece of legislation. I want to unequivocally associate myself with it. I want to continue to urge him to do the best that he can, with a view to building for the future.

I believe, Sir, and I am one of those who will always believe that we have to think in terms of the further development of Grantley Adams International Airport. From 10 gates to 16 gates, in my view is good, but it must be more because we are looking to bring in more people. We need to spend more money. We have to face that reality. There is going to be a time when we are going to have to think in terms of the air bridges. We are going to have to think of ground transportation, because if we stretch all the way to Lears, we cannot have people walking all the way down there so therefore, we are going to have to think in terms of busing them there.

The point is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are now in a developmental mode and we must speak to this debate as though we believe that there is something developmental that we are going to have to offer this country.

If it is only going to be that you are going to make cheap shots at what happens at a Statutory Corporation or at a Board, then, Sir, you are failing the people, and in my view, you ought not to bother to frustrate them by reappearing at the polls the next time around.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make my brief intervention into this debate, and to fully

support this and any reasonable measure that is designed to promote safety at any airport or on any aircraft at anytime, anywhere.

In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is an area in which I feel very emotional and sensitive sometimes. I remember there was a time when on an aircraft, it was being permitted freely for people to smoke. Even at a time when I was a smoker, I used to marvel and wondered how it was possible for the rules to permit people to smoke on aircrafts, when you are floating literally on cloud nine on a very massive tank of gas. I do not believe there is any aircraft now on which smoking is permitted. Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I support any measure to promote the safety of individuals in the international transport sector.

Further, I also believe that every person who is about to enter onto an aircraft should be fully and thoroughly searched. There should be no exceptions or exemptions, be it the President of the United States, a Head of State, a Head of Government, a Minister of Government, a Member of Parliament or anybody. This is to ensure that there is no threat posed to any other person using that aircraft. These are changing times and they call for some very radical measures.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to commend the Minister for a job that he is doing very well. I believe that under his astute leadership, we are seeing positive results. I listened to his announcement earlier about the number of new airlines to come into Barbados in the upcoming Winter and the times ahead. He sounded very impressive and he is to be commended for continuing a trend that took root in a big way, around the latter part of the 1990s. It is very good that he is continuing that trend.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to ask though, what is the latest position, in relation to our Air Services Agreements with other countries. Airlift is one thing, but Air Services Agreements are things by which countries negotiate largely for route rights. It is very important that countries do that.

They do not negotiate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, only for the here and now. They have to recognise that the time may well come when Barbados, once again, may be the owner and operator of an active carrier and would, therefore, want to benefit from putting in place, a number of Air Services Agreements with countries all around the world.

There was again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a major thrust in that regard which, I gather was continuing. I would just like to ask the Minister another question and, if he does not have the answers now, he can get back to me:

1. Where are we in relation to a number of Air Services Agreements that were under active discussion some time ago?

2. What, if any are the plans for Caribbean Airways?

3. Is it the intention that Caribbean Airways is to continue to operate as a duty free shop, a lounge and a ground handling company?

4. Is thought being put into reviving Caribbean Airways and remaking it into an operating entity, another airline in operation, as it were?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if that is the sole role intended for Caribbean Airways, then, I would like to know.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that may seem fanciful to some but the fact of the matter is that we in Barbados and indeed around the region, are now pumping, in my view on a continuous basis, a massive amount of money into LIAT to keep it going. I believe, subject to correction, we are doing something of a similar nature, in relation to BWIA.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must say that I have no romantic attachment whatsoever to any airline. I never had. 4.30 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe, that airlines will come and airlines will go. I have been able to see during my tenure in politics in Parliament, indeed in Cabinet, a lovely aircraft called Carib Express which was functioning beautifully but because of the financial pressures brought to bear on it that it could not endure, it went under, but the aviation industry in the region did not collapse, the show went on. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have no romantic attachment to any airline.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the former Honourable Member for Christ Church South and I used to have some very interesting debates about this whole issue and I certainly got the impression that he had a very strong romantic attachment to BWIA. I constantly said to him that I have no such romantic attachment at a time when I had the day-to-day responsibility for international transport. I felt that the object was to ensure that persons could move from point A to point B in a safe way. I felt it was my duty to ensure as far as I could that the facilities and the airlines were there to facilitate the movement of people. However, I do not believe that we have to hold out at all times where every two minutes you hear of meetings taking place at the highest level to see how you can continue to prop up the regional carrier LIAT even though it is said that it is symbolic with the region and that it is a regional institution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hold no such view. Sir, I am speaking subject to correction, and if I am incorrect the Minister can correct me at the end, but I believe that LIAT has never shown a profit with or without competition. Therefore, I believe that the time has come for us to sit

down very seriously and decide how much longer we are going to continue to prop up a carrier that fails to show any financial returns on the massive investment being constantly injected into it. In that context I believe we can look again at the issue of how we can perhaps begin to utilise Caribbean Airways once again for the benefit of Barbados. This is something I am throwing out to the Honourable Member who may want to give it some thought.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must commend the Honourable Minister for the very good work he is doing with respect to the airport expansion project. Sir, there is no denying that the former airport had outlived its useful life. It was bursting at its seam in every sense of the word. The facilities were run down and maintenance was a problem. You can name anything in terms of being a problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the airport had it firsthand in everyone's view, so things had to change. We have been showing the numbers to justify our planning and our expectations. We have been expecting several increases in our tourist arrivals which is materialising. Therefore, you have to have the facilities to cope with any massive influx of visitors to our shores. We have to have that infrastructure in place. Therefore, I would wish to commend the Minister for being there at this time and to be the person who could say that the project is progressing and progressing well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it must be recognised that with this massive physical expansion, it has also to be a case where they cannot be business as usual. There has to be an accompanying change in mind-set. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are those who rant and rave about the new facilities in Trinidad and Tobago. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I went there about six weeks ago, not on business nor on pleasure but on a health matter with a relative. Sir, the facilities were beautiful but the experience I had at that time did not leave any good impression on my mind at all. Sir, a situation arose even though I had called ahead and requested that wheelchair assistance be extended on arrival at the airport for the person.

Sir, Barbados' airport is still under construction and when the person was leaving here, I requested the wheelchair facility here and they were here on arrival curbside but leaving Trinidad and Tobago with their massive and modernised airport where you got curbside, there was nobody there at all waiting on you and you had to go inside and ask about it, only to be told to bring the person inside and put them to sit over there. I had to tell them that if the person could have done that, I would not have requested a wheelchair in the first place. I could not get the point through to the officer at the airport in Trinidad and Tobago that you needed to get the wheelchair out curbside to take the person inside. What I had to do then was to literally limp along with the person at 0.0 miles per hour to get them on the inside to put them to sit to wait until someone decided to bring a wheelchair to that position. Then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to get

to go onto the aeroplane you had to go into three different lines to do three different things, presenting your ticket one place, paying some other tax some place else *et cetera* and it was a whole chaotic experience.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you cannot have a modernised physical infrastructure and then leave those sorts of chaotic systems in place because the level of visitor satisfaction would be very, very low. After that experience I personally feel no inclination whatsoever to revisit the Trinidad and Tobago airport although the facilities are extremely lovely.

I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that once we have upgraded our physical infrastructure to where we are going to put them at, we have to ensure that there is accompanying adjustment in mind-set and an increase in efficiency. Systems now must work because airports are the first and last impression that a visitor has of the country and God forbids if he has bad experiences in both cases, because he or she certainly would not want to come back and word of mouth advertising is often the best. Therefore, it would not augur well for Barbados to have a modernised physical infrastructure and very inefficient and unhelpful systems accompanying that physical expansion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the airport manager must see his role differently. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I went all over the world leading Barbados delegations in the conduct of air service negotiations which is what I spoke about earlier. I have seen on almost every occasion whether it was in Switzerland, Germany, the United Kingdom or even here in the region to a lesser extent that the airport manager was present at the negotiations and was making serious input into the negotiations. I am saying that an airport manager in Barbados now has to see his role completely different from merely getting up on mornings and going to work to mediate in internal differences and disputes between one staff member quarrelling with another staff member or the Maintenance and Development Unit having a disagreement with the air traffic controllers. He has to go beyond that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, an airport manager has to be someone who sees himself as a key player in attracting and generating business for Barbados. He is not now to see himself as a desk-bound person, merely mediating in disputes or checking to make sure that toilets are working. He has to go beyond that.

4.40 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not saying that to say that I condone any foolishness about \$272 000 for an airport manager. I will never support any such salary for an airport manager but at the same time, I am saying that an airport manager must recognise that his role in these times has to be far different from what it was in times gone by because the

competition is too fierce. Therefore, he now has to see himself as a major player in the revenue-generation for our airport and for the people of Barbados as a whole.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the last point I would wish to make is that I would want to see a smooth transition from that of a Government-operated entity to that of a corporatised entity, and that there would be due regard for the human face of this operation.

Sir, I do not remember which Honourable Member has said it earlier but I do agree with the Honourable Member that there are too many persons currently employed at the Airport who do not know where they are going to be when corporatisation fully kicks in and systems fully settle down. They are not sure what would be their position, whether or not they would have a job, and if so, where would it be and what would it be. There is too much uncertainty.

I heard the Honourable Member for St. James South making the point earlier that sometimes a Minister has to intervene to ensure that things stay on track. I would perhaps prefer to say that I would support ministerial monitoring of this particular situation, and I will say why. I would want to know that the Minister monitors the way the new Airport Board, particularly the leadership of the new airport Board. Please monitor that situation for me, Mr. Minister, because I well remember the time when that same leadership of the current Airport Board was the leadership of Caribbean Airways Board and, subject to correction, I think I am right in saying that on that occasion, a proposal was made to have laid off some 30 persons. Sir, I had to say no, that persons should not always look at the bottom line because that move would have made the balance sheet looked good but it would have meant that 30 persons would have been out of jobs and 30 families would have been seriously disadvantaged in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we now have a situation where that same leadership of the Caribbean Airways Board is now the leadership of the Grantley Adams International Airport Authority Board. Sir the issue of corporatisation is the perfect guise to start talking about trimming these things. It does not have to be so, but it is a nice guise to use when one wants to shed or to get rid of persons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people have families to support and I want to know that there would be ministerial monitoring of this transition phase from that of Government entity to that of a corporatised entity, to ensure that human face must be present and must be respected at all times.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, apart from those observations, I repeat my full support for the job being done by the current Minister of Tourism and International Transport and I give my full support to this Bill before this Honourable Chamber.

I thank you, Sir.

SUSPENSION

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 5.00 p.m.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 5.00 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.
4.45 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a contribution to this debate. At first glance, it seems to be a piece of legislation brought to this House in the view of global threat and reducing any impending threats to travellers passing through our airport and by extension decreasing the possibilities of threats with respect to our own airport infrastructure and staff. I want to give my support to this particular Bill.

However, even though I see it as a positive step in light of the global dispensation and new requirements, the debate allows for an opportunity to look closely at the fact that travel and trade has direct relationships to economic developments and in our context has direct relationships to our tourism industry which has been called by Members on the Other Side, the economic artery of this country. As a result, I want to look at this debate within that context.

Sir, my first statement is one of concern directly related to the question that if the tourism industry is in fact the economic artery, why is this particular industry plagued with consistent and persistent turnover in its management staff and structures. If it is indeed a significant industry, what could be the rationale for having in a short ten-year span approximately four Ministers of Tourism. Sir, it is supposed to be an economic artery of the country and, therefore, stability is imminent. In addition, we have had further chopping and changing of the management staff at the Barbados Tourism Authority. Sir, I speak specifically about the arm that is charged with the marketing development aspect of the industry. This seems to be paradoxical to me.

It would suggest that one of the things this administration would want to do is to establish stability in that area and not instability as the evidence now suggests exists. Sir, I do not believe that could be refuted.

Sir, I heard a lot of exaggerations and hyperbole. There are many persons on the Other Side who are extremely good at superlatives, that is all they know. What I find to be interesting among all the hyperbole, is that when I look at the facts I have to question sometimes if these Honourable Members are on cloud nine or whether they are under the influence of some mind altering element.

Sir, I have a copy of the Central Bank's Annual Report of 2003. The Minister of Tourism spoke to the percentage increases in cruise ship arrivals and passengers in Barbados. I want to draw his attention and the people of this country to the Central Bank of Barbados Annual Report 2003, page 2, where it clearly demonstrates that we have had a decrease in the number of cruise ships that have been calling at Barbados, systematically since 1996.

It also indicates an extremely marginal increase in the so-called cruise ship passenger arrivals. The critical point is, if the report says that there is a reduction in the number of ships and the Honourable Member wants to argue that the ships are bigger, then that is his business. The point is, there has been no correlation between the number of persons on the ships and the number of persons that came off the ships.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Sir, the Central Bank Annual Report of 2003 also shows that in terms of the contribution of the industry to the Gross Domestic Product that we have not yet reached the levels of 1997. Sir, it is there in the report. I did not make it up. The point that I am trying to make is that irrespective of all the talk and rhetoric, the tourism product has not moved past the levels of 1996 and 1997. We will hear all the superlatives, hyperbole, fancy talk and adjectives that mean nothing in the final analysis.

Sir, I am more concerned about the guise of corporatisation and its impact on the labour force at the airport. I am concerned about it because I had the opportunity to look at data from many territories worldwide where corporatisation has been put in place and it is important to note that there has always been a negative impact on labour.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say to you and the people of this country that I believe that a plan has been hatched by the Members of the Barbados Labour Party, a plan that they had in place since September 29, 1999, one that can be supported by their Budget, which was not refuted that it was their plan, to move the airport to a privatised position. I want to find out today whether it is their plan or not. If it is not their plan, then what was said in the September 29, 1999 Budget is therefore false and they should not be lying to the public. Again, as I said in the no confidence motion, they are collectively responsible if they are lying.

Sir, there can be no logic to move to a corporatised position and I will not accept the logic of efficiency. It is about access to capital and making more money. How are you going to make more money? Are you going to increase the number of people passing through Barbados significantly when we have done very little in terms of increasing the movement of people out of traditional areas?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are locked in a colonial time warp. It seems that there are Honourable Members on the Other Side who think that a tourist is only a white person from Germany, England, Canada or America. Therefore, our traditional movement of people and carriers must move along those traditional lines.

Sir, the Honourable Member would believe that he would go and spend the taxpayers' money in Germany to bring a German here who could hardly speak English but it would be 'no no' to attempt to re-establish fundamental links with the people in Dakar, Uganda, Nigeria or Latin America. Sir, that is the colonial mentality that I am talking about.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: If the Honourable Member really understood how to move tourism forward, he would be looking seriously at establishing carrying capacity out of Latin America and Africa. Sir, it takes about four hours to cross the Atlantic from Africa. Do you know that if you want to travel to Brazil or Latin America that you have to travel to Miami first? How long does it take to travel from Barbados to Germany?

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: The point that I am trying to make to the Honourable Member is that in order to make Barbados the type of trade hub and the type of tourism destination hub, it is important that new non-colonial routes be established in terms of, not only trade but in terms of travel.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I made a point earlier which I want to revisit. I want one of the Honourable Members on the Other Side to tell the people of this country if corporatisation is the first step towards privatisation.
5.10 p.m.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: I am not concerned with that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is important is that in the same document where the Barbados Labour Party Government indicated that they were going to privatise the airport and the sea port, they said they were going to privatise ICB and that has gone. They said they were going to privatise the BNB and that has gone. They said they were going to privatise the Barbados Mortgage Corporation and that has gone. Why should the people of this country believe that they are not going to privatise and sell off the airport and the seaport? Tell me why.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Do not mind all the rhetoric. I want them to answer the questions for the people of Barbados.

I would also condition my statement by saying this. I do not buy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this so-called efficiency theory. I do not buy the concept of raising greater capital as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me go specifically now to the labour impact that was mentioned earlier. I hope that we do not end up with a situation at the airport where there is out sourcing of maintenance work to downsize the staff. I hope we do not have out sourcing of cleaning. I hope that the red caps in Barbados would still have a job when it is all finished because this is a fundamental feature of corporatisation. It always moves towards profiteering, via reducing the corporate size. This is the basis of it, efficiency, and you cannot have increased efficiency in most cases. Sir, one of the tenets is streamlining, an economic buzz word that simply means to send home people.

I hope that the same mess that is now made at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, with respect to the workers not knowing whether they are working for Government or whether they are working for a private company, does not obtain in this situation.

I heard my colleague from St. John eloquently explain the corporate anomaly that already exists in that situation, so I am not going to revisit that at all. But, Sir, if you are now going to hire a worker on a contractual basis which, I believe, would be necessary, there are fundamental questions which I would like to ask, even though they may not be questions for the Honourable Members on the Other Side:

1. Is the move going to advantage or disadvantage the employee?
2. Am I going to be sure that the terms and conditions of work are going to be the same or better?
3. Am I going to be sure that the terms of pay are going to be better?

4. Am I going to be sure whether an employer in his corporate wisdom will come to work and say okay, Sir, you do not have a job description, I want you to do this tomorrow, and then go up the road and do that next week and then go down the road and do something else the other days?

Sir, these are reality situations that are happening all over the world, under the guise of corporatisation and privatisation. The Honourable Members on the Other Side would like to fool the people of this country that these are not real effects that can have a deleterious impact on themselves and their families. I will not be so moved and fooled. All I would want is the Honourable Member for St. Michael South to minimise the hyperbole and answer the questions.

Another important point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that I have been called to the airport on two occasions to do work stoppages. I went because I wanted to understand what was happening. One of the things that was most surprising to me was the fact that this administration would bring in contractors who have no respect or regard for Barbadian culture or Barbadian standards of living. I say that without reservation.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: I was there and I saw some of the workers working in areas without protection. One person that came to me, had major injuries. I saw many of the complaints that were raised.

I believe that it is the responsibility of the Government to make sure that anytime a foreign contractor comes into Barbados, he understands that the rhetoric of saying that the amount of money I pay one worker, could pay five workers from Africa, cannot have any place in Barbados. This is a fact and I would not back off from my position because I know it is true. It is our absolute duty and I want the Honourable Member for St. Michael South to understand what I am trying to say to him as the Minister responsible.

I want to find out what is wrong, if some of the work has been sub-contracted to local contractors. I also want to find out if our contractors who have built, or were the main contractors in airport projects through the region, do not have the competence to deal with that project? If the answer is yes, I want them to bring the proof.

I am very concerned because when I was out there, more than half the workers were non-Barbadian. They complained to me about the wages that were being paid, which were significantly below the wages that were being

paid for the south coast sewerage project. Sir, unionized workers said that it was a breach of a fundamental rule under collective bargaining.

These are the realities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so irrespective of all the colour, and the beautiful hues that are being painted, Sir, what we have is a political party in the Government that behave like comedians. They have mastered the art of camouflage. They tell the people one thing and do something else. They said that they were going to privatise the seaport and the airport and then came in here and lied about it.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could you please withdraw that statement.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not withdraw it. I will bring the evidence.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member cannot impute improper motives to the Government saying that the Government lied. He should not say that in this House. It should be withdrawn and struck from the record.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could you please withdraw that statement.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will withdraw and rephrase.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, any Honourable Member who has been trained in philosophy, should understand that there is something called truth based on coherence of truth that does not mean whether it is accurate or not. The coherence of their thoughts may not be true. It has nothing to do with me. I will say what I have to say.

You will never understand the logic. I have the evidence here. I always travel with my evidence.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member has been in here now for a year and he knows better than to impute improper motives to Honourable Members in this Chamber. The Honourable Member must therefore withdraw the statement, including his last attempt to rephrase what he was otherwise saying.
5.20 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have no doubt imputed improper motive and I am asking you to withdraw the statement made.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: I will withdraw it, Sir, but I will quote. Sir, can I quote from the September 29, 1997 summary of the Budget proposal of the Barbados Labour Party which was read by the Right Honourable Owen Seymour Arthur, the Honourable Member for St. Peter? Is it alright, Sir?

It says that Government will implement a privatisation programme to provide activities for the Securities Exchange. The entity involved is the airport. I do not have to go any further, Sir, so who is lying?

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member needs to refer to the text of the Budget speech itself and not the summary of the proposals because in the text of the speech the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter would have set out what the Government's plans are in relation to the airport.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could I hear one person at a time, please?

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Philip West just hold it, I cannot hear. Proceed Honourable Member.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: The Honourable Member needs to quote from the Budget speech itself. The Honourable Member knows full well...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: It is September 29, 1997, and until he can produce it, then he has to withdraw the remarks.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is an erroneous postulate that cannot be supported by logic. Any piece of any argument must come from the observational and one must be able to deduce from an observational position, Sir. I will never accept that, Sir. Who they think they are talking to. No, Sir, I am a trained scientist and I will not allow this argument to be brought to that level of nonsensical position, not me. You must stop this foolishness now. Man, let me get on with what I am got to say. I will not withdraw it.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. There are rules in this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The

Honourable Member believes that he can make up the rules, that is why he has found himself in the invidious position he is in. The reality is that he has to produce evidence if he is asserting that the Government has lied to the people of this country. There are standards in this House.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us reason for one minute. Two things would be true or untrue. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I cannot quote from section 7, should I not say that the Micro Enterprise Lending Institution will be established by the capitalisation of the sum \$7.5 million. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is getting into the ridiculous. I have nothing more to say, I have made my point already.

Sir, the Insurance Corporation of Barbados is gone, the Barbados National Bank is gone and the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company is gone, so why should Barbadians believe them that the other ones that they say they are not going to sell are not going to go too. That is the point. Why should a Barbadian believe anything that is said by this Honourable Government.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West were ordered expunged from the records by Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER..

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: They seem to change their mouth willy-nilly depending upon political expediency.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. The Honourable Member continues to disrespect the Chair and the Chamber by imputing improper motives to Honourable Members in this House.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I do not think that you could say that the Honourable Members have been changing willy-nilly, that is not fair to the Honourable Members.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Sir, willy-nilly is not a word with a connotation that is negative or positive. Bring the dictionary, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not necessary. Honourable Member, let us have a clean debate.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it is your ruling that willy-nilly is a word that imputes or cast any negative element, so be it, but I know that is not true otherwise vacillation would also be the same thing.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have another three minutes.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: You do not worry about that. I know that the public hears me well, you can rest assured of that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am going to further proceed with one last point, I know I have a very short time.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, many of these elements are occurring in this Honourable House because there are certain international directives, that is my belief, that Government divestment programme should bring things in line within a world of global trade, a world where Government is reduced to the level of tax collector and policymaker. The aim is to move Government out of the realm of providing goods and services for the people which was one of the fundamental premises of governance in the first place. Be rest assured, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that any developing country that accepts that postulate *carte blanche* will run into serious trouble because there is no historical evidence that the private sector has ever looked out for the interest of the masses of people, none whatsoever. It has been the interest of Government.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I indicated, the Honourable Member was misleading the House.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: The Honourable Member knows that it was a mistake in the summary and hence he knows that the summary is not the words of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister at page 15 of the *Hansard* document said these words:

“Mr. Speaker, similar steps will be taken to sell some shares in the Barbados National Bank, the Insurance Corporation of Barbados, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, the Barbados National Oil Company, the National Petroleum Corporation and the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company.

In every instance, Mr. Speaker, the approach will be as follows:

- (a) a block of shares for the staff
- (b) a block of shares for Credit Unions, Trade Unions and Mutual Funds
- (c) a block of shares for individuals
- (d) Government to retain a small portion, and
- (e) where necessary shares to be offered to strategic partners.”

That is from page 15 of the Budget Speech of September 29, 1997.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, nowhere in that citation is there reference to the airport or the seaport. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member knows that the document which refers to a summary which was not printed by the Barbados Government Printery does not include the airport nor the seaport. Therefore, for him to stand in this Chamber and rely on a document where in a summary a typographical error was made, similar to the typographical error that was made by the Democratic Labour Party in 1986 when they purported to tax vegetables, peas and okras, is to mislead the House. They got up in this House and indicated that the summary was a typographical error. So it is not only improper to impute those motives, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but it is in a manner that does not coincide with the high standards of behaviour required by the Honourable Members of this House.

Asides.

5.30 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is only one official copy of the Budget of Barbados and the Budget printed by the Government Printing Department is that official copy.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, further on a point of order. There is a Provision of Collection of Taxes Act, that is determined that those words that are issued from the mouth of the Honourable Minister of Finance on the Floor of this Honourable House in the Budget, must become law instantaneously subject to law ratifying it within four months.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to that extent, it stands not only to reason but it reflects Parliamentary practice that only that which is read by the Honourable Minister of Finance, constitutes the Budget and, therefore, to the extent that someone might have made a typographical error in a summary, which was corrected in the official copy which was published, not at George Street, but published by the Government Printery of Barbados, then I am suggesting to you that since this is a repeat of an incident that took place between the Honourable Member for St. Philip West and the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, that it is an indication that the Honourable Member is either deliberately intending to act upon a falsehood or is being benign and is suffering from a form of Alzheimer's that should not be part of a Honourable Member who said that he is prepared to take care of people in this country.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I would like you to go on. I am getting some clarification from *Hansard*.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Honourable Member has just indicated that the official document read in the Honourable House of Assembly is the official document and record, then this is the official document here. Companies involved in joint projects with the Carlisle Bay Center, Government will implement a privatization programme. The institutions that would be involved are the Airport...

This is the official document that was read by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us cool down a bit.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: "You can't get out of this one, don't care what you do".

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: No, it is not.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, until the Clerk of Parliament can determine what the official records of *Hansard* said, it is improper for any Honourable Member to take up a document that may have been distributed, even if stamped, because it was distributed to Honourable Members in the Chamber, but it does not reflect the official records of Parliament unless it is in *Hansard*.

Sir, what is particularly disgraceful and distasteful about the behavior of the Honourable Member, is that this same incident was clarified by the Right Honourable Prime Minister, in an exchange with the Honourable Member for St. Philip West on a previous occasion. This is clearly an attempt for the Honourable Member for St. Philip West and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, to make ground for the two of themselves before the upcoming Annual Conference on the August 13, given the fact that they are facing internal challenges for the leadership of the party. So that this exercise in walking out is an exercise to serve their own internal, domestic, and political survival, and nothing to do with the affairs of this Honourable Chamber.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have witnessed the most abominable display and disrespect

for Parliamentary practice in this country today. Sir, not just in the Barbados Parliament, not just in the Parliaments of the Caribbean but throughout the entire Commonwealth, it is understood that there is only one rule as it relates to the official record of Parliament. Sir, whether one uses Mays Parliamentary Practice, whether one uses the Australian Practice, whether one uses the Canadian Practice or whether one combs the records of the Rules of this Honourable Chamber, it is understood that the only official record of Parliament is that of *Hansard*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have sent for the official report of the House of Assembly Debates for Monday, September 29, 1997. Sir, the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, as delivered by the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, starting at page 3 of this document – and I want to hold it up – continuing down to page 27, available to every Honourable Member to verify, shows no record of a summary speaking to any intention on the part of the Prime Minister or this Government, to privatise any airport or seaport.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is particularly distasteful about what has transpired, is that as I indicated to you, when you read what is at page 14 and 15 of the report of *Hansard*, it repeats the list of companies to which I have adverted:

- (a) the Barbados National Bank;
- (b) the Insurance Corporation of Barbados;
- (c) the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC);
- (d) the Barbados National Oil Company Limited;
- (e) the National Petroleum Corporation; and
- (f) the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it goes on to spell out how Government's perspective on divestment is to take place, ensuring that staff, credit unions, trade unions, mutual funds, small individuals and indeed, Government, are to share in the ownership of these institutions.
5.40 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that every Member of this House would take a look at this because it is an exercise that can only be characterised as the most unfortunate and deliberate exercise in mischief. This is not the first time that this matter is being discussed with them. The Right Honourable Member for St. Peter had cause to treat to this issue with the Honourable Member for St. Philip West already but he does not believe that he should hear or see anything that is not of his own making. To that extent, we are now to be put through the unfortunate exercise of his

making allegations again which have already been proven to be false.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government does not hide from the fact that a document which was distributed on that evening may have had an error in the summary but the summary is not the Budget. It is only what falls from the mouth of the Minister of Finance and what goes into the official record of *Hansard* that constitutes the record to which we can refer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is unfortunate that the Democratic Labour Party has now sunk so low that they believe that Parliament itself must be a platform to prop up failing political careers in circumstances where it is so bad that a leader and deputy leader can now abandon control of the political institution that they seek to lead. This exercise this afternoon is but another example that they have heard about as a parliamentary tactic that will cause them to look good in the eyes of their faithful come August 13. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if that makes them happy and will prop them up eternally in George Street, then so be it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my concern as Leader of the House is that the records of this House are not tarnished and that there is no improper reference to an intention on the part of Government that was never part of the words or statements of the Prime Minister on September 29, 1997, nor indeed, the official records of *Hansard* which are available to every single member of the public in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one Honourable Member came in and, as the Honourable Member St. James Central said, behaved akin to a man who was intoxicated not only with his own desire for leadership but with other things that would cause him to behave in a way that reflected poorly on the dignity of this House. This evening, having had no example from the man who was previously their leader, we are now treated to a similar exercise that is really a sad reflection on this Parliament.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make this intervention to clarify the record for the sake of accuracy and the public and to say that clearly even when Members on that Side are corrected, they believe that they can continue to err in their ways and, God help us, if they ever become the Government of this country because I believe that the law and rule of law would be at serious risk and peril.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to wrap up this debate. In my own way, I believe this is one of the saddest days in the parliamentary history of our country. Sir, for me, it is the saddest day that I have been associated with this August institution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not abandon my post in the way in which the Opposition did. A number of fundamental issues were raised in this debate which I believe should be addressed. I will seek to clarify those technical matters that were raised in this wide-ranging debate as we sought to deal with this Civil Aviation (Amendment) Bill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was never our intention to create such a wide-ranging debate. I believe Members spoke on everything including the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. This was intended to be a tourism debate and a number of things were raised relative to tourism, international transport and travel which are necessary to be clarified.

Sir, during my time in this Chamber and during this session, we have had about four debates and this is from a Democratic Labour Party Administration who suddenly wants to talk every day about tourism, who ran away from the tourism sector in the past. In my opinion the Democratic Labour Party administration decimated the Barbados Tourism Authority and the tourism industry in Barbados, put the morale of workers at the Barbados Tourism Authority at an all-time low and in my opinion, stopped people from taking up appointments at the agency because of the way in which the Democratic Labour Party Administration treated the tourism industry and more specifically how they related to the Barbados Tourism Authority.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say this without excuse or apology. When we came to office, we had to clean up the Barbados Tourism Authority. There was an awful feeling in all of the overseas offices. There were square pegs in round holes and this Administration had to do audits in every overseas office as well as clean up the Barbados Tourism Authority which was not reflective of a society and industry that was dependant on tourism.

Sir, in my opinion, today, through the Leader of the Opposition we have started the syndrome all over again by the way in which he called the names of members and people who work at the Barbados Tourism Authority. I thought that it was convention in this Chamber that if a citizen's name was to be mentioned that it would be clear first with the Speaker but the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West called a number of names of persons who work at the Barbados Tourism Authority.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that people do not want to work at the Barbados Tourism Authority because they give of their best and are then treated to some of the worst accusations in this world. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition first went after the CEO of the Barbados Tourism Authority. This gentleman just resigned from the Barbados Tourism Authority not because of any audit, impropriety or anything bad as he

sought to suggest. Sir, the gentleman saw an opportunity available in another sector which he believes he should take up at this time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, he is an honourable man and has performed admirably at the Barbados Tourism Authority and has been praised by all and sundry in the industry in and out of Barbados. Today, the gentleman's name is being dragged through the mud and associated with issues relating to audit, improprieties and the like.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, no doubt people do not want to work at the Barbados Tourism Authority because they do not like to hear their names called in Parliament about their salaries and what are their pensions. Sir, this is the level we have sunk to in dealing with an agency which is fundamentally important to the development of this country. Sir, it is no doubt that competent and qualified people shy away from going to the Barbados Tourism Authority. Sir, if we are talking about tourism let us talk about it in depth. Let us not stay on the surface. Sir, all is not perfect in the tourism industry and everyone knows that. The arrival figures are not the only measure of performance in the industry and everyone knows that too, even the most casual observer.
5.50 p.m.

Sir, over the past three years, in the most difficult times, this Administration has kept hotel doors open in Barbados when people in other jurisdictions were closing their hotel doors. We have kept people in Barbados employed and food on the tables of Barbadians through the tourism industry at its lowest point ever in the history of the development of the industry regionally.

Sir, there were two Gulf wars, SARS, Foot and Mouth Disease, a downturn in the airline industry and bankruptcies and through it all Barbados has been able to keep its doors open, keep people coming to Barbados, provide more airlift to this country and better marketing of the country during the history of the development of this industry.

Asides.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Sir, everybody around us was using the discount programme. We were in a period of a downturn and the way it was thought, by the experts, to get people to visit was to discount in the industry. Everyone across the globe in travel and tourism was discounting. Mr. Deputy Speaker, what was Barbados supposed to do?

Sir, let me show you the innovation and creativity on this side of the aisle. The Government of Barbados took the burden off the private sector through the Best of Barbados programme by putting \$10 million in the hands of the private sector hoteliers after September 11 to keep the

industry buoyant. It was not a loan. It was a grant. We also made available \$30 million to the hotel industry through a hotel loan fund and another \$5 million in a small hotel loan fund for hoteliers at the concessional rates of 5 per cent and 5.5 per cent to keep this industry going.

Sir, the Government of Barbados, through its taxpayers, was able to take a lot of the pressure off the tourism industry players by being able to absorb a lot of the discounting in the industry. The yield is not what it should be but it is coming back. It will not happen overnight. It will take time.

In this environment I want all Barbadians to hear what the independent Central Bank of Barbados said in its 2003 report on Page 1 in its overview.

“After showing signs of recovery in the latter half of 2002, the Barbados economy strengthened further in 2003, the real Gross Domestic Product grew by 2.2 per cent. The resurgence in economic activity was due largely to a rebound in tourism as well as growth in the non trading sector. An improved global economic climate, the continuation of the Best of Barbados programme and other marketing initiatives provided the impetus for the strong growth in the tourism industry.”

Mr. Deputy Speaker, those are not my words. Those are the words of the Central Bank of Barbados. Sir, we can rant and rave in here forever and ever but we are not perfect. We have not got everything right but this industry is performing well under some very serious negative circumstances.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West quoted from an individual hotelier who spends his time on the attack against the Barbados Labour Party Government and it is covered by the media. He is the only man that I know that has *carte blanche* access to the media to Barbados and is encouraged in the most unbalanced and unfair way to say negative things about the tourism industry. Sir, every day he makes loose uncontrolled rhetoric about tourism.

I hope that the media of Barbados is thinking about what they are doing to the industry and the morale of our workers when they allow a man in an unbalanced and unfair way to have access to the airwaves and newspapers of this country. For example, this man went on the radio to talk about a Barbados Tourism Authority bond issue and that the Government should create a bond for hotels for 2007 in order to give them more rooms.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Barbados Government has given the hotels through the Enterprise Growth Fund Limited \$35 million; small hotels, \$5 million and the hotel loan fund,

\$30 million. The rate for the small Hotel Loan Fund is at 5 per cent and it has a moratorium of 5 years on principal and interest. We have already dispensed \$2 million of that money to six hotels and have given \$1 million as a grant to the Small Hotels of Barbados Inc. for their marketing. Mr. Deputy Speaker, only one hotel has been rejected for a loan under that fund.

Sir, \$30 million has been allocated to the Hotel Loan Fund at a rate of 5.5 per cent and a moratorium of 3 years on the principal and interest. Sir, \$7 million have already been dispensed to three hotels and \$6 million is committed to two other hotels in Barbados. I am talking about a Government that is committed to the development of this sector and yet this man goes on the radio and talks nonsense about the banks being flush with money and about 30 per cent of hotels not being able to access loans and he is ably abetted by people who should know better than to allow him the opportunity to say things without checking on the information.

Sir, this man also went on CBC-TV on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday and talked about the tourism industry without a response from people in the tourism industry. Sir, I am warning the public about how people are reacting to this loose uncontrolled rhetoric without any sort of balance to it. This is a free country and people should be allowed to express themselves. All I am demanding is that we are fair and balanced in our presentation and allow other people to speak.

Sir, the Leader of the Opposition raised an issue on the Best of Barbados programme.

Asides.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Best of Barbados programme is a discount programme. We call it a loyalty programme. Let me explain a few things. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy missed the boat because one of the components of the Best of Barbados programme is that it discounts opportunities on the ground when visitors arrive in Barbados. The most important thing is to get the tourists here in Barbados. If we give a discount coupon in Japan, it can only be spent in Tokyo. You cannot go to The Cliff Restaurant or Oistins if you are in the United States of America. The objective is to get the passenger here in Barbados.

Sir, the Best of Barbados programme is that a \$100 rebate was given to the tour operator or hotelier who brought that passenger to Barbados. What is more fundamental is that the largest portion of the money spent on the Best of Barbados programme was not spent on the rebate programme. It was spent on advertising and

promoting Barbados in our major marketplaces and it created some residual value for Barbados in the long-term. Sir, for Honourable Members to come to this Honourable House and criticise what we are doing and how we are doing it is certainly not to understand the programme.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West also raised the issue of the airport expansion project, the cost and the completion date. I was very clear to say that we have spent \$81.5 million to date on the airport expansion project. I said on the Floor of this House that the project was 60 per cent complete and we were about four to six months behind but at this time, it is still projected that the project would be completed within the budget.

6.00 p.m.

I also made the point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that because the project is delayed, the major functional areas of the airport will still be open and working. For example, the departure lounge is 98 per cent completed. It was not completed when we took it over but it was functional enough for passengers to pass through without any impediments, and that formed part of the programme, and that is what would happen when the arrival terminal is open. Sir, work would be going on in places that the ordinary passenger would not be able to see and I said that has happened everywhere.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in your lifetime and in my lifetime, the Grantley Adams International Airport will be under construction all the time because airports all over the world, especially once you are upgrading and receiving additional lift and additional passengers, that is the nature of this industry, so what are we ranting and raving about?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. John raised an issue of special powers for the Minister, under the Act that gave the Minister some special power to meddle in the affairs of the Grantley Adams International Airport.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Grantley Adams International Airport does not give the Minister any special powers to intervene and do anything. All it does in Section 13 is that the Minister can change and amend schedules by orders. A Board is appointed by the Minister which is supposed to carry out the policy of the Government. The company is fully owned by the Crown and it would be expected that the policies of the Crown would be instituted in the organisation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make no excuses or apologies for any agency falling under my Ministry that I should have direct communication with my Chairman or my Board to ensure that the policies of the Crown are carried out. I will not allow the Honourable Member for St. John or any other Honourable Member to take that away from me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy spoke about the number of planes as opposed to the number of people. I do not know if he knows very much about planes. I know he wants an airport in St. Lucy. Do you really feel that American Airlines, Continental, and US Air and others fly to Barbados just because they like Barbados? Sir, if the yields were bad and the percentage carrier was so bad, obviously, the people would not come to Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you add airport service charges, landing and parking fees, concessions and rentals, the total revenue that has come to the airport in the last three years are \$26.8 million in 2000-2001, \$28.8 million in 2001-2002, \$27.8 million in 2002-2003 and \$29.8 million in 2003-2004. The landing and parking fees in 2000 were \$5 million. In 2003-2004, the landing and parking fees are \$6.4 million. Sir, it is an increase of \$1.4 million in landing and parking fees in three years, and this reflects the increase in the level of airlift that is coming to Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heard all kinds of things that it is not doing anything for the economy, but let us look at the people who would have come through the airport. The arrival figures indicate, 507 000 in 2001, 497 000 in 2002 and 559 159 in 2003. Sir, more than 50 000 people came to Barbados in 2003 over 2002. Therefore, when I hear these arguments that just do not make sense, I just shudder to think where we are going in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North raised the issue of our Air Services Agreements. We have Air Services Agreements with Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Cuba, Luxemburg, Nigeria, the USA, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, those are the ones that are more relevant to this administration, but also the Republic Surinam, Switzerland which was an interim agreement passed on December 20, 1996, the Federal Republic of Germany in 1996, and the UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland June 23, 1999 which replaced an agreement that was signed on September 6, 1971.

There are also some Memoranda of Understanding between the Government of Barbados and the Government of Aruba, Venezuela, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In addition, we are working on other air services agreements.

Sir, there is one other issue, which is the turn over of staff at the Barbados Tourism Authority. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is exactly as I said before, a result of how people treat the Barbados Tourism Authority, and how the Democratic Labour Party has been allowed to treat that organisation.

four ministers in about one month. They had Hall, Greaves, Sandiford, and Tudor in about one or two months. The Barbados Labour Party had four ministers in ten years but the Democratic Labour Party had four ministers in about ten months. What is this about?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you hear that there is no direct correlation between the cruise ship calls and the number of passengers, it is nonsense. Sir, the reason why there are lesser calls for the cruise ships is because the ships that are calling now are bigger, and they carry more passengers. Sir, even with reduced ship calls, more people have come to Barbados during the period of time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, regarding the privatization of Grantley Adams International Airport, I do not know anywhere in the world where anybody has totally privatised an airport. You cannot totally privatise an airport under our jurisdiction, and we have never said that as a Government. Sir, I say again that expanded services from South America and Africa sound all well and good, but the market that is shoring up the passengers, had better be a market as well that has the resources to be able to provide a market for you in the first place.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we looked at South America, we were already in Brazil, South America. Do you know what was the significant thing? The economies in South America, the Argentinian economy, and the Brazilian economy took a downturn, at the time when we were seeking to expand services into those markets.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you really think that we could be at a stage in our lives where we could talk about expanded air services into Africa and South America, unless those jurisdictions are able to maintain the type of economic link that we need, to ensure that those services are sustainable?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heard all the talk and I love to hear when the Honourable Member for St. Philip West is ranting and raving, but I say in closing that this particular amendment to the Civil Aviation Act is fundamental for the future development of our international civil aviation environment. Sir, it is important that we continue to table efforts like this to ensure that Barbados is protected, particularly as travel and tourism are our number one economic earner.

6.10 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make no apologies for the fact that we have been able to run a travel and tourism industry in the worst of times and perform the best in the region. Mr. Deputy Speaker, while people from our source markets all over the region and all over the globe are praising us, other people are trying to pull us down, but we will not stop in our efforts to ensure that we continue to create the type of

environment that Barbados needs to take its industry forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West who spoke today is famous for a lot of sizzle and no steak, a lot of heat and no light and a lot of thunder and not a drop of rain. Sir, I say to you today that we are going to continue to manage this industry as we know it should be managed to bring benefits to all Barbadians now and in the future.

With those words I ask that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 – 6 inclusive were called and passed.

The First Schedule was called and passed.

The Second Schedule was called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. N. A. LYNCH, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Civil Aviation (Montreal Convention) (Amendment) Act, 2004.

ORDER NO. 3 – THE BARBADOS WATER AUTHORITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2004

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not detain the Honourable House for a long time because this is a financial matter. The Bill before the Honourable Chamber is to give the Barbados Water Authority another option in its quest to secure support from the Ministry of Finance during times when it needs to source financing from financial institutions, be it commercial banks, *et cetera*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you hear about four ministers in ten years, the Democratic Labour Party had

Mr. Deputy Speaker, like other Government entities, the Barbados Water Authority from time to time might have to seek guarantees from the Government of Barbados in order to access valuable institutional finance. The amendment which is being considered today is to make the necessary change to the Barbados Water Authority Act, Cap. 274A to allow the Government to guarantee payment of the principal and interest due by the Barbados Water Authority in respect of any loan to the Barbados Water Authority which is extremely timely at this time. Sir, given the lack of the financial strength of the Barbados Water Authority and the very important programme of work ahead of it, the Barbados Water Authority might have to seek some accommodation through the Ministry of Finance in the form of a loan guarantee in order to access loans from institutions.

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. A. P. WOOD, 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 in Committee.

Clauses 1 – 2 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. A. P. WOOD, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the DEPUTY SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
6.20 p.m.

On the separate motions of Hon. A. P. WOOD, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Barbados Water Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2004.

SUSPENSION

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 6.35 p.m.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This Honourable House is resumed.

ORDER NO. 2 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF THE PROPERTY SITUATE AT LOT 41, 7TH AVENUE, WANSTEAD TERRACE IN THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is not a matter that should detain us for any considerable time. There was a time in our history when a number of Government Ministers and agencies, had numbers of contract officers from overseas for whom housing had to be provided. It was part of their terms and conditions of service that such housing should be provided. Government retained a number of houses, many of them in the St. James South constituency and in the Husbands/Wanstead locale for provision to these contract officers. As more and more of our own people became trained and professional staff could be recruited locally, the need for housing for contract officers reduced and some of the houses fell into disrepair.

Sir, in 1997, Cabinet made a decision that vacant lots, residual parcels of land along the ABC Highway, disused properties which are owned by the Government, former public baths including a property at No. 41, 7th Avenue Wanstead Terrace should be vested in the National Housing Corporation. This particular property was formerly used by the Pyschiatric Hospital for an officer who was recruited from outside of Barbados. Sir, today we are attempting to vest this particular property in the National Housing Corporation so that it can dispose of it.

Sir, with a demand for housing, it is incumbent on Government to maintain its own properties and where there are lots, disused houses or other properties which can be brought into the housing pool and utilised by Barbadians that we should make them available.

This house is in an area that now attracts high property values, good sales and good rental income and it is really a sin in the context of the existing housing demand that properties should be allowed to sit and remain derelict. We are systematically attempting to address that particular problem. I am asking that this Honourable House pass this Resolution to allow this property to be vested in the National Housing Corporation for disposal.

The property will be sold at auction or tenders will be invited and sold to the individuals who offers the largest amount of money so that we will make some revenue from it which can then go into our general pool to help secure further investment. I have brought to the Chamber a plan

which Honourable Members can peruse at their leisure and be sure it is the right property and locale.

Sir, you would recall that in recent months we had a debate in which we focus on the issue of acquisitions and vesting and the Honourable Member for St. James South raised the point that there was a time to this when matters of this ilk came to this Chamber that maps came with the files so that Members of Parliament could examine the maps themselves which would help to preclude the commission of errors of various type.

Sir, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, August 10, 2004, at 11.00 a.m.

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

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, August 10, 2004 at 11.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
6.40 p.m.

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