
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2003 – 2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, March 9, 2004.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, G.C.M. B.A., Dip. Ed. (Speaker)
His Honour J. M. Edghill, J.P. (Deputy Speaker)
Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.) (Prime Minister,
Minister of Finance and the Civil Service)
Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.)
Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A. (Oxon.)
Hon. Dame Billie MILLER, D.A., B.C.H. (Senior Minister
and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)
Mr. G. W. PAYNE, LL.B.
Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B.
(Hons.), L.E.C., J.P. (Minister of Labour and Social
Security)
Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Minister of
Public Works and Transport)
Hon. R. D. MARSHALL (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. H. F. LASHLEY (Minister of Social Transformation)
Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B.
Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN
Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Minister of
Housing, Lands and the Environment)
Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, LL.B. (Deputy Prime
Minister, Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)
(Leader of the House)
Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.
Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, B.A., B.Sc., J.P. (Parliamentary
Secretary to the Attorney General and Minister of Home
Affairs)
Hon. N. A. LYNCH, B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Tourism
and International Transport)
Hon. A. P. WOOD, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil., J.P. (Minister of
Energy and Public Utilities)

Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc., J.P. (Minister of Education,
Youth Affairs and Sports)
Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P. (Minister of State, Ministry of
Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)
Hon. J. X. WALCOTT, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S. (Edin.), J.P.
(Minister of Health)
Mr. R. D. JONES, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Ed.), J.P.
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 taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, March 2, 2004.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move
that the Minutes so cited be confirmed subject to any
omissions, observations and/or corrections.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Barbados Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure 2004-2005.
2. Schedule of Personal Emoluments 2004-2005.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the Appropriation Bill, 2004.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, before I move the first reading of the Sports and Arts Promotion Fund Bill, I wish to indicate that the Bill which had been circulated has been withdrawn and another one has been circulated. In the circumstances, I beg to move that the Sports and Arts Promotion Fund Bill in its most recent incarnation be read a first a time.
10.20 a.m.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the Appropriation Bill, 2004, was read a first time.

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

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2004, was read a first time.

CONGRATULATORY/OBITUARY SPEECHES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Right Honourable Prime Minister.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, it is my sad and humble duty to have to lead this Honourable House in paying tribute to one of our very own, the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John.

I would have already had the opportunity by way of public statements to pay my own tribute to the life, work and worth of this most extraordinary man, and to the aspects of his attributes and capacities, which I have already referred to publicly which, for the record, I would want to state on the Floor of this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that on this occasion, it would be appropriate for me to begin by recognising that Sir Harold Bernard St. John was quite easily one of the greatest Parliamentarians in the history of the Barbados House of Assembly.

There are persons who have led this country, who would have contributed to this country's development, and whose records are in many respects reflected either in statements out of this House or in achievements not necessarily associated with this House but I cannot think of anyone over the course of my 20 years in Parliament, who has been more assiduous and in the very best sense of the word, a child of Parliament as Sir Harold Bernard St. John.

Mr. Speaker, his contribution to parliamentary life was not only extraordinary, it was prodigious. His passing in many respects marks the end of an era. For us in the Barbados Labour Party, his passing marks the breach of our link to the founders of the Party, Sir Grantley Adams and to that Parliament of 1966 which was instrumental in laying the foundations for the Independence of this country but it was in his sustained commitment to Parliament that I think today this Honourable House should remember him. It was a sustained commitment which began in 1966 and lasted into the 21st Century. It was a commitment that saw him contributing massively to the debates in this Honourable House and in a way that when those contributions are collected and collated, will bear favourable contribution to any contribution to this Parliament in its entire history.

Sir, there are others in Barbados and in the Caribbean whose collected speeches and best speeches, may in fact, be best speeches outside of Parliament but it may be said of Sir Bernard St. John, that if one were to get a collection of his speeches in this Honourable House, one would see a tapestry of richness and an understanding of public policy; a capacity for debate; a wit; an eloquence and a learning and wisdom, which would bear relationship to the contribution of any Parliament in any region or in any democracy.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold St. John has taken an interest in the work of this Parliament which, in my judgment, went beyond that of any of his contemporaries. I remember him immediately after election in 1994, laying claims to his right to sit at the edge of the Front Bench in Parliament to establish a very important tradition in this Honourable House, which is the rights of a former Prime Minister and how those rights be exercised, a right that I hope never to have to claim.

Mr. Speaker, I think that all Honourable Members of this Parliament who would have been privileged to have seen him, would recognise that as a former Prime Minister, he was able to impart and to give guidance from one of the richest reservoirs of wisdom and understanding of policy that has ever been in the capacity of any ordinary citizen.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that Your Honour can testify that his contributions to this Honourable House were always sharp and courteous to the Chair, and that even though he was a formidable debater, his contributions to this Honourable House were never characterised by any personal rancour or the lowering of the standard of debates.

Mr. Speaker, when all is said and done, whatever else might be said about him, and much could be said, is that Sir Harold St. John was a parliamentarian *'par excellence'* and today I must ask this Honourable House, first of all, to remember him, in my judgement, as the extraordinary parliamentarian of our times.

His contributions to the development of this country has been prodigious. He will come to be remembered as one of the founding fathers in the best sense in which the concept of founding fathers is recognised and understood in democracies. I believe that his contribution to the building of a modern Barbados economy also sets him apart in the category of a select few persons who have helped to build the modern economy.

Mr. Speaker, his contribution to the building of the economies of the developing world, through his leadership of trade negotiations at a critical time when the economic relationship between the developing world and Europe had to be established, that set him apart as one of those persons who has not only helped to shape a modern domestic economy but has helped to shape the modern international economy.

Sir Harold was passionately committed both to the ideals and practice of Caribbean integration. I believe that there are going to be few persons who would have sustained the zeal he had for building closer relationships with our regional neighbours as Sir Harold Bernard St. John.

His first, for raising to the regional field saw him as one of those champions of the Little Eight experiment that failed but the failure of the Little Eight did not in any way dampen his enthusiasm for wanting to continue to push the best ideals of Caribbean integration.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that I greatly felt his enthusiasm in 1994 when the Barbados Labour Party returned to Office, to want to be able to make a contribution to the development of a Caribbean regional integration process, in ways that reflected the Sir Harold St. John's selflessness but in fundamental ways reflected the Sir Harold St. John's deep knowledge of policy and wisdom, and we had hoped to have given him a stage upon which he could have made that fundamental contribution.

Mr. Speaker, it is a sad thing that contribution that was to have been his gift to have restored to the region, in some respects was thwarted by those within the region who felt that he was not fit, for example, to be the head of the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery and had said wounding things about him at a time when Sir Harold had no interest of wanting to be head of the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery but merely wanted to make a contribution to it.

10.30 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold felt that he was given prodigious talents and that he had a duty to make a prodigious contribution. Sir, that was the nature of the man.

I have said before and I will say it again that no one else outside of this Cabinet has made a more fundamental and vast contribution to Government than Sir Harold over the course of the last ten years.

He was the Chairman of our Domestic Negotiating Commission at a time when the Government had to marshal negotiations in at least four theatres. He was the head of our Fisheries and Marketing Delimitations Commission and the nature, in every instance of this man, was that he was doing it not as consultancy but as a contribution to the public life of this country and to help to carry forward the Regional Negotiating Machine.

Mr. Speaker, I think he had a splendid life. He had an amazing range of qualities that one would hope to find in a human being. He was a simple person but also very deep and one of impeccable integrity. His character was well-rounded and full. In addition to his great gifts of intellect and mind, he had a boyish, impish sense of humour. It was wonderful to be around him because he embraced people and wanted to mentor and impart knowledge to them.

Sir Harold was an emblem of generosity and spirit and above all he had the happy blend of being great and humble in equal measure. Sir, I say great and humble because he made massive contribution yet, from time to time, this country humbled him by not allowing him to attain the heights of public office by way of direct elections that he would have wished. He always accepted what the country did to him with humility and it never deterred him from embracing the country nor from contributing and giving himself in a way that has never been paralleled by a person in his place.

Mr. Speaker, on This Side, we know of his utter loyalty and commitment to the Barbados Labour Party in a way that perhaps would be studied by historians as a model. On every occasion that Harold Bernard St. John led this Party into elections and lost, it was not a question of his wanting to hold on to office or power for his own sake. His only

concern was what was in the best interest of the Party and the Government at that time. Sir, it is a model of political selflessness that every one called to public life would do well to emulate.

On This Side we know that despite his pain in the later days, he was always the first person at parliamentary group meetings. He cared so deeply about this Party and this House that he wanted to contribute to all preparations.

Sir, the most endearing image I will have of him is that of last year when our Party held its annual dinner. Although he was in the greatest pain, one of the first persons to be at that dinner was Harold Bernard St. John as if he was performing a right that he would not know how to desecrate.

Sir, all of us in public life have our flaws but no one in the Barbados Labour Party can speak of Sir Harold other than in relation to his utter integrity, great strength of character, his immense and unmatched loyalty, the thrill with which he approached public life, his wish only to want to contribute to public policy and the betterment of the society without seeking reward. Sir, these are the things that set him apart.

Mr. Speaker, this country and House have lost not just a patriot of the highest order but a treasure. I believe we have to find a way of establishing an appropriate memorial to this man who was gifted in so many respects and who shared his ample gifts with the people of this country in fundamental ways that have led to the betterment of this country.

Mr. Speaker, in my own personal regard, I have already said that my tenure as his Parliamentary Secretary in 1985/86 conditioned and prepared me in important ways for the post I now hold. I can only say that over the period of my prime ministership of Barbados, I have been blessed by being able to call at any time and in ample measure on his tremendous intellect, guidance and mentorship.

I will greatly miss him but at the same time, I give thanks that it was my greatest privilege to have known and have been positively touched by the life and outstanding character of the finest Barbadian whom it has been my privilege to know, Sir Harold Bernard St. John.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Sir Harold Bernard St. John. I will confine my remarks to the person I came to understand as a parliamentarian. Whenever I think of Sir Harold I think about the concepts of style and substance. He was able to combine style and substance in a way that made him admirable to those of us who had recently entered politics. He was 'a-must-listen to' at Budget time. He always brought substance and knowledge to bear on any debate. His understanding of a variety of subjects, especially trade

matters was extremely appealing to me because the depth of his understanding of ACP and European Union matters on trade would have been extremely refreshing if only because he was not a trained economist but a trained lawyer who understood all the issues of protectionism, tariffs and all related matters. I confess that I listened most attentively to his contributions in Parliament.

Sir, he was a fascinating man from his capacity not only to lead but to follow. He led the Barbados Labour Party and it was amazing how a man who had such an opportunity could have turned around and followed others with such dignity and class.
10.40 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, I happened, in my short political life, to have suffered two defeats at the polls already, in 1994 and 1999, and, perhaps, I have taken a lot of inspiration from Sir Harold who was never daunted by the losses that he suffered at the polls. He, in fact, rather than turn his back or quit, he became even more committed to the task of serving this country and in that sense he offered a very significant example to many of us who wish to continue in politics.

Therefore, I wish to quote from a book, *A New Machiavelli*, subtitled *The Art of Politics and Business* written by Alistair McAlpine. He said this about looking to the future and planning. He said:

"When planning for the future, always take advice from someone who has failed rather than from someone who has known only success. For someone of intelligence who has failed, would have contemplated failure and determined the reasons behind it, whereas, successful people often do not really know the truth of their success, only the myths that they have created for themselves."

Sir, this is the way in which McAlpine interpreted Machiavelli's view of his judgement of failure. The inspiration there is to note that persons who have suffered defeat are always able to reflect, contemplate and learn, once they are so willing to so do, in order to make for a brighter future.

Sir, having said that, it would still have required some measure of maturity and understanding for anyone to have suffered defeats in politics the way Sir Harold did and yet remain so committed to the cause, not only committed but exceedingly prepared to follow.

Sir, after a while in this Chamber, when I had an opportunity to be here before, it was easy to observe that this man had become a statesman in parliamentary contributions because sometimes you wondered whether he was not supportive of the Opposition in debate because of the views he held, that were devoid of partisan politics.

Sir, that, to my mind, established him as an outstanding statesman within the context of Barbadian politics. Mr. Speaker, he was tremendous in that regard. Once he believed in a position, he held that position *ad nauseam*.

Mr. Speaker, I recall a debate on the National Housing Corporation when I spoke to the issue of the low interest rates being offered and the apparent misallocation of such resources, to which Sir Harold said that he is going to raise a platform in St. Michael North West and tell the constituents that I do not wish them to have access to low interest rate loans.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: I considered it and thought it fascinating. I presumed it to be digressive but it could have been raising a very important political point for me, that in spite of my argument it could, perhaps, been turned against me in a political sense. I felt at the time that he said it facetiously and history would prove that he did. Sir, the thing about it is, he recognised that in my attempt to be critical of a particular policy, that I was creating a loophole that could be exploited politically and he indicated that to me in his response.

Indeed, it is a pleasure to observe politicians who have reached or approaching statesmanlike status because it gives one hope for the future, that after you have reached a particular point in your political career then your true honesty and gut feeling about a circumstance could be revealed and not be shadowed by your political persuasion but that takes some time to accomplish in these hallowed Chambers.

Sir, I said earlier that whenever we had Budget debates in Barbados, I made it my business to listen to Sir Harold St. John because like so many in the media with whom I have had conversation and discussion over the years, they too looked forward to his contribution for, perhaps, a more neutral assessment of the Budget presentation, even though he would have been on the Government's Side. He was a man that certainly, regardless on what side of the political fence you sit, you had no choice in Parliament but to sit and admire his contributions.

Sir, I have been told that Sir Harold was a man who advocated the need for local Government and, perhaps, it does appear that the genesis of such a view started when he became an Advisor to the Southern District Council.

Mr. Speaker, contrary to what some people may feel, I must confess that I am also an advocate of local Government. I see the need to extend democracy beyond Parliament. I see the need to give Barbadians a greater opportunity to participate in the delivery of services and

goods to the people of Barbados. Therefore, in this context I think that there is need to empower voters beyond the five-year cycle.

Sir, I am on record as saying that, perhaps, two existing institutions in government already constitute the basis for the construction of local government in a more defined way for the future. Perhaps, in planning for the future, it may be instructive to take note of what is perceived to be the wisdom of Sir Harold in recognising that democracy can be widened and the participation of the average man on the street and the masses could be encouraged by extending the parliamentary approach to the voters of Barbados in the form of some kind of some type of local government.

Sir Harold also shared some other passions. I think that most of us, if not all of us, are committed to the process of integration and regionalism. Especially in today's global world where the forces of the developed countries are going to be severe and, maybe, become hindrances to the progress and growth of developing states, then those of us who had thought about the process of integration would recognise that without integration there would be no future growth and development within CARICOM or a Caribbean context. Therefore, I would hope that the passion that Sir Harold shared for the integration movement would remain a passion of all forward-looking Parliamentarians throughout the region.

There is no way in which we can advance as a region without coming together to fight the forces of globalisation and trade liberalisation. The evidence is already very clear that in the absence of integration within the region, the struggle ahead is going to be even more difficult and therefore, integration is a compelling requirement for any future growth and development of the Caribbean area.
10.50 a.m.

He has shared many other concerns with the ruling party. I think the Opposition can say that it has been privileged to listen to the views espoused by Sir Harold, over the many years that he served in Parliament and even when not in Parliament, but he continued to make an outstanding contribution to Barbados' development. He is a model for me and, perhaps, by now it will be quite apparent that I admired his contributions immensely, and admired him totally as a Parliamentarian.

Sir, let me say here that beyond the Rt. Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, I would be less than honest than to admit that he was, perhaps, my favourite parliamentarian. I say that from a position on the Opposition Benches and I hope that no one interprets that as a weakness, it is just a confession which I had to make, that given the quality of his contributions, given the substance that he obviously possessed, given the well-rounded manner in which he

debated, given the examples that he set, and given the statesmanlike person that he became in the latter days in Parliament, that he has certainly served, as an inspiration as far as Parliament is concerned.

Now, some may interpret a Parliamentarian to be a politician, but I think there is a distinction. I must note and I must reiterate that he was, outside of the Rt. Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, my favourite Parliamentarian. I have come to understand that there are differences between Parliamentarians and politicians. Parliamentarians carry certain qualities that perhaps politicians may not carry because, in the pursuit of their vote, they may have to stifle some of their feelings about some of the political process at hand, whereas, a parliamentarian does not fear that kind of environment. He speaks freely and that is what determines the difference between a politician and a statesman. In that regard, Sir Harold St. John had emerged and matured to the level of being a statesman in the political arena of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I deliberately confined my remarks to the man, I think, I came to understand within Parliament because a lot has been said about this individual beyond the boundaries of Parliament and, I must confess again, that I never got to know the individual closely.

In fact, I have never had a conversation beyond, perhaps five minutes with the individual. This does not mean that you cannot admire someone from a distance. Rather, several of us spend quite a lot of our lives admiring the horizon and we are never able to get close to the horizon but therein lies its beauty. We understand it and we are able to observe it from a distance. In that regard, perhaps, Sir Harold was like that, can be likened to the horizon, someone that you can stay at a distance and admire for all his worth.

I therefore wish to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that his parting from the political arena offers, I think to the younger Parliamentarians, an opportunity to emulate his emphasis on substance, not that his substance went without style. As has been said, he did possess an outstanding sense of humour and wit, which was extremely evident in his asides. When you were on your feet speaking, he could always, by way of aside, find a way to penetrate or put a hole into your argument, such that for me, I see his contribution as one emphasizing substance in debate, without diluting the need for style. Again, in the political arena, one cannot deliver substance without trying at best, or within your capacity to add some degree of style. We all understand that politics is largely a game of public relations as well. Therefore, to simply package your content, to simply understand the issues and to present them without putting them in a way that would be attractive to the listening audience, would also deny the full impact of your presentation.

Sir, his emphasis would remain indelibly etched in my mind, with respect to the kind of expectation and quality that any Parliamentarian should strive for, in making presentations to this August Chamber. I will end by saying that for me, his capacity not only to lead, but his capacity to follow, is perhaps the greatest lesson that can be learnt by any young Parliamentarian or any young politician.

Sir, no one knows what the future holds, in terms of your position and no one knows what life holds. When given the opportunity to lead, you should try to do it to the best of your ability. Also, if you are not given the opportunity to lead and you have to fall back in line and follow, you should also seek to follow with equal admiration. It is that lesson which would remain for me, the most enduring lesson taught by Sir Harold St. John in his political life.

As has been stated, not only in this Chamber but beyond, he had an opportunity to perhaps reach the highest level of Parliamentary life much earlier in his career, but was denied so by the vagaries of politics. He had a subsequent opportunity perhaps to emerge, once again, but felt it necessary, in the interest of his political party to support the younger folk. It would not have been easy for a politician as, perhaps, defined predominantly by his ego. Therefore, for a politician of such stature to recognise the need to follow, at such a critical time in the political history of his party, would remain an admirable recognition for any student of politics to follow and learn.

It is in that regard therefore, Mr. Speaker, that I have the privilege and the Honour to speak only for a short period, in fact, on behalf of this outstanding son of the soil.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I would wish to begin my contribution by offering our thanks and appreciation to a large number of people, who moved into action almost as soon as Sir Harold passed this life, to prepare a state funeral, I think it is fair to say, the like of which we had not seen before.

It was led by the Cabinet Secretary and those officers of the Cabinet office, who worked way beyond the call of duty, into the night from early morning. I wish to publicly offer the thanks and appreciation of the Government and the people of Barbados to the Barbados Defence Force; the Royal Barbados Police Force; the Sanitation Service Authority which cleaned the route and the environs of the Christ Church Parish Church; the Ministry of Public Works; the firm that did all of the construction which had to be done to prepare the grave site and the company which power-washed the church so that it presented a good image because the Caribbean was watching Barbados and how we conducted ourselves on this occasion.

11.00 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, since Sir Harold left this distinguished Chamber at the end of the last Parliament, we have missed his presence, his calming influence, his tremendous memory and his intellect as a point of reference. If one was not sure about something one could always refer to him because of his very long period of service here and his general knowledge and interest in all things which touched upon our lives as parliamentarians. Sir Harold was perhaps the finest example of what a parliamentarian and a parliamentary representative of his constituency could be in my time.

A lot of the values, particularly the political values, and those things which marked me out as a representative of the constituency which I love to represent and do represent in this House, I have learnt from two men, my own father and Sir Harold Bernard St. John. I think that his example, which we must emulate, is an important legacy which he has left to us as parliamentarians. Like him, each of us must find a focus. Parliament is more than just coming in here and getting through the Order Paper, going into your constituency maybe once or twice a week and having your branch meeting once a month. That is not even a skeleton of what parliamentary representation means.

Sir, like him we need to find a focus. We need to find not only one, but two or three causes, because in his case, it was diverse. He was a greatly accomplished parliamentarian. You could approach him on any aspect of parliamentary life and on any aspect of government. He understood how one had to conduct oneself and how one had to strategise when one was in Opposition. In those long dark days of Opposition, he was one of a small group that kept the Barbados Labour Party focussed on its goal which was to return to government. Therefore, like him, we have to find a way to widen the base of our engagement. In other words, we need to be versatile as parliamentarians and broaden our horizon in the way that we seek to represent the people who sent us here and the way in which we seek to make an even wider national contribution. That, as I said, is his legacy.

Sir, we in paying this final tribute to Sir Harold could do no better than to find ways to be inspired by his examples.

Mr. Speaker, there will be many memorials to Sir Harold. I believe that one such memorial in this Parliament would be the putting in place at long last of new, modern and relevant standing orders. This was something he felt very strongly about. We have had draft standing orders on our desk, certainly, I had them on mine for years now. Like him, Sir, I was concerned and continue to be concerned that we are taking too long to bring more streamlined and more modern practice to the way in which we conduct the business of this ancient and much revered Parliament. It is not quite yet properly into the 21st century, and we need to

do this. This can be a memorial which in fairly short order we can work towards.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold was not one, as the Leader of the Opposition quite rightly pointed out, who was overly fastidious about form, he was a stickler for process. Substance was his contribution. He had no patience for trivia and for minutia. It has been said by many over the past week that he was a good man which is true, but he was also a good parliamentary representative who was always looking to build and to develop in his constituency. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I am forced to observe that at the end of it, it would be fair to say that Barbados was his parish, not only Christ Church, because his vision was so large and so all-embracing.

Sir, I believe that one memorial, because as I said there would be several overtime, in respect of his special parish and his constituency within it which I sincerely believe he would approve of has to do with Oistins Town. He always called it Oistins Town, never Oistins. He very much wanted to see Oistins Town, like Bridgetown and Speightstown, become the subject of special development area legislation. He wanted Oistins to have that kind of designation. He wanted Oistins to be the beneficiary of the kind of development which we see under way in the City of Bridgetown, I am very happy to say, and in Speightstown. That really was his ultimate dream.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there is a plan for Oistins. I believe the distinguished representative for the constituency in which it falls will be able to speak more volubly to that than I can. I think that one memorial, particularly the memorial that he would like to have seen arise out of Oistins Town would be that redeveloped, modern and forward-looking 21st century Oistins Town.
11.10 a.m.

It is within our capability, we have the capacity, the will is there, the plan is there; all that is left now is to programme and to implement this dream which he began and which, in bringing to good resolution and fruition, would be a memorial fitting for Sir Harold Bernard St. John.

Mr. Speaker, in this connection, I want to say a few words which I have before uttered on this Floor and which I feel that at every opportunity that presents itself I must continue to make the point. Sir, there is no one who is writing the history of the last Century of this Parliament and of this country. There is no 20th Century history of Barbados. There is Richard Ligon's book "**The True and Exact History of the Island Barbados, 1657**" and Robert H. Schomburgk's book "**1848 History of Barbados**", and then there are 'minutes' but there is no comprehensive

history and there is so much that has happened in the 20th Century, and particularly in the last 70 years of the 20th Century, if we are counting the 1930s, and we should. Those were the years of the social revolution of which Fab Hoyos wrote. He was much maligned in his time, like Sir Harold. A lot of the outpouring that we are hearing now is borne out of guilt.

Asides.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Speaker, it has to be said. As humans, that is how we are, we do not love each enough, we do not show nor impart affection enough and too often, it is only when persons have died and we will see them no more, that it all comes out.

Sir, to a few of us, and I count myself among them, the opportunity sometimes comes to have one's peers and those who care about us, to say nice things while we are alive. I have enjoyed this privilege as recently as last month and I appreciate it greatly but this is how the human condition socialises us and Sir Harold has suffered in that regard. That is all the more reason why the enormous contribution that he has made must be recorded for posterity.

The social revolution in Barbados is gravely understated and much misunderstood and, therefore, it lies within the function of the historians to put the record in writing and to record it correctly because the new technologies are there to help us.

Mr. Speaker, I lament the fact that Sir Harold St. John did not or could not have found the time to leave his writings or papers, so that it would have formed the basis for those who would, at some point, research our times.

Sir, the Parliament of Barbados has seen robust times. When I was a child, to come in here would have seemed like a battlefield sometimes. This Parliament is tamed as compared with what it used to be but at the same time, the substance and work flowing from the Parliament is prodigious and bespeaks the esteem with which Barbados is held as a well governed and stable democratic parliamentary democracy in the world.

Sir, I am not a historian but I throw out again that there must be a writing down.

As I close my remarks, I would wish to offer my personal condolences to his family; to his widow Lady St. John; his children; his grand-children; his sisters; his brother and to the extended family. For them, he was their rock and yesterday during the funeral service we heard that out of the mouth of his daughter who appreciated him. Sir, what they need to know too, was that they were his rock because he was a man who was dedicated to his family and needed to feel the warmth and

love of his family around him, so that there was a mutual love and affection at that home at Enterprise, such that I have observed in my time with him.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the family that we deeply appreciate the sacrifice which they have made in terms of allowing us as Parliamentarians and as Barbadians, to have so much of his time, his attention, and his love and affection; at times perhaps when they would have loved to have him around and with them; at times when they had to forego a family vacation because it did not fit into his calendar or agenda; at times particularly in the difficult times when no one can quite reach in to comfort, to help or to guide those personal moments when we can only be guided by our own values and our own sense of what is the right and proper thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that his family and his wide circle of friends will understand, from the way in which we have sought to uplift him at the time of his death and the way in which we will eulogise him in this Honourable Chamber which he loves so much, that they will understand the very highest esteem in which we have held this great man.

Mr. Speaker, before I take my seat, it would be in order for me to move that a Resolution of Condolence at the end of this item on our Order Paper should be prepared and delivered to Lady St. John because we are, indeed, in the process of speaking to a formal Resolution of Condolence.

I would, therefore, ask that with the appropriate wording, the Clerk would so prepare and that such a Resolution would move from this Honourable House.

I thank you, Sir.
11.20 a.m.

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL:

"Death lays his icy hands on kings
Sceptre and crown must tumble down
And in the dust be equally made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade."

Mr. Speaker, those are the words of the poet Shelly. The late Sir Harold Bernard St. John knew and lived these words very well. People from all walks of life and the people of Oistins Town paid him tribute. I said Oistins Town because the Honourable Member for the City said that he always referred to Oistins as Oistins Town. They spoke of his stature and importance. He represented them and he passed around not only to look for a vote but to sit on a bench and chat with them. I believe through his life he remembered the words of the poet Shelly and lived that way.

Sir, I first came into contact with the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John around 1980. At that time, he was the Deputy Prime Minister of Barbados when I was working in the insurance business and I met with his daughter Charmaine to discuss insurance with her. She said she would buy the insurance but asked me to call her father as he wanted to speak to me about it.

When I spoke to him, he told me I did not have to sell him the merits of insurance but wanted to make sure that I was giving his daughter the correct policy. Sir, he spoke to me as if he had known me for a long time and perhaps he did because he made it his business to know everything as he was always gathering good information.

Mr. Speaker, he also told me that he noticed I had changed my car and hoped that I had bought it cash since I was making a lot of money. He advised me that if I could afford, I should always buy a car cash since it would depreciate over years and that land and property could be bought on credit as over the years it would appreciate. Sir, this was my first lesson in finance and economics.

Sir, he was a decent man and when he took over the reins of Government at the passing of the late Tom Adams. He said that the late Prime Minister kept a file on persons but he would never do the same as he felt that information was for matters of construction and not for destruction.

Sir Harold Bernard St. John believed in punctuality. He was always the first to be here in Parliament and at parliamentary group meetings. He was also humorous and always had time to give a joke in the members' room or the lunch room. Sir, he enjoyed conversation and he loved his life. Mr. Speaker, whenever I wanted to make an investment, I would first consult Sir Harold as he would always give good information. During the takeover of Life of Barbados and Barbados Mutual, Guardian Life bid for the business and the late Sir Harold gave his views on who should receive it. I spoke to him afterwards, he asked me if I had received my money, and the amount I had received. I told him the figure and he began to glorify and praise God on my behalf.

Asides.

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: Sir, he always thanked God for small mercies. He also told me that the women of Barbados would now get a windfall. He could relate humour to the serious side of life and was the kind of person that was easy to like.

Sir, I want to say to his wife, children and family members that he was a good man. As the Honourable Member for the City said he was a representative for all Barbados, not just the constituency of Christ Church South

and he knew where to go in Barbados to get any item. On behalf the constituents of Michael West Central, my family and I, I offer condolences to the widow, children and family of the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John.

11.30 a.m.

I think what I am going to say is appropriate on the passing of the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John. On the death of King Arthur, when Arthur was put on the barge to go out to sea he said to those gathered around, "the old order changeth."

Mr. SPEAKER: Who said that? King Arthur who died?

Asides.

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I said that while he was dying on his bed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Okay.

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: While he was on the barge going out to sea he said to those gathered around,

"The old order changeth. The yielding place to new. As God fulfills himself in many ways, comfort thyself. What comfort is in me? I have lived my life and that which I have done may he within himself make pure but if thou should never see my face again, pray for my soul. More things are wrought by pray than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice rise like a fountain for me night and day. For what are men better than sheep or goats that nourish a blind life within the brain. If knowing God, they lift their hands of prayer, doth for themselves and those who called me friend, for so the whole round earth is everywhere, bound by gold chains about the feet of God but now, farewell, I am going a long way."

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want to briefly pay tribute to a colleague, the undisputed Leader of the political team in Christ Church, a distinguished Member of this Honourable House and a distinguished Barbadian who has, in all of his many and various aspects of his life, truly left his footprints in the sands of time.

Sir, I will not speak about his brilliance at the Bar, I will not speak of respect for which he was held in international circles, particularly with respect to international trade, but more particularly about the part of Barbados that he loved dearly and the way in which he worked throughout

his entire life, both his public and private contribution, in order to improve and make the significant transformation to the south eastern part of Barbados.

Sir, my memory of Sir Harold Bernard St. John goes back to 1971 when I first entered his alma mater, Foundation School, and I grew to understand what it was that kept him firmly glued to that part of Barbados. My first glimpse of Oistins early in the morning was a peaceful fishing village at that time and now how things have changed as a result of the contribution of the Honourable Member. I remember waiting for the St. Christopher or Silver Sands bus and standing on the sand by the beach, where the bus stop was. This area is now being occupied by the Oistins Fishing Complex and Entertainment Centre.

Sir, we can look at the contribution of the late Honourable Member of this Honourable House and we can get a feeling for the impact of his presence and an impact of his work by taking a look at how that entire area of Christ Church has been transformed.

We must not forget that Sir Harold Bernard St. John would have entered politics in an era when there was the double-member constituency system and he was one of two persons representing the entire Christ Church area. Therefore, it was no surprise to me when persons from all over Christ Church would speak with such fondness of Sir Harold. In a sense his constituency responsibility, by way of geographic area shrunk in accordance with the changing of the electoral system but his love and commitment for the larger area, which in his first involvement with the political life was first defined.

Mr. Speaker, 1971 would have been the first time that I would have encountered him. It would have been a time that Sir Harold went through the depths of the political valley, having suffered a shocking and surprising defeat in 1971. It is also instructive for those of us, as young school boys, who had an interest in politics. Sir, what was important and a measure of the man was that as I travel through Thyme Bottom, Parish Land, Lodge Road, Gall Hill and Oistins with my friends at Foundation School, and as we sat on the rocks at Enterprise Road casting our fishing lines, before there was a Miami Beach...

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, what was important and what was a perfect measure of the man was, notwithstanding his defeat at the polls, he was still seen out and about pursuing his daily labour, which included checking on the well-being of the people of that community. It was, therefore, no surprise that he ascended the political mountain top in 1976 and Christ Church, Barbados and the world have not been the same since then.

Sir, during that period I was still a school boy at Foundation School, on top of the hill, where we were able to observe the major changes which were initiated by Sir Harold Bernard St. John. Even today people speak of his contribution, particularly to the fishing industry as one of the path-breaking moments in the way an earlier Parliamentary Representative, Mr. Edwy Talma, was credited with helping fishermen to change from the sail boats to motorised launches, it was Sir Harold's era that the fishing industry made that change from day boats to ice boats. It is in his era that fishermen at Oistins were relieved of the onerous task of having to load their catches onto Moses and row them to shore.

Sir, I remember the days when people pulled the Moses out of the breaking surf to land their fish on the sand. Then the women would sit by the roadside selling the fish and sea eggs. Mr. Speaker, if it rained at anytime these women could not make any money because nobody would be able to come and buy the fish.
11.40 a.m.

Sir Harold was able to empower those people and to put them in a position where, in pursuit of the profession that they loved, that of exploiting the sea, they were able to function in conditions of dignity and decency, no longer subject to the sun and rain, no longer having to spend their energy hauling out boats. He provided a fine jetty, covered facilities for their sales, protecting both the vendors and the persons who came to purchase, cold storage facilities and ice facilities at Oistins Town.

Sir, all this was done to allow the owners of the fishing fleet of that area to invest in larger boats and to change. Over the years, we have seen the long-line industry developing. Again, larger numbers of persons based around the Oistins Town area, but also, things such as the Oistins Fish Festival, in celebration of the Honour and dignity of one of the oldest professions, that of fishing, and to start to change the character of Oistins Town, to add an entertainment dimension which is now not just seasonal by way of the Easter Weekend Activity, but is now every weekend and, indeed, nightly.

Sir, I recall the days when there was no entertainment of note in Oistins Town. If you wanted to eat, there was Skeete's Bakery, where you could get some of the best turnovers and salt breads out of a traditional brick oven, in the backyard of Mr. Skeete, in the region where a modern fast food chain is located now, KFC. I am calling them for historical accuracy, not to advertise them, Sir, but of course, I would have preferred Mr. Skeete's bread. In terms of places of beverages, there were only one or two shops remaining. It was a town that was in decline.

Mr. Speaker, it is only from the mid-seventies, when the former Honourable Member, Sir Harold St. John took over representation of the area that we saw a modernisation process. Sir, what was remarkable is that he was always insistent that Oistins Town and the surrounding areas were not just places intended for commercial exploitation, but they were places where people lived. His commitment was to improving the people of the area, and not merely the improvement of the physical conditions, as important as they were. Yes, he was proud of the Police Station, the Polyclinic and all those facilities.

Sir, what touched me with his contribution, is the outpouring of warmth and affection which comes freely from those associated with the area. Sir, up to yesterday evening, after the very touching state funeral, those of us who were in Oistins Town, would have been able to hear the discussion around the fishing complex, where people were able to speak about the ways in which he touched their lives, on a very direct and personal level, so whether it is Michelle, Lucille, Grace or anyone, several other persons there were able to speak.

Sir, a Mr. Graeme Nurse, one of the oldest, most longstanding fishermen in Barbados, from the Silver Sands area, which is an area, though no longer represented by Sir Harold, that would have been subjected to the shifting boundaries several elections ago, he still made weekly visits to the area, he was still known and loved in the area, Mr. Nurse spoke, for example, about the encouragement which Sir Harold gave many years ago, to the concept of a fishing cooperative, for persons in that area and how he was encouraged by Sir Harold.

In fact, Sir Harold would come in his car to collect him to go with him to fishing cooperative meetings, because he understood the importance of developing the concept of saving. He understood the importance of economic empowerment and that particularly, with an industry such as fishing, where the income is on a seasonal basis that he wanted to help, and he did succeed in helping persons involved in the fishing industry to stabilise their income flow, to be able to save and to reinvest in larger and better boats.

Therefore, Sir, throughout the fishing industry, across the southeastern part of Barbados, you would find many other similar examples of sentiments and anecdotes, not only from Mr. Nurse, but from several others who can speak in a very direct and personal way about how he has touched their lives.

Sir, I am using this anecdotal approach to indicate one very simple picture that I have of Sir Harold Bernard St. John. Here was a man who walked among kings and princes but still did not lose the

common touch. He was equally at home on the large stage of the world, representing the African, Caribbean and Pacific states in the very touching LOMÉ negotiations with the European Union where he was well respected in countries all over, but he was equally at home, Sir, standing on the beach in Oistins Town, talking with the fisher folk. He was equally at home, Sir, taking officials of the National Housing Corporation or some other Government agency out on a tour of his constituency, and giving very clear indications of the kinds of work that he would want to have done. He was equally at home, Sir, visiting the South Point Depot of the Ministry of Public Works to let them know the work he wanted done. In fact, Sir, of all of us in that area, serviced by South Point, he was the most frequent visitor. He was there in person. He did not think it beneath him to go and pursue those areas on behalf of his constituents, so that really, Sir, is a tremendous measure of the man.

I recall as well, in terms of other personal experiences with Sir Harold, when I first went to Christ Church East as an aspirant for election to political office, it was Sir Harold who sat me down, gave me fully and freely the benefit of his advice, of his political intelligence and of his contacts, in order that I was able to successfully pursue the matter of an election in 1999.

I also recall, Sir, that Sir Harold spoke every night on every platform, in every constituency in Christ Church. It was amazing. He spoke on every topic. He appealed to young audiences, old audiences. He spoke on national and international matters. He was still out there and spoke, Sir, even in 2003 when he had already announced his retirement.

In fact, I recall his last speech in this Parliament, when he was wrapping up the debate, and some Honourable Members were heckling him and he reminded them, because someone Over There would have been suggesting that they probably wanted him to keep out of the elections and said that we will deal with you, we would review your career on the platform. He said, "Fine. Honourable Members would have two opportunities to review my career and contribution to politics, once on the platform and if necessary, the second time in the law courts....," but such was the wit and humour of the man.

Sir, the essential point is that even though he already had a distinguished career and made a significant contribution, even after his official retirement from politics, he was still very much out there in the hustings with us and his contribution in that regard would certainly be very much missed. He had an excellent memory, perhaps one of the clearest understandings of the inner workings of the Barbadian society that I know, a combination of a feel for the laws that governed us and the traditions, the customs and the mores of the Barbadian people. He knew the family

connections, which is very important in Barbados. He had a deep understanding and an almost ecliptic approach to the analysis of matters Barbadian. Whereas there were experts who may focus only on their narrow discipline, sociologists focus one way, economists focus another, lawyers focus another, Sir Harold St. John was able to bring a very broad approach to the careful analysis of the issues which confronted us. Therefore, his contribution was unique.

11.50 a.m.

Sir, those of us, particularly those in the immediate regions of Christ Church, who share some common interest with him, will miss him greatly. I know that I speak on behalf of the entire Christ Church Foundation School family of which he was a proud old scholar. We are equally proud of him not only for the value and the contribution he has made and the great honour that he has brought to the school, but of the fact that over the years he had given back to the school which gave him his early beginning, so I know that they would want me to express their condolences to his family in this Parliament. The constituents of Christ Church, a large part of which, during different periods of time, would have been represented by Sir Harold St. John – which was subject to electoral changes – would want me as well to express condolences to his family and to thank them for the sacrifice they have made in allowing him to serve the Barbadian public for so long.

For me, Sir, his death is a deep personal loss for reasons such as the long association with the areas that he had represented, having the privilege even as a preteen and teenage boy to have seen first-hand what difference a committed and dedicated Member of Parliament can make to an area and then having the privilege to have benefited from his assistance in launching my own political career. So I would want to extend on behalf of my family, my constituents and the Christ Church Foundation School deepest condolences to the St. John family.

I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I too rise to pay tribute to the late Sir Harold St. John. It was known within these Chambers that we both shared a common relationship because both of us started our political career in opposition and our interest was very much to do with the masses of people of Barbados, so it is not by accident that at an early stage of his political career that he was connected to the Southern District Council.

Sir, one must understand that in order to have a good appreciation of Parliament it is always good to start from the opposition benches because it is from the opposition benches that you get a wider opportunity to take part in discussions. When you enter Parliament on the Government side you are always limited in your contribution, but when you enter

Parliament from the Opposition side, you do not know which ministry you will be responsible for shadowing, so you are allowed to discuss many issues that you would not normally be able to discuss if you were on the Government Side.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold and I had many discussions which had nothing to do with ourselves, but with the vendors and the fishermen. Whenever we met, he always wanted to know how the fishermen in Half Moon Fort and Six Men's were doing and whether they were catching fish or not. He would also ask me about the dolphin project in Half Moon Fort now Moon Town, the lobster project or the sea moss project.

Sir, many people speak about being Caribbean persons but they sometimes do not understand that in order to say that you are very much a Caribbean person that you must first have an appreciation for the masses of people who live within the Caribbean. Therefore, it was not surprising that he would have been what I would call a believer in the localisation concept. Sir, sometimes I wonder how he felt when we continued to advocate the 100% Bajan promotion because he was very much a Caribbean man. I always felt that the only reason he accepted that principle was because he did not want to offend some of his comrades. He strongly believed that in order for Barbados to go forward that Barbados had to have a good relationship with the people within the Caribbean and that they had to build a foundation within the Caribbean before they got into the extra-regional market. That is also a very strong belief of mine, and that is why I will continue to openly state that it is difficult for me to speak about a 100% Bajan when in fact the true terminology should be localisation.

Sir, Sir Harold understood quite well that in order to be a good politician one had to have the capacity to support and to deliver to the constituents what was required and that one had to build a good foundation. Therefore, it was not surprising that from early he built that foundation and did not wait until he got involved in politics to do so. Politicians should learn that they are not to wait until they enter politics to build foundations but to bring those foundations to politics.

Sir, when I came to This House in 1994, I sat in the furthest seat to the south and when I was offered the opportunity to move up one seat I did it only for one week. I did that because I wanted to be closer to the honourable gentleman because I recognised from early that if one wanted to follow how the debate was going, one only had to look at the body language of Sir Harold. Whether it was a Member of this Side or that Side that was speaking one could always tell when he disagreed with what was being said in this House because sometimes he would 'stupse' and he would tell his own colleagues that they should sit and allow somebody from the Opposition to speak because he wanted to enjoy a good debate.

Sir, there is no doubt that the happiest moments for him in this House were when there was a good debate. One could always tell when the Barbados Labour Party debaters were in trouble because when one saw him jump to his feet one knew that it was pull back time because he had to put in a plug because they were losing the debate.

Sir, even though he sat on the Front Bench, many times he would use that opportunity to deliver the message that the Front Bench, even though they were great in numbers, could not deliver. He was able to deliver it for them because he had a political history that was very wide.
12.00 noon

Mr. Speaker, what was also very amazing about Sir Harold was that on many occasions in this Parliament, I would speak and Sir Harold would get up and tell me the year in which he had spoken those very words and that whenever one would check *Hansard*, one would realise that Sir Harold would have been able to give the year in which he had made those statements. Sir, those Honourable Members who were here in 1994 would be able to confirm that.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that the beauty of the man is not what he has done. That is why I always say to people that it is good to come to Parliament and quote things but unless one is able to quote and tell people what one has learned from the quotation, then one is not going to go anywhere. On the other hand, there are too many politicians who find themselves referring to quotations from other people and cannot say how they have been able to expand on those quotations.

Mr. Speaker, I am not one for pretty quotations because I believe when we quote, we should be able to tell Parliament how we have been able to learn from that quote. Sir, many students know that it is not good to go to school and be able to quote a complete book because if after being able to quote a complete book and one cannot expand on it, then one would not have learnt anything.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold St. John was not like that, he had a fantastic memory, he knew the history, and he expanded on what was taught. Sir, another good feature about him was that he did not just speak but he had a belief that the people of Oistins should have been empowered and when the Government did not deliver, he made it his business to do things that would have empowered those persons. Therefore, it is not surprising that before one would have seen places that were known to be the popular areas of Barbados but Sir Harold was able to move that popularity from that area and re-locate it to Oistins. He would have not only done that based on Government's help but on his own contribution to the area and on the need to make sure that the people of Oistins had an opportunity to impact on their own lives by becoming involved in community tourism at different levels. Sir, this is rather interesting because in

today's age when certain people are now recognising the importance of community tourism, there would have been players who would have been advocates and who would not have to wait. I am sure that Sir Harold St. John would not have had to wait until 2007 to recognise that there is a need to involve the people of Barbados in the development of Barbados but he took an early decision to make sure that the people were involved. He also made sure that they had a future outlook of themselves and were able to plan forward.

Mr. Speaker, even though Sir Harold was an advocate of local Government, every time I challenged him on his concept of local Government, he would say: "Or in any other form." Sir, as you are aware, I am a strong believer that we need not return to local Government as we had it in the old days and I too believe that was also Sir Harold's belief. I believe, as he did, that local Government in another form, could be the way we deal with our Estimates. That is, that we take those Heads that can easily be divided between the constituencies, divide them so that at the beginning of the Estimates, everyone would know his or her share of the Estimates to be spent on his or her constituency.

I believe that is something that Sir Harold would have looked forward to, and that is why I will continue to fight for a fair share of the Estimates for all constituencies, so that at the beginning, when we come to discuss them, each Honourable Member would know the amount to be allocated to his or her constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I can imagine that even though you cannot take part in these debates, you look forward to being able to take up your Estimates and seeing an allocation for St. Michael Central. You will then be able to tell your constituents how much money has been budgeted for your constituency. I know that someday we will be able to carry that fight and remove the bloc vote and will be able to have a division of the votes, so that every parliamentarian would be able to appreciate the Estimates when laid.

Mr. Speaker, to his family, I want them to feel proud that even though he might have amassed a lot, there was still a common touch about him. It is true that he was not a parliamentarian like some others who were able to go into their constituencies on a one-to-one level. He was a parliamentarian who believed that as long as he put policies in place, and as long as he outlined and defended them, that his constituents would have been better off. He was not one for cheap talk, he was one who believed in delivering services and commitment to his constituents.

Sir, we have to understand that as politics becomes very complex and that as the demands of politicians become very complex, there are going to be changing times and the

way we operate as parliamentarians will have to change. One has to consider whether the way in which we now operate is the best way, and the only way that this could be done is by testing the pulse of our people. I believe he might have tried that for us and might have paid the sacrifice for it. We now have to decide which is the best system to deliver to our constituents but at the end of the day, it must be the delivery of the best service to one's constituents and defending the constituents in whatever has been allocated or debated as it relates to the constituents' welfare.

Sir, Sir Harold not only fought in Parliament, he fought in the law courts and internationally. It is rather interesting that one of his last jobs, as I might call it, would have been dealing with the relationship with our neighbours to the south. Sir, in the same way that Sir Harold has defended the Barbados Labour Party, I can assure you that he would have defended the Barbados Government and the people of Barbados as it related to the welfare of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, one interesting thing about Sir Harold is that even though he had an admiration for the people, if that admiration was from the Other Side, he would not have allowed that admiration to defeat his party. He would have preferred to have met that person in the corridors and tell him what he thought of him but he would have never used the Floor of the Honourable House to bring credit to the enemy. He would always have kept that credit to himself, to be delivered in such a way where he would not be quoted, neither would there be any witness. He understood the importance of his party and always made sure that goodwill was always kept within the corridors of the Barbados Labour Party and was not prepared to give anything that would have been used against his political party on the Floor of the House.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, young politicians must understand that when coming to politics, experience does count and over the years, Sir Harold has used his experience to make sure that he spoke on many Heads. The reason why he did that was that in those nine years in Opposition, he would have used those nine years to cover as many Heads as possible because he was a strong believer that, whenever you were offered the Ministry you should do a good job even though it was not the Ministry you expected. Sir, he was not one for specialisation, he was not only broad but was able to command the respect of many persons in Barbados. He even commanded the respect of the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow and I can confirm that because he had an appreciation for him even when he lost.

12.10 p.m.

Sir, I want to say to his family that although he has gone, his good works will not be forgotten. When you are on earth, you should be known for something. People believe you can do as you like here on earth but, at the end of the

day, if you are not known for something, then your contribution is not appreciated by the masses of people. I say to all politicians that they should be known for something and not allow people to wonder if what they say is true but instead create a landmark for themselves so that people can speak the truth when they have passed from this earth.

My deepest sympathy goes out to his constituents and his family who still reside in the most northerly parish, St. Lucy. He not only had a commitment to St. Lucy because of the fishing relationship but because of his relatives who reside there. Sir, I can assure you that he loved St. Lucy and he was looking forward to spending his last days next to the Animal Flower Cave enjoying the fresh breezes from the Atlantic Ocean. Sir, I can speak to that because he told me that personally.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, he spoke to me and confided in me that his last wish was to be represented by a true Member of Parliament.

I offer my deepest sympathy to his family and wish them well. I know that they will be able to continue their lives because of the goodwill left by that honourable gentleman.

Sir, I thank you.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, like all other Honourable Members, I join this debate to pay tribute to an outstanding Barbadian and Parliamentarian. Sir Harold Bernard St. John's love for Barbados and his family is well-known and has been spoken about by all Barbadians in the last week.

I first met Sir Harold in 1972 when I attended one of his constituency branch meetings at the St. Lawrence School when my interest was first sparked in being involved in elective politics. When I met Sir Harold, I was impressed by his overall knowledge of what was happening in political life in Barbados.

I came to know Sir Harold well when I became a Member of the Cabinet in April 2000. I also sat one seat away from where Sir Harold sat on the Front Bench in the House from April, 2000 to October, 2001. I got to know and understand him as a person and not just as the former Prime Minister and most senior person in Parliament at that time. I understood his impatience with a number of things and his intolerance of nonsense. I also got a first-hand knowledge of his supremely sharp intellect, his love for Barbados and things Barbadian, particularly so the people of Christ Church.

When I came to the Front Bench as Minister of Tourism and International Transport it was significant that I sat next to the man who had made the most significant public contribution and, Sir, after leaving public office he continued to be interested in these two areas of our development.

Every week he filled my ears with issues of tourism, civil aviation and international transport. It was not superficial information but conversations that went deep into tourism and international transport. He showed his knowledge of these areas by giving statistics, principles and concepts that dealt with the development of tourism, international transport and civil aviation for which he had an expanded love. Every week, he also brought reading materials and articles from newspapers and information that would challenge anyone in this Chamber to do more reading and get involved in these disciplines. I could not understand how one human being could amass knowledge in such an intimate way and be able to distill it to others in a simplified fashion.

He questioned me weekly about the industry. He wanted to know where we were going in tourism and what were the next plans. When we were working on the Tourism Development Act, we depended on Sir Harold for much of what now appears in the new Act. He gave suggestions, recommendations, praise and scoldings when necessary. This showed the true measure of the man, Sir Harold Bernard St. John.

Sir Harold loved politics and political life. He constantly asked about the political scene during the short time he left Parliament. Every conversation he had led back to public policy and, Sir, no one has a greater grasp of public policy than Sir Harold.

Many spoke of his fine intellect but I am most impressed by his fantastic memory. Sir Harold has full recall of every public initiative. He knew why, when, what and how every initiative turned out. He had the finest memory to be found in a human being.

I met with him every month as the Chairman of Needham's Point Development Inc., to marshal the project of rebuilding the Hilton Hotel. He took on that role with interest and not a week would pass without Sir Harold calling to speak about the development of the Hilton Hotel. 12.20 p.m.

It is going to be a painful occasion in Barbados when the Hilton Hotel is reopened later this year because Sir Harold will not be there to see the outcome of this project. He dedicated his entire being to this project. As a matter of fact, we had a site visit about six months ago and we noticed

from that day that he was ailing. Mr. Speaker, ailing as he was, he wanted to be there for that particular site visit and we waited for Sir Harold to arrive at the Needham's Point site. This tells us something about his commitment to Government, to public life and the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, there is also another similar project which Sir Harold marshalled that would add additional rooms next to the Hilton Hotel. Again, I say it is going to be sad that Sir Harold would not be at the opening of the Hilton to see the final project.

Sir, this morning I was looking through an article from the *New York Times*, which Sir Harold brought me. This article referred to the hottest winning winter sun spots that ranks Barbados with Cape Town and Dubai. Every week he brought something different for you to read which came out of a journal or newspaper that spoke about Barbados or the development of the industry.

Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing that I will remember, it is that Sir Harold was never one to quit. In politics there will always be winners and losers but when he lost he returned again to fight the battle. It says a lot about a public figure who would return to battle each and every time knowing that he had a contribution to make and that Barbados could be the better for that contribution.

Therefore, I wish to extend condolences to his widow and the rest of his family and to all those who may be grieving at this time. Sir Harold was a man who has left a void in public life in Barbados. When I was listening to the tributes being paid to Sir Harold I said to myself, I wonder how history will remember me. Will I be remembered for just an iota of the things that people seem to remember Sir Harold for, his integrity and contribution? Sir, if any of us in this Parliament could get just an iota of the kind of tributes that people have paid to Sir Harold, I believe that we would have been great in public life and in our contribution to Barbados.

Sir, in the words of Kipling:

"If you can meet with triumph and disaster and treat those two imposters just the same, if you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, or walk with kings – nor lose the common touch, if neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you, if all men count with you but none too much; if you can fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds' worth of distance run, yours is the earth and everything that's in it, And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son!"

I am obliged to you, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 1.30 p.m. this afternoon.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Speaker, it is with some sadness that I rise to speak on this occasion and I feel compelled, though I already paid tribute to the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John today, nonetheless, to say a little about him as well.

As I indicated previously, Mr. Speaker, I had the Honour to serve in his Chambers for approximately seven years. The one thing about him at that time, was his strong determination to put doing the right thing above doing the popular thing. He really, you could almost say, had little regard for popularity. Whether it was in his political life or his legal profession, he was always determined to do what was right.

I remember, Mr. Speaker, a personal experience I had with him, sometime shortly after joining his Chambers. Sir, at the time, I was thinking very seriously of getting heavily involved in politics. He was working on a matter, on behalf of the party who enjoyed the least popularity in the case, and I had shied away from going with him to the venue where the matter was being heard. After a week or so, he realised that I had not decided to go with him to any of the hearings. He confronted me and told me that he wanted me to get involved in the matter. In fact, he wanted me to do research as well, but not only research but to come to some of the hearings with him. I promptly and unwisely said to him that I really was avoiding the matter because I did not think that doing it was going to go down that well, and that the party involved was, in fact, not enjoying any significant measure of popularity.

He promptly, Mr. Speaker, in no uncertain terms proceeded to tell me some things. He made some very strong remarks to me about that attitude. In fact, he chastised me very strongly, and then proceeded to command me to get into the car with him, whereupon, I was then driven by him to the venue where the matter was being heard. I learnt from those

days, therefore, that popularity was not his focus. He felt he had a duty to represent people and he did it to the best of his ability. Sir, from very early, he instilled in me that quality of doing what is right, even if it does not turn out to be what is very popular.

Mr. Speaker, he was a very hard worker and that point must be emphasised, who never seemed to get tired, in fact, not in the way in which you and I know tiredness. Anytime he said that he was feeling tired, he would then proceed not to do what you or I would do, which is to go somewhere and relax or, maybe, get into some old talk, but he would shift with consummate ease from working on a very complex and intricate legal matter to, in fact, by way of rest or relaxation, he would shift to reading a book on the most intricate financial issues, or the most complex global matters that were consuming the world at large at the particular time. He would shift from a very complex legal matter to something equally as complex and claim that he was taking a break or that he was tired. As I said, he never ever seemed to get tired. It is something that I have tried myself but not really with the success which he had.

Mr. Speaker, he was committed to always sharing his knowledge. He always had time to assist. In fact, he always seemed to have knowledge to impart. I often wonder if he was really for these times, because his brain seemed to be able, at all times, to absorb all knowledge, as if it was just flowing into his brain every second of every minute of every day. He was acquiring knowledge which he very readily was willing to pass on to others, and I have benefited from that knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, despite his very tough exterior, he was underneath it all, a very soft individual. He believed in allowing people, or assisting them as well to fulfil whatever potential they had. I have seen people work with Sir Harold for whom he demonstrated the utmost in patience. In other words, he was very patient with them, people who were in my view, at times, not necessarily measuring up, and other people would have been quick to talk about dismissal and so on. He never used that sort of approach. He felt that everybody could in fact learn to be somebody. He, therefore, was very tolerant of people at all times and would nurture them. He would chastise them, yes, he would be very heavily critical but an idea or hint of getting rid of them in anger, was never on with him. He felt that you can come on to be the best.

I remember a situation once with one of his legal secretaries. In fact, one day he had chastised her, being dissatisfied with something she had done, and she got up from her desk where he was chastising her, and proceeded to walk out the door. She was angry and hurting. She did not talk back to him because she had tremendous respect for him. She walked through the door and for the next hour or so, he came to me and said,

“man Toppin, the secretary gone, I hope she comes back, the secretary gone, the secretary gone.” His concern was that she should not have run from the challenge of it and she should come back, despite how hard he had been on her. He was never bent upon getting rid of her, he just was concerned that she should come back and continue to work with him, which she did shortly afterwards, because he was prepared to give her, or anyone working with him, a chance.

He was fantastic in the area of memory. Those who knew him before I did, were able to say that he had, in his younger days, of course, this trait that had persisted up to the end, of being involved in complex matters and long trials, in other jurisdictions or in Barbados, and he was able, not having made a single note during cross-examinations, at any stage in the proceedings, in his address then to the judge or the jury, to easily refer back to what John Brown had said on the third day of the hearing at three minutes past eleven. He was able to quote it word for word, without having made a single note because such was his vast mental powers and his powers of recollection and retention. This is a tribute which many people, I am sure, would want to have.

I believe that we are going to be doing ourselves a disservice if we allow this human greatness to just remain buried away, literally. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is incumbent on us now, as a Government, as a people – his family, of course, would have to play a prominent role as well in this – to ensure that all of the speeches that he has ever made are now neatly compiled and made available for distribution to members of the public. I am aware Mr. Speaker, of an attempt which the late Sir Harold made to obtain all of his speeches. Unfortunately, politics crept into the request he made for his speeches, which is a fact, and the speeches were not made available to him, which is a fact too. Time has now passed and I would hope that we would be able to benefit from being able to review all of the speeches he has made, because his intellect was vast and he knew the things which were in his speeches.

1.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I remember another incident which I would share with you. He was asked once to address a meeting at party headquarters on the issue of agriculture. He spent days in the office, Sintjon Chambers as it was called, compiling a voluminous presentation, and I remember going to headquarters the night to hear him deliver that speech only to be told by him that he had forgotten it in the office. Mr. Speaker, despite that he was still able to get up and pour forth on the very topic without a single note and was able to speak with a freshness and a depth on the area that show that he had retained it all in his head. In my view he was really a walking encyclopaedia. He was comprehensively knowledgeable on every single thing whether it be politics, law, cricket or any other sports. He would just read anything he could put his hands on, such was the greatness of the man.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to seeing the compilation of his speeches. He must have speeches recorded. Government agencies are there to record speeches and I want to see the day come soon when we would be able to have all of his speeches both in terms of video if video was done and in hard copy, black and white, where that was done as well.

Mr. Speaker, having spoken before on the matter I therefore would want again to offer to his family on behalf of myself, my family and the constituents of St. Michael North our deepest sympathy. I know this is a time of great sadness for all of them, but I can safely say that Sir Harold was a man that would want business to go on and on.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of visiting him at his home a couple of times during his illness. At Christmastime I was there, in January I was there and on the Monday before he was admitted into hospital on the Wednesday I was there. That day was a very touching moment for me. He was willing, even as he lay there just counting time as it were, to share his knowledge because I remember asking him a question about a legal file I was working on at the time and although speaking was labourious for him and very difficult, he still made a suggestion in response to that question I had raised, so he was always willing to share even to the very end.

Mr. Speaker, I will miss his presence. It is going to be a trying time for everyone, but I am sure, knowing Sir Harold the way I did, that he would not want us to continue for too long a period of mourning for him as he would want us to continue doing what we do to ensure that the affairs of state and the welfare of the citizens of this country which he always held paramount would continue as when he was here. So once again I extend my sympathies to his family.

Mr. Speaker, I am indebted to you.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, we are always tempted at times like this to achieve the task of producing hagiographies which are sometimes a little detached from the reality in relation to the persons who have passed on. That is likely on occasions such as this because of the void that is created by their absence. Although I was not in the Chamber, I heard the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown speaking about guilt that people often feel even in the political context when they are in the midst of a heated battle and contention with somebody who then passes on either without they being able to correct the record, to apologise or to redeem themselves in their eyesight.

Mr. Speaker, I have not said anything at all yet about the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John. Mr. Speaker, I must say that as an opponent of his in the political field, I had many

issues with him in his political career both in the House and out of the House because, to my mind, he always remained an active politician up until the day he passed on. I must confess that I was always impressed with his presence and with his ability. I respected him as a Member of this House.

At the level of personal contact, I actually found him to be very shy, unpretentious and very reserved but very accommodating. He was impatient but at times he was also very lively, entertaining and affable. My relationship with him was never a close relationship. I would have been closer to his children, his nieces, his nephews and his in-laws. However, there were occasions when we met on a one and one basis.

Many Honourable Members of this House may not recall that the St. John family had a very intimate relationship with Malvern Plantation in St. John. On Saturdays, Sir Harold, when he was still in the family, used to come to St. John and on the way back home he would stop at the Four Roads Supermarket. At that time I was then a young Member of Parliament and I would get the opportunity to meet and socialise with him at the Four Roads Supermarket. Invariably, we spoke about matters relating to the sugar industry. That was so because as I said he was always a shy person. I think he was even more shy with his political opponents and never laid his soul as bare as he might have done with his colleagues because his personality was such that he was always a target of criticism.

Whereas other politicians in the Barbados Labour Party were formidable public speakers and very skilful politicians, I think it was the almost unpretentiousness and shyness of Harold St. John that attracted criticism to him more than to the others.

I remember the 1981 election campaign when the Democratic Labour Party mounted a very formidable team of candidates in Christ Church and how bitter the exchanges were during that campaign particularly in Christ Church. Christ Church because of the presence of Sir Harold St. John was always a very controversial area at election time.

Mr. Speaker, when we were in the process of restructuring the sugar industry in 1992/93 it was as a result of that information we exchanged that we were able to call upon him to assist in the process. Regrettably, the sugar producers called on him first and therefore in the initial stages Sir Harold was not an ally of the restructuring but he was working for persons who were opposed to the restructuring.
1.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it took us a long time, by persuasions, by regular meetings and by working through the legal issues, the receivership of the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited.

We looked at issues such as what would we do with the sugar plantations once we had acquired them; how would we set up the management company to run the sugar estates; who would own the sugar estates that were indebted; how would we use the land to pay off for the outstanding debts; how would we structure agriculture production and management in Barbados; what would we do with the land that was not under agricultural production. These were all issues in which Sir Harold St. John, acting on the behalf of the Sugar Producers, officials in the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, *et cetera*, were required to sit and hammer out.

Sir, though we did not come to a perfect solution, we were able to come up with an arrangement which saved the sugar industry at that time and assisted in bringing some stability and balance to the Barbados economy.

Sir Harold had a wide circle of friends in the Caribbean and his interest in the Caribbean has been acknowledged by many of those persons who have spoken in this debate. Perhaps those who had the opportunity of studying in England and of meeting people from throughout the region, had an unique experience because unlike the average Barbadian, they would have met persons from a variety of territories and they came back to Barbados with a different perspective on regional integration, and Sir Harold was probably one of the chief proponents of that.

I recognise that throughout the Caribbean region, he had a wide circle of acquaintances. In Barbados, despite his apparent shyness and attachment, he had a phenomenal knowledge of family relationships and knew a lot about people. His daughter yesterday spoke about him being on the telephone and they used to accuse him of gossiping on evenings, like a woman, but the point is that perhaps many politicians do the same thing.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, I will use the word exchanging information.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, in small societies we do not use the word in that way because that carries a negative connotation but for politicians and others, that information is just as important because one piece of advice that the Right Excellent Errol Barrow always passed down to persons at the Criminal Bar, was that if one is going to be successful, then one needed to know people's business, and that it was vital for that person to know because they would be coming across witnesses who would be coming into court with pretentiousness which would have to be destroyed

basically during cross-examination, to be successful. Therefore, those persons who have been through that experience, have acquired that taste for information.

Sir, the unpretentiousness was something that I found refreshing in a politician of his type. Even when he was Deputy Prime Minister of Barbados he exhibited that level of unpretentiousness and while it appeared as though others were seeking Office to promote their agenda in some ways he was only interested in carrying the country forward to the best of his ability.

As an opponent, he was very tough, pugnacious and very vigorous and spared no quarter. He treated young politicians, not in the way that Honourable Members would have described because Honourable Members were not his opponents. Honourable Members have looked at it from the point of view of the encouragement that he gave, *et cetera*, but when one was his opponent it was the complete opposite. He never stopped calling me a political neophyte. He never stopped calling me a political brat whenever one got up to question him or to criticise him. He was a very tough debater at that level and if one were able to cut one's teeth on debaters of that character and calibre, it is clear that one would end up being an outstanding public speaker.

Sir Harold was very knowledgeable and hardworking and the Barbados Labour Party should forever be indebted to him because the party is basically going to be ruled from the grave by the workhorse contribution that Sir Harold has made to the party, both as an institution and also in framing and shaping policies, particularly in the key economic sectors.

I am certain that he had social issues and he would express them from time to time but I do not think that he was always ideologically as liberal as his other colleagues on social issues but he certainly had a fix on the harder economic issues and on issues relating to governance, in the way that other Honourable Members did not enjoy. Therefore, the sheer magnitude of his intellectual and practical involvement in the politics of Barbados will have an impact on the Barbados Labour Party for a long time.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold was loyal and partisan. Let us not doubt that, and one often finds that in the prays of St. John... Sir, people talked about his pragmatism. A person who is as partisan in their approach to politics cannot, at the same time to my mind, be described as a person who is pragmatic. The late Sir Harold St. John, to my mind, never felt comfortable with shifting political alliances in the current political environment. Sir, I cannot say less than this, he was never happy about the kinds of things that he saw happening in political parties, with people moving from one party to the other with such ease, because he was a loyalist and very partisan.

Mr. Speaker, I remember on the night of the no confidence debate back in 1994, as we were leaving the Honourable Chamber, Sir Harold said to me: "Thompson, what is going on in Barbados? I cannot believe that I have lived to see this day." Sir, that was because of his perspective on the concept of party loyalty but I know that not everyone has that view.

Let me reiterate that I have not said that to be critical of anyone because we all have to live with our own outlooks and there are some persons who pay less attention to aspects of party. They see their contributions as being above or around party, *et cetera*, but that was not how Sir Harold saw it. Therefore, he had a great discomfort with the way the party system, as we know it, was developing and the way he felt that for non-ideological reasons, parties accommodated such wide divergences of opinion.

Mr. Speaker, that was Sir Harold's view but we are now into a modern environment in which perhaps political parties are outliving their usefulness in the way in which we know them.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to the sugar industry, he was very clear in what he wanted to see achieved. I want to thank him, despite the fact that he is not with it, he turned from a legal adversary to an ally in that process.

In relation to international business, he had a very clear vision and a wide knowledge of that sector of the economy in which very few persons have such a wide knowledge.

In relation to the question of trustees under the International Trust Act, in regards to offshore banking, *et cetera*, one could have always called upon him for advice and from time I did when I was writing opinions of one sort or another. Therefore, it is correct to say that Sir Harold was helpful in that regard.

I remember some years ago or it might have been recently, there was a very heated debate in relation to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. When that debate came up – and on that hangs a tale that he will carry to his grave, and I will not repeat myself until I have retired from active politics – he said something to me about the way that one would play a political hand that was dealt by others. The point being that Sir Harold had a view that seemed to differ from the chief proponents in his party but he remained silent.
2.00 p.m.

When we discussed the matter at the level of law, he was very clear about where his position stood. He made a demarcation about how you played the political game and what were the facts. Sir, he made a distinction between the

legal and political issue and out of loyalty to his Party, he chose in some cases to remain silent, as we all do when we get ourselves into a bind.

On regional issues his commitment was strong and enduring. When I was on the Guild of Undergraduates at Cave Hill, he maintained an interest in the students and what they were achieving in the restructuring of the University of the West Indies, in the financing of the campus and the law school. It was not an interest exhibited only in his politics but seen also in his personal involvement.

I recall back in 1986 when the lunch room of Parliament was where the elevator was I met Sir Harold there. I had just returned home from Trinidad and we talked about the Law School because we were going through a particularly difficult time there with examinations. During that conversation, he told me that I might get vex with him for holding elections when my examinations were being held. We did not know the elections date then but I went immediately to the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow and told him that I suspected that the elections would be somewhere between the middle of April and the end of May. The elections were held on the May 28th, the day I sat my last examination and I do not know how I passed it because my mind was on elections in Barbados and not on the examination. Suffice it to say, Sir Harold lost that election, resumed practice which is an area of his life that he enjoys very much.

Sir, as a political opponent, I was tough on Sir Harold and he was tough on his political opponents as well. Between 1991 and 1994, I was asked to shadow him as a backbencher and every time he spoke, I was required to get up and speak. It was a Herculean task to keep pace with the many issues on which he spoke because even though members in the Opposition were assigned portfolios, Sir Harold became the leading spokesman on almost every area of economic and social policy and it brought you into direct heated confrontation with him week after week in this Chamber. He was indefatigable, never tired of debate and putting forward his point of view as a politician and a strong member of the Barbados Labour Party.

A particular heated debate in this Chamber shifted on to race in Barbados and we had it hammer and tong over the issue. Sir Harold stopped for one moment to give a personal reflection. He said that when he was at school, a boy was confused about race and said he was neither black nor white but Technicolor. He then told me that I reminded him of that young man. Sir, I dropped into my seat totally flabbergasted when he told me that I was too Technicolor to make a contribution to the debate and I did not object or spoke on the subject after that. He was fearless in the views he expressed even though, to me, there were often more

conservative than I would have expressed. For many of his own Members, his views were also correct on the perspective of the Party and on a number of issues.

He brought the voice of business to the deliberations of Parliament. He had a knowledge of what was happening in the economy, contacts that were unparalleled at that level and this was evidenced by the legal work and social relations that he had developed through the years.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I want to pay tribute to his family. First to his daughter, Nicole, for her tribute that was fascinating and loving and which reflected her mother's passion. Sir, as she spoke, I saw the mother and not the daughter. Secondly, to Lady Stella St. John who stood by him through thick and thin in the tough debilitating days of Opposition through losing two elections and through personal criticism because of her public role.

Despite those negatives, whenever you saw Sir Harold and Lady Stella St. John at a Party, they would dance together and enjoy life. When they were among a close circle of friends at a cocktail reception, it appeared as though they were happy in each other company and certainly conveyed a positive, loving disposition throughout the years of his political involvement. Sir, politics can encroach in a dastardly way in your personal life and it is unique, rare and admirable to see two persons stand up to the rigours of politics in that way.

I want to pay a special tribute to her for her contribution as a controversial woman and one who stood by her man throughout his political involvement and was able to bear children who, by their own impression of their father, have exhibited a resilience and love for him, despite the fact that he was involved in politics and would not have given them the time and energy they would have craved.

I extend my sympathy to the St. John family and the people of Christ Church who supported him through the years and to members of the Barbados Labour Party who would have lost an important figure, a person who has made a great contribution to the development of that Party and one who has contributed significantly to Barbados.

Sir, I join in support of the Resolution moved by the Honourable Member for the City.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my political association with Harold St. John began from 1971. He and I were appointed by the late Tom Adams to the Senate as Opposition Senators. In those days, I was young, raw, caustic and aggressive. I did not spend much time wondering about the niceties of parliamentary debate, I said what I had to say.

2.10 p.m.

Sir, it was during that period that I learned a lot of things from him. There was no time limit on speeches in the Senate in those days. On occasion we felt that the Opposition, the two of us, were not getting the kind of break that we deserved and we decided that we would talk and talk. Sir Harold asked me how long I think that I was good for and I told him that I feel that I could handle five hours and he told me that he could handle five hours too. He spoke first but he did not reach the five hours but he spoke for a very long time. I spoke sometime after him and my recollection is that I spoke for four hours and twenty minutes. Mr. Speaker, I stopped talking after four hours and twenty minutes, not because he was not encouraging me to go on but the Government Side decided that the best way to get me to stop talking was to push back the dinner hour. They pushed back the dinner hour by half an hour and then by an hour. Sir, at that time I got a little tired and I gave up.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned this because these anecdotes will obviously come into a discussion on someone like the late 'Bree' St. John. Sir, what he wanted to do was to let the Government Side know that whatever they had we had something better. Even if they had numbers, to use his own phrase, "we had volubility of language."

Mr. Speaker, not that he was one that I would classify as a voluble speaker. Earlier today I have heard many Honourable Members speak about the content and the substance of his contribution. His contribution was crafted with information, reason and good sense, that is true. He was not the traditional type of orator, the one who grabbed people's imaginations and inflamed their emotions. People listened to him at the public meetings which we held across this island and they always listened to him in silence. They absorbed what he had to say because he had many good things to say. Unlike the many speakers, many of the other speakers in those days were titillating the crowd and excited their passions but that was not his style.

Sir, at the end of it all, those who wanted to get on in politics and understand its dynamics and what mattered, would inevitably turn back to what Sir Harold said. Mr. Speaker, when the lights were turned down and the crowd had disappeared and you go home in the quiet of the moment you think about what you are going to do the next week in politics; what position you are going to take in Parliament on Tuesday; what you are going to say on a particular issue. Putting aside all the histrionics on the public platform that captured the imagination of the public, the substance of Sir Harold remains with you.

I worked with him longer than anybody in Parliament. He and I were in Chambers for the past twenty-seven years. I had more than ample opportunity to assess the man and I have no doubt that he had the opportunity to assess me. If the

situation were reversed, I have no idea what he would be saying about me.

Sir, in observing Sir Harold as a Parliamentarian and a Member of the Barbados Labour Party, I saw a man whose every action was deeply rooted in principle. We heard that he was a good man and we heard of his integrity being repeated but whatever he did was rooted in principle, which means that he could be predicted, something that is very rare in modern politicians. They do not believe in anything, therefore, you can never know what position they would take on an issue from one day to another, not so with Sir Harold.

I could always predict, after working alongside him, the position that he would take on issues. He took positions that were deeply rooted in principle and he was consistent. We would hear about some politicians that their morning word and their evening word do not gel.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, some politicians are like that. In the afternoon you cannot believe what they said in the morning because they twist, turn and move *et cetera*. Sir Harold was not like that.

Sir Harold was a trail blazer in many ways. Many of the modern pieces of legislation that we are seeing, I have heard coming out of the fertile brain of Sir Harold for many years. For example, the Fair Trading Commission. When I first went to the Senate as a young man, thirty-three years ago, I remember Sir Harold speaking of all the issues and concepts that are now part of the Fair Trading Commission legislation. I remember he used to talk particularly about truth in lending. He used to wax emotional when he attacked the commercial banks in Bridgetown and the way in which they were tricking people into believing that they were paying a certain amount when in fact it was something else. Sir, his truth in lending speeches stuck with me over the years.

Sir Harold was talking about hire purchase and sale of goods a long time ago. He was a harbinger of much of the modern legislation in this country. Although we hear a lot about his contributions in the economic and trade sphere – I beg to differ from the Honourable Member for St. John – he was also very keen on social issues.

I remember when I was Minister of Education, Sir Harold used to call me regularly to discuss aspects of education. He believed that there was a dialectical link between education and work. He believed that the education curriculum should be so structured, that it prepared young people in this country for the important areas of development

in industry, tourism, and manufacturing. He believed that the structure of a curriculum in our schools should be geared to that.

I had a different view because I am from the old classical school that believed that education is for the refinement of the mind and the intellect. If you have a refined mind and intellect you can do anything but he did not agree with that. He saw the need to train people for jobs. He saw the dialectical between education and work.

Therefore, what we did at the Polytechnic and the Skills Training Programme was the product of the creative intellect of Sir Harold, he was not Minister of Labour. He pushed it every week in the Cabinet because that was a vision he had of the needs of the development in this country for the future.

Sir, he had a great respect for what we did in culture. Some people say that he was a pragmatist but he went beyond that. I remember when we started an enlarged Crop Over Festival in 1978, when I was Minister of Culture. ...I remember, Mr. Speaker, that I would go to Cabinet asking for money to establish a division of culture, in the Ministry of Education, because there was no Ministry of Culture up to that point. We would talk about the things that we wanted to do. We talked about mass culture, the democratisation of culture in Barbados because it was something in those days that was fairly esoteric. The masses were shut off from an expression of cultural aspects of life in this country, so we wanted to do this, and the only member of the Cabinet in those days who gave me any support, was St. John. As I said, there was some pragmatism in it. He felt that if he could build a good festival in the middle of the summer, like the Crop Over Festival that the hotels' rooms would not be closed for the summer. Those who were with him know that tourism was his abiding passion and in those days, a number of hotels used to close for the Summer season, and St. John saw this as an opportunity to fill hotel rooms during the summer and I think he succeeded in that, but over and above that, Mr. Speaker, St. John was a man who understood Barbados, Barbadiana, Barbadian customs, its cultures, its social currents, better than anyone else I have met.
2.20 p.m.

The closest person I saw come to that was the late Errol Walton Barrow. He seemed to understand Barbados and Barbadians, but nobody that I have ever met understood it better than St. John and to raise a name, a custom, a district, a practice, whatever you talk about Barbados, you would engage St. John in excited exchange because he had a feel for this country like I have seen no one else has.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to make one or two comments about him as a person. He was the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party and led the Party into elections in

1971. I was among a number of young people who offered ourselves in the electorate in those days. I saw the way he led his team then, and the years following. He was the quintessential team man. He showed respect for his team members right up to the time when he was Prime Minister. He gave them an opportunity to express themselves and he brought them on, he guided where he could, he passed information where he could, he encouraged and, therefore, respect flowed back to him.

Mr. Speaker, in the 46 years of my membership in the Barbados Labour Party, Sir, I have seen no one, again, other than Sir Grantley Adams who had commanded the respect of every party member in the way in which St. John did, and it flowed naturally. He did not demand it, he did not push for it, by the way he was, the way he dealt with people, the respect he showed to people, respect flowed back to him. He was a man who guided, he was not tricky, no Machiavellian tactics, no man who sought to put down his own. All that was consistent with the great combination, Sir, the Cabinet of 1976 to 1981 was all for one and one for all, touch one, touch all. This is how it was, everyone, from top to bottom. I do not know if it has gone to his grave as the Honourable Member for St. John says but I know that it existed. Every man was for his brother and they worked as a team, in the way that no Cabinet has ever before or since worked in this country. Sir, the whole new generation of Barbados Labour Party people is somewhat born out of that kind of experience, the St. John's example. I hear about party loyalty, but nobody could have been more loyal.

The Honourable Member for St. John is right again. I do not like to tell him that too often because his head gets a little big, but he is right, Sir, when he says that St. John did not understand this new thing about politics of inclusion. It gravely grieved him. He believed that people had to believe in something and to stand up for what they believe. He used to bend my ear, not too often but now and then he would grumble in his own cryptive style because he never wasted words. He said a lot with few words and he would, from time to time, grumble into my ear, this new dispensation. It did not accord to his values, it did not accord to the principles that I spoke about earlier. That was the man.

Sir, he was unique in a very special way. He was a combination of maverick and conservative. Nobody was more maverick than St. John, although some people unkindly ascribe that to me. I am no maverick but St. John was, but it is a combination of maverick and conservative, a happy blend. He was virtuous, so he could play these at the same time for maximum effect. He was always like that, and we go far back. I remember him from school, Sir, and the way in which he carried himself was almost like happy-go-lucky, both in what he did and what he said. None of this, of course, succeeded in obscuring what was indeed a powerful and incisive intellect. He was a man who could see to the heart of things.

I said when *CBC* spoke to me sometime last week, a few comments in a rush. I did not have time to think, but one of the things I recall saying is that when I started to practise law, the late Chief Justice Douglas told me one day, "pattern yourself on St John, they do not come any better." That was a long time ago. I tried, Sir, but I did not succeed, because the bar was a little bit too high for me, and that is not false modesty because he was in a class above others, as an intellect. I am not dealing only with law, I mean generally speaking. He was a man who, as I said, could look through all the trees and see the substance in them. He was a man who could analyse. He could also conceptualise. He was not a man who read the newspapers, the international journals and see what they say and say, "Ah, that sounds good, I will follow that." Rather, he is a man who would read them and engage his own intellect with what he read. He used to read all these esoteric journals, particularly, if they related to trade or finance, and then he would engage his own intellect with what he had read. He would underline something and he would run across something and he would say, "this makes sense and this does not make sense," and evolve a St. John position. This was the man that I remember. Sir, St. John went through periods of personal and political tragedies to which many have made reference.

2.30 p.m.

I was one who sat down with him in his home in 1971 after he lost his own seat and the election when he was the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party. He was a shattered man. Never mind the exterior man, he took it very hard. Those of us who had confidence in him stayed and assured him that that was just a battle, that there was a wider war to be fought. He soon jumped back into this war with all the zeal, the enthusiasm and the spirit of a believer and finally triumphed and then he lost again.

Mr. Speaker, there were other little things that hurt him. Some people in politics said some very unkind things about him. The Democratic Labour Party platform back in the 1970s was rife with malice against St. John and his family. I listened with my own ears to some of the things they said about him. St. John was a man who wanted to shield his family from politics. They could say anything about him, he could handle it, but he did not like the wicked, malicious and untrue attacks that were being made on his family. It is to the eternal shame of those who did it, that a man as decent as Harold St. John had to put up with that kind of malice. I am glad that today the Democratic Labour Party seems to have moved beyond that and have moved into a new sense of maturity where they could discuss politics and persons in a less personal way.

Sir, I want to talk a little about the setbacks in St. John's political life. Others have said that he was so big a man that he could pass the leadership on to somebody else and still be loyal, which is true. Fortunately, those who took

up the leadership when he passed it up were kind to him, I could attest to that. I have the history of it in my head and on paper. Therefore, it was easy of him to adjust. It is when you are not kind to people that you get their backs up. So it would be useful if that aspect of St. John's life should somehow find itself into the thesaurus.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I am going to wind up because this thing is troublesome in many ways. In the fullness of time I would have much more to say. Mr. Speaker, I feel the pain keenly of his widow Stella, his children, Nicole, Charmaine and Bryte, his grandchildren and all of those close to him. Therefore, I would like to think that this House would do more than just pass a resolution of condolence. This House and this Government will do something big to reflect the enormous contribution that Harold St. John has made to this country.

Sir, everybody across the political divide, the social divide and the wealth divide have this past week spoken with sincere and honest feelings about what a great man he was and about the contributions he has made to the development of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome this resolution and I am going to vote for it, but we have to go beyond the resolution. He used to talk about Oistins. I sat in a Cabinet where I used to hear about Oistins every single week. Every week St. John used to talk about Oistins. St. John said you have to change the road, you have to move the police station, you have to move the chattel houses but you have to build good houses to put the people in and you have to move Sermac Laundry which was on the seaside. The owners of Sermac Laundry were the strongest Barbados Labour Party supporters in Barbados, but St. John said that it had to move because the effluent from the laundry which was going out to the sea would damage the coral. People were angry with St. John but he said he was speaking from his heart, he understands what he was talking about. He said that there was nothing wrong with going on the other side of the street but it must be moved. That is the kind of man he was.

Mr. Speaker, Harold St. John believed in those fishermen and insisted on the building of that jetty to look after those fishermen. He reminds me of the psalmist David. Those that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters, see the works of the Lord and the wonders in the deep. St. John believes that more than David. There was a kinship between him and the fishermen that is inexplicable. When he went and dealt with the fishermen at Oistins it was not for a show, for votes or for people to say, look, St. John down there with the fishermen. He did that from the time he was a boy. He felt a natural and compulsive

link with those people, that is why we have to look at what kind of tribute we should have for him. Somebody wrote, I think they meant well, about a round-about, but why do they not rename the whole of Oistins after him, not a section of it, not the Scarborough section, not the court house, not the library, not the Rates and Taxes Office, not the park across the street where they got Southern Plaza shopping mall and not the place where we have great pride and fun on Saturday nights. They should consider renaming the whole compound after him, nothing is wrong with that.

Mr. Speaker, this is a man who felt pain, who suffered, who had reversals in his life but remained a man. He reminds me of the words of the poet William Ernest Henley who said:

“In the fell clutch of circumstance, I have not winced nor cried aloud: Under the bludgeoning of chance, my head is bloody, but unbowed.”

That was Harold Bernard St. John, a real man.

I am grateful to you, Sir.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, having to speak after the Honourable Member for St. George South, I know my contribution would pale into insignificance because the Honourable Member for St. George South has regaled the now departed Honourable Member from a position of knowledge, of comradeship and from having served with him both in this House and in the Cabinet of Barbados, and has spoken from his heart about the goodly gentleman.
2.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that Sir Harold St. John has come from a generation of men and women who love this country and that regardless of the station that they have held in life, whether it is money, plantocracy, persons who were involved as workers in the fields of Barbados, carpenters, masons, doctors, lawyers, *et cetera*, they all love this country and have made their contributions in the best way that they knew how.

Sir, some have made it with their sweat, blood and tears while tilling these fields beyond recall; some have made it in this Parliament; some have made it as the voice of the people in the hustings of this country. Sir, when it all boils down, we can only compliment them for their love of this country and for the people.

Mr. Speaker, for sometime Sir Bernard St. John has represented the constituency, albeit with the adjustments and changes that I have the honour and privilege to represent. Therefore, I want to be the voice of the people in speaking to the Resolution which is before us, relative to Sir Bernard St. John.

Mr. Speaker, I know that those constituents would want to express their thanks and appreciation for his work and his life, and for all of those things which he would have done over time for them, how he would have listened and would have sometimes successfully, sometimes unsuccessfully, tried to bring succour and hope to them.

Mr. Speaker, let us not create myths because Sir Bernard was a human like us and, therefore, would have suffered some of the same difficulties with which we would have suffered. Sir Bernard came from a situation of partisan politics which others have spoken about, politics which by its very nature within the kind of democracy that we have, would have been contentious, divisive. There would have been the cut-and-thrust of debates and we in here understand that a lot of that has to do with the search for power and the search to govern.

Sir, what it does is that it sometimes sends a message to our followers that, in a misunderstanding of the political reality, they become very vicious and partisan and seek not only to kill with words but if they had the opportunity, would have killed with knives and guns, in representing what they consider to be in the interest of those who they support.

Therefore, as we speak to these issues from time to time, both in a celebratory note for some good deed of a politician... Two or three weeks ago, we spoke to the ascension to damehood of one of our own. Today we speak in these tones and moods that are relative to the passing of one of our own, an individual who has made his contribution in the best way that he knew.

Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the Honourable Member for St. George South that there seemed always to be an affinity to the fisherfolks of Oistins. He dealt with those persons with a touch that to me, appeared highly genuine. I have families who live in Scarborough, who had fishing boats and who would speak of their love and appreciation for this man. Therefore, I bear their testimony as to that kind of affinity which they have.

Mr. Speaker, from time to time, as I passed through Oistins Town, I would see Sir Harold walking the streets quite casually or dressed quite casually, conversing with all those persons who would stop to talk to him. Sir Harold also had a certain fanatical loyalty engendered by many of those persons.

I remember sometime ago in the early 1990s when we had some difficulty in this country, the trade union movement at the time were mounting a number of platforms across Barbados. At that time we mounted a platform at the small plaza where the Harvest Mart is now situated. When I got down from speaking, this lady came up to me and called me all kinds of names, to which I remained silent

because in the presence of that kind of hostility and vigour, avoidance sometimes is the best *modus operandi*. As she moved away, I eventually asked who she was and was told that she was one of 'Bree' St. John's biggest supporters.

Asides.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, there were persons who believed that they had to develop a certain brand of loyalty and support, and Sir Harold had that kind of loyalty and support among many of the fisherfolks at Oistins.

Sir, when I was teaching at Christ Church Boys' School, occasionally I would go to this shop at Lodge Road to get some reasonably good ham cutters. I never stopped going even though I was told that it was a 'Bree' stronghold. One day I went into the shop and spoke to Mrs. Evelyn and told her that Sir Harold was no longer in the area, that he was no longer into elective politics. I asked her if she would be willing to shift her allegiance and support to a good gentleman from the soil, namely me. She said: "Just look here to the left and you will see that I have posters that go way back into the 1960s, chronicling the life of Harold 'Bree' St. John. You can ask but you will not get."

Mr. Speaker, I smiled, bought my ham cutters, and ate them there because I understood that kind of support and loyalty. Therefore, I hope that those of us who make the journey into Parliament, who look to carry forward the message of the people of Barbados, would develop that level of support and loyalty. I would hope that it would not be done out of a fanatical belief but that it was being done because we are serving the interest of the people. It is important that we serve the interest of the people and as a result of this, persons in the community will stand by our sides from the beginning to the end. Sir, this is one of the testaments we can talk about relative to persons such as Sir Harold St. John.
2.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the call from the Honourable Member for St. Michael North about capturing the voices of persons such as Sir Harold because many Barbadians have spoken on a diverse number of issues and subjects and even though we are literate people, we do not capture it in the raw form, that is the form of their voices or in a synthesis form, an analysis of their words for the guidance of future generations.

Mr. Speaker, a record of voices and words of persons such as Sir Harold St. John should be the genesis for this type of writing because too many good Barbadians have passed without us and future generations having the benefit of their guidance and this society is worse off because it has not been captured for the minds of our young people. We do not have the historical and cultural dynamics of our society

sufficiently reflected in the hearts and minds of our people today and the future generations. Sir, one of the challenges for the Barbados Labour Party would be to commission an interested historian to do this job.

Mr. Speaker, even though Sir Harold and current representative for Christ Church East Central come from different political perspectives, because I still think of myself as democratic socialist, that when he looked across Christ Church at the current representative, he had a voice then in the May, he would say that the people voted for a reasonably young man who would continue the fight and struggle for them.

I spoke about Oistins several times in earlier presentations because I see Oistins as the centre of Christ Church and the town that will galvanise its total development not only from a cultural sphere and what people refer to as an entertainment centre with fish, chicken, dancing *et cetera* but people will see a true reflection of the things of Christ Church expressed in the life force of people like Aberdeen Jones, Sir Edwy Talma, Sir Harold Bernard St. John, other politicians, community workers and the fisherfolk.

Sir, from time to time we have to converse about the development of Christ Church, not only in political tones but because we have been put there to represent the interest of the people of Christ Church. I want to implore my colleagues on the Other Side who now carry the banner for Christ Church to let us sit down together since I have never seen the Oistins Development Plan. Perhaps we could call it the Christ Church Development Plan, sit down together and articulate and fashion the total development around the nexus of Oistins. Oistins should be at the centre, everything else should radiate outward. Sir, I am convinced that all good men will do what is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, as Sir Harold St. John rests comfortably in the arms of his Lord, he would look down upon us and say that his thoughts and ideas are now being truly manifested in the hearts of those young and middle-age men, those persons who have seen the ideas and messages that I truly wanted to bring to them.

Sir, we who continue along the journey should do justice to the memory of Sir Harold and all others who have worked steadfastly in the fields, supermarkets, wherever, so that Christ Church will truly represent future generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I truly did not know that we had such kindred spirits in here but Honourable Members quoted from Shelly and other erudite poets. I think that we have some brilliant poetic minds in this Honourable Chamber, even though the poems were not written by them but, Sir, there is

nothing wrong with borrowing and because I had no time to pen, I too will borrow from "The Sum of Life" and I will quote briefly from Henry Longfellow:

"Lives of great men all remind us
We should make our lives sublime
And departing leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

Sir, I have used this particular stanza from time to time because it sends a fundamental story and message to me. It has nothing to do with the millions we might amass with our search here on earth but the quality of life we live, how we impact on our fellow-men and women and seek to transform our lives and theirs, how our trueness which is the spirit, not the corporeal that can be punished and placed in a tomb but that spirit will still live on and embrace each and every one of us, that people could look down through time and say, there goes the footprints of good men who have worked selflessly for the elevation and development of our people and country.

3.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, we have placed one yesterday in his grave. We will place many more great men and women in their graves because in the end generically speaking, this country has produced a mass number of great men and women from every walk of life.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, we have heard the raconteurs over the past few days. We have heard the carolling words and songs of poets speaking about moving stanzas but we have to strip the facade from misrepresentations and we have to come back to truth. There is a tendency of man in the post-period of a deceased to speak most respectfully about the life works of the individual.

A tribute is usually a gift or a profound affection for someone whom you love and whom you believe his life work is worthy of being complimented and ought to be preserved for the periods of prosperity so that young boys and girls can look to an outstanding historic mentor for guidance for the future. It is within this context that one must not seek exclusively to canonise an individual and pitchfork him into an arena beyond reproach. We heard before that Sir Harold took a stand on the basis on the principles that guided his conscience but as a consequence the element of inclusion of which I am a product stood to be questioned by him. Sir, I respect that kind of honest presentation and I also viewed the idiosyncrasies of a man like that because they revealed a positive quality of honesty.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard so many virtuous things today, yesterday and the preceding days that we ask

ourselves, what manner of man is this? How great is this man that is so unblemished, so flawless and has not done anything negative? I do not believe that generations unborn would believe many of the things which they hear. I believe that we have to be fair or we will only be going through a ritualistic exercise and not being prepared to speak the truth about persons.

Certainly, my first encounter with him was not one so cordial. Indeed, at the time when he was struggling for his political life in 1986, I encountered not the blunt end of the sword but the sharp end of the sword. So, I know him as a man of many parts, a man who had emotions and a man who was loyal to the party he believed in and if you were opposed to that, you receive the wrath of a man who would not accept your political position.

Sir, I was a little surprised that if he thought at the time that you were converted and included in the dispensation which he belonged, he would not be so receptive. I am not going to be a revisionist who wants to distort history for the sake of some form of political marketing.

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: I want to view him within the context of how I see all manner of men.

Sir, what is very conspicuous in the contributions is that individuals who spoke so caringly about him are of the same social class as he was and therefore found it difficult to understand why he behaved the way in which he did. The reality is, he was the product, and with all honesty he was a product unlike us of the dynamics of the plantation and whatever resistance one might get on these circumstances, he was a product of dynamics of the plantation. This might sound harsh but it is true. The variables that we refuse to put into the analysis of the character of the individual, he witnessed on the plantation, black and white. He witnessed the plantation master and worker, working in the fields with drivers. He saw that.

Sir, your experiences shape your personality and his experience shaped him. Therefore, in the element of courage which mystifies us, how come this man had such great courage. The courage came because in the plantation there is a sense of confidence imbued in every offspring of the slave master or the leader of the plantations' offspring. That was the courage which he had. It is nothing negative about an individual.

Mr. Speaker, ordinarily lesser mortals struggle hard for courage because they feel a sense of subordination. Therefore, when they are confronted with the educated elites

who are from a traditional aristocracy, they find themselves retreating and finding it difficult to socialise, communicate and enter into dialogue with them, that was not Sir Harold's problem. He never had the problem or fear of talking to people as equals because he was born from a privileged class on the plantation.

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Sir Harold was also inspired of the qualities of assurance and hope to strive to achieve a sense of excellence and brilliance that was the natural quality of a man who did not have to rustle with the day-to-day issues of bread and butter and going to sleep hungry at night. Sir, without having to look for a lantern to do work in the dark, to illuminate a small pocket in the midst of darkness to see a few lines on a page of a text book. He never had that problem. He had all the comforts of a man who came from a specific class in this society and he had all the opportunities. Therefore, he took advantage of them and excelled and explored the frontiers of academia in order to become one of this country's leading intellectuals.

Sir Harold had a world of his own. He was universal in his analysis of man. The concept of class and race very seldom entered into any form of dialogue in this Chamber. He spoke as though all men and women, and I speak of men in a very wide context embracing both men and women, in a generalisation, not differentiating between black, white, mulatto or 'doogla'. He never did that. He spoke about man and woman in all of his presentations within these Chambers.

I want to view him as a public servant. I can hear how brilliant he was as a lawyer but what motivates a lawyer to achieve the goals he set about to achieve is still a mystery to man.

Asides.

3.10 p.m.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: The reality is that it has nothing to do with the man's self-worth or contribution to the development of man. Sometimes the largesse is so gigantic that any man, even without knowledge, would try to be successful in the law courts, but when he comes to public life, it is what he does, in order to uplift the quality of life for ordinary people in the street. I want to judge him against that background, but any man that is worth his salt on earth does not want to be alienated from self-worth. He wants to know that he has made a meaningful contribution to society and he was not alienated from that thought. He felt that he had to make a meaningful contribution.

Therefore, we came to Parliament on many days and heard the voluminous nature of his knowledge. He was a man well read, not only an almost infinite, in terms of man's measurement for academic qualities. As we heard here

before, he spoke on many subject matters but he had his prejudices as anybody else. As we heard the most senior Honourable Member of Parliament say today in here that he was not interested in new constructs or new formations because he had a mental fixation about what ought to be a Barbados Labour Party representative. If you did not set the elitist analysis, which he had, you were never given a genuine embrace by the individual because he knew what was supposed to be a Barbados Labour Party representative.

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: It is not my words. I never knew that he was opposed to it, but we all must appreciate, that no one can question his brilliance because all of us view with admiration, the expansive nature of his knowledge, on a variety of subject matters. All of us looked up to him as a paternalistic individual. The view which we held in here, not only based on his experience as a Parliamentarian, but because of his long period in politics in general, and his vast accumulation of both wisdom and experience, we conclude, as a consequence of our inert feelings, however suppressed or latent they might be for respect for the elderly, being an African principle, we looked up to him as our knowledgeable father, who must be respected in the society and I believe that we should always respect the elders.

Sir, when you speak of a man as a great lawyer and you speak of a man as a great Parliamentarian, you have not spoken of the man as a great politician. I do not believe that he was a great politician. I believe that because of his forthright position, a fixation with certain values, and with his own vision of how society ought to be constructed, that sometimes you would never abandon these principles, because you felt that is the way the world ought to be shaped.

He will charge, not as a radical but as a reformist, very critical at times of the bureaucracy in this country, not because he felt it ought to be radically changed, but he wanted to see a more efficient bureaucratic system functioning within the Governance of Barbados. You would hear him from time to time, speak of the structure within the bureaucracy, and the type of persons that carry out the functions within the bureaucracy. This is my knowledge of him here in this Honourable Chamber. I have great respect for him. I respect his brilliance. I respect any man who seeks to explore knowledge, and to use that knowledge for the development of man. Those positive qualities must be attributed to him, but I want to say, he is a good man, he is a nice man. I walked with him and ate fish in Oistins Town.

I believe that the future of man requires a more in-depth approach to understanding "Bree" St. John, the affectionate title given to him by those who were his equals.

We also know that there were other times, and I can tell you of the times I came into contact with him on a controversial matter within the law courts, during the time when a former Honourable Member, Lionel Craig and Fred Tommy Miller, had a case within the law court. I know of that experience. He is a man, possessed of many different qualities but what is this misrepresentation by mature and intelligent men, selling to the general public, the almost flawless greatness of an individual, without giving a true record, and a true tribute of the man's contribution.

Sir, all of us can look back on those records and have some construct of the type of individual he was at the particular time and what he really gave to this country, both good and what some of us, as a consequence of our own subjective views, perceive as not so good. I have known of his recommendation for my incarceration into Glendairy Prison, after a dispute during the 1986 election, when the truth was misrepresented that I was involved in some kind of sinister behaviour in the Ivy Housing Area, during the Barbados Labour Party's campaign. He accused me, but he was also a person who reached out to me in the same year of 1986.

When I came to the Barbados Labour Party, I do not know if he probably did not want to be part of the militancy, because when you confront elites with the culture of the rustic...

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Do not mind the elites' bravery and courage, they do not like to face the vulgar tongue of the rustics. I am an urbanized man within the dynamics of the ghetto, but he was always very kind to me and I would mislead this Chamber to say that he was not a kind man to me. On more than one occasion, I was a little mystified because when I held certain positions, he would, in a very private conversation speak to me on these issues, especially about the Zone 1 issue relating to water and he would talk to me about it. On the last occasion when he came here looking a bit frail and defeated by nature and probably man and the divine, when he came up the stairs he said to me, I am following you closely. I never thought he would but I believe that he was an honest man.

Sir, just like I said, a few Tuesdays ago I felt that Dame Billie Miller, the representative of the City was a woman who was honest to her feelings and that deception was not part of her life, deception was not part of his life. He never was a man of deceit. He overtly manifested in his expressions how he felt about any individual or any opposing unit whatsoever, including the Democratic Labour Party. He did it more than once. He was strong in relation to his unswerving loyalty to the Party to which he belonged. Nobody can say that he is not an academic. I find it difficult to call him a politician. I have heard great anecdotal views on

his marvellous periods of interaction in the campaign, and socialising within the environment of Oistins Town. I am a politician and I cannot measure the purpose of a man being there. I do not know what is the motive for being there. I believe it is very difficult for some of us sometimes. When we love people, we want to help them and interact with them. Sometimes we go because we have to go. If you want to enjoy the benefits of power and prestige sometimes you have to socialize in the most uncomfortable environment in order to be rewarded in the ballot box. I know politicians who go into communities under great stress. Because I see them there on a regular basis, I do not believe they are there because they want to be there.

3.20 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: We have to recognise people for who they are and what they have done. Sometimes it is difficult to determine the motivation behind the things they do. We can only speculate or make groundless assumptions on some of the things that motivate them. However, what we can say, and it cannot be refuted even though one might deny it, is the fact that Sir Harold was an intellect especially a legal luminary *par excellence* because we have heard him speak on many different aspects of the law. I believe that he did not always fine-tune his analysis in relation to the social variables in the society itself and would generalize on a number of issues.

Mr. Speaker, I heard an Honourable Member speak about his great understanding of the social issues in the society, but you have to fine-tune the social problems in a society especially when you are looking at the unfair distribution which I have known in politics for a long time and still experience sometimes here on This Side. He spoke universally on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, no one can say that as parliamentarians we did not look to him sometimes for advice on areas of law, governance, on tourism in his early days, on areas about trade or without admiration for his contributions to debates in relation to the ACP/EU negotiations and his wide knowledge on the LOMÉ Convention. I have heard him on many occasions both within the caucus of the Party itself and in Parliament speaking knowledgeably on these particular areas of law and governance. No one can take that aspect away from his contribution to the development of this country.

Mr. Speaker, we are not always able to see a concrete signature within the various parochial pockets of our nation that says to us that this servant has contributed this to the development of the area. We all sometimes search for that important tangible signature in our constituency, I am still a victim of that. I have not been able to put a tangible

signature on my constituency as he did in Oistins Town. As a consequence, this role model to some must go down in the records of history as an individual who has made a contribution to this society even if we all do not believe that the manner in which he wanted to shape the society is the way that we share any common position on the way which he intended or would have liked to shape this particular society. He had a vision on what he thought this nation and the world ought to be. That in itself serves as a driving force hoping that he would have achieved his objectives within his lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to his children that they have had a father and to his wife, a husband who has served this country well and has made a contribution to its development. May his soul rest in peace and may his family enjoy the legacy of his contribution.

Thank you very much.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, it would have been the year 1931, some six years before the disturbances that had ultimately created such a tremendous impact on our political and social landscape, when Harold Bernard St. John entered into this world. That would have been some 20 years before adult suffrage came to Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, by the year 1947/1948 young Harold Bernard St. John started to grasp with the issues of his day. By the time 1950 came around he had developed an acute awareness of the significance of the disturbances of 1937 and by 1950 he too, like many Barbadians, had been clamouring for the advent of adult suffrage in Barbados. I take it, Mr. Speaker, that that campaign towards adult suffrage created such a lasting impression on Harold Bernard St. John that at that moment even before going to England to study at the University of London he made up his mind to join with those who champion the cause of the masses of Barbados.

It is a matter of record that by the time he was 23 years old he had already been called to the Bar to practise law in Barbados. It is also a matter of record that at the time of his untimely death he would have been one of the longest serving attorneys-at-law on the roll practising in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, I do have some difficulty with those persons who claimed that he was not a politician and who pretend that they find it hard to locate a political philosophy in it.

To me, Mr. Speaker, he was clearly a definite social democrat who believed firmly in the cause of democracy that could produce programmes for the upliftment of society. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy came close to saying so when he said that he had the interest of the fishermen in the North at heart, but he had the interest of the fishermen of Barbados at heart.

When I called Sir Harold a social democrat, Mr. Speaker, I bear in mind a number of policies that attracted his keen interest and which to him made a difference to Barbados. He was fully in support of the establishment of a rural development commission with a purpose of uplifting and enhancing life in rural communities. Also when the first legislative proposals on urban development came to this House under this Administration to do with the question of urban renewal and urban upliftment to put high emphasis on the clearance of slums, Sir Harold supported those policies as well. He took great pride in speaking of the sites and services programmes of the Barbados Labour Party. He lent his support to the move to educate Barbadians more. If ever there was pragmatism in him, the way people have said that he was a pragmatist, his pragmatism lay in his perception of where he wanted to carry the economy of Barbados or where he wanted the economy of Barbados to go.

3.30 p.m.

Sir, the pragmatism came out from the point of view, as like Sir Grantley Adams, he felt that Barbados could not survive on mono-culture and he would have lent his support in the 1950s to the establishment, by the then Barbados Labour Party, of the Barbados Development Board, the precursor of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation. He also supported tourism.

Mr. Speaker, in the last fifteen years he was an unrepentant supporter of policies bringing new forms of business enterprise to Barbados. I recall many occasions when it came to matters relating to the offshore sector, he and another Honourable Member Sir Henry Forde spoke with conviction and at the end of the day, both Sir Henry Forde and Sir Harold Bernard St. John were able to fit the offshore sector into Barbados' economy and to itemise the particulars in which this offshore sector could contribute to the development and growth of our economy.

Mr. Speaker, they are those who said and urged that he was not a politician. There is a stereotype in the minds of many people in this world that a politician has to be tricky, mendacious and probably Machiavellian. Sir, because of the absence of mendacity, duplicity and Machiavellians from the marrow of this distinguished person, Barbadians, like others, said that he was not a politician.

Sir, if ever there is such a thing as a purity in spirit and purity in purpose that could commend a person as a politician, clearly, on that basis and in that light he was definitely the type of politician worth emulating. Mr. Speaker, he was not a trickster, a liar nor Machiavellian but he was a man who put country above self and a man who, to all and sundry, emerged as a distinguished statesman *par excellence* within the annals of Barbadian political history.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members will also recall that Sir Harold Bernard St. John paid close attention to international developments. I was reading a series of articles on the evolution of a private sector in China and based on the political system in China and the articles about the move towards a private sector in China, I felt that the only person who could render me advice on the new Chinese economy was Sir Harold. I believe at least one other Member in this Honourable House was present when I went up to him and asked him questions about the new economic thrust in China and he had the answers.

I recalled that there were times when there were questions that I would not readily ask another person, I would go to Sir Harold and get the answers. I have seen Honourable Members on the Floor of this Honourable House, when confronted with strange words did not consult the dictionary but consulted Sir Harold. Sometimes they got better results than what was written in the dictionary in the absence of the peculiar Barbadian culture could offer. He was very well read.

Mr. Speaker, I recall, about five years ago, having to discuss matters of law with Sir Harold. Not only did I leave those discussions the richer but he was able to trigger in me a desire to pursue international law. In circumstances, where, as a young person looking at law, I was persuaded by John Austin that international law, clearly in Austin's time and shortly afterward, was nothing different from morality. My exchanges with Sir Harold developed in me a passion to pursue international law, so much so as today I would concede that international law is law and not the sort of morality on which John Austin spoke about.

Mr. Speaker, as I reflect on the contribution of Sir Harold Bernard St. John, I also bear in mind that period of Barbadian history between 1976 and 1986 where, with a series of LOMÉ Conventions, Sir Harold took enormous pride in working as Chairman of African, Caribbean and Pacific bloc countries under LOMÉ Convention and worked for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries in the context of the negotiations with the European Union. At the time he was knighted, in my contribution congratulating him on receiving his Knighthood, I mentioned that if there was one particular area of his involvement in public life which he would have trumpeted as, perhaps, the most meaningful contribution that he would have made up to then, it would have been in the area of his Chairmanship of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.

Mr. Speaker, it is not so easy when one detaches to calculate precisely which area of involvement or area of human endeavour he would have cherished as his favourite. As I speak, I am happily reminded that Sir Harold had a passion for local government and he did not stand alone on it either. There are some Honourable Members present today who would advocate some form of local government.

Whenever the issue of local government was raised, Sir Harold was able to debate it. He knew that very often that he was in the minority but his perception and evaluation of local government suggested to me and to many others that he believed that at the grass-roots level there was some part to be played by the working-class grass-roots person.

Sir, there was a lady in Weston, St. James called Eileen Lucas who was a doyenne of partisan Barbados Labour Party supporters along the coast of St. James for many years. She was also a person who was patronised by many fishermen. I recall Sir Harold constantly asking me about Ms. Lucas' welfare and about the welfare of those persons below the road who plied their trade in the fishing industry. Sir, this brings me to Oistins.

Mr. Speaker, often I would hear from the mouth of Sir Harold some new idea for the further enrichment of Oistins. There were times when I was tempted to think that Sir Harold's obsession with Oistins was rather extreme but therein lay the passion and devotion to what he perceived to be the capital of his constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned his love for local politics and his attachment to local government, the amazing thing is, at one level Sir Harold, was a champion of local government and at another level a champion of a federalist movement for the Caribbean.
3.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I took it that Sir Harold had a greater attachment to football than to cricket but whenever the West Indies Cricket team did badly, he felt the pain of the Barbadian supporters to this game.

Mr. Speaker, this country has lost a tremendous patriot and as I conclude, it seems that we in the Barbados Labour Party are going to have to reflect on the contributions, not only of Sir Harold Bernard St. John but to look at business in our Party in this way; that we bear in mind that when we have Party conferences and parliamentary group meetings, the first person to arrive for such meetings was Sir Harold Bernard St. John. Sir, at every Barbados Labour Party Parliamentary meeting, he would arrive sometimes 90 minutes before the scheduled start and would sit and wait.

Sir, there is even a rumour that when we were not meeting, so enthusiastic Sir Harold was to come to a meeting, that on a number of occasions, he came around asking where were the rest of the members of that meeting.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party would have seen Sir Harold work with Sir Grantley Adams, would have seen Sir Harold work with Tom Adams, would have seen Sir Harold work with this Administration and not even the

doyen of politicians, Sir Henry Forde, can claim such a tremendous achievement. Sir Harold Bernard St. John has worked with all the generations of the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, I recall that in moments of defeat, pained as he was, he would have been philosophical and gracious and in time of the 1971 defeat he said: "*Voce populi de este*" the voice of God, is the voice of the people. In the time of the 1986 defeat, he said "I believe in democracy, tonight democracy has prevailed." Sir, such was the measure and stature of this gracious and outstanding patriot.

Mr. Speaker, as I speak on the behalf of the good people of St. James North, especially for those of Weston, and on my own behalf, I would like to tender those heartfelt condolences to his family, his wife and children, to his friends, the likes of Sam Waithe and Attorney-at-Law Clarke, and those other persons from Kings Agro Processing, with whom he was in daily contact.

Sir, I have not been exhaustive in this contribution but my sense of generosity and that unselfishness that I have learnt from Sir Harold, would now inform me to take my seat as I too join with other Honourable Members in paying glowing tribute to this worthy and outstanding Knight.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I will start the point of my tribute at the point the Honourable Member has just ended, and it is in recognising that with the passing of Sir Harold, what we have seen is an end of an era in politics.

Sir, here was a man who has spanned the times of Sir Grantley Herbert Adams, a name for many of us, and yet who sat with politicians of modern day. He was a man whose intellect, social development, and vision, had to have been broad enough for him to span the thinking and approach to a philosophy, policy and national development, over these many years, so that he kept current and people believe that he had a continuing contribution to make, and were prepared to support him in making that contribution.

Mr. Speaker, I disagree with persons who hold the view that we are seeking to deify or beatify him, or that we are casting him in terms other than a man but there are men whose accomplishments are such that there must be rightly and fairly lauded, and Sir Harold St. John was, in fact, one of those men.

Mr. Speaker, in burying him yesterday and in continuing to mourn him, I clearly hold to the view that the country, the Parliament and the Barbados Labour Party have

lost a giant who has served us well, and one who is deserving of the many tributes being paid to him, whether it is from the simple fisherfolk at Oistins or from former Prime Ministers themselves.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that Sir Harold was born of a social class, a status and a level of wealth that was alien to the majority of black people but the reality is that unlike others who were so born, he sought to commit himself to the service of the public rather than to making himself or his family comfortable in that niche.

I did not see in him a commitment to serve, born out of a sense of self-aggrandisement. I have never seen that at any time during the time that I came to the Barbados Labour Party and have had contact with him.

Sir Harold remained in politics even when it was clear to him that if the prime ministership was the ultimate goal, that he would not have seen it again. He continued to serve whatever his personal fortunes. He served even when his family was criticised, vilified and ridiculed, unfairly so in many instances.

Sir Harold was a life of service from beginning to end because even on his death bed, though his body was wracked and he was physically weak, his intellect remained so incisive to the end that he was able to render advice on tough legal matters, including this matter with Trinidad and Tobago, with which we are currently grappling.

Sir, here was a man, who had he chosen to commit himself in the practice of law as he has committed himself to the service to the people of Barbados, could have risen to higher heights in the courts and have swelled his reputation. Instead, he chose to make sure that the people of Oistins were happy and that their futures were secured.

Mr. Speaker, instead he chose to develop Christ Church pursuant to a vision which embraced persons of all social classes and colours. He chose to commit himself to a life of service of wider Barbados and to a political party which he has served until the end.

Mr. Speaker, there are those persons who say that he was fierce in his loyalty with the Barbados Labour Party and that he did not understand or support the politics of inclusion were quite true. That was, in fact, my experience of him, yet people have spoken of him as being gentlemanly, and he was a gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, even though Sir Harold was the victim of tremendous political abuse, I have never heard from him the kind of language and invectives which are so popular on many political platforms. I have heard him using his wit to

demolish the Opposition, however, he perceived it at the time. The truth is that sometimes he perceived the Opposition as being ourselves because sometimes when on a piece of legislation or policy and he did not agree with the position being taken by the Government, he would in fact, speak firmly of his own position and the position taken of the Government. He would speak at Parliamentary group meetings about it with great firmness and would have indicated his intention to publicly say that he did not necessarily support it, to which he would give his reasons.

Mr. Speaker, even in this, I have found that Sir Harold was not a man who reached out to people, and people could have mistaken that for aloofness, snobbishness but when one takes the time to get to know him, here was a man who had a wealth of information and a concern about the Barbados Labour Party that he was willing to share and to give, if he was approached. Sir, in my contact with him, I have always found that he was a tremendous source of knowledge, information and advice, which he gave freely when asked.
3.50 p.m.

The breadth of his intellect was such that once he brought his mind to focus on an issue, he could speak to it with tremendous clarity. He brought the experience of the many years he sat in this Chamber to his speeches in Parliament whether on social or economic policy. He could speak of the history of new policy and tell you it was not in fact new because it had been tried thirty years before but failed and give the reason why.

He would indicate to you why he felt a particular path should not be pursued and root it in the context of previous history whether social or political. This was one of the factors which made his contributions to the debates in this Chamber invaluable along with the tremendous perspective and length of knowledge that he brought to the issue.

Sir, he loved Parliament and political debate. He would often chuckle heartily when he was frequently teased by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. He enjoyed good debate and would enter the debate by saying something that nobody else contemplated, make a totally different contribution and sit down laughing as he left the debate to continue.

His favourite expression was "I know this thing good" or "I understand this system good". This was in fact true because he was around so long that he had acquired the knowledge of how Government works and the interconnection of various disciplines in a way that new parliamentarians have not yet understood or appreciated and he frequently spoke from that perspective.

He was a reformist and had a tendency to be iconoclastic about those things he perceived as being changed. There were some elements on which his views

were perceived as conservative but I do not think he was purely conservative. I believe the Honourable Member for St. George South spoke of him being maverick and conservative and these elements were interesting to watch in his personality because of the way he framed an issue.

Sir, so many ordinary Barbadians loved him. They spoke of him being a good man and this shows the character that he was. He mixed easily whether with people of the highest or lowest social class. He had a knowledge of Barbadian family connections and would give stories of the histories of families. He did not speak in a way that suggested gossip but if you could not understand why a person was behaving in a particular way or the basis of a relationship he would say "I know this thing good" and take you back twenty years to the way families were connected and you were then able to understand that these families were linked for a long time.

He had a knowledge of Barbados and Barbadian social culture and habits that were unparalleled. It was this knowledge of people and how they perceived things, married with his vision for Christ Church and Oistins that merged into the role he played in the development of the Oistins Fish Festival and Oistins. In this regard, his wife Lady Stella St. John was a true partner because together with a team of people from the area, they brought Oistins and the festival from a backward village because Oistins twenty years ago cannot be compared with it today as a thriving commercial centre which he helped to build by making personal investment in Christ Church with a fish market of wonderful quality that doubles as a place of social gathering for locals and tourists, a fish festival and fisher-folk that are vibrant and an industry that is flourishing. He was able with Lady Stella St. John, whether in or out of Government to work towards that goal of building Oistins and the Fish Festival.

I believe that in that is a lesson for all of us who call ourselves politicians because it tells us that in the best or worst times, when you have a commitment to people, you continue to serve them no matter what are your own personal circumstances. It is to the St. John's tribute that they continue whether in or out of office to ensure that Oistins and the Fish Festival were built.

I mentioned Lady Stella St. John but often in paying tribute when members pass on, we fail to recognise sufficiently the sacrifices that families have to make, whether parents, partners or children, the extent to which they are exposed and have to listen to public ridicule where people can be unkind to them on the street to hear their love ones spoken about in disparaging terms.

Sir, we do not pay sufficient regard to families who suffer as a result of our choice to be politicians. I know the St. Johns must have been wounded time and again by the

many unkind things said about Sir Harold and the family and particularly about Lady Stella St. John.

I think we need to thank them for supporting his choice because whatever the personal difficulties they encountered, they continued to support his political life, existence and involvement in an unwavering way. The Honourable Member for St. George North spoke about Sir Harold's involvement in the parliamentary group and generally in the Barbados Labour Party. It is, therefore, fitting that when he passed, members of the Barbados Labour Party were at his bedside along with members of his family and friends. He was surrounded by people who loved him, supported him and understood the nature and measure of the man when others appeared not to do so.

During the course of his comments, the Honourable Member for St. George South spoke about a challenge that my own family had with Sir Harold. This is interesting because Sir Harold provided a tremendous business opportunity for my family and then presented them with a challenge which caused them tremendous pain and I do not think they ever recovered the same amount of affection for Sir Harold subsequent to that.

As a small black businessman, when Southern Plaza opened, Sir Harold offered my father an opportunity to be one of the businesses to go into the plaza. It was a wonderful opportunity for my father to go to Oistins to develop a presence outside of St. Michael to establish his business in Christ Church. We ended up, as a result, having a large Christ Church clientele, so much so that the business grew to the point where Dad felt that he needed to get his own place with more space to expand with bigger machinery, in order to accommodate the volume of business that he was getting and therein lay the difficulty.
4.00 p.m.

Sir Harold took an environmental point. I was at school at the time and I am unable to say how rooted his feelings were in accurate information. Suffice it is to say that the opening of the business was delayed, I think, by as much as a year and in the process, Dad lost a tremendous amount of money, and it caused him great pain. In the same way that Dad had been the beneficiary of Sir Harold's kindness, even though there was a delay or fracture, I benefited from Sir Harold's kindness. I actually wrote to him a couple weeks ago, to indicate to him how grateful I was for the support that he had given to me, and it had nothing to do with being an elitist, but simply an opportunity that he felt I deserved.

In 1994, the political circumstances brought an election date more hastily than Honourable Members on either Side of the House expected. The Barbados Labour Party constitution allows, in unusual circumstances which it does

not define specifically, that where there have been no nomination processes completed, a Committee should meet and the leader of this Committee should select the candidate, rather than go through an entire nomination process.

Sir, at that time, though I had run in 1991 and lost, and I wanted to run again in 1994, there was not unanimous support for my candidacy and some of it was at a very high level. Sir, you know Barbados is very small and you hear these things. As it turns out, Sir Harold was on the Selection Committee and there was discussion as to whether or not I should be the candidate and it was not necessarily going my way. Dame Patricia who had been my Headmistress was also on the Committee, and she supported me. I am told that, Sir Harold, then rocked back in his seat and said that Liz Thompson is a good girl, she got to run, and then voices said, but, and he repeated it, "Liz Thompson is a good girl and she has to run. She is bright, she could talk good, let her run, give the girl a chance." Then, there was opposition and Sir Harold continued to rock back in his seat and insisted that I be given the opportunity to be the candidate.

One of the things that he mentioned, in support of me was something that other Members mentioned today, and it was his perception of political loyalty, he said, "she knows no other allegiance other than the Barbados Labour Party." One of his reasons for supporting me was that as far as he was concerned, my family had been solid Barbados Labour Party supporters.

Sir, that was in fact his perception and I am particularly grateful to Sir Harold that he stood his ground on my behalf because, had he joined with the other voices, I could not have been a candidate in 1994, and I would not now be the Parliamentary representative for St. James South. I thank him, and I join with those persons in my constituency who would thank him. I know there are others who might not, but there are some of us who are grateful.

Sir, it shows how a leader in a political organisation can intervene in a very direct way to affect your fortunes positively or negatively. As it turned out, mine were positively effective. I was pleased that I was able to win my seat in 1994 and to show him that the confidence which he had demonstrated in seeing my value as a candidate, and insisting that I am on the ticket, it was my way of repaying him, by ensuring that I won the seat. He actually said to me, "Liz Thompson, get out there and win your seat."

Sir, now that I say that, often Sir Harold would talk to me but he never called my name. He never called me Liz, he never called me, Elizabeth, he did not call me by my last name. He would come and sit and have conversations with me, and would never call my name. I would say, 'Bree' this, or 'Bree' that, but he never called my name. I would watch him. There was a time when I sat next to him in the House

and I would turn and watch him, and he had a very interesting little habit, whenever you spoke, he would play with a rubber band. All the time, he would be twirling the rubber band around his fingers, or he would be opening a paper clip, or rubbing his fingers together, and it had nothing to do with money. It was a personal idiosyncrasy and I wondered if even after all this time and even though he was such an effective speaker, whether or not it indicated that he still had some degree of shyness and nervousness about speaking in public and about being the focus of so many eyes and attention.

Sir, if that was in fact the reason, if it was a nervous habit, borne of a discomfort about public speaking, it would be an interesting commentary on the fact that a man who had served so long and made so many hundreds of speeches, still retained some degree of nervousness about public speaking and a man who was bright and had a wealth of information and experience to draw on when he delivered of himself.

I think that also demonstrated the divergence in his personality, the kind of differences, the shy person, the gentleman, but yet the public figure, the Prime Minister, the family man, but yet this man who could speak so well and the great intellect. There were always these two sides, almost conflicting, kinds of characteristics and personal traits.

The last time I spent long time talking with Sir Harold was during the 2003 campaign. This was a man who was of advance years, who had retired from politics, who was physically unwell, but who every day was out canvassing and every night was sitting at political meetings speaking well into the night, until 11.00 p.m. and 12.00 p.m. and enjoying it greatly and speaking well.

I think that without the pressure of being a candidate himself, that you saw a different side of him. He was so relaxed. He spoke so well. He sat at the meetings, and even after he had finished speaking, he would not go home, he sat down and listened to other speeches. Sometimes, I arrived in Christ Church at night and he would say, "Come girl and sit next to me," never calling my name, "What you plan to talk about? Why you do not go on now? Why you do not talk before so and so." He would tease me and we would sit and talk together, and he would ask me where I was speaking next and how were things going in the zone for which I was responsible in the campaign. He would also ask me about my own constituency and he would speak about politics and always going back to the history, comparing this campaign with others before it, and giving you that wealth of information that he so readily shared with all.

This was a man, ordinary in many respects but great, in other respects and I think, Sir, that it would be remiss of me, given the opportunities that he helped to create for me and the fact that he so strongly supported me, and as a result, I

was a candidate for the Barbados Labour Party and became a Parliamentarian. It would have been remiss of me if I did not acknowledge that Harold 'Bree' St. John was a good man who lived a good life, who served well and for whom my family and I have something to be grateful.
4.10 p.m.

As a Parliamentarian, I acknowledge his tremendous contribution to this House and to this country. I pray that his family will be comforted by their memories of him, that the people of Christ Church whom he loved will hold their love of him in their hearts, that some proper memorial would be erected in his honour and that we will continue to recognise his tremendous contribution to the nation and to the region.

I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to join this debate recognising that we are speaking of a man whose political career has spanned four decades and who has been a considerable force on behalf of his Party. I think we have heard that from several persons. As someone who has had a chance to study a little of the modern political history of Barbados, I cannot help but notice that the name H. B. St. John features so prominently.

Mr. Speaker, whatever can be said of his shortcomings, we have heard about that as well today, there can be no doubt that he has made a contribution in certain of the areas he felt strongly about, therefore, it is appropriate for us to take note of that contribution. Mr. Speaker, when I was asked by my leader to look a little closer at matters relating to foreign affairs and foreign trade during the recent General Election, I recognised that the role which Sir Harold played specifically in the LOMÉ II Convention with the ACP/EU negotiations was a formidable one.

Mr. Speaker, I find myself compelled to associate fully with a sentiment that was raised by the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown which was repeated by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. It is unfortunate that more of this recent history has not been codified. We are left to go and glean from the remembrances of contemporaries or we have to go into Hansard to find the particulars of the phenomenal contributions that have been made by too many Barbadians who have made a contribution to this country. I think that is an abomination and I hope that both parties and the wider society can see it as such and will seek to make amends. Indeed, we had to wait on T. T. Lewis' great-nephew, who is not even a Barbadian, to come and see that his works were put down on paper. I am not sure if his social origins would meet the favour of the Honourable Member for St. Michael East but there is no doubt that he made a contribution to the nation. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you a little about the memoirs of Winter Algernon Crawford. Had it not

been for the generosity of the Nation Group of Companies, those memoirs would have never seen the light of day. That is the reality. So I think we have a lot of work to do in that department.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that I should associate myself with the tremendous work done by Sir Harold. One can say whatever one wants to say about him but there is no doubt that he had a capacity for work. In fact, when one considers the number of portfolios he was responsible for in the 1976 Government which are now scattered between six Cabinet Ministers in this present Cabinet, one gets an idea of just how much work he did at a time when institutions were being developed which he had an intimate hand in creating. A lot has been said about that, Mr. Speaker, and I do not care to go on *ad nauseam* on that score.

However, I just want to say what little bit I was able to learn personally from Sir Harold, a man who clearly, in spite of the vicissitudes and vagaries of elective politics, was never once daunted by a sense of purpose and loyalty to his cause. Mr. Speaker, in spite of the disappointment of 1971 and 1986 he remained loyal to his Party.

We have heard that word several times today and I think we have to hear it again from this Side because I only had one conversation with Sir Harold that had to do with partisan politics. In fact, he spoke to me expressly about that issue of loyalty. I thought that was moving because in spite of how partisan he was and how much he loved his Party, he was encouraging a member of the opposing Party to be just as loyal to his respective Party, and that did not negate at all from his sense of patriotism.

Mr. Speaker, I too can speak about that intimately because in his capacity as Chairman of Needhams Point Development Incorporated and Needhams Point Holdings Limited he actually got up on the Floor of this House two Budgets ago and praised the work that I was doing on the Hilton Project. Mr. Speaker, there were people in my own Party who knew that I was involved in that project in a professional capacity and I am sure that there were people in his Party who probably were not too happy to hear about that, but it is a measure of the man that partisanship did not matter. That just explains why I feel such a sense of personal loss.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, in spite of that he never once tried to encourage me to get involved in the politics of inclusion. Also in spite of the fact that his company was paying me engineering fees – there were not very much, the foreign engineers got the lion share of that – he encouraged me to be loyal to my Party, but it did not necessarily mean that I could not make a national contribution or could not put country first. Mr. Speaker, I think his life is a fine example of that.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we interred a true patriot yesterday. I share in the loss along with all other Barbadians. On behalf of the many constituents of St. Michael South Central, those who had a chance to ask me personally to do it on their behalf and those whom I am sure would want to do so, I extend deepest condolences to his entire family, his host of friends, his political colleagues and all of those persons who have been touched by his remarkable life. May he rest in peace.

I am obliged to you, Sir.
4.20 p.m.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution in this series of tribute to who I consider a very extraordinary Barbadian. I wish to say that I personally believed that the tributes which flowed came from the hearts of all those persons who have participated in providing tributes.

Mr. Speaker, over the last number of days, we have heard many things being said about this extraordinary Barbadian Sir Harold St. John. These tributes have flowed from persons located at all points along the political spectrum and further afield and some of the adjectives which aptly describe the qualities and characteristics which are inherent in Sir Harold are as follows:

Mr. Speaker, we would have heard words such as ‘honest’. Over the number of weeks, we would have heard why persons think that Sir Harold was an honest gentleman. We would have heard that he was very upright and forthright. We would have heard of his commitment to party; to country; that Sir Harold was always ready to put the country’s interest first, even if at some times it would prove to be costly to him. Sir, others have spoken to how steep was Sir Harold’s integrity.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the Sir Harold St. John that I have gotten to know, deserves all of these tributes and all flowed from the hearts of those who have taken the time out to have made those tributes.

Mr. Speaker, the life and times of Sir Harold St. John, I have no doubt would provide many opportunities for scholars by researches on the social and economic developments of Barbados. Much has been said by the legal fraternity about Sir Harold, the legal luminary, and I will not repeat that. Much has been said about Sir Harold’s commitment to, and his love for his family, both the immediate and extended families, and Sir Harold indeed, would have treated the people of Oistins and the wider Christ Church like part of his extended family.

Mr. Speaker, in my case, what are my fond memories of Sir Harold St. John? Sir, my first real encounter with Sir Harold was when I was a member of the Public Utilities Board and there is at least one gentleman in this room whom I have to thank for that experience, that is to be appointed to a body like the Public Utilities Board at a time when Honourable Members of the Barbados Labour Party saw in a visionary way that changes would have been necessary to the telecommunications sector in Barbados. Sir, I would have spent the period November, 1994, right through to 21st January 1999, having had a successful entry into elective politics, as a member of the Public Utilities Board.

Sir, there was one event in particular towards the end of that stint that we came in regular contact with this legal luminary called Sir Harold Bernard St. John. When we had the ISDN Hearing, Sir Harold teamed up with Freddy Clarke, to be the legal team for BARTEL at that time. Sir, that ISDN Hearing was conducted at the Barbados Hilton and it is fortuitous or otherwise, that Sir Harold became the Chairman of the Needhams Point Development Limited, which is the company that is overseeing the construction of the Barbados Hilton.

Mr. Speaker, we were there for a period of almost thirty days, where I got the opportunity to have seen Sir Harold at work, and to have seen his brilliance and legal mind coming out, when in his very unique way, he sought to represent the interest of BARTEL at the time, in the most professional way. Sir, it was as though he had great anticipation of the question which the Commissioner and the interveners would have been posing to Cable and Wireless personnel. He did real justice to his appointment as a member of the legal team of Cable and Wireless.

Mr. Speaker, I used to be mystified in the way in which he would have been conducting business with Freddie Clarke, in representing the interest of Cable and Wireless. Of course, there were interesting exchanges because the late Wendell McClean was, at the time, very active on the behalf of the consumers at those sessions.

Mr. Speaker, during the general election campaign for 1999, I remember Sir Harold St. John coming to St. Philip and just as the others have spoken to his love for parts of Barbados that are outside of Christ Church, I can tell you that based on conversations that I have had with Sir Harold, he had a special liking for St. Philip as well. As a matter of fact, Sir Harold would sit me down and tell me about the difficulties that the Barbados Labour Party would have encountered from the 1950s and 1960s in trying to make breakthroughs in the parish of St. Philip, and having made breakthroughs in the constituency of St. Philip North, the further problems the Barbados Labour Party would have encountered would have been in trying to make a breakthrough in the parish of St. Philip South.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold would have related the stories of the types of receptions that they would have encountered back in the 1960s and 1970s when they journeyed to areas such as St. Martins, to have political meetings; at the height of someone like Reynold Weekes going to any part of St. Philip to set up a political meeting, was a challenge for the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, he could have also told us about the vision that he had for the development for parts of St. Philip and when some of us speak in glowing terms of the work that has gone on in the area of Six Roads, and the way how residential development and economic activity was brought, and continues to flourish in the parish of St. Philip as a whole, Sir Harold St. John would tell you that in his forward-thinking and very visionary way, that back in the 1960s, he knew that it was coming.

Mr. Speaker, things that have happened in Six Cross Roads, which is the economic zone of the parish, are things that Sir Harold knew that the parish of St. Philip would have attained at some stage.
4.30 p.m.

I remember in 1999 there was some thought that the Barbados Labour Party's interest in St. Philip South might be well represented by me, therefore, on the occasion of the televised debate shortly before the elections of January 21, 1999, when the Prime Minister and Opposition Leader, at that time, the Honourable Member for St. John squared off, there was a big political meeting in St. Martins which was not a happy hunting ground for the Barbados Labour Party at the time.

Sir, the Barbados Labour Party was heavily engaged in lending support to a rookie politician. The Chairman, Stephen Conliffe, was the first speaker and had to speak for two hours because I was dealing with spot meetings in Foursquare and Woodland and did not arrive at St. Martins until 9.15 p.m. I went up on the platform and spoke for an extensive period of time but around eleven o'clock Sir Harold St. John along with other members of the Party turned up in numbers.

Sir Harold decided in January 1999 that he would not leave St. Martins without making a delivery. A large section of the audience had come to the meeting to hear him yet he decided to give way to other younger speakers, sought special permission from the police to run the meeting until two o'clock and Sir Harold remained until one o'clock in the morning to make his delivery. I admired him at the time and it told me something about him then because apart from my encounter in his professional capacity as a lawyer representing the interest of Cable & Wireless in a hearing at the Hilton Hotel, I had not discussed anything with Sir Harold.

Sir, everything that Honourable Members said today was justified by the act that he waited to make his delivery at St. Martins. It showed commitment to Party and to the development of young politicians.

Mr. Speaker, my stint at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development also brought me closer to Sir Harold St. John. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East and others may say that Sir Harold might not have been the typical politician but as the Minister responsible for Agriculture and Rural Development I was at the receiving end of the most vigorous representation on behalf of the people of the constituency of Christ Church South and Christ Church in general and I can give countless examples of the vigorous representation of Sir Harold St. John.

Sir, he made numerous phone calls because he loved to use the phone. His daughter in her tribute said that the family used to tease him and tell him that he was worse than a woman when it came to using the telephone.

Sir, many days I had to deal with Sir Harold when he telephoned to ask why I was taking so long to bring the services of the Rural Development Commission to the constituency of Christ Church South and phone calls also came frequently from the Honourable Member for Christ Church East as well. He asked for what would appear to be simple things to some people like street lights. He had a passion for seeing the lives of old people improved and he would send a list as well as call on the telephone to remind you not to leave a job unfinished. On one occasion, we had to extend a road in Bournes Village because Sir Harold would not let me rest comfortably unless it was finished.

Sir Harold knew the importance of completing the ice project in Oistins for the people who were dear to his heart and took it on himself to behave as if he were the main shareholder in the ice company. Every day he journeyed to the Ministry of Agriculture or called to enquire about the project. He told me if the hold-up was with the Ministry of Finance that I should call the Honourable Member for St. Peter so that the project could continue.
4.40 p.m.

Sir, when the project was finished there was another issue. The boat handlers were experiencing some difficulty and it was becoming dangerous where the boats were being tied close to where the ice was being dispensed. They needed to get to the jetty and Sir Harold then looked at charge two. The gentleman needed close to \$100 000.00 to make some adjustment to the plant in order to make life easier for Sir Harold's constituents. Sir Harold was relentless in his charge to make sure that the jetty was repaired and the necessary adjustments were done properly in order to reduce the incidences of possible damage to the boats owned by people who were so dear to his heart.

Sir Harold also had a passion to see the management capability and capacity of the fisherfolk in Oistins significantly enhanced. I can assure you that when the Government got the services of Dr. Adapid, who was a consultant to the Fisheries Division and who would have done significant work in building fisherfolk organisations and enhancing the management capability of those organisations that Sir Harold St. John was very instrumental in ensuring that whatever benefits were to be derived for the various fisherfolk associations in Barbados, that Oistins fisherfolk got its just due.

Mr. Speaker, I also remember Sir Harold as a man who was sending, without anyone making a request of him, strategic pieces of information, which he got off the internet or would have picked up at the various conferences he would have attended, to my Ministry. Most of the documents would have centered on the international trade negotiations. Sir Harold had a long-standing passion and interest in business of African, Caribbean and the Pacific as it relates to the relationship to the European Union.

Sir, every time Sir Harold got an article on any aspects of African, Caribbean and the Pacific as it related to agriculture, he would make sure that he put it in the post or he sent someone with it up to the Ministry of Agriculture and then he would call me to find out if I read it. Sir, that is how I remember Sir Harold, a man who was always ready and willing to share strategic pieces of information that could help to inform the shaping of this Government's public policy and to help to prepare Barbados better for its place in a changing financial and economic environment.

Sir, I also remember Sir Harold for the significant contribution and the seriousness with which he took the business of the parliamentary group and all of us remember that, nobody can dispute that. We are going to miss him.

Mr. Speaker, you were there when Sir Harold St. John, once he is in the country would make sure that he comes to Parliamentary Committee and he gets there first. It is the way which he would have articulated to various issues in matters we discussed at the Parliamentary Group meetings. Whereas some of us may want to take a contemporary look at the issues, Sir Harold would always put the issues in a proper historical perspective so that you get a clear understanding on how the issues developed and what were the factors impinging on how we as a party should shape the way forward on these matters. At times Sir Harold would dominate the session but I did not mind because we would be gaining an education as some of us might not have had the time to read widely about the issues. Mr. Speaker, that is the way I remember Sir Harold, always ready and willing to make contributions such that when you leave the room you are much wiser than when you entered.

I also saw Sir Harold as someone who spoke critically about the level and nature of bureaucracy which prevented things from happening, because he had a passion for success. Sometimes he would have a short fuse when the bureaucracy was so strong and we could not get to the end of meaningful things but he recognised and appreciated that at the end of the day that it would take time and order for persons to understand the need for change. He also had a short fuse when it came to mediocrity because Sir Harold St. John set some very high standards for himself and his life is an example of brilliance of what can be achieved when you set high standards but you are prepared to travel the path which will allow you to achieve great success.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to speak to one regret which I think Sir Harold St. John would have had. That regret is not seeing the redevelopment of Oistins. All of us as politicians have a passion for seeing some things which are in our constituencies developed to our liking before we demit office.

Sir, there was a flood in Barbados but before that flood came I had arranged with Sir Harold and the Honourable Member for St. George North that we would have gone to Oistins to revisit the Oistins Redevelopment Plan. When I thought that the meeting would have been called off because I had to think about my constituents as they were trying to find shelter, I received a call that Sir Harold St. John is not in any mood to cancel any meeting and that I should make myself available on time and that the Honourable Member for St. George North should also make himself available on time and with our officials to go and discuss the business of redeveloping Oistins.

Sir, we went to Oistins with a number of umbrellas because Sir Harold St. John said that we were going to open the plan and that it may be old and falling apart but we are going to look at this plan and see how we should redevelop Oistins. He said that one of the plans was from the 1980s and if we need to revise them we need to revise them with dispatch and help him to see this dream of redeveloping Oistins before he leaves office and before his untimely passing.

Sir, we put a plan in place. A co-ordinator, who was to come from the Ministry of Housing would lead the effort in redesigning the plan. The only thing that has happened is that the market facility which many have criticised, that was supposed to be part of the plan but because it took so long and because of Sir Harold's undying love and great interest for those vendors who descended on Oistins and seeing them being housed, he said that we could not wait for that redeveloped plan to come because it did not look as though he was going to see it. He said to go ahead with the plans for the market facilities, take the pressure off those folks who assemble there to ply their trade and in so doing you would also be taking the police off their backs, because they are just

trying to do a legitimate thing, but they are blocking the entrance. The police just next door are on their backs, so go ahead and do the market facility.
4.50 p.m.

There were other components of the project that St. John had a passion to see come to fruition. One is the separation of the fish vending activity in the market in Oistins Town, from the entertainment component, but he was also very eager to see the refurbishment and upgrade of the Oistins Town market. The physical condition had deteriorated and Sir Harold St. John, true to representing the interest of people in Oistins Town wanted to see that market redevelop.

Sir, I spoke about the market facility for the small business persons there. He wanted to see the provision of a small modern bus terminal there so that those who are waiting for the bus would have access to proper toilet facilities but that they would have proper shelter as well. He also thought, like some of the others, that they should have been a tourism related facility in the area that previously housed the district hospital, and he wanted something done to the work that got started on the new post office complex in Oistins. He had this Oistins Redevelopment Plan put together but if I could speak for Sir Harold, one regret is that we are still some distance away from that project being executed.

If I could ask those responsible for one thing as I close, I would ask them to move with greater urgency to complete the redesign work of the Oistins Town area, and having done that, to seek counsel where it resides, to ensure that a major redevelopment of Oistins Town takes place, in the not too distant future.

Mr. Speaker, let me close by expressing my sincerest condolences – of course, on behalf of the very good constituents of St. Philip South and, indeed, all parishioners of St. Philip, as I mentioned the fact that Sir Harold St. John held St. Philip dear to his heart, not in the same way as Christ Church, I must admit. On behalf of my own family and myself, let me extend my sincerest condolences to Sir Harold St. John's family and friends and there certainly would have been many such persons.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, I attempted to get to my feet just before the Honourable Member who just took his seat spoke. He caught your eye first and I am actually a little bit on hindsight, grateful that I had the opportunity to listen to that Honourable Member. I believe that in a very substantive way, he has framed Sir Harold as an individual who was really a man dedicated in his commitment to changing the financial and physical environment of Barbados for the better.

Sir, that characterisation, if I should say so, perhaps somewhat contrasts with other characterisations that we have heard today, in particular that from the Honourable Member of St. Michael East whom I must say, I have a shade of disagreement with, in the context of which he has placed his analysis. It is not often that I find a fault with his usual very in-depth sociological analysis, Sir, but I say to this House that I understand Sir Harold St. John as being a man born in 1931 and he was born to a plantation. He was born before the riots of 1937. He was born before there was full universal adult suffrage in Barbados. He was born, Sir, and experienced for the first half of his life, a colonial existence. He cannot be conceptualised in the same social setting as one would conceptualise someone, who was born in 1966 or post-1966, and that is a reality.

It is a reality, Sir, as well to say, as with all Honourable Members on This Side that Sir Harold was a man who held a *petit bourgeois* professor in a petty beaux yeux economy. What it cannot be properly said of him, however, is that when one looks at his life and his legacy that he did not essay and endeavour to translate himself or to transcend that *petit bourgeois* background.

I think that there is an abundance of evidence, Sir, which suggests that an individual who has committed himself, in the way so ably articulated by the Honourable Member who just took his seat, is an individual, who in a very real sense and in a very real manner has characterised his life's work along the lines of transcending that *petit bourgeois* origination.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are not unread in this Chamber and we must be very fair in our sociological analysis. There are many persons who have been lauded in this world as greats, because of a commitment that they have had to the working class, who were born in privileged circumstances.

V. I. Lenin much reputed as a champion of working class politics, but, Sir, he is not without fault and blemish because he has left for this world, the failings of communist dictatorship.

Fidel Castro, born of exceptionally privileged circumstances but not without fault and blemish because he has introduced to the Caribbean, the failings of similar dictatorship.

Forbes Burnham, born in privileged circumstances, enjoying a *petit bourgeois* profession but, Sir, carried out a *coup d'état* on the Guyanese Constitution from which they are trying to recover.

Our own, the late Rt. Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, a much lauded champion in this Chamber, born exactly to

the same social circumstances as Sir Harold St. John, viewed John Connell as a son of a carpenter and, therefore, unsuited to certain types of political office.

Therefore, let us not make the error of overly miss committing ourselves to a form of analysis which will not give us the opportunity to see in the late Sir Harold, a man, because we are not here to judge him by the standards of God, we must judge him by the standards of men. If it is true, and I believe it is because he has shared the view with me that he had reservations, in his time, about the philosophical soundness or value to the politics of inclusion.

I, for my own part, indicated to Sir Harold that he did not define me politically, so he could not determine what I did politically, but that does not take away from the fact that we must regard, not that which he may have held as one of many passing views but regard the totality of his life's work and the totality of his commitment.

At no time, Sir, do I feel he is wrong. In fact, I believe I am living testimony to the error and there are others in this Parliament who are testimony to the error of Sir Harold's misunderstanding of the value of the politics of inclusion. This does not at any stage turn us away from the value of his life's work.

I wish to say, Mr. Speaker, without an apology that if you have had the opportunity as I had as a young man, and only yesterday at his service, I spent some time with the former Member for St. Philip South and the Honourable Member Sir Lloyd Sandiford, discussing the days when I would have come to Parliament with some others to sit in the gallery. In those days the Public Gallery was not as empty as it is right now, those were the halcyon days of this Chamber when Sir Harold St. John, Mr. St. John as he then was; the late "Tom" Adams; the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow; Dr. Richard Haynes and Sir Lloyd Sandiford, giants, gargantuan debaters, bestrode this place like a colossi. Even in those days, the contribution of Sir Harold amidst that kind of robust intellectual company was outstanding, and none among us can detract from that. There was a robustness of intellect, a mightiness of intellectual curiosity and a penetrative capacity for analysis and interest in probing every aspect of governance.

5.00 p.m.

Sir, I had the opportunity in Washington in November of last year to sit with a panel of gentlemen who are referred to, in the very flattering way, as experts on governance. I must tell you that some of the things that those gentlemen grapple with I have heard the late Sir Harold reduce to simple and almost basic premises. He was a man who was very gifted intellectually. We must not forget that his contribution extended also to the realm of the development of this region.

Sir, if I had an opportunity to speak as one who holds some responsibility for this country's trade relations as well as many of those alongside whom we fight and struggle, I would say that much of that which we do now, much of that which we fight for and that the genesis of much of that which this region now does was laid by Sir Harold St. John. His selflessness in that regard is reflected in the statement attributed to him when he became Prime Minister after the passing of the late Mr. J. M. G. M. "Tom" Adams when a journalist in a very simplistic way, as many of our journalists unfortunately are wont to be, asked him if he was happy about becoming Prime Minister. His response to that was that he was not so concerned about his position as he was for Barbados. That statement was repeated very recently on that programme "First Among Equals" the one relating to Sir Harold. That characterised the selflessness and perhaps the vision with which he underwent all aspects of public life.

Sir, his involvement in the African, Caribbean, Pacific and European Union (ACP/EU) negotiations now known as LOMÉ is one which is worthy of reflection. There has been an inexorable trend towards the removal of institutionalised protection by the so-called capitalist first world. Sir Harold St. John understood that was an inexorable march and that there was nothing that would hold back the hands of time. Equally, unlike many today who throw their hands up and continue to ask for more time and say, "Oh dear, we are not ready," he understood that as much as that institutionalised protection would have ultimately to come to an end, there was a relationship between levels of developments and the socio-economic impact of trade and that levels of developments were things we had to build into our agreements. It was a consideration that we must speak to, it was not an issue only for debate and articulation, it was that we must prepare ourselves for the day when the time would come that we no longer enjoyed the kind of protection that we did.

Sir, in many ways, he was the precursor, the forerunner and the herald to much of the international trade debate and much of the international trade positioning that the Caribbean now takes. I heard the Prime Minister today speak about the worth that he had by way of a contribution if he was allowed to make it into the Regional Negotiating Machinery and about the quality of his speeches. These are some of the things upon which we must always be reflecting when we think about the contribution of Sir Harold St. John.

Mr. Speaker, I make the point that it is not a question of judging mankind by the standards of God. There will always be contradictions in mankind. None of us is without fault, without sin or without blemish. It is all too easy to make a class analysis and fault him because he was less than perfect, but the reality is that given the framework into which he was born and given the contribution that he made

throughout nearly a century, then we realise that when compared to many others Sir Harold St. John was outstanding. Part of his dedication to Barbados was reflected in the fact that even as he weighed 90 pounds on his dying bed when the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago visited this country a couple weeks ago, he was available on the telephone to give advice before and after the meeting and was willing to place himself at the latter stages of his illness at the disposal of the people of Barbados, without cost, without benefit and without profit. Sir, not many people are willing to give of themselves in that manner.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to this Chamber, as one of its youngest Members, that I think that perhaps it is a culture in this country that we ridicule, tear down and drag through the mud all that is part of the political establishment. When one is in opposition, it is all too easy to find fault with everything that is political along the lines of governance. Unfortunately, that has been an unhappy and ugly cycle that has defiled our political existence.

Sir, one of the ways which we might enable our society to understand better is the significant degree of contribution that not only Sir Harold – this country has been fortunate – but the many others who have graced these Chambers and most importantly others who have held the highest office in this land, some have died in office, have given of themselves above and beyond the call of duty. We have to recognise that this thing called a former Prime Minister should not just be simply an individual who goes back into the society to stand up in the back of the bus, to wait at the back of the line without credit, without respect and without treatment as though that individual had not warranted something in this society.

Sir, I honestly believe that the time has come for us to look at how quietly and humbly Sir Harold went back about his business and how quietly and humbly Sir Lloyd Sandiford goes about his business and recognise that the least this country could do is to ensure that some of those common basic courtesies are extended to those who have held the highest office of the land which would make it clear that Barbados really values and appreciates the sacrifice they have made.

Sir, I honestly believe that perhaps we could learn the lesson of our failure to truly and properly embrace that gentleman prior to his death. Hopefully, the same thing would not be said of the other existing former Prime Minister and others to come. We must commit ourselves as a country to doing our utmost to treat those who held that distinguished office and offered so much to Barbados, the common courtesies of life which would demonstrate a true appreciation of their service and commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I shall try to be as brief as possible with my intervention because I do not wish to repeat what was said by other Honourable Members who have spoken earlier. However, I cannot sit and not make a contribution on behalf of the people of St. Thomas, my family and myself where the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John is concerned. Mr. Speaker, I met Sir Harold St. John about three decades ago. He was a man whom I admired and respected. I would not associate him and his relationship with people in any way to do with class or colour because he just saw individuals as they were.

5.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, moving around the Barbados Labour Party and seeing these hailed men and women who we considered as the under 40s. That was an era where there were many distinguished men and women who came together in the interest of looking after the people of Barbados and indeed, the masses were the larger in numbers and therefore, they were all committed to looking after the needs of the masses, and Sir Harold St. John was in that midst.

Mr. Speaker, every year at annual conferences and indeed at the Barbados Labour Party Headquarters, where we moved over to the Queen's Park Steel Shed, Sir Harold was always there to mentor people, particularly the League of Young Socialists and other young individuals who follow the Barbados Labour Party in its quest to make a more meaningful contribution to the lives of the people of Barbados. Sir Harold mixed with the rank and file and indeed, it is because of his involvements at the conference level that I would have met that team from Christ Church who always rallied behind Sir Harold, who was always there for them, with them, and among them. Sir, I speak of persons such as Bernadette, Myrna, Mr. King from Kings Agro, Vera Howell, Mr. Pinheiro, people who I knew from the time I was about 18 or 20 years old. Mr. Speaker, that relationship would have developed because of those persons' love for Sir Harold.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold came to the fore because he had the interest of the people at heart, and for many years, has worked assiduously in looking after the needs of these individuals.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the distinct pleasure to have met, Sir Harold. Of course, in 1985 after the death of Mr. Tom Adams, there was a smooth transition of leadership within the Barbados Labour Party, and that was because we all knew of the level of ability and the understanding of leadership which Sir Harold had. Therefore, there was absolutely no confusion as to who would have carried the Barbados Labour Party thereafter.

Mr. Speaker, I was so elated when I was invited to Government Headquarters, which would have been the first time in my life. I was summoned by Sir Harold to be able to determine what were the plans for the people of St. Thomas regarding a new candidate. Sir, even though my session was a brief one, Sir Harold was specific and I was able to have discussed with him what were the issues and plans for the people of St. Thomas, then I left.

Mr. Speaker, I cherished those moments because they spoke volumes of an ordinary woman in a constituency, as a President of the Branch, being given the privilege to have spoken on the behalf of the constituency branch and the people of St. Thomas. Sir, you know that the outcome is history because Sir David Simmons then became the Member of Parliament for the parish of St. Thomas, as a result of discussion with Sir Harold, in his new capacity as Prime Minister in March, 1985.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold was a realist, he told the electorate the truth. He never varied from what was correct, upright and proper. Therefore, in May, 1985, when Barbadians went to the polls, Sir Harold gave a true picture of the economy and ensured that he upheld what he knew to be honest and upright.

Mr. Speaker, at that time we had lost the Government but the fact remained that what Sir Harold had identified to the country of Barbados was true and it came back to haunt us after there was a change of Government because the policies of the then Opposition were contrary to what would have been good to help to carry the economy of the country, Barbados forward.

Sir Harold did not have any remorse in his heart; he was angry with no one, and he took it in strides. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East was in the union spouting because he was a part of the confusion that was taking place in Barbados, that misguided individuals had us in the claws of the structural adjustment and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I say that the late Sir Harold St. John stood up for what was right, and proper, in guiding Barbadians to make the choice as to a Government that will continue looking after the growth and development of this country.

Mr. Speaker, the late Sir Harold had a great vision for the people of Christ Church, particularly those in Oistins. I am extremely happy to have seen Oistins Hill being properly upgraded during Sir Harold's lifetime because he has spoken to the need for handrails to allow older persons to be able to get up and down that hill.

Mr. Speaker, it is not what we hear mentioned in this Honourable Chamber about Sir Harold that will change anything. Your Honour would have heard others speak to the

high level of representation that Sir Harold gave to the people of Christ Church. There are people who have spoken to the fact that Sir Harold has helped them with baby milk for their children, with jobs, with house repairs, therefore it is not only we in this Honourable House who can speak about Sir Harold St. John at this level but also the ordinary folks of Christ Church, and across the length and breadth of Barbados. That is a man whom I have greatly admired over the years.

Mr. Speaker, another fond memory which I have about Sir Harold was in the by-election in St. Thomas in 2001, where Sir Harold took the privilege to come to St. Thomas to take the platform with Sir Henry, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, along with the Right Honourable Prime Minister. Sir, those men speaking to the people of St. Thomas about the social changes in the landscape of St. Thomas, and I must say that St. Thomas has gotten its share. Sir, I thought that this was a man who, though he was getting on in years and whose health was not the best, would sacrifice to come to speak for me, an ordinary woman, and I felt extremely proud. Sir, I thank him for the contribution which he would have made and of course, that would have helped to impact on the outcome of what has happened in St. Thomas in 2001.

Mr. Speaker, when I took my seat in this Honourable Chamber, I had another distinct privilege of having Sir Harold to my right. I have witnessed his sharp intellect, his well co-ordinated speeches, and the delivery of his speeches. Sir, even though that was short-lived, it has helped to empower me and to give me a better understanding of the man, Sir Harold St. John, and to what contribution he has made to the political and social landscape of Barbados.

Sir Harold has been one of my mentors and I will cherish that relationship for life. Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party has been richly blessed by having many distinguished leaders of which Sir Harold is one. He has left a legacy for many politicians to follow and has shown us in Barbados that politics is about people. Therefore, whatever the level of the individual with which he interacted whether upper, middle or working class, Sir Harold was able to tailor himself to meet their needs, that is what I call an excellent leader in these times.

5.20 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold Bernard St. John will go down in history as an outstanding Barbadian who impacted on the lives of people and the growth and development of Barbados. I want to conclude by extending to his wife Lady Stella St. John, his three children, other relatives and friends and, indeed, all the constituents of Christ Church South heart felt condolences as we mourn and share their grief with them at this their time of need.

Mr. Speaker, we trust that the history of Barbados will adequately record the contribution of the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John and, may he rest in peace.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I too want to say a few words on this occasion. I am deeply honoured to have served in this Parliament with the late Sir Harold Bernard St. John. As a young boy growing up in the parish of St. George, I never thought I would have the privilege of serving with such a great man. When we look at Sir Harold Bernard St. John we see a gentleman who served with the late Right Excellent Grantley Adams, Mencea Cox, Ronald Mapp and Freddie Millar, great persons we hear about but were not able to meet. He bridged the gap between our founding fathers and a new generation.

Mr. Speaker, he brought that richness to the Barbados Labour Party particularly to young parliamentarians in general and we are better able today to prepare ourselves for the future. I believe that Sir Harold Bernard St. John was born at a time when black people needed great, strong leadership and whether we believe he was from the planter class or not, he supported the development and eradication of poverty among black people. One can say that he was a strong supporter of the working class and felt that local Government meant more to his class than any other class. Therefore, history will judge the man as a strong believer in local Government. He made this abundantly clear when we discussed the setting up of the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission. He felt that since we could not go back to local Government as it was then, that these two Commissions should provide some comfort to the poor.

I first met Sir Harold Bernard St. John in 1969 as a teenager after the by-election in St. Joseph and I have followed the progress of the Barbados Labour Party from then owing to the encouragement of Sir Harold St. John, Nigel Barrow and men of that ilk who encouraged youngsters to join the Party and to look at its philosophy. I am grateful to the encouragement he has given to me and other young aspiring politicians at that time.

Mr. Speaker, during the dark days of the Barbados Labour Party from 1961 to 1976, to some extent we saw a man committed to the development of the Barbados Labour Party, who rallied behind it, went throughout the length and breadth of this Island speaking on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party and its philosophy. Sir, we were in Opposition for fifteen years but yet he did not waver, that was the character of the man, Sir Harold Bernard St. John.

It is true that during the latter part of 1976 to 1987, I was at college or serving in the foreign service. When he became Prime Minister in 1985, I was serving in Canada and did not have the opportunity to have met him during those periods when he was Prime Minister. However, I recall after

returning here in 1988 that he encouraged me to seek nomination in St. George because he felt there was a nexus between Oistins and the Glebe. In fact, he told me that since 1971, in the Barbados Labour Party there was the feeling that there should be the development of the Glebe and more than any person else he encouraged the bus route between Oistins and the Glebe. He also encouraged the bus route between Oistins and Speightstown because he felt that there must be an inner transport system to link the people of inner Barbados with the people of the coastal areas.

We owe a lot to Sir Harold St. John who piloted those initiatives during the period of the Barbados Labour Party Government between 1976 and 1986. He felt that people of St. George came to Oistins to find work in the industrial development and this has helped to encourage persons who still find meaningful employment in the area of Christ Church.

When I became the Member of Parliament of St. George North, Sir Harold sat next to me and encouraged me to make a speech. When I became the Minister of Housing, he followed every detail of what took place in the Ministry of Housing. It is felt by many persons who are still at the Ministry of Housing that it was his initiative that led to the creation of the Housing Management Section Division within the Ministry of Housing and Lands. It was also his initiative that led to the separation of the Legal Unit in the Ministry of Housing and Lands because at one time it used to be located in the office of the Attorney-General. I understand that it was his initiative that led to that separation. 5.30 p.m.

Sir Harold followed land issues closely and, therefore, he was able on many occasions to speak with certainty to development within the Freehold Purchase Act. For example, Sir Harold enquired of the status of the number of tenants who received conveyances. He also felt that after fifteen years all the tenants in Barbados should have received their conveyance.

I also believe that he also followed closely what was happening in other Ministries as well because other Honourable Members indicated that Sir Harold kept abreast of what was happening in the various Ministries.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South spoke of Sir Harold's significant interest in the development of Oistins. Sir, last week we received a call and it was suggested that if Oistins could have been renamed, the name Sir Harold St. John should replace it. Other callers are asking for the renaming of the entire Highway 7 as Sir Harold Bernard Highway. Highway 7 stretches from London Bourne Towers up to Oistins.

Mr. Speaker, it shows the high esteem in which the people of Christ Church hold Sir Harold. I believe that he has done more than anyone else in helping to reshape and develop Oistins as the town that we know today. He was very unhappy with the condition in which Oistins was left in 1994 by the Democratic Labour Party. Sir Harold has tried over the period 1994 to present to reshape Oistins and it is to his honour and glory that we now have Oistins the way it is today.

Sir, I believe that history will judge Sir Harold Bernard St. John as a great man. A man who has left a legacy that we can all be proud of and as Parliamentarians we have to be guided by some philosophy. His philosophy was to research and then talk. Sir, sometime ago when persons were saying that foreigners own more property here than Barbadians, Sir Harold was the Chairman of that Committee and he dismissed the myth because it was not true.

I believe that we can learn a lot from Sir Harold Bernard St. John. I wish to convey condolences to his family, especially his wife and children, brothers, sisters and the entire St. John family on behalf of my family and I and the people of St. George.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, it is with some sense of sadness that I rise to speak on this Resolution and to pay tribute to the life of Sir Harold Bernard St. John. He was a truly remarkable and outstanding Barbadian, a true statesman. This was a man who was unrelenting in his commitment to this country and to the region.

Sir Harold was a man who was well respected by all, locally, regionally and internationally. This was, indeed, a man who was indefatigable in his pursuit of the interest of Christ Church South, in particular, and Christ Church as a whole.

Sir, I was drawn to Sir Harold in 1976 and I was attracted to him by his seriousness and in 1999 I had the opportunity to work with him as part of the Christ Church team for that election. I began to admire this man for his capacity, seriousness and intellect which he displayed during the organisation of that electoral process. I became particularly close to him in May 2002 and I am certainly not going into the whole story but it was to do with the process of nomination for Christ Church South at that time. I am sure that all Honourable Members on Both Sides are familiar or feel that they are familiar with that process.

However, during that time I got to know Sir Harold and to exchange views and discuss a number of topics with him. I got the opportunity to learn a lot about this man who, we

have heard from various Members on Both Sides, seemed to be very shy in his day-to-day activities. I got to appreciate his belief in this country and its people. I heard the Honourable Member for St. George South speak to this and I concur with the remarks which he expressed about this earlier today. Sir Harold was a person who understood Barbados, the culture of Barbados, the psyche of being a Barbadian and I think that he really understood more than many of those who have spoken to what being Barbadian was all about. It was something that he really cherished and believed in this country.

In addition, he shared thoughts on the development of this country, not only the development of Oistins but he had a lot to say about tourism. I believe that we are familiar in what he has done for tourism over the years and an Honourable Member spoke to this today and the importance of the expanding of the Crop Over Festival as a summer festival to facilitate the hotel industry during the slow summer period and his involvement in the expansion of the cruise liners coming to Barbados.

Indeed, I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Michael South would not feel too badly if I said that among the number of technocrats he is still today regarded as the best Minister of Tourism that Barbados ever had.

Sir, apart from this he was interested in the expansion of the sugar industry and the role which it should take and the revamping of the cotton industry. Sir Harold thought a lot about fishing and the need for Barbados to expand its fishing industry by the use of larger boats and a more extensive sort of fishing. He felt that if the Japanese and Koreans were coming to the Caribbean that we as Barbadians, and indeed Caribbean people, should be involved in expanding the whole fishing industry within this region.

Sir Harold was an unrepentant integrationist. He expressed concerns about Caribbean Single Market and Economy and he felt that the only way forward for this group of islands was in some sort of federal arrangement. He truly felt this way and we have heard such during the course of today.

In addition, he believed in this Parliament. He respected it and believed in its function and he thought that there was a need for us to look at a review of the Standing Orders of this Parliament, as he said, to bring it more into the 21st century in some regards.

Sir, we have heard about the importance that he attached to the Parliamentary Group meetings and how he would arrive early every week before many of us got there. We also wanted to hear his contributions on bits of legislation changes and proposals. He always brought a

different insight to these things and many times we would understand that there would have to be amendments after his interventions.

Sir, one thing imparted to me was the necessity to have absolute honesty in politics and that whether you were popular or not, you had to be honest. He said that this might have cost him an election in 1986 but it was one of his tenets that in politics one needed to be absolutely honest. Sir Harold begged me and beseeched me that whatever I do, to try to maintain this.

Sir Harold displayed a particularly sharp intellect and an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of issues and topics. He would discuss the pros and cons of incineration; long-line fishing and how they impact on the reefs and coastal erosion and the impact on the cliffs. Sir Harold also discussed the location of the police station and court at Oistins and how erosion was occurring. He also discussed the merits and demerits of the New Zealand electoral process where there is a proportional representation along with the first past the post system in place. Indeed, he had a remarkable memory and the ability to use history and his language to elucidate the most complex issue. He made it seem very simple and he was very rational and logical when he interpreted certain issues for you.

Mr. Speaker, I respected him especially for this ability. In addition, I must say that I would cherish for the rest of my life, the advice he gave me on entering politics, and the support which he gave to me during the actual process.

Asides.
5.40 p.m.

Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: ...but coming out of his discussions, he displayed three qualities which I sanction and I think I should mention, sincerity, kindness and loyalty. I believe that Honourable Members on Both Sides have spoken about these, in some degree today, so I am not going to go into them. Certainly, I think that his life was one that Honourable Members should try to emulate as much as possible.

Honourable Members have talked about Oistins Town and its redevelopment. I think it is rather unfortunate that this development was not completed in his lifetime. Certainly, there has been some gradual transformation of it, and I hope that the powers that be, would ensure that they are completed. I am mindful of the comments of the Honourable Member of Christ Church East Central of being a total Christ Church involvement, and I certainly agree with that concept. Oistins Town should not be seen as just a part of Christ Church South but as a focus for Christ Church in general.

His passing at this time is indeed a grave loss to this country, as I said, at a time when we are entering into negotiations with the CSME, FTAA and WTO negotiations, where he brought a wealth of experience in dealing with these matters.

I said, that I now have the Honour of representing the Christ Church constituency which was dear to him. Indeed, over the past week, several members of that constituency have been reflecting and there were outpourings of grief. They have been discussing their relationship with Sir Harold, the things he did for them and how they feel about his passing, especially the fisherfolk of Oistins Town, with whom he had a special nexus. His passing will leave a vacuum which I will do my utmost to replace. I am not Sir Harold.

Sir, we will all miss him, and on behalf of myself and the constituents of Christ Church I want again, to extend my sincere condolences to Lady St. John, their children and the relatives of Sir Harold St. John, for the life of an outstanding Barbadian statesman.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I too would want to join with all Honourable Members of this Chamber to pay respect to our dearly departed colleague and comrade, Sir Harold St. John. I remember distinctly when I first came to this Honourable Chamber that having entered the Chamber, one would always be shy and reluctant to speak on certain issues. In doing so, when you rise to speak, Sir Harold would always be giving good advice, particularly on parliamentary procedure.

Sir, I remember when I was on the Other Side, myself, the now Leader of the Opposition and the representative for St. Lucy, would always be under serious borage from the Government. While I was on That Side, Sir Harold, sitting in the last chair, would always be giving us a fair comment, and if there is one thing you could say about him, it is that he was fair.

Sir, he was also very approachable, in terms of representing a particular issue. I felt that he was an expert on Parliamentary procedure. I am also hearing that he was an expert on international trade, agricultural issues and a wide set of issues. In other words, if you had to coin a phrase for him, you could easily say that he was a man for all seasons.

I remember on assuming the role of the Minister of Social Transformation, he would always talk to me about the best ways of getting around some of the bureaucratic hurdles or the obstacles that are normally put in the way to impede progress, and I respected his views.

Sir, before I entered Parliament, I had a good insight into the way they used to talk, from reading the newspapers. I knew that in the 1980s, he was a very strong advocate of local Government. I still believe that there is a place for local Government in Barbados. I believe that process could happen, but not like in the late 1950s and 1960s when district councils were established.

Sir, some Honourable Members of this Chamber enunciated a position of the two commissions, the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission, taking up this duty. I would want to say, yes, there is a role for the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission in a sense of local Governance, but I believe that this Government, and we would talk more about that in the Estimates, will be moving towards a process of empowerment of those community-based organisations in Barbados, which would also be able to share this type of governance at the local level with the central Government.

Sir, in a sense, the Government through the agency of the Ministry of Social Transformation will actually be realising a dream that Sir Harold wanted to implement. As I said, it would be done differently, and we would be using the process of empowerment of those community-based organisations so they would have the shared responsibility with central Government of determining and governing their own community.

Additionally, Sir, we used to have a lot of exchanges about the Resource Centre that he worked very hard to establish, along with the Christ Church Parish Church Committee, at the Christ Church Parish Church. He got them to submit a proposal to the Ministry of Social Transformation for funding. That proposal is still with us and I think that one of the things we could do to honour him, is to make sure that we honour that commitment, so that a resource centre within the precincts of the church would be established. I know that Father Harewood also spoke and said that he was fighting very hard, almost on a daily basis, to make sure that this Resource Centre is established.

Sir, you would not believe it, but sometimes he and I would talk about his sporting life. When you hear about a man that has been a lawyer and all of these versatile areas in which he was involved, you would never expect that he had a life that was involved in sports. In fact, he used to kick inside right at that time for Spartan Football Club, where he would terrorise the opposing goal, and one season he ended up with the most goals in the tournament.

Obviously, he was a strong opponent to the politics of inclusion. I am very happy that our current Prime Minister did not share the same views and have included us, in terms of this whole process of liberal governance, but that was his view.

I must also say that being an owner of Silver Rock, I must compliment him for employing many persons from St. Michael South East. In fact, whenever he took on one, he would tell me, "I employed another Pine girl. Do you know so and so?" Sir, he extended even at that level, to St. Michael South East. I must tell you that in terms of the discussions here in Parliament today and the tributes made to him, it would seem that his expertise, in terms of community development has been regulated to a particular geographical area, which is Christ Church. I must tell you that he knew the parish of St. Michael well. He knew almost every single gap and area in St. Michael. He could tell you who lived in this particular gap and what happened there. I used to figure that he was probably one of the most malicious politicians that I have ever met in my life. He had a comprehensive knowledge of what was going on in Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: Additionally, I want to say also that I have lived in his constituency of Christ Church, because most persons believe that I lived in the Pine all my life. I lived in a Government Unit, #5 Longchester Lane, Gall Hill, Christ Church, where I lived for eight years. At that time, he was our representative and I must tell you that my mother and my family supported the Barbados Labour Party. At that time I was too small to have any political inclination whatsoever. At that time I did not like politics and I did not like to see a politician coming through the gap. Sir, many times when he came through the gap canvassing, the little fellows and I, at age 11 and 12, would heckle him and so on, but such was the nature of politics.
5.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold played a very strong interest in the work of the Ministry of Social Transformation through the Urban Development Commission. He would always submit a list of the work that he wanted done, even the capital works programme and even for getting individual houses fixed for poor people. He was always acutely aware of what was going on in the Ministry of Social Transformation.

Sir, I want to join with all Honourable Members in asking that the complex at Oistins be renamed after him as well as the proposal that was made by the Honourable Member for St. George North to name that stretch of Highway 7 after him.

Sir, I want on behalf of the people of St. Michael South East and my family to express to his sorrowing wife our sincere condolences. He was a good man. May he rest in peace.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, given the lateness of the hour and also the fact that eloquent accolades were paid to the former Honourable Member, Sir Harold St. John, I propose to be very brief.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to begin with the admission that it would not be fair for me to convey to the Honourable Members of this Honourable House an impression that I knew Sir Harold St. John very well. However, I must say that while I followed his political life and while I have seen the influence that he has exerted over this Honourable House, it is clear to me that the deficiency is entirely mine and I am much the poorer for not having had the opportunity to foster a solid relationship with him.

Mr. Speaker, I must say though that I had a few encounters with him in the legal profession. Mr. Speaker, I think Sir Harold exemplifies one of the finest qualities of the noble tradition of Barristers. That tradition holds that a Barrister need not be an expert in any area or need not be steeped in the knowledge of engineering, chemistry or any of those things, but that when given an appropriate brief that he is able to discharge his obligations to his clients with the greatest of panache and the greatest success.

Mr. Speaker, my encounter with Sir Harold which exemplifies this noble tradition is when he served as the Attorney-at-Law for BARTEL now Cable and Wireless Barbados at the Public Utilities Board hearings. I had the opportunity to sit in on many of those hearings and from time to time many technical issues and also many technical issues of finance arose but in every instance those were not areas that Sir Harold had been trained in but he equipped himself outstandingly. On occasions I would raise this with him and he would remind me, especially in one of our most technical legal cases, American Cyanamid against Ethicon, that none of the lawyers were trained in Science. He reiterated that what was important was that the Attorney-at-Law paid careful attention to the brief that he had been given, consulted frequently with his clients and paid attention to the law.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold was clearly one of the most brilliant Barristers ever to have practised at the Bar in Barbados. I have on one occasion acted as a junior in a complex case of arbitration, and while Sir Harold was arguing the merits of our client's case, I slipped him a little note referring him to a piece of new case law. Sir Harold took the note from me and put it aside. I thought that he was ignoring this bright spark of research that I had just put his way because I did not realise that Sir Harold was able to read and digest things with amazing speed. Two minutes later, Sir Harold picked up the note and proceeded to argue from it as though he had it in his briefcase for weeks. Those are the kinds of attributes that experienced Counsel like Sir Harold would have wanted to see passed on to many junior members of the Bar.

He frequently referred to people like myself as Conveyancers. Anybody who seemed to do anything other than appearing in the Law Courts Sir Harold called them Conveyancers almost as if he did not think that they were lawyers of the highest order. Sir Harold had significant respect for the area of conveyancing because he readily admitted that he could make no sense at all of title deeds, mortgages and encumbrances and so on and that he would leave all of those archaic and esoteric matters to the Conveyancers.

Mr. Speaker, the Government and people of Barbados are very much the poorer because of his death. The Bar which would no doubt be paying tribute to him some time in the very near future will always remember fondly his intellect and the time he took to speak to junior lawyers many of whom would remember the generous briefs he would have passed their way. We have truly lost an individual of the finest intellect and perhaps even the sharpest wit.

Mr. Speaker, on the behalf of the constituents of St. Joseph, I would like to join with my colleagues in this Honourable House and convey our sincerest condolences to Lady Stella St. John and all of the grieving relatives and friends of the St. John family.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to pay tribute to the man Sir Harold St. John and to support the resolution that words of condolences be sent to Sir Harold's grieving widow, Lady Stella St. John.

My first recollection of Sir Harold is when he came to my house to canvass in the now infamous 1986 General Election. I remember him speaking at great lengths with my father. I remember him speaking about Oistins Town and his vision for the development of that area and his vision for the development of Barbados on the whole. That, Mr. Speaker, was the essence of the man. He was not only a Christ Church man, he was also a Barbados man. That resounded with me and stayed with me for years to come because this gentleman was able to give such a massive contribution to politics, to his professional life, to his constituents and to his family life. This man had a vision of a greater picture for an improved and developed Barbados that Barbados would almost be seen as a Utopian society. He was a man who really stood out among men.

Mr. Speaker, I feel very honoured to be able to make this contribution about a man like Sir Harold. Mr. Speaker, when I think of Sir Harold, I could not stand in this Honourable Chamber and not think of the other Sir because whenever one says Sir Harold, one would have to say

Sir Henry, a man who I have come to replace in this Honourable Chamber. Sir, wherever one went to listen on the political platforms, everybody would come to hear about the two Sirs, Sir Harold and Sir Henry.

6.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it grieves me, not only at his loss but also to imagine the significant loss that my predecessor must feel to the loss of Sir Harold St. John. These two men were friends, I believe, from about 11 years old. They went to school together, they shared the same profession, they were in this hallowed Chamber together, and they have served together for a great number of years.

Sir, not only do my sympathies go out to his immediate family, his widow and to his extended family, my sympathies also go out to his great friend, Sir Henry. Sir, like those other persons who feel that great loss, I am sure that Sir Henry also feels that great loss, the loss of a tried and tested friend; a man who was there for him in good times and in bad times; a man who I am sure he conversed with; who they bounced ideas off of time and time again; and who had a mutual respect for each other. Sir, that mutual respect was conveyed to me and it is seeing those two gentlemen operating in the manner in which they did that I grew to have a significant admiration for Sir Harold St. John.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold was a fantastic politician; a fantastic Attorney-at-Law; and a fantastic family man. He was a model for all of us and it would suit all of us young politicians to emulate the contributions of Sir Harold. Sir, I will always remember him fondly, he always had great words of advice and words of wisdom to impart to me. I remember him speaking on a political platform at Harts Gap as well as a joint meeting at Amity Lodge and he always had kind words, words to inspire and words that one would always remember. They were always topical things that one could always use in one's everyday life in time to come.

Mr. Speaker, on the behalf of the people of Christ Church West, I wish to convey my sympathies to his family and to say that Sir Harold will remain in our thoughts for a long time to come, just as Sir Harold will remain in the hearts of all Barbadians, years after his mortal body passed.

Sir Harold, wherever you are, I salute you.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, coming from the rural parish of St. Andrew, I certainly cannot lay claim to the closeness with which Honourable Members in the Christ Church area have spoken in remembering Sir Harold St. John.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding that, I believe that apart from a number of Honourable Members, my memory of Sir Harold would go even before most of the Honourable Members, if not all of the Honourable Members of this House, were Honourable Members of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, my first recollection of Sir Harold was in the early 1970s as an Articles Clerk with R. G. Mandeville and Company. I remember those days Sir Harold's name was a household word, and certainly in legal circles in Barbados. I remember Mr. Clyde Turney who was my boss at the time, sending me to Sir Harold for a debrief on a matter which was coming on early the following week.

I have previously had experiences in dealing with other Attorneys-at-Law with similar eminence of Sir Harold and I had the impression that as I entered, I would have been intimidated and that when I leave, I would have had the same feeling. There was no doubt that I would have been speaking to someone in authority.

Mr. Speaker, I recall my first meeting with Sir Harold and as I entered the room, there was a difference when compared to my meetings with Attorneys-at-Law with similar imminence. At that time I was a well known Barbados athlete and I had heard people saying that Sir Harold was well versed in all areas. On entering his office, he asked me how come I am allowing the Guyanese to beat me every time I ran in the half marathon. He remembered my times very well. At that time I remember doing a half marathon in 66 minutes, while coming fourth behind three Guyanese. He remembered that very well. Sir, at that time, the discussion had nothing to do with law, we were speaking about athletics and straightaway, there was a kind of warmth that developed between him and me from that time on, to the time of his death.

Mr. Speaker, I recall too that sometime afterwards when I was admitted to the Bar, I was a junior in a matter and Sir Harold was not the Attorney in that particular case, Sir Henry Forde, his good friend was acting on the other side and Jack Dear was acting for our Chambers. Jack Dear was absent and Sir Henry got up and made an excuse for Jack Dear's absence.

Mr. Speaker, I would not say that at that time the Chief Justice scolded me but he was quick to have pointed out in a manner which was not what one would have expected a person would have addressed to a junior. I recall that on the next day, Sir Harold, hearing about what had transpired, called me and asked me what I had intended to do about it. That continued the warmth that I have felt towards Sir Harold.

Mr. Speaker, even though he did not suggest that I do anything, the interest that he had shown in what had

transpired certainly made me realise the type of individual that we are dealing with today.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the fact that I cannot speak like the Honourable Members of Christ Church about the support that he gave to their campaign, we have always felt that Sir Harold was there with us. I recall during the nomination in 1989 for the St. Andrew constituency, Sir Henry Forde, his good friend, called me the Saturday afternoon before the nomination to find out if everything was okay. Shortly afterwards, Sir Harold called and asked if I did my homework and that was an indication that his support was with me. Notwithstanding the fact that the people of St. Andrew were not able to see him during the last elections, he called to find out how things were going, told me I did not need any support and that he would concentrate on the areas that needed support.

6.10 p.m.

Sir, these things show the quality of the man, his commitment to the cause of the Barbados Labour Party and to the disciples of the Party who were destined to continue the work of the Party.

Mr. Speaker, I hear people talk about his commitment to the Barbados Labour Party but I think it goes deeper than that. In some respects he was a fundamentalist in that he believed that the policy, programmes and personality of the Barbados Labour Party should not be contaminated in a way which would negate those policies and principles which the founders of the Party held very dear. As far as he was concerned, there was no room for pragmatism in his belief in these principles and he remained with that belief until the end.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Barbados Labour Party and wider Barbados will miss him but, at the same time, we can feel richer now that he is gone in remembering his ideals and the good points which he has left with us.

I join with my colleagues on This Side and on the Other Side in wishing his family all the best in the future.

May he rest in peace.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to speak to this Resolution and convey my condolences and those of the people of St. Philip West to the family of Sir Harold Bernard St. John. I also want to extend to Lady Stella St. John and the entire family my personal condolences and those of the other members of the Democratic Labour Party.

I have not had the great fortune of interfacing with Sir Harold on a political or social level but I have had the opportunity to review some of his successes and challenges within his long and illustrious political career. At times there are a specific set of characteristics that define individuals who are presented with longevity and success and they can also be found in other persons who exhibited similar successes. From referring to statements made by his constituents, those made by his Cabinet colleagues and past members of Cabinet who served with him, many younger politicians would do well to emulate him.

I heard of his integrity, dedication, commitment and specifically his loyalty to family, country, his Party and constituency in the face of difficulties even at times when he suffered shocking defeats that would have made individuals with less capabilities and less strength of character to step aside from the political arena. Mr. Speaker, I would have to consider myself poorer for not having the opportunity to interact with an individual who brought those types of qualities to politics.

Essentially, I want to side with my colleagues on This Side, the Cabinet members of the late Sir Harold and the many persons associated with him to offer my condolences to Sir Harold St. John and his family.

Sir, it is indeed an honour to speak on his behalf.

Mr. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the constituents of St. Philip North to pay tribute to Sir Harold St. John. I want to submit that words of honesty and integrity have been mentioned by every speaker. In fact, when you speak to Barbadians on the street, they indicate to you that Sir Harold St. John displayed the quality of honesty and integrity.

Sir, what can be said further is his commitment and dedication to his constituency and his attachment to the development of the Oistins area. In fact, it was indicated that he showed an interest in Oistins because it was an avenue where the working class could ply their trade and develop themselves economically.

Further, I want to say, that when I was still a junior member of the Bar, I encountered Sir Harold one morning in Court No. 5 where other senior lawyers were involved in a matter and I got the opportunity to witness the skills of Sir Harold St. John. I must say that he exhibited fine skills and his cross-examination was very incisive.

Sir, other members of the Bar said that he had a wide and varied knowledge of all aspects of the law and that research was his main domain. Mr. Speaker, I would say that

it augured well because as a junior attorney, once you engage in research, then you will see success at the end of the day. Certainly, Sir Harold Bernard St. John excelled at the Bar, became silk and was respected as a legal luminary not only in Barbados but throughout the Caribbean. Mr. Speaker, I want to submit that on behalf of the people of St. Philip North, we express our condolences to family and friends.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.
6.20 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, this has been a long day of tributes flowing from Both Sides of this Chamber and one which will come to be read as a complete endorsement of the life and contribution of one who was a Member of this Parliament just after our Independence as a country until sometime last year. Indeed, the mere span of his involvement in public life speaks volumes as to his commitment and dedication to service. Sir, when one reflects that commitment was interspersed by two defeats, then it speaks even greater as to the character and nature of the man whom we have the pleasure to honour here today.

Sir Harold Bernard St. John, as stated by many Honourable Members here today, was one who was given to commit himself in the service of his country, region, party and parish. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, in every sphere in which he chose to engage himself, he distinguished his contribution by a commitment to excellence, perseverance and, indeed, in a manner that saw to it that there was no person who could accuse him of anything other than the most courteous behaviour and the most dignified stances, even in the face of great opposition.

I believe that the records and history of Barbados will record that this was a man who clearly was exceptionally talented but who gave beyond that which he was required to do in circumstances where others may have left the arena and in circumstances where, I believe, he would have had, in almost every instance, to make decisions that would have put his own personal career development second to that of his country or party.

Mr. Speaker, I had the great honour when entering this great House of Assembly of sitting next to Sir Harold for two years as the youngest person in Parliament because the rules of Parliament require that those on the Front Bench sit first in terms of seniority, length and service and thereafter in terms of age. Sir, being the youngest Member of Parliament and the youngest person in the Cabinet, I sat next last on the Front Bench in respect of those who were Members of Cabinet. Then, immediately next to me Sir Harold, as a former Prime Minister, was afforded the courtesy and privilege of being able to sit on that Bench.

Mr. Speaker, while I had known Sir Harold for most of my life, it was in those two years that I truly got to understand the measure of his intellect, commitment and of his very strong positions in relation to the need for us always to ensure that on matters of public policy and on matters of representation that we were thorough and that we were prepared as individuals who had to public life.

Sir, his involvement in the Barbados Labour Party, even after his defeat in 1986, saw to it that he insisted upon our being able to respect the need for research, respect the need for our ability to treat to matters pertaining to representational politics and respect the need for us to understand the importance of ethics in public life. I believe that those early lessons made a substantial difference for those of us who came to public life in those days, after the defeat of the Barbados Labour Party in 1986.

Sir Harold's role was one of mentorship. He was always available to give of his time, to serve in any capacity at any level in respect of any duty that was asked of him. Indeed, I believe that there were more political parties in the region that benefitted from the services of persons like Sir Harold, particularly in the context of the fact that most of our political parties are relatively young and most of them have been new to the transition of leadership, that it would make substantial difference to the preservation of democracy in this region.

Mr. Speaker, in our country, part of the reason for the success of the Barbados Labour Party's capacity to manage transitions of leadership, having had six leaders over its sixty years, has been the result of the quality of character of persons like Sir Harold St. John and others who understood at all times that the party was greater than the individual and who understood that there was an importance of passing on the traditions, not just of the party but of involvement in public life and those things that matter.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that I have benefitted from his guidance and mentorship in respect of my period of time, approximately sixteen years as a member of the Barbados Labour Party, and I believe that we have a responsibility in his honour to ensure that we too take care of those traditions, those things which have distinguished the record of this party in the building of Barbados in relation to the commitment to research, strong public policy, the commitment to representational politics and social justice, the commitment to ethics in public life and we have a responsibility to hold those things as central to our continued development as a party such that those who would continue to come after us will understand the importance that these things play in being able to run a successful party but more important, being able to build a nation successfully on the basis of party politics.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe that there are very few politicians who I have been interactive with who have evinced a greater generosity of spirit than Sir Harold St. John. I spoke about his willingness to serve in any capacity at any level and, indeed, at the outset of these tributes the Prime Minister spoke to the fact that Sir Harold served on no less than seven Boards or Committees and on each of them he gave of his service without expectation of financial reward. Sir, in today's world where consultants abound, that is virtually unheard of but once again that reflects the measure of the man.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know that it would be possible to speak in tribute to Sir Harold without speaking to two or three of the ideas that he continually referred to as though there were his policy anchors, the question of local government and the need for greater decentralisation in the delivery of services continued to be a passion of his. Indeed, the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown refers to him at all times of continuing to be the legal advisor to the Southern District Council. The truth of the matter is, his involvement in local Government, led him to the belief and the conviction that there was a need, Mr. Speaker, for a commitment, in the context of our Government, to a greater decentralisation of services that affected people's lives on a daily basis. Further, there must be active participation on the part of people, in the delivery of services that affected them, so that they could hold those service providers accountable for the quality and range of services which they receive. This is not an issue that will go away.

6.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it is my judgment that his contribution, in respect of keeping that theory alive will have, at some point in the future, to be considered in a comprehensive manner by the people of this country, as we seek to improve our forms of governance, while recognising that we would not want to impose new layers of taxation, in being able to deliver the same services that our people have come to expect.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, Sir Harold was passionate about the role of the Caribbean Community and the extent to which small countries, such as ours, could only succeed, if we were prepared to work together in a form of governance, economically at least but, ultimately, politically that would allow us to minimise the extent to which our size acted as a constraint to our economic political and social development.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, his first ministerial assignment, as Minister of Caribbean Affairs, stands out in title, because he remained fervent in his belief that our ultimate goal, as individual politicians within our national states, must be to work towards a form of political integration in the region.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the developments over the last decade, only serve to confirm his belief, because we have seen the region subjected to all forms of economic and political instabilities that could better be weathered, if there was a unitary state, reflecting the resources of our entire region.

What was significant though, was that even from his time as Prime Minister, the year that he served between 1985 and 1986, he put a matter on the table which still stands to be decided by regional leaders. That was, that the effectiveness of the CARICOM as a regional integration movement would always be undermined, if it did not have its own separate source of funding to ensure that we improve the quality of governance of CARICOM, in order to be able to advance the work and the decisions taken at a regional level.

It is only in the last year, Mr. Speaker, that these matters have come to the fore again. They are being discussed, not in the context of funding *per se*, but in the context of finding an appropriate form of governance to improve the delivery and implementation of decisions made at the Conference of the Heads of Government, which stands as the highest body of the Caribbean community.

I anticipate, Mr. Speaker, that this issue will be discussed but I must say that Sir Harold's continued research, even though he played no formal role, either in relation to the Government or the CARICOM Secretariat, as to the best forms of Governance for CARICOM, remained right up until the end. It is significant, that even in the midst of his illness, ten days before Christmas, Sir Harold was sending me cases and articles, in relation to governance models that he had come across, as it related to our own internal work, as to how best we can seek to fashion a form of governance to improve the effectiveness of CARICOM. This, once again, was the nature of the man. He shared generously, his knowledge, his research, and he felt passionately that one could not participate in public life, if you did not prepare yourself, and that there are simply no short cuts to involvement in public life, particularly as it relates to preparation, and advancing the interest of the people.

Sir, he understood the trust that is placed in an elected representative to be tremendous, and one that ought not to be betrayed for one's own personal ambitions or even for the party's ambitions. Sir, much has been said in here about his decisions in 1986, not to respond to the very generous proposals that were put by the then Opposition on the eve of an election, commonly referred to as the back raising scenario. It is significant that, in spite of the fact he knew his position would not be attractive to the electorate, Sir Harold was steadfast in his understanding that he had a moral responsibility not to betray the trust of the electorate in the

people of Barbados by putting out to risk, our economic, financial, political and social security.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, when the history of Barbados is written, that period of 1991 to 1993 will be reflected as one of the worst economic recessions that this country would have gone through, in its early years as an independent state.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak briefly as to his tremendous contribution, in relation to Barbados' preparation, in respect of the maritime delimitation policies. I say deliberately, policies, because we spoke on this in recent times, only in relation to Trinidad and Tobago. In truth and in fact, what Sir Harold helped us develop, was a policy framework that treats not just to Trinidad and Tobago, but indeed to Guyana, as we recently saw with the signing of an exclusive Economic Zone Cooperation Agreement which, once again, Sir Harold led the negotiations. It was signed by the Barbados Government and the Guyanese Government on December 2, 2003, ratified already by the Barbados Government and, I believe, standing to be ratified by the Guyanese Parliament this week. We have, ultimately, to settle maritime boundaries with other Caribbean neighbours, but it was his understanding of the policy framework that has brought the Government safely, thus far.

Indeed, from as early as 1995, the Government of Barbados established a Maritime Delimitation Committee, chaired by Sir Harold. It was through the work of that Committee that we received a policy blueprint as to what steps we needed to take in order to be able to settle Barbados' maritime boundaries.

The first step, of course, Mr. Speaker, was to be able to settle the base points around the coast line of Barbados because you cannot establish maritime boundaries effectively, if you do not have the base points from which measurements are then taken and boundaries determined. This process, with the help of the United Kingdom Hydrography office and the Commonwealth Secretariat, took some two and a half years. Sir, parallel to that, he took what was already a comprehensive understanding of the Law of the Sea and built upon it, to see how best we would be able to protect our interest and to ensure that Barbados' economic future in the 21st Century was based not just on those things that we could do economically in our land space, but as the Honourable Member for the City had put it some few years ago, how best we could ensure that the 21st Century was the Century for maritime expansion and exploitation for this country.

Our limited 166 square miles demand of us, a comprehensive utilisation of every resource that is available to us, if we are to ensure that Barbados can make the

transition from being a developing economy to a developed economy, and that the transition could be sustainable. He took great delight in participating in these kinds of specialised matters.

Mr. Speaker, it is significant that his work, in relation to fisheries, span his constituency interest but also his national interest, in relation to maritime delimitation and an understanding that the role fisheries have played, not just in the economy of this country, but in the livelihood of thousands of Barbadians, over centuries is one that we would wish to perpetuate and not one that we would wish to see go into oblivion simply because we were not able to make the transition with the new developments in the fisheries sector that needed to be put in place.

6.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, his work in relation to the Oistins Fish Market has been spoken of extensively today. His vision would have signaled a further transition in the development of the fisheries sector in Barbados in terms of the upgrading of the plant that was necessary to support an expanded fishing industry in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the last time Sir Harold entered this Chamber was in early November of last year. I believe the Honourable Member for Christ Church South can attest to this because he came to meet with me and other officials of the maritime negotiating team in relation to our strategy for the upcoming talks with the Trinidad and Tobago Government which was to take place later in November. Mr. Speaker, in spite of the fact that at that very time he was undergoing treatment at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), he came down to Parliament, came up the stairs and participated in a two-hour meeting with us and thereafter spent some time with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South outside of this Honourable Chamber reflecting on a number of constituency matters. I have since come to tease the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to say that he no longer has the luxury of having double representation in a single member constituency of Barbados with the passing of Sir Harold. You must believe me, Mr. Speaker, when I say that his interest did not stop until he was literally physically incapable of speaking to the issues that concerned the residents of Christ Church South. Indeed, last night I described the Honourable Member for Christ Church South as a political orphan from hereon in.

Mr. Speaker, the reality however is that we cannot understand fully Sir Harold's commitment and contribution to Barbados, the Barbados Labour Party (BLP), this Parliament and his constituency without understanding that you do not divorce one element of your characteristics for one aspect of your life and have a different set for another aspect. It speaks volumes that he was a man whose commitment in his personal life would have seen him

married for some 47 years to Lady St. John and his commitment to his family not just his children but – to my own knowledge, because I grew up with many of his nephews and nieces – to his many nieces and nephews because he acted as their surrogate father when their own father died at an early age when they were young children. They always understood that this was the person who ultimately was responsible for the family and for their well-being. It is not many people who, when carrying that kind of workload and that kind of commitment to public life, can still find time, not just for their own family, but for the extended family and to play that kind of mentorship role of a guardian. I believe, Sir, that any tribute to Sir Harold would be incomplete if it did not effectively reflect on his contribution to his family life, his own personal family and that of his extended family, particularly the surrogate father role that he played to his nephews and nieces on the death of their own father, his brother.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to pay tribute to Lady St. John who yesterday was an absolute picture of dignity and who clearly in spite of her very devastating loss of a husband to whom she has been married for 47 years displayed a certain stoic virtue that is not well-known to persons suffering from grief on the loss of a loved one.

I certainly am aware, Mr. Speaker, because over the last nine months I would have cause to visit them perhaps more often than any other period of my friendship with them and on every occasion she was at his side completely devoted to his care ensuring that whether it was within Barbados or outside of Barbados she made sure that he would suffer as little as possible once she had something to do with it.

Mr. Speaker, this was not a case of Lady St. John relying on professional help to take care of Sir Harold. This was a woman who took care of her husband. She understood her responsibility and obviously her choice to be there in those days of difficulties that he would have to face. Indeed, his three children also have been extremely supportive to her and to him in those difficult times. As his daughter Nicole said yesterday, when all is said and done, family is the essence of our being on this earth and our inability to master those family relationships ultimately undermine the nature by which societies can progress and humanity can improve as we know it.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this tribute here today must go not only to Sir Harold but indeed to his family for the sacrifices which they have made in sharing him with this country. Many in this Chamber have spoken of the way in which families have suffered as a result of a person being in public life. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I certainly remember that Sir Harold was adamant at all stages of his involvement to ensure that his family was involved in some level or another, such that at points of his public life elements of the public made the most disparaging and unfortunate statements about

Lady St. John and the rest of his family. It could not have been easy for them to live a public life while at the same time facing the day-to-day challenges that all families face. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that many a different person would have left public life in those circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, my first memory of Sir Harold goes back to when I was about five or six years old at my parents home and his coming there and sitting down and engaging with us in spite of the fact that we were small children. I must say to you that I consider it a distinct privilege to have been afforded the opportunity to work with one whose contribution to Barbados has been as vast as it has been and whose involvement in Barbados political life predates the era in which we now function in circumstances where he was able to pass on to us first-hand what it was like to work in a Barbados that still had a local government system working in it, what it was like to work with a Grantley Adams, what it was like to work with men like Mencea E. Cox, Ronald Mapp and Freddie Miller and what it was like to be at the constitutional talks in London.

Sir, in my preparation for participation in the case that would go before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council week after next, Sir Harold played an invaluable role in being able to brief me on the aspects of those constitutional talks at Marlboro House in June of 1966 in circumstances that it would allow us to be able to better argue the Government's position when we go to London.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, there would be a huge void in this country's landscape from Sir Harold's passing. It is trite to say that there is a tremendous loss but in this case there would truly be a tremendous loss with the passing of Sir Harold Bernard St. John. He, almost singlehandedly, shepherded the values, the traditions and the mores of the Barbados Labour Party from the generation of Grantley Adams to the generation of those youngest among us in this Chamber.

6.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, if we pay but one tribute to his memory, it will be to preserve and safeguard those values, traditions and mores, such that the party which we have come to know, to love, and to serve, will remain faithful to its philosophical mores and its perspective of what representational politics in a small State like Barbados is about, and what nation building, in essence, must be about.

Mr. Speaker, I want to associate myself with the Resolution so appropriately referred to by the Honourable Member for the City. I have had the benefit of having the Resolution prepared and would, therefore, wish to formally read this Resolution into the records of this Honourable House for all times.

Mr. Speaker, as I read it, I say to Sir Harold's families, to the people of Barbados, that we have lost a truly great Barbadian and Caribbean patriot and I will, miss him sorely, for especially during the last six months, his counsel to me has been of great benefit in being able to meet some of the very difficult challenges of Government.

RESOLUTION

Whereas the Honourable Sir Harold St. John, Knight of St. Andrew, Privy Counsellor, and one of Her Majesty's Counsel, passed this life on 29th day of February, 2004.

Whereas Sir Harold was a member of the Senate from 1964 to 1966 and from 1971 to 1976. A member of the Honourable House of Assembly from 1966 to 1971, from 1976 to 1986 and from 1991 to 2003. A minister of Government from 1976 to 1986, Leader of Government Business in the House of Assembly from 1976 to 1981. Deputy Prime Minister from 1976 to 1985 and Prime Minister of Barbados from 1985 to 1986.

Whereas Sir Harold, during his long and distinguished career, served the developing world as President of the ACP Group in the Lomé Regime, and served Barbados latterly as ambassador extraordinaire and envoy on special missions, chief negotiator in bilateral discussions and in maritime and territorial boundaries affairs and in diverse other ways.

Whereas his service was motivated and founded on a sincere desire for the development of his native Barbados, the Barbadian people, the integration of the West Indian people, the social upliftment of the region and a belief in democracy and in its finer conventions as the premiere vehicle for development.

Whereas the nature of Sir Harold's service in his several endeavours was characterised by the generous employment of his prodigious gifts in advocacy by humility and by probity.

Be It Resolved that this Honourable House extends its deepest sympathies to the widow, Stella Lady St. John; his children, Charmaine, Nicole and Bryte and relatives of the late Sir Harold St. John, and expresses the wish that they be comforted by the memory of a life lived selflessly and in the service of his nation Barbados and of its people.

Dated this 10th March, 2004.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution be adopted by this Honourable House and be forwarded to Lady St. John to reflect the entire endorsement and sentiments of this Honourable Chamber for a life well lived of this great Barbadian and Caribbean patriot.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members before I move the Resolution, I would like to associate this Honourable Chair, with the sentiments expressed at the passing of the late Honourable Member.

On the behalf of my family, the officers and staff of this Parliament, my constituency St. Michael Central, and myself, I would like to express my heartfelt condolences.

As is normal in situations like these, this House with acclaim accepts the Resolution of sympathy and directs that this Resolution be sent to the grieving relatives.

As a mark of respect for the late Honourable Member, I now invite all Honourable Members and every one present in this Honourable House to stand with me and observe one minute silence.

One minute silence was observed.

Mr. SPEAKER: May he rest in peace. Thank you.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, before I proceed with Government Business for today, I beg to move that Item No. 9 on the Order Paper be withdrawn because it is now subsumed into Order No. 12.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative.
7.00 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. R. R. FARLEY seconded by Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER, the House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. R. D. MARSHALL, Chairman of Committee, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

ORDER NO. 12 – RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$8 599 069 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 2003-2004 AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 11, 2003-2004 WHICH FORMS THE SCHEDULE TO THE RESOLUTION AND THAT THE EXPLANATORY NOTES TO HEAD 13 AND 30 BE AMENDED AS SET OUT IN THE SCHEDULE II TO THIS RESOLUTION

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I want to make two introductory comments. First, I am speaking to the amended version of the supplementary which was circulated in the sum of \$8 599 069. Secondly, this is usual at this time of the year to deal with the closure of items which are necessary for the purposes of tidying up at the end of the financial year. A significant part of this speaks to additional sums of money required to meet the increases in salary to public officers which is due and payable before the end of the financial year. It is spread across a number of Ministries and departments which we will deal with head by head as is normal.

In relation to Head 13, the Prime Minister's Office there are several items in the sum of \$68,747.00 required for a number of purposes. Under Defence and Security there is the matter of travel and an additional \$6 000 is required to cover the cost of travel allowances for officers of the Defence and Security Department. There is also the additional sum of \$58 000 to meet the cost of salaries, acting allowances, overtime payments for the period January to March this year. Sir, there is also the cost of colour separation in the Government Printing Department.

I beg to move that Head 13 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 14 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE
– \$2 290 118.00

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Sir, under the Ministry of Finance the largest portion of this money is under Subprogramme 139, pensions, gratuities and other benefits to meet the cost of arrears for pensioners as a result of the increase in the rates of pension which were adjusted during the course of the financial year. Additionally, the sum of \$72 270 is required to meet the cost of National Insurance Contributions under this Head as a result of the increase in salaries.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I beg to move that Head 14 stand part.

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

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

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Chairman, I rise to query whether or not the pensioners have been receiving their pensions given the technical problems at the National Insurance Board. Only two weeks ago, I had to go public and not be political in suggesting that my information showed that it was a matter of a technical problem relating to the computerisation of pension at the National Insurance that had caused the stumbling with respect to the delivery of pensions to old people in Barbados.

I think it appropriate that this Government should give its perspective and not just the CEO of the National Insurance Board. As we speak, pensioners are still experiencing difficulties in getting their pensions on time and the Government of Barbados should tell them why this is so.

Mr. Chairman, as I have said before, I only rise to ask what has been happening with the delivery of old age pension to old people in Barbados over the last month because I think the public of Barbados deserves an official explanation.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the query made by the last Honourable Member who spoke, it transpired that in modernising the systems at the National Insurance Scheme and in introducing the new technology, we encountered a number of very troubling difficulties in putting the new data into the new computers. It has been necessary to check what was there before and we have encountered hundreds of instances where a person would be from say, Hothersal, St. John and that person's address and nomenclature would be incorrect. This and other problems had to be sanitized before putting the data into the new system. We have also come across instances where persons were deceased and buried whose names were still alive for purposes of the disbursement of benefits. Sir, the trouble is quite severe and we are getting the most accurate information possible to put into the new data bank.

It is with regret, Mr. Chairman, that I have to say this but in as much that we are confident that down the road this year we are going to have improved systems, at the same time I want to ask all Barbadians to show us a measure of Christian patience on this matter for the reason that ultimately we are sure that our new systems will inure to the benefit of Barbadians.
7.10 p.m.

Sir, the troubling areas were very much the contributory pensions and the survivors' benefits. We have made some headway in improving both the update of survivors' benefits and their delivery. However, we are still confronted with some problems on the contributory pensions but we are confident that in the very near future those niggling problems will be avoided.

Sir, I will, in the very near future, make a public statement. I spoke to a Nicholas Cox approximately sixteen days ago and I believe that he gave it headline treatment in the *Barbados Advocate*. I am not sure to what degree the news there was disseminated to Barbados but I think that it now falls squarely on me, certainly by weekend, to speak to the country on this matter.

Sir, I would not say that there is a crisis but I would admit that over time there were some difficulties brought about by inaccurate storage of information and dissemination and even some accounting flaws but hopefully in the very near future these problems would be averted.

I want to say publicly that the Leader of the Opposition is correct in saying that this is not a political matter. I applaud him for rising to the occasion and demonstrating a manner of statesmanship. He said that it is not a political problem but a technical problem and I believe him.

Mr. Chairman, all Barbadians must have confidence in our National Insurance system and, therefore, anybody who makes a pronouncement that is designed to make sure that the system works well is to be commended for such. We intend to have all the problems averted.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 14 stand part.

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

The question that Head 14 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 15 – CABINET OFFICE – \$27 924.00

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, the majority of this money is required in order to tidy up things for the end of the financial year in relation to Personal Emoluments and National Insurance Contributions.

I beg to move that Head 15 stand part.

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

The question that Head 15 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 17 – OMBUDSMAN
– \$1 152.00

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, this small sum is required to top up the amount for Personal Emoluments for National Insurance Contributions. I beg to move that Head 17 stand part.

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

The question that Head 17 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 22 – MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT – \$124 807.00

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, this represents adjustments for Personal Emoluments in relation to several offices falling under the General Management and Coordination Services, the Department of Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property, the National Productivity Council and the Ministry of Energy.

I beg that Head 22 stand part.

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

The question that Head 22 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 23 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH
– \$1 507 883.00

Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, this amount takes care of a number of entities falling under the Ministry of Health as a result of a revision in salaries and wages. I believe that the largest amounts are for the Sanitation Authority in the sum of \$340,171.00 and to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital \$1,085,550.00. The amount for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is required to cover the payment of the period April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004.

I beg to move that Head 23 stand part.

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

The question that Head 23 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 24 – MINISTRY OF SOCIAL TRANS-
FORMATION – \$163 857.00

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, this sum is required mainly to cover personal emoluments and National Insurance Contributions. The amount required for Community Development is to cover the rental of containers

for the storage of important equipment. Sir, this amount includes salaries for the temporary post of Director of Social Planning and Research.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: I beg to move that Head 24 stand part.

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

The question that Head 24 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 25 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT – \$30 314.00

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Supplementary required under Head 25 represents matters exclusively for Personal Emoluments and National Insurance Contributions. I beg to move that Head 25 stand part.

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

The question that Head 25 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 27 – MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND
INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT
– \$38 804.00

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Chairman, as in the case of many of the other Ministries, this amount covers personal emoluments and National Insurance Contributions for the end of the year. I beg to move that Head 27 stand part.

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY: I beg to second that.

The question that Head 27 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 28 – MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
– \$185 075.00

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, the matters on which this Supplementary is sought relate entirely to other Personal Emoluments and National Insurance Contributions. I therefore beg that Head 28 stand part.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Chairman, I just rise on a matter of concern with respect to the fire fighting services in Barbados. It is unbelievable, but when you are a fire victim and you go to the Fire Department for a report on the state of the fire, you have to pay.

Asides.

7.20 p.m.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Yes, you have to pay for the report.

Sir, if you are a fire victim and you are going to report to the police, or you want to make some request for assistance, you need to be in possession of a report on the fire, in order to be able to go to other departments to state that you are a victim. I find it extremely inhumane that a person could suffer such a loss, and then be required to make a monetary contribution to get a report.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: It is true. I think it is in excess of \$50 to get a report from the Fire Department. I feel it is time that something is done.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Yes, a report. Just to get a report so that you can take it to the Welfare Department, or to some other department within Government for assistance, or even to go to the police to report that you have lost your passport or some other thing in the fire. To get a report from the Fire Service Department, requires the victim to pay and it has been so for a long period of time.

Again, it is not a political issue. It is just a matter of the Government being more humane in a circumstance where a person has suffered a loss. I just thought I would mention this particular matter which has been a major concern.

In this regard, therefore, I would support any attempt to better the working conditions, and the enumeration of members of the Fire Service Department but let it be known that I am expressing a concern for victims of fire.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Joseph, as you know, I represent people and this is the first time I am hearing of this.

Asides.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, notwithstanding that I am holding just a watching brief on this matter, I believe that there is a system in place, almost, I am enamoured, where members of the public are required to pay a very small fee to cover the administrative cost of doing these things.

In fact, a police report is a matter that is also chargeable – \$50 and a medical report from the QEH is also chargeable – \$50. I think the sum is set so low as to ensure that the administrative costs and so on are covered by the cost of the report.

I am happy for the support of the Honourable Member and I therefore beg that this Head stand part.

Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 29 – OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$600.00

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, equally, this small sum is sought to supplement the provision for National Insurance Contributions, in respect of this department and I therefore beg that this Head stand part.

Hon. J. X. WALCOTT: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 30 – ATTORNEY GENERAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3 868 818.00

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, again, under my watching brief, the matters being sought under this Supplementary are, of course, sought to tidy up the Government's business for the rest of the year under this Head.

The sums are varied, in terms of quantum and also in terms of the matters which they are intended to cover. A supplementary amount is being required in the sum of \$78 000 to cover attendances at conferences and meetings and also payment of legal fees.

I believe Honourable Members will be aware that the Government has been having to carry the high cost of legal representation in such matters as various Privy Council cases and so on.

In terms of the Magistrate's Court, there is a sum being sought of \$210 000 to cover the cost of utility services.

A sum of \$96 000 to meet the payment of plain clothes allowances and post mortem examinations.

A sum \$439 663 being required to meet the payment of legal fees for the Community Legal Services Department. This is a sum that is well deserving for a department that has been doing outstanding work in representing the underdog in our community.

An amount in the sum of \$42 000 is required to pay travel allowances.

Mr. Chairman, by far, the largest sum required is \$1.963 million which is required to pay the contractor for work being done on the District E Police Station.

Then, the next sum which would be of significance is the provision for \$800 000 to meet the cost of specialised equipment for the Royal Barbados Police Force.

I therefore beg that Head 30 stand part.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HEAD 31 – MINISTRY OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$98 605

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, as with other Honourable Members who spoke before me, the reason for the Supplementary is very much the same as the others. It has to do with personal emoluments at the National Conservation Commission. The sum which we require is \$98 605.

I beg to move therefore that Head 31 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 37 – MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3 826

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I beg that Head 37 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 38 – MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9 807

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Sir, the sum required in this case, is just over \$8 838. Again, we ride on this omnibus on the same reason that we spoke about just now.

I beg to move therefore, Sir, that Head 38 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 43 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2 854

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman this small sum of \$2 854 is required to supplement National Insurance payments in the Project Implementation Unit.

I beg to move, Sir, that Head 43 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 44 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY – \$157 541

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, the amount required in this supplementary is mainly for increases in remuneration, National Insurance Contributions and travel. In the circumstances, I beg to move that Head 44 stand part.

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

The question that Head 44 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 50 – POST OFFICE – \$67 011

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, the amount required relates as well to the matter of personal emoluments and National Insurance Contributions. I therefore beg that Head 50 stand part.

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

The question that Head 50 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

AMENDMENTS TO EXPLANATORY NOTES TO HEADS 13 AND 30

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Explanatory Notes to Heads 13 and 30 be amended as set out in Schedule II to this supplementary resolution.

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

The question that the Explanatory Notes to Heads 13 and 30 be amended was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. R. R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. G. A. CLARKE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER the passing of one Money Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. R. R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. G. A. CLARKE, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government Business for today. I take this time to remind Honourable Members that the Estimates Debate is scheduled for next week. We will start on Monday at 10.00 a.m. and will continue for the entire week, so Honourable Members

should arrange their business accordingly. I therefore beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Monday, March 15, 2004 at 10.00 a.m. in the morning.

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

The question that the House do now adjourn until Monday, March 15, 2004 was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
7.40 p.m.

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