
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION OF 2003 - 2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 1, 2005.

House of Assembly Debates (OFFICIAL REPORT) FIRST SESSION 2003 - 2008
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY Tuesday, March 1, 2005
Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10:00 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, G.C.M., B.A., Dip. Ed. (Speaker); His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P. (Deputy Speaker); The 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 B. A. MILLER, D.A. B.C.H., (Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade); Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of Labour and Social Security); Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Minister of Public Works); Mr. R. D. MARSHALL, (Chairman of Committees); Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.); Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN; Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON-MCDOWALD, LL.B. (Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment); Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P. (Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports); Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.; 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, J.P., B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil. (Minister of Energy and Public Utilities); Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc., J.P., (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports); Mr. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance) (Leader of the Opposition); Dr. W. F. DUGUID, B.D.S. (Comm.), F.D.S., FDRCS., J.P., ; Hon. Dr. J. X. WALCOTT, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S. (Edin.), J.P. (Minister of Health); Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade); Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, LL.B., (Hons.), L.E.C., (Minister of Industry and International Business); Mr. R. D. JONES, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Ed.) J.P.; Mr. M. A. LASHLEY (LL.B.) (Hons.); Dr. D. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B., B.S.; Mr. R. L. SEALY, B.Sc., M.B.A.;

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, February 15, 2005.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its

meeting of Tuesday, February 15, 2005, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I report to this Honourable House that I am in receipt of the Accounts and Statement for the month of October, 2004 prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

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

1. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption)(Barbados Tourism Investment (Properties) Inc.) Order, 2005.

2. Excise Tax (Rate of Tax) Order, 2005.

3. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Aurora (Barbados) SRL) Order, 2005.

4. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Hotel & Resorts Limited) Order, 2005.

5. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Delcan International Corporation) Order, 2005.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following

1. Firearms (Licensing)(Forms and Fees) Regulations, 2003.

Hon. N A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following

1. Shipping (Incentives) (Ken Water Sports Inc.) Order, 2005.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following

1. The Telecommunications (Prescribed Telecommunications and Radio Communications Apparatus) Regulations, 2003.

2. The Telecommunications (Declaration of Dominance) Regulations, 2003.

3. The Telecommunications (Restriction and Prohibition) Regulations, 2003.

4. The Telecommunications (Licence Fees) Regulation, 2003.

5. Telecommunications (Public Telecommunications Licensing) Regulation, 2003.

6. Telecommunications (Certification Standards) Regulations, 2003.

7. Telecommunications (Resale) Regulations, 2003.

8. Telecommunications(Licence Fee)(Amendment) Regulation, 2003.

9. Telecommunications(Confidentiality) Regulation, 2003.

10. Telecommunications (Numbering) Regulation, 2003.

11. Telecommunications (Universal

Service)	Regulation, 2003.	
12.	Telecommunications (Spectrum Management & Licensing) Regulation, 2003.	21. Telecommunications(Data Communications Service) Regulations, 2003.
13.	Telecommunications(Licence Fees)(Amendment)(No. 2) Regulations, 2003.	22. Telecommunications (Radio-Communication Ship Station) Regulations, 2003.
14.	Telecommunications(Class Licence) Regulation, 2003.	23. Telecommunications (General Radio Communications Station License) Regulations, 2003.
15	Telecommunications (Cyber Caf,) Regulations, 2003.	24. Telecommunications (Customer Equipment Transition) Regulations, 2003.
H56/10:20		25. Telecommunications (Private Telecommunications Licencing) Regulations,2003.
Sequence 2		26. Telecommunications (Satellite Television Receiver Antenna) Regulations, 2003.
1005	Tuesday, March 1,	27. Notice Given Under Regulation 9 of the Telecommunications (Universal Service) Regulations, 2003.
CONTINUATION OF		28. Telecommunications (International submarine Cable Licence) Regulations, 2004.
Hon. A.P. WOOD: ...		29. Telecommunications (Video Tape Rental Service) Regulations, 2004
16.	Telecommunications(Call Centres) Regulations, 2003.	30. Telecommunications (Citizens Bank Radio Service) Regulations, 2004.
17.	Telecommunications(Interconnections) Regulations, 2003.	31. Telecommunications (Amateur Radio) Regulations, 2004.
18.	Telecommunications (Interconnection)(Amendment) Regulations, 2003.	32. Telecommunications (Aircraft) Regulations, 2004.
19.	Telecommunications(Regulated Service) Order, 2003.	33. Telecommunications (Radio-
20.	Telecommunications(Commercial Trunked Radio-Communication Network) Regulations, 2003.	

Controlled Models Licence) Regulations, 2004.

34. Telecommunications (Customer Equipment Transitions) (Amendment) Regulations, 2004.

35. Telecommunications (Numbering) (Amendment) Regulations, 2004.

36. Telecommunications (Numbering) (Amendment)(No.2) Regulations, 2004.

37. Telecommunications (Licence Fee)(Amendment) Regulations, 2004.

38. Telecommunications (Citizen Band Radio Service) (Amendment) Regulations, 2004.

39. Telecommunications (Restriction and Prohibition)(Amendment) Regulations, 2004.

40. Telecommunications (Transition Timetable Phase II) Order, 2003

41. Telecommunications (Data Communications Service)(Amendment) Regulations, 2004.

42. Telecommunications (Commercial Trunked Radio Commercials Network)(Amendment) Regulations, 2004.

ORDERS OF THE DAY SUSPENSION OF STANDING

ORDERS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ORDER NO. 5

SECOND READING OF THE SHIPPING (INCENTIVES) (AMENDMENT) BILL,2005

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to introduce the Shipping (Incentives) (Amendment) Bill, 2005 and the draft Value Order Tax Bill,2005. Sir, this is another vital piece of legislation that is necessary as we continue to shape this new service economy for Barbados. This morning I will focus primarily on the Objects and Reasons of the Bill and how this particular sector influences the overall development of our industry but more important, is how it influences the development of the wider tourism and international transport industry, particularly, as it focuses on the development of cruise tourism.

Sir, this particular piece of legislation is important to the tourism and international transport sectors of the economy which, from all indications are performing relatively well. We will accept some level of criticism once that criticism is constructive, fair and relevant but we will certainly discard the parts that bear no relevance to the way this sector is performing.

Mr. Speaker, the tourism and international transport industries are made up primarily of landbased and cruise sector tourism and both sectors depend on air travel as a significant part of their development. Traditionally, much focus has been spent on the landbased side of the development of our industry much to the

neglect of the maritime side of this sector although this sector is vital of the overall development of the transport sector and our economy. Therefore, this piece of legislation focuses on the maritime side but it will effectively create a bridge to bring the two sides of the sector together.

Mr. Speaker, with this legislation we are seeking to not only create a basis for an individual sector that can grow within a wider ambit of tourism and transport but to allow land-based and cruise tourism to be married in a way that we have not effectively done in the past.

The legislation points to a separate component which has never received the attention, focus or facilitation it deserves as it continues to contribute to the development of our country, that is the boating and yachting sector. This sector has flourished significantly in other jurisdictions because of the policies that have been put in place, the legislative framework and the marketing encouragement that have been given to this sector.

Sir, this administration believes that similarly, if this direction is taken in Barbados we will see an enhanced boating and yachting sector which would contribute significantly to the development of land-based tourism because land-based passengers also use the boating and yachting sector, and we are referring to pleasure boats. Sir, in this particular piece of legislation we also focus on the use of these types of boats for the cruise sector, particularly the day trippers that come to Barbados.

Sir, given our geographic location, the level of maturity of our industry and the overall advanced development of Barbados, compared to some other jurisdictions in the region, we believe that it is important that if we focus on the development of the boating and yachting industry we will see a new industry being

developed, which would not only contribute significantly to the development of our economy but moreso to the development of an industry where small Barbadian entrepreneurs are seeking to advance.

Sir, as I said, the pleasure craft for hire is being used for the land-based and cruise sectors.

H56:10.30 a.m.

Sequence 6

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

House 56, sequence 4,
10:30 a.m.

Continuation of Hon. N.A. LYNCH:

It is interesting that in this particular regard, the cruise sector dominates. All of those pleasure boats that are docked in both the shallow draft and the carenage are used by people who come into Barbados on cruise ships. They use them for pleasure boating up and down our coast, long line fishing, or simply to lounge on the catamaran. These particular pleasure crafts contribute significantly to the development of the sector.

Sir, even more so, I think in recent times that Barbadians have been utilising these crafts for their own leisure purposes. I speak here of boats like the Harbour Master and Jolly Roger, which have become a fundamental part of the development of the leisure sector, and not only focussing on the development of the cruise sector in Barbados.

Sir, there are two central prongs to this piece of legislation. I will seek to develop a boating and yachting industry, which has not been given a type of legislative much support

and encouragement over time. Then, I will enhance the leisure boating sector, which is utilised by both tourists visiting the island and Barbadians, and has made a significant contribution to the development of our indigenous leisure behaviour in Barbados.

Sir, much of what would be spoken about, in terms of the legislation and the proposals and amendments to the Shipping Incentives Act, have arisen out of a need to:

i. enhance Barbados' image as a boating friendly jurisdiction

ii. attract the international boating community to see Barbados as a port of call, and a serious player in the development of the boating and yachting industry

iii. increase our foreign exchange earnings and our

take from this sector, which has contributed significantly to the development of many of the jurisdictions around us.

iv. build new capacity in the tourism sector for ongoing earnings into the future, as we continue to expand and diversify the offerings of the tourism and international transport sector.

Sir, as we mature as a tourism destination, we must continue to enhance the product offerings that we put into the marketplace, and the proposals that we give to those who are potential visitors to Barbados.

It has been going out into the public domain that many of the attractions and product base of Barbados, given that we are now a mature destination and have been at the industry, maybe, longer than many of our

neighbours, a lot of what we have to offer to visitors to Barbados really is growing stale. Sir, what we might seek to do is to find a basis for diversifying that product base, and upgrade and enhance our existing product base for the development of the sector.

Sir, this legislation therefore seeks to aid in increasing our foreign exchange earning capacity within the tourism sector but even more important, to continue to build new capacity for the development of the sector into the future. As I said, this sector is maturing and, particularly, is much more advanced than some of our neighbours. It is showing all the characteristics of a mature tourism destination.

This legislation, Sir, is also aimed at increasing overall investment in the sector, in a targeted and strategic manner, by existing players in the industry, who have voiced their opinion that they want to do more to shore up the sector.

There is also the concept that many potential owners, some local, want to be involved in this sector, even more significantly than they are now, but do not have the right incentive environment to be able to do so, Sir. Therefore, this legislation is timely and important, as we continue to develop the sector.

In many ways, Sir, the Shipping Incentives Bill that we are discussing today, mirrors the Tourism Development Act and has the same guiding principles that underpin the Tourism Development Act. As a matter of fact, you could even claim that this piece of legislation is really an extension of the Tourism Development Act because it continues to create a basis for further diversification of the industry. It is diversification for visitors to Barbados, diversification of markets to the product offerings to the structures of the sector and to the underpinnings of the sector.

This piece of legislation leverages our geographic position as the most easterly of the chain of Caribbean islands. It leverages that geographic location as the first stop across the Atlantic for yachtsmen, sea fearers, and those who are interesting in making that crossing across the Atlantic.

A lot has been said about where Barbados is going in the development of our industry. Sir, when people come across the Atlantic, the first stop, geographically that they should come to is Barbados, if they are following the compass correctly and going in the right direction.

Sir, consultation has been ongoing with persons in this sector, in an attempt to create the basis for this legislation. Many of them have provided vital information and contributions for the development of the sector and ways to continually enhance the sector. Therefore, the legislation shores up the industry in a way but from the consultations that have been had, it certainly makes this piece of legislation very industry compliant. Those who have been at work in this industry over time, those who have plied their trade, those who have had pleasure boats for hire, and those who have seen what has happened in other jurisdictions around us, the Grenadines is a prime example, really believe that if Barbados puts the right legislative framework in place, and creates the right basis for incentives that we can see this industry flourish in a way, Sir, that has not been expanded anywhere in this region.

Sir, I will give some information about the last sector. At the last count, there were approximately 550 vessels on the register in Barbados. The Ministry of Tourism and International Transport registered vessels under 10 tonnes, in what is called the Small Vessels Register. The boats which are over 10 tonnes but under 150 tonnes are registered on what is

called the Small Ships Register of the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport.

The Small Vessels Register has boats on it, Sir, like the Harbour Master, the Jolly Roger, the Tiami and 156 permits for these vessels were issued by the Barbados Port, Incorporated. There are 176 speed boats registered in Barbados, 159 jet-skis or wave runners have also been on register and with the new Shipping and Watersports Regulations which became effective in December 2004, responsibility has been transferred from the Barbados Port Inc. to the Ministry.

Sir, most of these boats operate out of the shallow draft or the Careenage, as I said before. Clearly, the issue of the jet-skis and the wave runners, which has continuously been a sore point for some in the sector, operate in restricted and specific channels, which are about 11, in Barbados.

Sir, in recent times, there has been some talk about the issue of the jet-skis and wave runners and whether or not they contribute significantly to enhancing the environment, destroying the environment, and where their place is, relative to the overall tourism make up. Let me say, Sir, for the record that this administration is interested in encouraging those small entrepreneurs who are within the law and keep the law and maintain proper practices in their businesses.

House 56, sequence 4, 10:4014

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. N. A. LYNCH:

Sir, there has been much talk about people and where they are going with the jet-skis. Some people have even proffered the idea that we need to narrow the number of channels we

have in Barbados for the operation of jet-skis. Recently, there has also been much talk about what had gone on at Carlisle Bay relative to the development of the the jet-ski sector.

Sir, that Carlisle Bay area is really a marine park. It is one of the few areas along the coast of Barbados which is a dive site and which contributes significantly to the development of our tourism industry.

Sir, we clearly need to guard the patrimony of Barbados by ensuring that the waters around us remain as pristine as it possibly can be so as to ensure the future development of the industry. Sir, much has been said about whether or not we can have persons 'running up and down' Carlisle Bay.

Sir, we will encourage the development of small businesses. We will also encourage the development of the jet-ski sector because we understand the contribution they make to the overall development of the industry. We also understand what it does for the development of the small businessman in Barbados who ply his or her trade in that marine environment. However, at the same time, it must never be lost on the public of Barbados that what we live on and what we strive on every day in the tourism sector is the sea, sand and surf which must be maintained in the best environmental condition if we are to continue to enhance the tourism industry into the future. Therefore, any regulating that is done will not be to the disadvantage any of the jet-ski operators of Barbados. However, at the same time, as we seek to encourage their development, we will also seek to ensure that the marine environment remains in the pristine condition it is in so as to create more capacity for the future of Barbados through this sector.

Sir, this small boating sector contributes approximately \$30 million to the economy every year. Sir, it is our opinion that this figure

can be significantly shored up if we put the right framework in place. Sir, we recognise the relevance of the sector both to tourism and to the local leisure industry. Therefore, there is potential for growth in the sector if proper incentive structures are put in place. This is a sector in which many local entrepreneurs and small business holders have a stake.

Sir, if you go down to the Careenage on any given day you would see that boats, those that do long line fishing et cetera, are anchored down there. Sir, many of those boats are not owned by people who you would consider to be involved in the larger business sector in Barbados. So whether they be black, white or any other ethnic group, what is important is that there are a lot of small Barbadians who own these boats and who earn their living from what happens in that leisure boat sector. Sir, as we continue to develop the tourism sector, particularly the cruise sector, we need to encourage the development of this small boat sector.

Sir, if our projections are correct relative to the development of the cruise sector, there is going to be a need, as I said before, to substantially enhance the product base that we have. Sir, we have seen that there is going to be a need for more of these pleasure crafts, whether they be for long line fishing or round boat trips, as we continue to develop and enhance the sector. Sir, this legislation will create a basis to get more locals and people from within the region to invest more in this sector.

Sir, there is clearly a need for regulations and encouragement as we continue to move this sector forward. Sir, interestingly enough, the cruise sector in Barbados and the day trippers that come into Barbados utilise this small boating sector more so than their land based counterparts or even the locals. Sir, we continue to develop the cruise sector to the

point now where we are starting to look at the probability of being able to land about a million cruise passengers in Barbados in any one year. Sir, this is very significant when you think of our product base, of our infrastructure and our carrying capacity.

Sir, except for some periods when there were significant jumps, the cruise sector has grown significantly in the past five years. In 1999, figures coming out of the Statistical Department stated that 466 280 cruise ship passengers landed in Barbados. Sir, I do not want to get into the arguments about the issue of the manifest and how many people get off in Barbados. Sir, for the last five years the Barbados Port Inc. has been conducting a cruise survey. That cruise survey which is scientifically done and organised has pointed to the fact that over 80 per cent of the people who land in Barbados on cruise ships do get off. Anyone who has contradictory evidence which is based scientifically, can present their evidence.

Sir, Barbados is seen as a marquee port for those people who come into Barbados. That is the reason we have had 13 cruise ships from Europe home-porting out of Barbados for this season alone.

Sir, I want to get back to the statistical figures. In 1999, we had 466 280 passengers. In 2000, we had 582 832 passengers, an increase of 25 per cent. In 2001 we had 593 775 passengers, an increase of 1.9 per cent. In 2002, we lost 2.6 per cent to record 578 541 passengers. Sir, that dip in 2001 had a lot to do with the terrorism events of 2001. Ships then had to reposition themselves along the coastlines of the United States of America because people were being encouraged to drive to cruise ports rather than to fly. People were very apprehensive about flying then and it still remains a sore point. Therefore, with Barbados being so far easterly and so far to the south, it

was clearly at a disadvantage, but even in that year we were able to record 578 541 passengers.

Sir, in 2003, we had 625 946 passengers, for an increase of 8.2 per cent. The year 2004 was an exceptional year for cruise tourism in Barbados. We had a jump up of 30 per cent for a figure of 812 863 cruise passengers.

House 56 Sequence 5

10:50 a.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, there are many people who would want to argue numbers but it is the Government Statistical Department that has produced these figures.

Sir, I take the point that 2004 was an exceptional year where we would have seen significant increases but they were not the types of increase that we believed could have been sustained over time because as our industry matures, and as there are deployments of ships in different jurisdictions... Sir, it seems as though this year we are going to have somewhere in the region of 750,000 passengers arriving, which is approximately an 8 per cent or 9 per cent decline in the 2004 figures.

Mr. Speaker, much of this has been the result of the redeployment of ships globally and the fact that as lifestyle changes come on board, people are looking for new experiences, and Barbados has been a cruise port that has been around for sometime. However, 750 000 cruise passengers in any year is nothing to scoff at and as I said, between 2003 and 2004, there was a significant jump upwards.

Mr. Speaker, outside of these significant

jumps between 2003 and 2004, we have seen our industry growing by approximately 2.5 per cent to 3 per cent per annum. The regional industry average, however, is somewhere in the region of 6 per cent to 8 per cent. Therefore, this means that our cruise sector has not been growing as fast as the industry average across the region.

Sir, there are many explanations for that. As I said, Barbados is a more matured cruise destination than some of our neighbours and as people continue to look for new experiences and new destinations, clearly Barbados would be at a disadvantage.

We are also at a disadvantage significantly because of our geographic location. Sir, because we are so far south/easterly, most of our cruise passengers on a seven-day itinerary, which is the normal cruise itinerary, do originate in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Therefore, we do not get the opportunity, for example, to see people coming out of the mainland because if people had to sail from Galveston, Miami, Baltimore, or any of the ports that have now become significant cruise players, it clearly would take 12 to 14 days for them to reach Barbados and to return. Therefore, Barbados was at a serious disadvantage, once terrorism raised its ugly head. However, even within that scenario, Barbados continues to be a significant player for day-trippers and for homeporting.

Mr. Speaker, the challenge for us, as a cruise destination, will be to continue maintaining our basis as a marquee destination within the region. It will also be a challenge for us to maintain growth at a rate that is higher than the average regional rate which we are seeing, which is approximately 6 per cent to 8 per cent.

Sir, in the face of huge repositionings in the industry, in the face of numerous ownership

changes within the cruise sector, considerations of markets, maturity of our destination, lifestyle changes and tourism threats, which continue to be significant in the United States of America, we are always going to be challenged as a cruise destination, to continue to keep the numbers at a level that we have seen in the past.

Mr. Speaker, the recognition of the slippage after 2004 has already been met with some short-term corrections that have already been put in place by both the Barbados Tourism Authority and the Barbados Port Incorporation. There are also going to be a long-term strategic focus to allow us to grow at that sustained rate, somewhere in the region of 6 per cent to 8 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, when we recognised that there was a challenge coming into 2005, those two agencies, the Barbados Port Incorporation and the Barbados Tourism Authority, have already moved to create better partnership collaboration and a more strategic focus, both as a short-term corrective measure but more so as a long-term strategy, to ensure that we get that significant growth which I have spoken of before.

Mr. Speaker, we have focused on the issue of our budget because we recognised that the budget contribution is significant to the number of cruise passengers that we seek. The issue of berthing spaces in Barbados and where cruise ships are berth is an important tool in the decision-making for the larger cruise ships industry and the focus on our continued Port development that allows for new product bases. It has also allowed us to have a significant place in Barbados for the crew of those ships, to be able to enjoy the facilities that Barbados has to offer. Sir, much focus in jurisdictions are placed on the passengers but not necessarily on the crew.

Mr. Chairman, we have had some feedback with regards to the attractiveness of our destination overall. For example, we have some attractions which clearly are in need of refurbishment, with the Caves of Barbados being one of those attractions. Sir, Harrison's Cave is one of the most visited tourist sites in this country. When people are making a decision on where to deploy a cruise ship, Harrison's Cave is one of those attractions which continues to attract our cruise partners. Sir, therefore, as a destination, Barbados must be clear that its entire products are on show whenever tourists come and, therefore, the attractiveness of those product, whether they are our roads, our waterways, or our city, would be important as to where these people would deploy their ships.

Mr. Speaker, we are also seeking to create, for the first time, some exclusive contractual arrangements with cruise ships across the globe. This has been done by some of our partners in other jurisdictions. This ensures a minimum number of people landing at one's destination in any one year. It is the way that the Bahamas and Jamaica have used to enhance their own cruise ships industries.

We are also looking for new business opportunities such as the home-porting programme which has been so successful for Barbados. What Barbados has done in home-porting, has not been mirrored or duplicated by any of our partners around us. Barbados has now become a significant home-porting for arriving tourists. Sir, you know what happens when one gets the services that are provided. There is also the issue of new Shipping (Incentives) (Amendment) Bills.

Sir, what is significant is that we continue to create a basis which the cruise sector significantly utilises. That is why it is also necessary to get a basis and an understanding of how that cruise sector is growing because it

creates a basis for the development of the boating, yachting and pleasure boat sectors.

Mr. Speaker, in the Prime Minister's 2002 Budgetary Proposals, it was recognised that this was a significant area of operation for Barbados and this administration identified that these alternations needed to be made. As I said before, consultations were held with the sector and they were at the centre of providing this new framework for the development of the industry.

Mr. Speaker, in the Prime Minister's 2002 Budgetary Proposal, we have identified a number of changes that needed to be made. We needed to create a basis for:

(a) The introduction of a refurbishment programme to facilitate the alteration, equipping, maintenance or repair of existing boats used commercially in the tourism sector, as well as the acquisition of marine equipment, sport, fishing gear, fishing and furnishings;

(b) Concessions in relation to marketing the industry will provide to coincide with these;

(c) The removal of the requirements for order for approved shipping companies and regulations made under the Shipping (Incentives) Act, Cap. 90(A), made by the Minister, would be subject to negative resolution and the same approval system used in the Tourism Development Bill, will be used with the appropriate amendments made to the Shipping (Incentives) Act;

(d) Consideration will be given to extending concession to any person, and not only to approved shipping companies.

H:No.56(6)1100 a.m.

Tuesday, March 1,

2005

Continuation of Hon. N. A. LYNCH:

This was approved by Cabinet in January 2005, and the draft legislation is now here before us. The Shipping (Incentives)(Amendment) Bill has eight Clauses and three Schedules as follows:

Clause 1 is the citation of the draft Bill.

Clause 2 amends the definition of shipping activities specifically to include commercial shipping and boating in the tourism industry which did not exist in the past.

Clause 3 ensures that the orders made by the Minister under the Act are no longer subject to negative resolution.

Clause 4 repeals Section 5 of the Shipping (Incentives) Act, Cap 90(A) and inserts income tax concessions for approved shipping companies. Approved capital expenditure of up to \$200 million may be deducted against income arising over a period of fifteen years, interest or dividends received by an investor or person other than a commercial bank who provides the loan or other funds to such companies shall be exempted from income tax. Losses may be carried forward for a period of nine years and 150 per cent income tax deduction is to be allowed for the marketing expenditure identified in the First Schedule of the Act. An exemption from the payment of custom duties and the items listed in the Third Schedule provided a restaurant is being operated and where the Minister is satisfied that the items concerned are not being made or manufactured in Barbados.

Sir, this is significant because it creates a whole new basis for how we look at this boating and yachting industry.

Clause 5 repeals Section 6 of the Act and provides that an approved shipping company engaged in commercial or boating activity in the tourism industry can access concessions under Section 5 and 7 only if it possesses and operating licence or permit with respect to its activities. It stipulates the information which must be submitted in order to access concessions under Section 5 and 7 of the Act mainly in respect to the importation, the building, alteration, refitting, equipping, maintenance or repair of a ship.

Clause 6 renumbers Section 7 and 7(1) and inserts at 7(2) an exemption from the payment of customs duty with respect to items listed in the Second Schedule where the Minister is satisfied that these items are not manufactured in Barbados.

Clause 7 provides that the Minister may by order amend the First, Second and Third Schedules.

Clause 8 amends the Act by inserting the First, Second and Third Schedules.

The First Schedule to the Act lists the specific items of marketing expenditure which if incurred by a shipping company will attract 150 per cent income tax deduction.

The Second Schedule lists the items to be exempted from custom duties including trailers, items to be used in the building, refurbishing, equipping, transporting, equipping, maintenance of ship as well as water sports equipment.

The Third Schedule lists the items to be exempted from custom duties in respect of restaurants operated by approved shipping companies.

The items in Part A of the Third Schedule may be imported duty free once every five

years and those in Part B may be imported duty-free once every year.

The Value Added Tax (Order) 2005 deletes subparagraph E of paragraph six of the Third Schedule to the Value Tax Act Cap 87 and substitutes that an approved shipping company that identifies for concession under the provisions of the Shipping Incentives Act provides that such order be made by the Minister of Finance and is subject to negative resolution.

Sir, all this has been done to provide Barbados with a framework that would allow the small boating and yachting sector, this vitally important sector to our tourism industry, which is a significant player in the development of our leisure industry in Barbados, to be given the opportunity to create a better basis for its development and advancement in Barbados.

Sir, this legislation is timely and comes when we need to continue to create new products and services in the tourism sector and provides an opportunity for building ongoing capacity in an industry that continues to lead Barbados in its economic make-up. As we continue to build a service-driven economy for Barbados, these are the types of incentives and initiatives that would continue to allow Barbados to grow and create the offerings necessary to continue to push this industry forward and by extension the economy.

Sir, with those few words, I beg that this Bill be read a second.

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

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, having listened to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, I got the impression at the end of his speech that this debate is about seeking to create a new product and service

given the present state of the tourism industry. In fact, it is supposed to be another component of the marketing strategy of Barbados as we go into the next five to ten years.

It is known that there is in existence a National Marketing Committee that is a collaborative effort between the private sector and public sector and yet the Minister of Tourism and the Ministry of Tourism has not fully embraced the national marketing strategy that has been outlined in the Committee.

Sir, in recent times, the President of the Barbados Hotel Tourism Association has been in the public calling for additional marketing dollars. While the Minister is suggesting that this is a new angle for tourism and would offer an alternative product, there has been no sense in which it is part of the strategic plan of the Government and part of the agenda of the National Marketing Committee. I thought that a major initiative which is seeking to embrace and enhance the tourism product would have been part of the consideration of the National Marketing Committee but, Sir, that does not appear to be so.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister said that last year Barbados attracted some 812 000 cruise ship passengers. I did not have time to check the statistics but would like to believe that the Minister is accurate in his comment. The Minister also went on to say that 80 per cent of cruise ship passengers coming to Barbados get off the ship and leave the port. This would be approximately 650 000 cruise ship passengers who come through the Barbados port in any given year.

Mr. Speaker, it is fascinating that at the port there are 150 taxis under the cooperative banner and 50 taxis under the independent banner giving a grand total of 200 taxis at the Barbados Port Authority.

H56/11:10

Sequence 7

Tuesday, March 1,
1005

CONTINUATION OF... Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Sir, there have been recent changes, in light of the fact that the Barbados Port Authority feels that there is a need for greater equity between the taxi owners and drivers at the Barbados Port Authority. Therefore, they have recently, within the last month and a half, instituted a new policy of rotation which is a ratio of 3 to 1, that is, for every 3 corporative taxis there is 1 independent taxi. Mr. Speaker, the belief is that it is intended to give a wider spread to a greater number of taxi drivers at the port of entry.

Sir, the fascinating thing about the Minister's statistics is that if there are approximately 650 000 cruise ship passengers disembarking ships in 2004, it means that over a 365-day period there would be approximately, on any given day, an average of 3 240 passengers disembarking. There are only 200 taxis at the Port. It has been said that Barbadians do not like information and statistics but, in fact, on any given day if all of those persons took a trip to a short destination like Bridgetown, the Garrison, Malibu, or any other such destinations, each taxi driver would get approximately 9 trips per day. Therefore, taxi drivers in Barbados would be the most happy persons to be living in Barbados but they are not.

I am saying that the bogus numbers which the Minister quoted this morning...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have to withdraw that.

Asides

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: I take that back. The numbers are inaccurate. Therefore, to come and suggest that 80 per cent of all cruise ship passengers get off at Barbados cannot be a correct figure.

Sir, it is known that taxi drivers have been complaining a lot in recent times about what is going on at the Barbados Port Authority. I, therefore, am saying that it cannot be that taxi drivers are doing well. It cannot be that 80 per cent of the cruise ship passengers get off at Barbados.

Sir, I want to make this point to repute what I just said. In fact, the 200 taxi drivers at the Barbados Port Authority have not been receiving any such pleasure because a majority of passengers are now using either tours organised by large operators in Barbados who go to Miami before hand and determine that they would get the majority of cruise ship passengers. For example, Paul Foster, Ince and others have been doing extremely well at the Port and, in fact, the taxi drivers are now getting only the crumbs at the Barbados Port Authority. This is the belief of the taxi drivers themselves. That is why they was a recent decision to reorganise and reschedule the way in which taxi drivers can get access to work.

Mr. Speaker, it gets even more involved than that because there are two systems being operated at the Barbados Port Authority. There is one in which you can get a short trip confined to the Garrison, Malibu and Bridgetown or you may get access to an island tour. Therefore, many persons are aware that the taxi drivers have not been getting the kind of benefit from the cruise ship industry that they wanted and hoped to have derived as a result of the so-called expansion in numbers over the last few years.

We know that the so-called benefits being derived in the cruise ship industry are not what has been said by the Honourable Minister. The Minister should have explained that within the last few months we have lost two large cruise liners to Barbados. The Minister has made no such contact with such a reality that within the last few months two cruise ships said that they would not be plying their trade any longer to Barbados.

Sir, the Honourable Minister has a way of putting information in the public domain to suggest that the tourism industry, under his watch, has performed exceedingly well but this has not been the case. In fact, of the twenty-four countries in the Caribbean reporting to CTO, Barbados came twenty-first in terms of worst performance. The Minister must know that within the context of the Caribbean tourism that Barbados came twenty-first out of twenty-four destinations who report to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation.

Mr. Speaker, let me refer to day-trippers and home- porting. We would have thought that given the importance of home-porting, that rather than to be eight months behind and over budget, as is the case, that the Grantley Adams International Airport would have ensured that the expansion would have been delivered, not only on a timely basis but also on an efficient basis and that has not occurred.

In fact, we know that the airport expansion is tremendously behind time and that there are several problems associated, not only with the question of timing or the cost but also the quality of the work as identified over the last four weeks in the Press.

Clearly, if this component of the tourism section, which is critical and vital, is not functioning the way it should, then there is not much hope for the expansion of the industry in general. You cannot have a situation in which

you are focusing on home porting which really does not contribute to the number of tourists who arrive in Barbados but would merely involve just a transfer from the airport to the seaport - and not be in position to execute the project effectively. Sir, given the present state of the Grantley Adams International Airport, the uncertainty surrounding when it would be completed, the concerns surrounding what the real cost of the expansion would be and more important what the quality of the work done at the airport has been to date, the evidence is quite clear that the project has been poorly managed, in every sense of the word. There ought to be concern if we are now seeking to develop this product within the wider tourism product where the airport will become a critical component in executing the product which is being presented to us this morning.

Mr. Speaker, again, the Minister has a way of boasting about growth and whether there has been growth in number or expenditure but it is also known that in our wider tourism sector that there are difficulties with respect to the industry. As I speak to Barbadians today, one in every fourteen hotel rooms is under threat because of the non-performing nature of the industry at this time.

H56: 11.20 a.m.

Sequence 8

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

House 56, sequence 9,
11:20 a.m.

Continuation of Mr. C.A. MASCOLL:

Sir, it is not only a question of numbers, but it was stated by the Minister, as far back as 1999 that it is more important to generate the kind of revenue that you want and therefore in the

overall industry, there is clear evidence of underperformance, not only in the cruise ship but land based tourism in Barbados. There is no clear marketing strategy that this Government has outlined, which would bring about any substantial change in the industry.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister talked about Harrison's Cave and how it is the number one attraction when you seek to market the cruise ship sector in Barbados. Again, there are several problems associated with Harrison's Cave that have not yet come to the public's notice, such as the question of staffing. When Harrison's Cave became a company, and there were employees from the NCC who were transferred to the Harrison's Cave, it was expected that they would have become part of a permanent structure called, the Caves of Barbados but to date, those workers have not been given the assurance that they would be part of a permanent structure called, the Caves of Barbados.

The Caves of Barbados continues to be poorly managed under this administration. The attempt now is to expend some \$23 million in expansion, without there being a clearly defined plan for how we are going to:

- i. enhance the product,
- ii. make it more attractive,
- iii. make it profitable, and
- iv. ensure that the workers have a permanent job, rather than to be concerned about whether they will become permanent, as opposed to being temporary workers at the Caves of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: The workers have

made their complaints and it is known that Harrison's Cave, for all it is worth, has not become the kind of product over the last ten years, in the abundance of finance, in the abundance of a Minister who boasts repeatedly about his performance, that Harrison's Cave has under performed considerably and it is known, Mr. Speaker, that this has been the case.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Workers who have been transferred from the National Conservation Commission have not yet been made permanent and that is important.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, we know that there were concerns in recent times about the way in which the small jet-ski operators have functioned, within the area of Carlisle Bay to Brandons, which is in actual fact, controlled by the Barbados Port Authority. The Barbados Port has control over the coastline up to the Hilton and down as far as Pile Bay or Brandon.

Again, there has to be a clearly defined policy with respect to how small tour operators, or operators of these kinds of motorised vehicles will be allowed to ply their trade, not only in the Carlisle Bay area but also along the expansion of Brandons, which is in fact right for expansion. This area is very close, as is known, to the Port Authority and the Harbour and ought to be seen as part of any development plan for tourism to expand the returns from the Cruise Ship Industry and the returns from alternative products within the tourism sector.

Mr. Speaker, it is a bay. It has a beautiful beach. It has beautiful scenery. It is accessible and there is room for expansion. Therefore, it is important that the Minister embraces, not only the area to the south of the Port but the area to the north as well, and use of the wide area surrounding the Harbour, which is available for expansion.

In addition, as I have said it before, Mr. Speaker, when they are considering expanding that area, there needs to be careful consideration given to the residents of Brighton who are locked because of the lack of an alternative exit and entry.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please, I have given you some latitude but do not overdo it, please.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: No. It is important because if in fact there is only one entry and exit to Brighton, then there must be consideration of what access there is to the sea. The Honourable Member for the City will know this that, in fact, if you are locked...

Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I have not spoken in this debate. The Honourable Member must not seek to mislead the House. I grew up on that beach and I well know it.

Asides.

Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER: It is not mine. It belongs to all of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Sir, to utilise the Brighton Beach area, consideration must be given to the ability of the residents there to deal with any emergency. Therefore, in the absence of providing adequate road facilities and access

to Spring Garden, then our residents in Brighton will be confined to exit, either by way of the beach or by way of the heavens.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, move on.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: All I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that there needs to be some consideration given to the plight of those individuals.

Mr. Speaker, I have taken note that this legislation apparently gives a lot for tax purposes - I need to check the others - in the Schedule to persons involved in this kind of business. I quote:

"FIRST SCHEDULE

(Section 5(4))

MARKETING EXPENDITURE INCURRED BY AN APPROVED SHIPPING COMPANY

1. Fares, accommodation and subsistence of the taxpayer or his employees travelling from Barbados in the promotion of yachting or boating tourism or training in agreed marine skills, exclusive of the cost of a holiday trip.

11. Cost of electronic marketing or yachting or boating tourism in Barbados via websites."

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Sir, these are very generous incentives being granted to this sector. I would like to think that this sector is going to be able to respond and react to these incentives, because the First Schedule to the Bill is very exhaustive and provides a fair degree of latitude to this particular small hotel sector, which I am not sure is given even to

land based tourism.

I would like to see what would be the justification for giving the kind of incentives, in terms of exemption from custom duties. I quote.

"SECOND SCHEDULE

(Section 5 (5))

ITEMS TO BE EXEMPT FROM CUSTOMS DUTY

1. Articles including trailers imported by an approved shipping company for use exclusively in the building, refurbishing, equipment, transporting, maintenance or repair of a ship.

2. All water sports equipment including towables, imported by an approved shipping company."

Sir, this seems to me to be a fairly large set of incentives for this particular sector. It really does make me wonder why there are certain sectors, especially within tourism, which seem to get access to the kinds of incentives that certainly other sectors would wish to have access to, in Barbados.

I want to make the point because, within the context of what we are seeing worldwide, discrimination is not the tenant upon which you can formulate policy any longer. In fact, the whole basis for the World Trade Organisation is that there is non-discrimination. If we continue to offer these kinds of incentives only to very limited sectors within the economy then, in actual fact, we are using a principle to discriminate against other sectors that would seek to get such incentives to be able to ply their trade on more level playing fields, and

that is certainly not happening now in Barbados.

House 56, sequence 9, 11:3014

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Mr. C. A. MASCOLL:

We are seemingly picking out little niche areas and has offered large incentives to persons involved in the development of Royal Westmoreland and Port St. Charles. Very heavy incentives are now being made available to companies involved in this narrow area of shipping. Mr. Speaker, I cannot see why such considerations cannot be given to other sectors of the economy that are also capable of earning foreign exchange for Barbados.

Sir, perhaps we need to reconsider the policy basis upon which we are making decisions with respect to incentives to these niche areas within the economy. There is a certain commonality of character, of complexion and of the involvement of persons in these particular sectors which we are seeing that are appearing to be attracting considerable incentives in Barbados, but there can be no economic basis for such within this new global environment.

Mr. Speaker, discrimination is no longer the tenet for exercising such bias toward a particular sector, firm or company. Therefore, there is a need for broader consideration of where we are going as an economy.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the need to encourage wider involvement in shipping. I see it as part of a so-called project that was lurking on the shores of Barbados for the last several years. We were told about a US\$300 million project called the Bridgetown Redevelopment Project. Today you hear about

it, tomorrow, you do not. I wonder where that Bridgetown Redevelopment Project is now. I wonder whether or not that Bridgetown Redevelopment Project that was given so much focus and so much exposure is still on the books or within the consideration of the investors.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, where the Bridgetown Development Project actually is with respect to its implementation. I wonder whether we are still considering it. It has become a very silent instrument in the affairs of Barbados. It has become almost non-existence after it was given so much prominence. Every reason was given to justify why there needs to be incentives to encourage this level of investment, how we are going to transform Bridgetown, how are going to make sure that the area to the north of Bridgetown is developed, how the Carlisle Bay area would also be given priority in any developmental process and how we are going to transform the Careenage.

Sir, what has happened to all of these incentives and to this project? It was supposed to be the case that there would be counterpart financing and that a British firm would have been investing in the Bridgetown Development Project and that it was a means to bring foreign exchange and foreign investment into Barbados. The Barbados Shipping and Trading Company was supposed to be a major player in the execution of the project, but the project has apparently died.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: This Bridgetown Development Project was on the books now for the last eight to nine years. Every year it had a different character. Every year we change the incentive package. Every year we justify why this should be added; why this should not be added; why we had to alter the project; when

the project will be introduced; why it cannot be introduced at this time and in this form; and why we need now to cater to an alternative strategy or approach. Sir, not a word, but then we understand the nature of the other side.

Sir, the lovely boardwalk is in need of refurbishment. In fact, the boardwalk has become a liability. Those who might have walked it when it was opened and have not returned, would not know that it has deteriorated substantially over the last couple of years due to poor maintenance and has become a threat especially to the ladies in their high heels.

Mr. Speaker, for the longest time we were supposed to develop the little area opposite the boardwalk where ships and small yachts were repaired. Apparently, that project has also gone into abeyance because I can see no activity there at all. In fact, years ago it used to be much better.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: I expected this kind of aside and I can understand why because once you speak of Bridgetown, you always offend the Honourable Member.

The reality is that we need to come closer to implementation and not be caught up with the fanciful pictures of grandeur that we have heard about over the last several years in Barbados. There is no clear evidence that we are making any substantial strides toward the implementation. There have been a lot of talk and a lot of cosmetic changes with respect to this Bridgetown Development Plan.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose, as I said, that perhaps this is part of the process of retooling and re-equipping the Bridgetown area, but I am concerned because while we may be seeking to develop an industry in shipping, there are other

industries in Barbados that are equally deserving of the kind of incentives that are being given to this sector. That cannot be justified in today's world because no one on the other side would have done a study to prove whether or not it is worth the while to invest the kind of resources and the kind of time in this area that we are apparently wishing to devote to it, according to the legislation that is being amended today, so that it might, as I said, be part of a higher strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I see this as coming under the remit of the Barbados Port Authority, therefore we need to investigate the wider remit of the Barbados Port Authority because there are concerns about the changing nature of the Barbados Port Authority. Sir, let me express some of the concerns which would fit smoothly into this legislation. Sir, once you start to corporatise with the hope that you could sell shares to the private sector, it is going to have an influence on the overall mechanics of business at the Barbados Port Authority. Therefore, a corporatised Barbados Port Authority, which is now seeking to become more involved in money making, which is developing the area along the Harbour Road, which intends to expand and remove the sugar bond, which intends to take up the entire area from Brandons, is going to have implications for the small taxi drivers in terms of their access to work.

Mr. Speaker, we must not be fooled. If the Barbados Port Authority is fully corporatised, then a bidding process may very well come into vogue some time down the road where a larger corporation or a larger set of businesses involved in transportation may be able to bid on the basis of efficiency, effectiveness and the ability to carry out the work much better than a small disunited group. Therefore, there can be concerns for the development of the Barbados Port Authority with respect to the ability of the taxi drivers to

be able to make bids on their own behalf as it relates to getting work out of the Barbados Port Authority.

Sir, I can therefore foresee a time in the future when larger and better organised transportation companies may be able to go into the Barbados Port Authority and make better bids for such work if we are developing this kind of shipping industry that we are talking about, because the development of the shipping industry would mean greater economic activity not only within the Port but also in the wider Bridgetown area. That therefore has to be a concern that we should be looking at, and we must not wait until it comes upon us to address it.

House 56 Sequence 10

11:40 a.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Mr. C. A. MASCOLL:
Mr. Speaker, the other issue relates to the development of our water sports. Sir, again there is the concern that water taxis could become a significant part of the transportation landscape of Barbados over the coming years because of the inability to widen roads and the inability to expand Bridgetown. It, therefore, means that we are going to have to make greater use of the sea. If we are going to make greater use of the sea, it is going to mean that there will be greater financial resources required to invest in the initial set up of, not only water sports but also water transportation, and therein lies the problem.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East were ordered to be expunged from the records by Mr. Speaker.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, it is

known that the way that one gets a taxi permit is that you fill out an application form and hope to have a contact, in order to get that taxi permit.

MR. SPEAKER: That is different, Sir.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, when we seek to develop water sports and taxi transportation via water in Barbados, the initial set up is going to require those who want to get involved to have contacts. Therefore, a natural expansion from a land-based taxi to the involvement in water taxis will not occur. Therefore, while there should have been a natural extension of the land-based taxi to expand into water-based taxis, you are not going to see that kind of expansion because land-based taxi owners will not have the kind of capital to be able to invest into water taxis.

Sir, already there are some persons who have gotten involved in water taxis, and land-based taxi owners are complaining that they do not have access to such in Barbados, neither do they see themselves as being able to develop and to expand along the lines that they would naturally be expected to expand along. Perhaps what is required is for the cooperative and independent companies to be better organised, so that they can take greater advantage of any potential growth within the transportation section. Sir, as it now stands, they are not as well equipped to be able to respond to the needs of the future. They are not going to have the necessary capital to be able to invest in opportunities that will redound from the expansion of water sports or water taxis. They are not going to be able to get involved in this new area of transportation activity which should be a natural extension of their present situation. Sir, it will not be so because they do not have the resources to be as organised and equipped as larger companies in Barbados, which have already started to position themselves to take advantage of the new

opportunities that may result from the expansion of such in the transport sector of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, while I understand that the Minister sees the development of this particular sector as being part of a national programme, I am suggesting that the National Marketing Committee ought to become more involved in the development of this project and that they should have seen this as part of their mandate in developing the tourism services and products of Barbados, even more in the foreseeable future. Sir, it is not happening. It is not the case that they are involved. They do not feel or do not seem to be part of this process of expanding the tourism product. They do not seem to be part of the persons who initiated this drive but yet there is supposed to be a joint public/private sector consultation or committee called the National Marketing Committee.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the attempt to amend the legislation is nothing too serious but we always have to be careful that we are providing opportunities - not for a selected few - by providing the kind of incentives that are available in this legislation but that we are going to give persons who are already involved in the transport sector a greater opportunity to expand and to develop the services that can be derived.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to give my support to the measure before this Honourable House.

This Shipping (Incentives)(Amendment) Bill, 2005, and the draft Value Added Tax Order, 2005, are matters of large importance. I was very disappointed to have heard the Honourable Leader of the Opposition offering us his opinion to this Honourable Chamber that shipping is a narrow area for incentives, and

that it is one of highly specialised narrow areas and niches to which the Government is offering incentives.

Mr. Speaker, with all the force that I can command, I would beg to differ. There is too little appreciation of the sea around us. I have made this point in the Honourable House on diverse occasions and it seems that I have to go on making this point until I hope that some day it would be better understood.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados, like every other country in the world with a coastline, has a 12-mile territorial jurisdictional limit. Barbados is 14 miles wide by 21 miles long, 166 square miles, apart from the few additional square miles that became Barbados when the Deepwater Harbour was built. If you add to the 12-mile territorial limit around the entire coastline of Barbados, there is more to the sea which falls into our jurisdiction than there is to the land on which we live. Sir, beyond that 12-mile territorial limit is a 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone, known as the EEZ.

Sir, Barbados, as everybody in Barbados knows, is in the process of negotiating maritime delimitation treaty or arrangements with Trinidad and Tobago and will, in due course, negotiate with other islands and other mainland states in this Caribbean region, which have coastlines. Sir, wherever there are archipelagos of islands like ours, they have to get into that process because there is an understanding, and I want the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to be part of that understanding, that we have not even begun to scratch the surface of what we can exploit from the seas and oceans of this world because there is more of the earth's surface given over to seas and oceans, than there is to islands and continents.

Mr. Speaker, it, therefore, is a grievous misunderstanding on the part of the Honourable

Leader of the Opposition and I believe that his misunderstanding is shared by too many Barbadians who need now to know and to understand better that this is the frontier of the 21st Century.

H:No.56(11)1150 a.m.

Tuesday, March 1,
2005

Continuation of Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER:

This is the frontier that we must now learn to exploit to our advantage. This is only one of the reasons why I am pleased to see this Shipping (Incentives) (Amendment) Bill before the House.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Barbados took the lead a few years ago at the United Nations to have the Caribbean Sea regarded as a special area. It was not an easy thing to accomplish because like so many of the international financial institutions, the United Nations is not anxious to create new concepts in terms of the interest of small developing island economies such as ours.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados had to revise the language of its Resolution and then step back a bit from that language in order to get a toehold which, over years to come, would allow us to build on it until we get what we wish. Sir, one of the reasons we had to do this had to do with an insufficiency of understanding of how threatened the sea of the Caribbean is in the world today.

The majority of the oil in the world is processed and refined in this subregion. Sir, apart from Trinidad and Venezuela in this area of the Caribbean, we are not large among the world's producers of oil. I speak to the Caribbean in the largest sense, in the sense of

the Association of the Caribbean States and all those states actually touched by the Caribbean Sea. Sir, it is a much threatened area and every day, unbeknownst to ordinary citizens in this subregion, billions of barrels of oil traversed what is known as the Caribbean corridor taking oil to be refined in the refineries and it is only by the grace of God that there has not been any major spill, until this time.

Sir, I hope in my time that it would never happen because we do not only live on the edge of the sea of the Caribbean but we live out of it. We eat out of it and it sustains a major component of our tourism product and the last thing we want is any major pollution or despoiling of the Caribbean Sea.

I am glad that the Honourable Minister of Tourism when he introduced this matter was careful to emphasise the importance of keeping our near-shore waters in as pristine a condition as we can because to pollute and despoil those waters would be to kill the goose that is laying the golden tourism egg for us.

Sir, the sea of the Caribbean is very important and we have had with this Resolution at the United Nations to draw it in the wider context of sustainable development. I was particularly pleased to hear the Minister of Tourism make his point about the protection of the environment because, if we cannot give these initiatives and others without looking at them in the big picture of sustainable development, then in a few years time, like other parts of the Caribbean and areas touching the Caribbean, we would pay the price.

Sir, for many years, I have been speaking about the way the Mississippi River, the longest and largest river in the United States of America, collects industrial sludge from the middle of America which comes into New Orleans and is vomited into the Gulf of Mexico. Sir, the Gulf of Mexico is poisoned

with nitrates and mercury and because of this fact, I do not eat crustaceans when I visit that part of the world.

Mr. Speaker, I did not know that this debate was coming up but a few weeks ago, by pure happenstance, I met a lady through the courtesy of the Ambassador of the United States and fell into conversation with her about this matter which concerns me deeply. Sir, she has sent me a publication which is showing that what I feared is true. It said that the Gulf of Mexico is poisoned and is in deep trouble and peril. There are a number of chapters which speak to the coast, which say that the fish is disappearing and that there are 'fishkills'. It speaks about what is happening far afield from the gulf to the Everglades in Florida but, happily, it also speaks to solutions.

Sir, we take the sea for granted. Hurricane Ivan did not hit Barbados in a direct fashion but in an indirect fashion. We only look at the surface damage done by hurricanes but we fail to appreciate that they do terrible damage at sea. Last week we took the President of Botswana on a cruise to give him an appreciation of our heritage and tourism product and the experts from Coastal Zone Management Unit and Marine Trust told me that many coral blocks are broken off which are now creating rubble and destroying sea grasses and bottom life as far away from Grenada to Barbados.

Sir, it is important that in these shipping incentives that we build in the protection of our near shore waters. We do not want what happened in the Gulf of Mexico to happen here in the Caribbean. I am amazed that Honourable Members find something funny about this but I sincerely hope that in our life time, we do not come to pay the price that communities around the Gulf of Mexico are paying.

Mr. Speaker, we have not begun to scratch the surface of the many ways, in the context of sustainable development, in which we can exploit the waters around Barbados. We have a growing cruise industry and a growing water sport particularly pleasure craft industry around Barbados. We heard the Minister of Tourism in his presentation speak to the presence of a number of

jet-skis. I know that monitoring associated with that aspect of the watersport industry in Barbados is being addressed by the Minister. He also spoke of the number of craft generally speaking, catamaran and the like, which are expected to be affected by this legislation.

The Minister spoke of 276 speed boats, 169 jet-skis or wave runners and 550 vessels on the Small Vessel Register.

H56/11:50

Sequence 12

Tuesday, March 1,
1005

CONTINUATION OF Hon. Dame Billie MILLER Sir, the Honourable Member for St. John can intimidate the Honourable Members on his side so he believes that he can intimidate those on this side but it cannot happen.

Asides

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Speaker, it is most important that these pleasure craft, the whole water sport fraternity and in particular those aspects of it where there are implications for shipping should be made to be subject to important regulations which deal with the preservation of the nearshore waters of Barbados and our coastline.

Sir, even though we see tidal movement we take it for granted. We have had enormous winter swells last month, February.

Asides

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: The whole thrust of the point that I want to make is that I am supportive of these incentives. I think that everything has been said to encourage more Barbadians and there are a lot of Barbadians who are interested in this area of activity.

Sir, this touches on the Bridgetown Redevelopment Project and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has displayed his lack of understanding in what is going on, not only in respect of the urban renewal and redevelopment of Bridgetown but of Speightstown and soon Oistin.

Sir, nobody who is coming to this Honourable Parliament and drives along the Wharf and Heroes Square could fail to recognise steel pilings. The Chamberlain Bridge, popularly known as the Swing Bridge, is about to be replaced by a lift bridge. The work is about to start. Some of the material is lying on the ground. If you went to the gallery at the end of this building, you can see the material lying on the ground. How could you fail to see it?

The Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated, and the Honourable Minister can speak to it if he wishes to, has already published in both newspapers in Barbados what their programme for the immediate future is. If you are a thinking person or you are a Member of Parliament in this country, I assumed that you read the newspapers and inform yourself as well as you can before you come in here to utter statements. He says things that he does not know anything about. That is not a good message to be sending as a Leader of the Opposition in Barbados. The Honourable

Member should be telling us that he knows. He should not come into this Honourable House and give us a long litany of things that he does not know that are happening.

Sir, I am an older Senior Member and am on my way out and they are young people. I keep telling Honourable Members to do their homework. There is going to be an expansion of the boardwalk and he pretended that he does not know what the boardwalk is and that work is on the way.

Mr. Speaker, there is a marina at Port St. Charles for which these incentives have positive implications and there is a marina which the Government is going to build at the Pier Head, Bridgetown, for which these incentives before this Honourable House will have serious implications as well. You do not drum up \$300 million overnight and you have to be very careful and selective about those persons or companies with whom you would do business. It is true that it is taking time and everybody is anxious to see the marina get on the way but studies have to be done.

Sir, there are tidal and wave movements around Barbados which have to be examined. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is an engineer and he knows of which I speak.

Asides

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Speaker, we have to be very careful about what we do to the outer Carenage, Carlise Bay and the inner Carenage in terms of shipping and these shipping incentives have implications for that as well. We also have to be careful that we do not create another Miami Beach where we do not intend to create a Miami Beach.

Aside

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: It was the result of a terrible expensive mistake in Barbados.

Sir, a coastguard headquarters was meant to be built off Oistin and because the Government of the day either was given bad advice or did not take good advice given to it, we ended up not with a coastguard facility but with another beach. It is not that Barbados did not have beaches.

I remember that at Warrens, which is now a thriving subtown, a crematorium was being built.

Asides

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Sir, happily, today it is a well-positioned polyclinic.

Asides

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: That was only a point being made illustrative of the importance particularly with the sea. When you are dealing with land-based things, you are dealing with fixed structures, not so with the sea, so you have to be extraordinarily careful.

Sir, I am very pleased that a number of projects which are part of the redevelopment of Bridgetown are on the way because the Constitution River goes past the Fairchild Street market and I think that it is an important point to make to Honourable Members.

H56: 12.10 p.m.

Sequence 13

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

House 56, sequence 14,
12:10 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER:

I do not know how the Leader of the Opposition drives through Bridgetown and do not recognise that work is about to start at the Fairchild Street Market. Has he noticed that accommodation has been prepared for the relocation of vendors so that the site can be cleared to start the rebuilding of the Fairchild Street market? All of that is part and parcel...

Asides.

Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER: No. You talked about the Bridgetown Redevelopment project which is not only the Pierhead project. The Pierhead project is separate, with its own legislation and incentives. The redevelopment of Bridgetown is a much larger concept. Part of it is happening at the South Gate of the Port, where a revetment is being built and the landscaping corridor begins. This is very important and the Port Authority is responsible for what we see going on at Trevor's Way.

Sir, I really have a lot of difficulty with the fact that the Leader of the Opposition wears spectacles and still cannot see all of these aspects of the redevelopment of Bridgetown which are underway. He lives close to Speightstown and I hope that he is seeing the redevelopment on coastal Speightstown which is happening as well.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is not in his seat at this time but even he might speak to proposals for the beach front at Oistins Town where the fish fry has now developed and, all of these things are interconnected.

Sir, my essential point is that they are not

only an important part of our tourism product, they not only generate revenues, and business opportunities for young, upwardly mobile Barbadians, but they are all part and parcel of physical Barbados and the environment, which is the springboard from which that kind of development will come, and which we have to protect, not only now but in the future.

I know that young people feel they are immortal and cannot get HIV/AIDS. They think that because a beach has been there, it will always be there. There are beaches now in places that were not there when I was a child, so that new beaches are forming and old beaches are disappearing.

Barbados is the first landfall out of the Atlantic. All that protects us from the Atlantic are the reefs and we are doing damage to them every day. I just do not want shipping to do damage to the point where the reefs can no longer protect us.

Asides.

Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER: It is not only jet-skis...Ships are washing their bilges out at sea and the oil is floating on the ocean. Many of us know that flying fish spawn on the top of the sea and with the wave action, oil forms into sticky little pellets and it sinks to the bottom, so it is doing damage to the sea eggs and other sea life that spawn and live on the bottom. Therefore, bottom life is much affected by this action.

Sir, sometimes if you walk on beaches along the east coast, you may not see it but when you hold up the bottom of your foot, you can see the black sticky tar substance. There are little tar balls but they are doing horrendous damage out there. We cannot police the ships to stop them from washing out their bilges. Sometimes they will go just outside the 12-mile line and wash them out, preferably at night.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two minutes to conclude.

Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER: Thank you, Sir.

Sir, I am hoping that regulations will be built into this entire process to protect that very aspect of our heritage, which is feeding, clothing and educating us today. Generations to come will not thank us, if we were so greedy and avaricious that we failed to protect what is really theirs. We are only here taking care of it for a time. Those who came before us sought as best they could, in the way of agriculture. Now, agriculture is coming on stream to protect, preserve and conserve the environment for our generation.

We have this enormous duty and the more that technology opens up opportunities to us, the greater is our responsibility, Sir, that we should protect this marine environment which we tend to take so much for granted, for the benefit of the generations that will come after us.

Mr. Speaker, I am very obliged for the opportunity to be given my support to the measure before the House.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this Bill. It is clear to me that this Bill could have easily included the Port St. Charles Amendment Bill. Mr. Speaker, it is no doubt that the sea is important to the development of Barbados. We must understand that this Parliament is not only for the 'too few', but it must include all coastal equipment that is used in transporting cargo, such as a fishing boat carrying cargo from Barbados to Grenada, and jet skis cannot only

be included by accident.

Sir, the simple reason is that a couple of years ago, the Barbadian public was given the impression that a jet-ski was an enemy to Barbados. Now, that you are coming to dish out large incentives to big cruise liners and other shipping agencies, you are not using jet-skis as a red herring.

We were told that jet-skis were the most dangerous things that you could find in Barbados, so much so, Sir, that this Government was able to remove jet-skis from the ownership of the masses of people in Barbados and put them in the hands of the hotel owners. Sir, now that you have removed them from the hands of the poor people of Barbados and the masses of Barbados, you are praising jet-skis.

Asides.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. This Government has not removed jet-skis from any small operators to put them in the hands of hoteliers. This should be struck from the records.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am telling you, Sir, that they used the Press in Barbados to give the impression that once you own a jet-ski, you were the enemy to the tourism industry, and we saw a situation where the owners of hotels in this country came out against the jet-skis and men whom I could identify with, who were the owners - and I am sorry that the Honourable Member for St. James Central and the Honourable Member for St. James North are not in their seats, because they would be able to tell you also that they could identify men who owned those boats - and as soon as the boats were taken from them and the hotel owners took over control of the jet-skis, they stopped hearing the negative

press, so much so today now, Sir, that you can see an amendment coming to Parliament.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy continues to mislead this House. He is not even giving an insinuation in stating that things were taken away from legitimate owners of these crafts.

Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has that evidence, he should put it before the Members of this Chamber, otherwise, he should desist from making such statements.

Asides.

House 56, sequence 14, 12:2014

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Proceed please.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have spoken in this House about this already and you were here to hear it. I have said already that the one thing you should not do is to give incentives to hotels involved in the all-inclusive business that the masses of people in Barbados cannot get. When I speak about the masses, I am not talking about black people as Honourable Members would think, I am speaking about white people. Many people believe that only the poor blacks of Barbados own jet-skis, but that is not true, they are owned by the poor whites as well.

Sir, they gave the incentives that the masses of people in Barbados could not get to the all-inclusive hoteliers so that they could buy jet-skis which meant that they took over the jet-ski market because the people who use to ride on the jet-skis would no longer be able to go

and operate with the masses. If the Minister wants to deny that, let him deny it. Sir, it cannot come from the lips of the Minister today that a jet-ski is the best piece of operating equipment in Barbados, after that negative campaign was carried out against the owners of the jet-skis.

Sir, Government gave the incentives to the all-inclusive owners and in the process they took away the market from the masses of people of Barbados, so Government would have to take the blame. Sir, the Honourable Member comes in here talking about jet-skis like if he is newly converted so that people would buy into it.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of the previous jet-skis owners are now employees of the all-inclusive hotels. Sir, if the Honourable Member continues to make this point he would have to challenge the Honourable Members from St. James North, St. James South and St. James Central because they know of what I speak. If he continues to challenge this, he will also have to tell the owners of the Coach House why the fellows cannot go to the Coach House like they used to and spend the amount of money they used to spend. Sir, if that is not so, he has to tell me why the jet-skis boys cannot 'float' to the Coach House on weekends with large sums of money in their pocket and block the Coach House as they used to.

Mr. Speaker, any legislation that comes before this Parliament must be legislation for all. Sir, what frightens me in this country, and we can link the two together, is that we behaved as if the sugar industry was the worst industry in the world, but at least in the sugar industry, the plantation owners had no better privilege than that small holders.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have not done the linking yet.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I am getting there. In the sugar industry the plantation trucks had to go in the lines just like the small holder trucks, but in the tourism industry once you are a big player you do not have to line up, it is only the small players who have to line up to beg for a piece.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister must understand that when he speaks about tourism, it must be tourism for all, it cannot be tourism clouded with a jet-ski as a word with no meaning to it. A ship has a meaning and a ship has requirements. You can have a whole long list of what can be included in a ship and not one item of what can be included in a jet-ski, not even the fuel, yet the Minister of Tourism could say that this is about everybody.

Sir, what is interesting is that previously the Minister was talking about capital projects but all of a sudden now he is talking about capital expenditure. I am glad to know that he can appreciate the point about capital expenditure. He will soon get to revenue expenditure and will no longer argue about current expenditure. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to see that this Minister has moved away from capital projects to capital expenditure. He is learning well, that is one thing about him.

Sir, he can curse me as much as he likes, but he will go down and he will leave me in his Will as the man who has tutored him because he has been able to copy well, however, the day that I silence myself in this House, he would not be able to speak. Sir, he is so impressed with what comes out of my mouth that he is even touring my constituency to see how I operate within it.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister needs to get up and speak on behalf of the previous owners of the jet-skis from Haynesville, Fitts Village and all of those areas, who are now employees again. Sir, that is a backward step and I know

that the Minister is aware of it.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: This Minister cares and that is why he will speak about it and will agree that he has to make sure that the Coach House boys are back in the Coach House again with money in their pockets and not 'bumming'.

Mr. Speaker, we also need to find out from this Minister if there is going to be a separate amendment to this Act to facilitate Port St. Charles because it is clear that something is going on there that the Minister has not spoken to this House about. We cannot have these custom officers, immigration officers and health officers being treated the way they have been treated lately. Sir, I want to make it clear that you cannot blame the present owners, the blame has to go on the shoulders of the Government because the present owners indicated to the Government a long time ago that there was a need for a change in the way these expenses had to be administered.

Sir, I found it rather surprising that you can take up a document today and read that there are changes going on in the lives of Barbadians but they were not informed by the people who should know better and they had to be treated in that particular way. Our brothers and sisters cannot be treated in that way, Sir, not when the shipping agents and the ship owners who do not know Barbados are sure that we are going to come to Parliament with an amendment to look after their interest. We need to look after the interest of the workers at Port St. Charles and those who operate in the government buildings or the buildings that Government has been able to use at Port St. Charles. Sir, the owners sent out that message long enough and Government should have taken action.

Sir, I have seen many supplementaries coming through to this Parliament. I believe today, without reflecting on what we are going to do, that we might see something...

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, do not do it, do not do it.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, you know that I would never reflect on what will happen today. Sir, I am saying that a supplementary should come to cover the cost of running Port St. Charles.

Sir, I want to make this point that was made by the Honourable Member for St. John and I when that facility was being set up. We said that the expenses should have been the Government's expenses, therefore, we should not have to wait for this particular occasion to reinforce this particular point. That point should have been taken by the Government from the time it was made by the Opposition.

I am saying, Sir, that services like those cannot be in the hands of the private sector. That is why I was careful the last time we spoke on a matter like this in relation to the airport when I asked who will be in charge. I was told by the Minister of Tourism that the Government will always be in charge of these particular services and that they will never give them up. If that is true, why are we arguing about what is happening to the north of Barbados, that should have been a non-point, Sir.

Sir, we have to understand what is happening in this country and we have to understand that we have to make changes to make Barbados effective and to make sure that we are in a position to become number one. Sir, we cannot become number one when we only look at the top and not at the bottom. We have to look at the whole body.

Sir, now the Minister has appreciated the fact that there is something called community tourism, we have to understand that if Barbados is to go forward, the place we have to spend some money on is in the constituency of St. Lucy.

House 56 Sequence 15

12:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, that is why I thought that when the Honourable Member was speaking about the Caves of Barbados today, that ...

MR. SPEAKER: Please Honourable Member, let us get back to the Bill.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, it is all about shipping. It is about the movement of people, cargo, et cetera. It cannot be Barbados as a whole. It has to be Barbados divided into units, and St. Lucy is part of Barbados.

MR. SPEAKER: So you are going to do some shipping in St. Lucy?

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes, we are going to do some shipping in St. Lucy, Sir, and always remember that we have a port where we ship cement. We also have the facility for an airport, never mind the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown said that it should be located on one of the golf courses on the West Coast.

Asides.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I am perfectly capable of speaking for myself. The Honourable Member is grossly

misleading the Honourable House. Sir, such a statement has never left my mouth. I have never said that an airport should be located on any golf course. Honourable Members have to be responsible for what is said in this House. Sir, a joke is a joke but this is ridiculous.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to apologise to the Honourable Member for the City.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want to withdraw those words?

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: No, Sir, I do not want to withdraw those words, I want to correct them. Sir, when the Honourable Member for the City said that there was a need for private jets, when I looked around, the only place I could see as an airport for private jets would be at the Royal Westmoreland Golf Course or at Sandy Lane Golf Course, so I thought that those were the locations. MR. SPEAKER In other words, you were the one who said the golf course?

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, those were the only available places. I now understand that the Honourable Member for the City would not have said the available land in St. Lucy, so the Honourable Member had to say the available land on the West Coast.

Asides.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please. Let us get back to the Bill before the House.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that when we bring legislation to this Parliament that it cannot be for a minority group. It must be all-inclusive and all-embracing and, therefore, in this day and age, we cannot be using jet-skis as red herrings because the jet-skis of Barbados are

not owned by the persons who the Honourable Member for St. James North and I would have known, who are the boys in the Garden and the boys in Sea View, St. James, the boys who used to tow their own boats. They are not there anymore and if you doubt me, Mr. Speaker, you can ask the Honourable Member.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. James North knows that there was a time when one could have walked to the back of the Holetown Police Station and identified the owners of the jet-skis but these days when you go, you have to ask which hotel owns which jet-skis. Sir, the identity is not there anymore, and it was skillfully done. People use the call-in programmes and newspapers to make sure that lucrative arm was removed from the masses, then those jet-skis owners started working for those hoteliers.

Sir, imagine how it points back again. I forgot that the Minister was an officer of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Authority at that time and the same argument I saw with the jet-skis, I am now hearing about the taxi drivers and taxi owners. It is clear to me that we might have taxi owners nearly up to 2000 but what is amazing is that when one watches what is going on at the Port, one sees people coming out of the Port, not in taxis, but in BT coaches. Sir, policy should be dictated in such a way that there should be a fair share for all and not a fair share for those at the top and none for those at the bottom.

Mr. Speaker, the success of taxi drivers cannot be that someone who has money can say to them that they are not making any money with their taxis and that they should get out of the business. Sir, we have to understand that taxi drivers, like the small cane farmers, are important to tourism and that there must be a place in tourism for the taxi drivers in Barbados. We have to understand too that because someone can buy 20 BT coaches, it

does not mean that he has a right to the tourism industry and that the taxi driver whose children must provide a service to the tourists, still cannot make any money.

Mr. Speaker, we need to bring back a smiling Barbados and the best way to have a smiling Barbados is for the masses to have an appreciation of what the tourism industry is by being able to earn a living from that sector.

Mr. Speaker, there was a time in this country during the 1970s, where young boys would have found it a privilege to stop by any street junction so that when a mini-moke with tourists pass, tourists would ask for direction and in giving direction, we would have been given some money. Sir, that was when tourism was important to the masses of people in Barbados. These day when you go to any street junction, all you are seeing are tour buses passing by, without stopping and asking for directions. Sir, if these shipping incentives are to bring more people to Barbados, they must be able to encourage the masses to get money in their pockets.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Tourism and International Transport would do well to have a reversal of himself, like how he had a reversal on community tourism. Sir, the only reason World Cup, 2007... Sir, these amendments most likely have to do with the World Cup, 2007, so there is a connection between World Cup, 2007 and this Shipping (Incentives)(Amendment) Bill, 2005. Sir, the only way that Barbados can be successful in the World Cup, 2007 is how we are able to dish out the benefits of community tourism all across Barbados, so that we can have a larger retention, so that when the ships bring people, they will not be bringing them for the 'too-few' but that as a whole Barbados can benefit and can retain some of that money.

Mr. Speaker, the development of Barbados

will be on how we can attract capital expenditure and not revenue expenditure. Sir, I agree with the Minister on that particular point because the Minister understands the importance of capital expenditure. It, therefore, means that the columns which he claims that he does not read, he has been reading them. Sir, I have said that boardrooms in Barbados cannot be dealing with revenue expenditure but with capital expenditure because we need to increase output and the only way that we can do that is by expanding.

Sir, if this Shipping (Incentive) (Amendment) Bill, 2005 is supposed to do that, then Government would have to convince me that everybody is included, but based on what I am seeing, if this particular Act was before us ten years ago, I would have had no choice but to support it because I would have been able to identify with the jet-skis. Sir, I cannot identify with them ten years later because today the jet-skis owners are not the same owners of ten years ago. Instead, the owners ten years ago are now the workers today, and yet we are talking about a progressive country. How can we get a progressive country when we have moved our jet-skis owners back to workers? Sir, based on that, I will find it very difficult to support what is in this Bill.

I thank you.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 145 p.m.

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 1:45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and MR.

SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

H:No.56(16)1240 p.m.

Tuesday, March 1,
2005

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is resumed.

The Honourable Member from St. Michael South Central.

Mr. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to this amendment to the Shipping (Incentives) Act and to say at the outset that there is nothing wrong with attempting to improve our bodies of law that would in any way lead to an improvement in which our marine resources are exploited. I do not think that anyone on this side would have a difficulty with that concept.

Mr. Speaker, I really think that it is far-fetched to suggest that bringing a rather simple amendment which is adjusting a few words here and there and replacing two Clauses to an existing Act is going to lead to an explosion of a new type of tourism in Barbados. I do not buy into the idea that we are going to see a new section developed in tourism merely by a simple and straightforward amendment to the Shipping (Incentives) Act.

Sir, there is nothing wrong with improving the initiatives to the shipping sector but you will not see the development of yacht-based tourism and the like and the diversifying and expansion of our tourism product merely by this adjustment to the Act.

Mr. Speaker, I think we would recognising that a number of other things need to take place. One of the reasons why we have

struggled with a yacht-based tourism sector is because of lack of facilities. We hear that the redevelopment of the Pierhead is still on the card and that it took long because of the extensive studies required. I am sure that if the Honourable Member for the City cared to tell the entire story that she would recognise that those studies have been sitting in the possession of the Government of Barbados for a number of years. These studies were done on tidal movement....

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Yes, they are studies but we need studies specific to this project. We have to build a revetment, breakwater and so on and studies have not been done in relation to those matters.

Mr. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I am saying categorically that this Government and the last Government have had many studies done on several sites that were proposed for marine developments in Barbados. Sir, studies were done for Graeme Hall Swamp, Chancery Lane and in the Speightstown area adjacent to Port St. Charles and to suggest that we are not seeing this development because of some delay of this peculiar and highly specialised work that needs to take place is simply not true.

H56/13:50

Sequence 17

Tuesday, March 1,
1005

CONTINUATION OF... Mr. R.L.
SEALY:

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South, in his presentation, has not said what is specifically wrong with the old legislation, that

having been rectified we are going to see this grand improvement in this sector nor has he said what we are now seeing that is absent in the previous legislation that will see this grand improvement.

I will say that for individuals who own vessels and who have been lobbying to get a better deal in terms of incentives and so on for their vessels, they should feel very good right now. For example, section 6 that has been repealed had differentiated between residents of Barbados and foreign residents in terms of what tax concessions they could receive. That has now been removed. Again, no doubt the lobby, perhaps, the Port St. Charles lobby. I heard from the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown that this legislation has serious implications for Port St. Charles and Port St. Charles, as we know, is a waterfront development. It is place where people live, mainly expatriates. Perhaps, they are benefiting because a lot of them own craft as well.

Sir, previously, the tax concession that they were not eligible for, they are now eligible for. That is what I mean when I say congratulations to that group. They have lobbied long, hard and they got what they wanted. Sir, to suggest that somehow we are now going to see all these benefits, for example, the small water sports operators are just not true.

Mr. Speaker, while I am at that let me refer to section 3 of the legislation. The Minister, of course, raced past this but I was curious to hear from him why the legal draftsmen bother themselves to take out the words "subject to negative resolution", from the old Act. What was occurring under the old legislation was that in order for a minister to approve what is a shipping company, he had to issue an order, which, of course, is quite normal but the old legislation, recognising the need for checks and balances, had subjected him to a

negative resolution by Parliament. In other words, if he had an approved shipping company and for some reason any member felt that order should be negated, the legislation had allowed for such.

Mr. Speaker, Chapter I of the Interpretation Act clearly states what subject the negative resolution is supposed to do. While one could argue that it is not heavily used, I am a bit curious as to why the Government is troubling itself to take it out. Sir, if there is nothing to worry about; if everything is above board and if we are seeing accountability being practiced by this Government, surely, it could have remained.

Sir, at this time when we are talking about deepening our democracy and more accountability it would seem to me that clause could have remained. I am not sure why they felt it was necessary to take it out. Why should the Minister's orders be unfettered is just a little beyond me.

Mr. Speaker, had the Auditor General in his annual report been in brimful of praise for the financial rectitude of this Government, I might not have been as concerned but you must understand that we are talking about big money in terms of approving these shipping companies. Sir, approximately \$200 million in respect to approve shipping activity, that expenditure can be deducted against income for a fifteen-year period. This is a large sum of money and we on this side are just a little concerned. We need to be aware of the fact that it not only for the present minister that we are worried about but future ministers as well.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation talks about approved capital expenditure and that can mean anything. Sir, approved shipping companies and shipping activities are defined in the Act but what is approved capital expenditure. There is a grey area there and we need to be just a

little concerned.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South knows of the imperfection of human behaviour. He knows what is going on the Barbados Tourism Authority and what is going on at the airport and what I understand is also going on at the seaport and which may soon come to light. We need to recognise that we are dealing with imperfect human creatures. Therefore, the idea of taking away the capacity for an Opposition member to negate an act of a minister is something that we need to look at very carefully.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy spent sometime discussing what has been going on with a lot of the water sports operators in Barbados. Let me say that I am as surprised as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that sector was dealt with at all in this legislation. I am not sure how much precedent there is in other jurisdictions for a piece of legislation to be dealing with shipping and ocean going vessels and at the same time dealing with small individual water craft like jet- skis and so on.

Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that if the Honourable Member for St. Michael South and the Government were serious about developing that sector, surely, separate legislation could be looked at for that activity. In fact, the real place for it is with the Tourism Development Act because it is essentially a tourism based activity.

We have a situation where the incentives for huge ocean going cargo vessels are being lumped together with that of a jet-ski. It seems like an afterthought and, perhaps, it is instructive of the thinking that exists in this Government and this particular Minister.

It is noteworthy that the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown is concerns

about protecting our vital and precious ecosystem. The Honourable Member spoke to what larger vessels can do, washing out their bilges and so on, and when the Honourable Member for St. Michael South spoke the only persons that he could have identified that were doing anything that was environmentally degrading to our ocean were our jet-ski operators. The same sort of thinking that we have seen from him in the past when he launched the broadside on the taxi operators hours after he was named a minister. This is the same sort of thinking that we have seen from him when he attacked community tourism.

Mr. SPREAKER: Honourable Member, there is no need to go there.

Mr. R.L. SEALY: Why is it that we must constantly identify the areas where our ordinary Barbadians are having an opportunity to see some sorts of entrepreneurial expression? In that respect, I too think that it is worrying that so many of these operators have found themselves having to dispose of their assets and to get out of business altogether. It is something that should concern this Government.

Asides

Mr. R.L. SEALY: Yes, Harrison's Cave might be the number one attraction but by and large the majority of people coming to Barbados in numbers is still because of sea and sand, that is all that we really have. We do not have any vast forest that we can talk about having any interior styled tourism products. Places like Guyana and Dominica would think of tourism in those terms. We basically have sea, sand and sun.

H56: 14.00 p.m.

Sequence 18

Tuesday, March 01,

2005

House 56, sequence 19,
2:00 p.m.

Continuation of Mr. R.L. SEALY:

Therefore, the very business activity that rotates around what is still our strongest selling point, is one area where this Government should recognise that the ordinary people should have a chance for full expression.

Sir, I would hope that considering now we are hearing that 80 per cent of the persons on the cruise vessels who come into the Port actually get off, I am very surprised to hear those figures as well, I note that the Minister spoke about market research being performed but he did not cite anything that we could digest in here. There was no document laid in the House or anything of that matter, but at the same time, if 80 per cent of the cruise passengers are getting off the vessels, that is very great.

Obviously, the water sports activity that is occurring in this country and other activities which persons who get off the vessels would want to participate in, we have to look for opportunities where they can see that all Barbadians are given a chance to participate fully, in that exercise.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe that the environmental considerations which have been stated by other Members are worthy of reiteration. Clearly, we must recognise that this ocean of ours still remains something that with one simple mistake can be so impaired, it is rendered impossible for us to do anything in terms of our tourism activities, least of all the shipping and boating activities to which this legislation is speaking.

I will join with the Honourable Member

for the City, in saying that something meaningful has to be done as well, insofar as ensuring that these incentives which are provided for the shipping companies to operate, are also forced to comply rigidly to environmental considerations.

Mr. Speaker, the same way the jet skis could have been identified so eloquently, all of the vessels, including some of the same yachts that sometimes drop their anchors carelessly on our reefs, should also be subjected to a clear understanding that, yes, you could have incentives to operate but at the same time, you cannot just destroy and plunder our very precious resource.

Mr. Speaker, the concerns that we have risen here, it is okay for the influential yachtsmen and boat owners to have their incentives but at the same time, Sir, there must be a change in the thinking and in the policy direction of this Government so that not only the large boat owners, but some of the small operators are given a chance to stay in business and to achieve full expression. Sir, the ordinary Barbadians who may wish to get into the sector, should have every encouragement to do likewise.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to you.

Hon. D.D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, while the Members of the Opposition have been speaking of these amendments almost as if they were nothing more than legislative trivia, we on This Side are sure that sometimes to achieve the greatest impact, one does not need to recast a legislative instrument from top to bottom.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I am of the view that by the relatively small measure of amending the definition of shipping activities to include commercial shipping and boating in the tourist industry, we have been able in one fell swoop,

as the Shakespearians would say, to bring the scope of this legislation into clear and immediate contact with the requirements of the domestic sector.

Mr. Speaker, the Shipping Incentives Act is one that has been marketed extensively abroad but not in Barbados. Sir, when you take into account the relative framework set out in the Shipping Act and couple it with the Shipping Incentives Act, we are able to see a regime created in Barbados where major carriers - and in fact, we are really talking about ships of over 500 gross register tonnes - would have been registered under the Barbados flag. This has been a significant achievement for Barbados. In fact, the Ships Registry in Barbados was the second registry, globally, to have achieved ISO compliance.

Mr. Speaker, all of those efforts tended to have been directed at encouraging forward going vessels to register under the Barbados flag, so as to build our Ships Registry while at the same time, offering a suite of incentives to ships and shipping companies.

I believe that the Honourable Members on the Other Side have done their own research and I am sure they have discovered that the major ship registries in the world are to be found in Panama, Liberia, Cyprus and the Bahamas. These are countries that have been engaged in registering ships - flags of convenience as they are sometimes pejoratively referred to - for many decades. Barbados is a relatively recent entrant.

Mr. Speaker, in a very competitive environment, while at the same time as dealing with the international sector, while we are trying to get foreign going vessels, we also have to make sure that domestic operators, or people who want to engage in the shipping business domestically, do not stand on the outside of the window and watch on, as the

foreign going vessels get all of the benefits.

Therefore, by this simple amendment, Mr. Speaker, we are proposing effectively to bring a raft of benefits within the reach of Barbadian entrepreneurs and even CSME entrepreneurs, so as to bring the idea of a local or regional shipping operation home to all Barbadians.

In fact, I believe that the Honourable Member has great pleasure this morning in laying the Order in relation to one Barbadian shipping company which, I believe, is going to be operating a catamaran, but, Mr. Speaker, we need to see many of these enterprises seizing these opportunities and we need to ensure that the structure which is established is one that is efficient and workable.

Sir, unlike the Honourable Member who just spoke, I do not have any lingering doubts about the honesty and decency of any of the Honourable Members of the frontbench. I do not feel, as the Honourable Member who just spoke obviously feels that Ministers are prone to bad practice and underhand deals and corruption. In fact, one wonders why that is constantly the song that is trumpeted by the Members of the Opposition but that is their song, not ours. Perhaps, it is with good reason that they frequently sing that refrain.

Sir, the fact of the matter is that in today's highly competitive environment we need to ensure that when a corporation or a ship owner applies for incentives that the facility is there and the incentives are accorded to him within a meaningful time. I believe that this Parliament clearly understands the delays that a legislative process can cause in achieving commercial ends.

House 56, sequence 19, 14:1014

2005

Tuesday, March 01,

Continuation of Hon. D. D. MARSHALL:

It is something that we perhaps do not apologise for, but it is something that is very present. Therefore, in my view, it is important not just to the businessmen but to this Government in carrying out its initiatives that when concessions are accorded a particular investor that these concessions can be put into practice in the shortest possible time. We call it efficiency, but the Members of the Opposition are singing that sad refrain that they have been singing this morning about inherent human frailties.

Mr. Speaker, an investor who is going to spend \$200 million in outfitting a huge vessel is hardly going to sit around waiting, and twiddling his thumbs and sitting on his investment and paying interest on interest while our regulatory process creeps from beginning to the point where the concessions are accorded him. In every area of Barbados' commercial framework there is a constant cry that the administrative machinery has to keep pace with the needs of business. By providing that the Minister may by Order accord the incentives subject to the dissent of Parliament, we are putting the Minister in a meaningful position to award incentives in a commercially practicable time.

Mr. Speaker, we also have to recognise that the scope of the investments that we are contemplating are not small-scale things. In fact, I believe that is part of the reason we have not hitherto been able to attract really large investments. We are hoping today to cross over into an environment that is friendly toward business while at the same time maintaining the highest prudential standards of this

Government.

Mr. Speaker, the incentives that have been worked on and the amendments that have been worked on have received the input of the principal Registrar of the Ship Registry in London so we are well aware of the kinds of things that are of particular interest to potential investors. Mr. Speaker, that is what we have to do as a small nation. We have to be constantly on the cutting edge and we have to move Government away from the ponderous beast that it has been in previous years. We have to ensure that as our agencies function that they function with alacrity and that they are able to respond to needs in the time that makes a venture commercially viable.

Mr. Speaker, one of the amendments proposed include a total exemption, and states that where a person other than a commercial bank provides funding for an approved shipping activity by means of a loan or otherwise, either the interest or the dividends received by that person shall be exempt from income tax. When you compare that with the provisions that were there before, this is a quantitatively better position, and is therefore a more meaningful incentive to offer an investor.

Mr. Speaker, competition in this area is great as perhaps it is in all of the areas in which Barbados must stand toe to toe with competing jurisdictions. We really want to see our legislation promoted. I am well aware that the Ship Registry in London has been doing a tremendous amount of work and there are several sub-registries scattered across the globe registering ships under our Barbados Shipping Act and providing through them existing parliamentary process for the incentives under the Shipping Incentives Act to be extended to those companies.

Mr. Speaker, you are competing with jurisdictions such as Cyprus and Liberia where

there is no tax regime in place, you pay a fee to the Government based on the tonnage of the ship. In fact, in some of those jurisdictions they have a very straightforward formula. You do not have to calculate income and expenses and tax deductions and so on, you pay simply based on the tonnage of the ship.

Mr. Speaker, those are jurisdictions where from time to time the quality of the flag has been called into question. While that may be an easy route, Barbados recognised that our reputation globally stands not just on whether it is efficient but also whether we are able to attract high quality shipping companies to our shores. We actually have been successful in landing some huge shipping companies and to have their vessels registered in Barbados, but these companies came to Barbados knowing that they are coming to carry a flag of a country that has a solid reputation. Mr. Speaker, that is the other matter that I would want to briefly mention.

Mr. Speaker, when vessels operate under the purview of our Shipping Act and our Shipping Incentives Act they are bound by the various international treaties that Barbados is party to in relation to such things as the environment and the maintenance of the quality of our oceans. It is a clear requirement that ships and ship owning companies that operate under our legislative framework must comply with these standards. Mr. Speaker, that is one of the measures of whether a domicile or a jurisdiction is a jurisdiction with a high reputation. I am quite sure in my mind that this particular Minister constantly ensures that his various officers are always at the International Maritime Organisation conferences dealing with the various conventions and protocols to the conventions so that they can always be abreast of the various developments and the emerging trends.

Sir, what we have is an environment that

seeks to be efficient, to be attractive and also seeks to place tremendous emphasis on the sanctity of the environment.

Mr. Speaker, we need not recast this legislation from top to bottom to achieve salutary effects. We on this side of this House are satisfied that these incentives that are being brought to this legislation by way of amendments are such that there would be brought within the reach of the Barbadian entrepreneur who wants to seize a shipping opportunity whether it is a leisure craft, a cruise liner or whatever it is. It is now bringing these opportunities within the reach of Barbadian entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore have no hesitation in commending this set of amendments to this Honourable House.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to make a contribution to this debate because I believe that it is important for the continued development of Barbados, its tourism product and in particular with respect to this Bill, the relationship to developing the pleasure craft and yachting industry in Barbados.

However, Mr. Speaker, I support this Bill in a critical way because I believe that irrespective of trying to advance or to develop a particular industry, even though the amendments that are made may appear on the surface as though they are in the interest of the development of that particular sector, sometimes by making the amendments, we remove some checks and balances in the system. Sir, at times we make the amendments that allow for possibly the utilisation of powers of Ministers that I believe should be checked, given a new set of regional and international multilateral arrangements that we are supposed to be signatory to.

2:20 p.m.

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Continuation of Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I believe that such a Bill and its amendments must necessarily allow for integration within the newly formed Caribbean Single Market and Economy, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and the World Trade Organisation multilateral arrangements. It is from that perspective that I have some concerns with respect to this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I start by saying that the drafters of the principal Bill were correct in making sure that because we are dealing with large sums of investments and large sums of tax concessions, that it was necessary to maintain Parliament as the watchdog of the expenditure of the people. I believe it was also important that the drafters of the principal Bill recognised that when dealing with international agencies that need to get a piece of legislation or policy position moved quickly through the system, that is when it should be moved slowly, especially when dealing with large sums of money.

Sir, it bothers me when I look at section 3 of the Bill, where an amendment is put in place which allows a Minister, simply by Order, to make a decision and a determination, with respect to what would be considered a shipping company, and the kinds of concessions that a shipping company can get.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the original Bill, as was indicated by my comrade, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, that allowed for a negative resolution by

Parliament, was the correct way to deal with it. At least we should have an affirmative resolution as is indicated into Chapter One of the Laws of Barbados. I believe that was a wise decision taken. I believe that it is an error on the behalf of the drafters, to have allowed for such a change to occur in the new Bill.

Mr. Speaker, this does not cast any negative aspersions on anyone. It does not suggest that there is any malfeasance. It is a matter of protecting the interest of the people of Barbados. It is a matter of making sure that if there are incentives to be given to any individual or company, whether locally or externally, that Parliament has a mandate to look out for the expenditure of the people's money, or to determine what concessions are given. This should not be simply handed into the hands of a Minister. I will not support that because I think it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask what is fundamentally wrong with section 5 of the original Bill. Section 5 in particular, relates to a number of incomes tax provision. Therefore, I would want the Honourable Member for St. Michael South to tell the people of Barbados why this portion of the Bill is to be totally removed, because it was put there for a reason.

Sir, section 6 of the Bill where there is a distinction made for tax concessions given for Barbadians and non-Barbadians, where, in the principal Bill, non-Barbadians were subjected to taxes on their dividends, whereas for Barbadians, there was no tax provision on their dividends.

Sir, this section has been totally removed and I think Barbadians need to have an explanation for that. If the country is being moved into a CSME-readiness, into a FTAA-readiness, into a WTO-readiness, I want to understand the discriminatory components that seem to be invoked in this situation and I would

want the Honourable Member for St. Michael South to explain this in the interest of the country.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to go to another area of concern which relates to section 5.4. of the Bill, items identified in the First Schedule which deal with incurred expenditure by an approved shipping company. Sir, I do not have a problem with giving out tax concessions or incentives but I find some of them to be absurd.

Mr. Speaker, I will not support a position of Government where a company can deduct the salaries and wages paid to employees, during their travel overseas to promote yachting and boating tourism in Barbados, which would benefit the company. I will not support provisions such as cost of advertising or other means of soliciting business or publicity outside of Barbados, neither will I support where the cost of providing pamphlets and brochures for distribution abroad is also tax deductible. There are other things in the First Schedule which I consider to be absurd, for example, at No.9:

"Cost incurred in bringing journalists to Barbados and persons involved with international guides and documentation, where the promotion of yachting or boating tourism in Barbados is the sole objective."

Sir, this should not be here. As far as I am concerned, that is not the way that taxpayers' money should be spent. If you are talking about giving concession to a foreign company, a company that comes into Barbados with a significant amount of investment capacity, I do not believe that some of these revenues that should necessary come to Barbados should necessarily be written-off, in the interest of these large companies. I too would want the Minister to look very carefully at that section.

Mr. Speaker, I also looked at the section with what is allowed for duty concession and with respect to Customs duty. Sir, I have a problem with both sections One and Two because the deal is a sweet deal. It is such a sweet deal that I have major concerns with respect to whether or not this Government is going overboard with these types of concessions, in order to attract businesses to Barbados.

I understand the talk about competition, about how difficult it is, about the need to compete with large players and about luring businesses to Barbados, but at what expense. Who benefits in the long run? The Minister speaks of 556 registered vessels but I would want to ask how many of these vessels are owned by Barbadians, and how many are regional or extra-regional.

Mr. Speaker, if I am to accept that we are supposed to develop an indigenous yachting or pleasure craft industry, given that within a World Trade Organisation and a Free Trade Area of the Americas multilateral framework, we cannot introduce discriminatory elements. Sir, at the same time, it is important that we in Barbados create situations which would allow us to maximise our advantages and benefits from those concessions, instead of other entities taking that money out of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I have a knowledge of how multilateral companies operate. Therefore, with many of these multilateral entities being given all of the concessions, all that Barbadians would get would be jobs, with very little retraining, while those entities would operate with a sweatshop mentality. That is not the type of development that I want to see for Barbados. Sir, if the argument is that part of this requires a significant opportunity for a technology transfer or educational transfer, then I am all for those sorts of things, instead of simply

providing concessions because an entity is going to come here and would give a Bajan a job sweeping floors. Sir, I am not going to be part of that type of development. I have seen that type of development in the 1930s and 1940s and, therefore, I will not support that now.

H:No.56(21)230 p.m.

Tuesday, March 1,
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Continuation of Dr.D.C. ESTWICK:

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak on the harmonisation of many of the elements of this Bill. We are supposed to be within a Caribbean Single Market and Economy where CARICOM members operate within a set of arrangements that affect both labour and capital movement. I want to ask the Minister if there will be another set of amendments later that would deal with the CARICOM element or whether the CARICOM member has another set of criteria or opportunities that would be different from a Barbadian, a person from North America or from Canada.

Sir, do we have to come here again to introduce an amendment that will bring this Bill in synch with the Caribbean Single Market and Economy amendment which was put in place? Sir, I do not understand what we are doing. I have a strong feeling that this is a hipshot reaction on behalf of this administration because this amendment should have been in another Bill brought to Parliament recently.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Honourable Member from St. Michael South Central that heavy lobbying and pressure have taken a toll on the administration and that Government had to find a way to stick in the amendment some place. When I read the Bill, I do not see any sense of planning with respect to where the

further expansion of what shipping activities means. Sir, the old Bill says that shipping activities means the operation of ships for the carriage of passengers and cargo.

Mr. Speaker, Government has come to Parliament and introduce within the Bill one component, Section B, Commercial Shipping and Boating in the Tourism Industry without any understanding that the mere amendment to the Bill will do nothing at all for the development of that industry in Barbados because there are many other facets infrastructurally and financially that needs to be put in place to get it done. Sir, to come to Parliament and stick it in because it would affect a small operator in Mullins or Bay Street will do nothing.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South said that the mere amendment is the basis to create a sector in itself. Sir, the Honourable Member would have to be reading something that does not make sense.

Asides.

Dr.D.C. ESTWICK: The Honourable Member said that it allows landbased and cruise tourism to be merged. Sir, this is a hipshop reaction and will do none of the things which the Honourable Member said. All this hifalutin talk and hyperbole bothers me. Sir, in the final analysis, I want to find out how Barbadians will benefit from the amendment because this is my responsibility as a parliamentarian.

Are Barbadians going to have greater access to job, greater opportunities within the shipping industry, the pleasure craft industry or in any aspect to deal with this shipping incentive Bill? Sir, this is what I want to hear about. I do not want to hear about how many concessions are given to a big company from Taiwan or Morocco. The Honourable Member

for St. Michael South should tell the people of Barbados how they are going to benefit them.

Mr. Speaker, my last point deals with Section 6 of the Bill. The Honourable Member from St. Michael South Central asked a question relative to Section 3. Why is it that the Minister should have such power when dealing with such large sums of money? When I look at Section 5, the term capital expenditure is used. We could write-off up to \$200 million with respect to capital expenditure and it can be deducted for 15 years against your profit. Mr. Speaker, that is a significant concession. The company can also carry forward losses for nine years after the conclusion of the concessional period but this period used to be six years before.

Mr. Speaker, there are many customs concessions as well as those in Schedule 1 and now you can deduct your capital expenditure to the tune of \$200 million over fifteen years and then carry forward your losses. Sir, that is excessive and I want to know what risk do they take because business is about risk and any businessman knows that. I guess this Government is so desperate for private investment that it would do anything to facilitate the private sector. I forget the levy of one per cent, that is also a tax concession and I believe they would also be exempted from VAT based on the income tax laws. Everything they bring into Barbados would be tax free. If they make a capital investment, it can be written-off and if they make a loss it can be carried forward as well.

Mr. Speaker, it is frightening and I want to know, when all is said and done, how Barbadians are going to benefit from this. This is the major question which I want the Honourable Member for St. Michael South to answer and to explain to Barbadians how they will benefit from all these sweet deals and wide-ranging concessions.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support this because it removes Parliament from having a check and balance responsibility with respect to what happens at the ministerial level. I believe the minimum that should be put in place should be place is some form of affirmative Resolution. I believe the qualifications for a shipping company should not be removed. I also strongly believe that the discrimination with respect to Section 5 that deals with deduction and taxes on dividends where a Barbadian had no taxes to pay on the dividends but a foreign entity has to pay taxes on the dividends. These are suddenly removed and the foreign entity now gets the same concession as Barbadians which also happened with the transfer tax.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that all the concessions that have been given are too wide-ranging and I do not believe there is any risk to come to Barbados to do business according to what the Honourable Member presented here today.

Sir, based on those things, I cannot support this particular Bill. I thank you, Sir.

H56/14:40

Sequence 22

Tuesday, March 1,
1005

CONTINUATION OF... Mr. SPEAKER:
The Honourable Member for St. James Central.

Hon. K.D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, the questions put by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West are useful questions and can be answered very briefly. Yes, this amendment to the Shipping (Incentives) Act is aimed at improving the quality of life of Barbadians, putting more people to work and it is intended

that the long-term result will be the further enhancement and buoyancy of the Barbados economy. Sir, the demonstration of why that is the case is quite easily made and I am going to begin at section 2 of the Act.

I am grateful to the Honourable Member that preceded me for raising some of the issues. I suspect that if members of the listening public have these difficulties, then it is only useful that we resolve them now.

Sir, the Shipping (Incentives) Act, Chapter 90 A of the Laws of Barbados came into force on December 1, 1982. At section 2 of that Act we were given an opportunity to have a definition of shipping activities, which was very limited. It reflected the priorities of the age.

In 1982 the economy of Barbados and by extension the economies of the Caribbean were primarily interested and consumed by the trade in goods related commodities. Sir, with the advent of an entirely new regime under the GATS and a new set of disciplines, internationally recognising the significance of the sector of services, we sought to amend the legislation so as to speak incisively and directly with tremendous force to the critical issue of commercial shipping and boating in the tourist industry.

Mr. Speaker, why do we do that? Sir, you just have to look around the Caribbean, let us deal with the region first and foremost. It has been repeatedly said that this region benefits from an international competitive advantage against the entire world. We like to beat ourselves very badly but we dominate the players in the globe in the context of boating tourism, specifically cruise tourism.

Approximately 53 per cent of the globe's cruise tourism comes through this region. We are not the only players but we are certainly not

failures.

Sir, if we, small islands as we are, dominate the world insofar as that small market is concerned, then it makes an abundance of good sense for us to sculpt our legislation so that we speak directly to the benefits of having an investment and incentive regime built around the further advancement of that specific area where we hold a competitive advantage against the rest of the world.

Mr. Speaker, some aspects of what we have heard during the course of some of the submissions from the Honourable Members on the other side thus far, almost can be described as sitting and listening to pupils fighting among themselves to grapple with the understanding of some elementary issues. One major issue in my view is the failure to recognise that which the social scientists, particularly the practitioners of economics refer to as the theory of creative destruction.

Sir, an industry, which is an old and decaying industry but which has served a useful purpose, and has demonstrated that it has done so, begins to fall away and with it there is a consequential falloff in employment. The sectors that industry touched directly or indirectly also reflect that fall-off but there is an overtaking by way of a new type of industry. That is where you have the creativity on one hand and the destruction on the other.

Sir, there are towns and village in Barbados which were built from our fishing community and the trade of boat building, repairing and equipping of boats was something that fed several thousand Barbadians and Barbadian families. As fate would have it, the fishing as it was then, and to some extent as it is now, is beginning to lose its sparkle and advantage. Therefore, you will no longer have the boat building going on in Fitts Village, Oistin or to a lesser extend Silver Sands. Sir,

what does Government do? A conscientious and responsive government must sit down and look at the fact that there is still an interest in the seafaring community and all of those things connected to maritime affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Lucy talk about people from Paynes Bay, Fitts Village and along the west coast, most of whom would have come from fishing communities on the west coast and who found themselves into the jet-ski business. The jet ski business, whether run properly or improperly, is another debate. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy does not wisely seek to speak to the propriety of the manner in which it is run. When there is a fall-off in the jet-ski business are these people still not inclined, by virtue to the geographical proximity to the sea, by virtue of areas of specialist expertise that they have developed over time, by virtue of the historical relationship the communities have had with the sea, are these people not inclined to find and earn their living, and well-being near and through maritime affairs?

Sir, when one recognises that reality, not only does one negate any substance to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy's argument but one then comes back to the legislation which is attracting the attention of the Honourable House today. The legislation, at the Second Schedule, is speaking specifically to the question of building, refurbishing, maintenance, repairs and equipping of boats. We are recognising that the boat building industry is significant and critical.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados is at a crossroad. We can have a blinker-vision of the world and say that the only way forward is by doing things exactly the way we used to do them and that we can only understand boat building in the context of a Moses. If it gets big enough to be made of fiberglass vessel and we can put it out to sea for four days, is that as far as

Barbados can go or can we see that there is far more, not only by way of direct building but by the ancillary and related services connected.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this Honourable House to pause and reflect where we were a few years ago. It was this Barbados which lost the transatlantic race to St. Lucia. It was this Barbados which did not have the type of marina facilities that St. Lucia had. It was this Barbados that does not have the capacity to maintain yachts, retrofit and refurbish them like Road Town, Tortola has. It is this same Barbados which does not have the capacity to berth the number of yachts that Road Town, Tortola can. We last heard that Tortola has the capacity to berth 2 500 yachts at one time.

Sir, when we began in the north of the country with Port St. Charles there was a huge outcry of condemnation from the Opposition. When one comes to Parliament and seeks to revise the Shipping Incentives Act and to build into the Act a Schedule which specifically speaks to all water sports...

H56:14.50 p.m.

Sequence 23

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

House 56, sequence 24,
2:50 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. K.D. SYMMONDS:

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by trying to give the impression that it is the Opposition that stopped the Government from getting back the transatlantic race to Port St. Charles when in truth and in fact, it was not the Opposition that stopped them.

Hon. K.D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, at no time did I make any such suggestion. Again, it only indicates that the Honourable Member is out of his depth. Sir, the transatlantic race was one that would involve 400 or more yachts. There was nowhere in Barbados that could adequately compete to host such a volume of yachts and that is why they found themselves in St. Lucia.

Sir, what we are seeking to do now is to put in place the legislative framework which would provide for the investment opportunities and climate that, down the road, not only would we recapture that lucrative prize but also others of similar dimension and proportion.

Mr. Speaker, one does not have to come here every Tuesday to hold tutorials for Members of the Opposition. They can understand these things, if they would do a little homework. Sir, when they go overseas, it is not just a question of going into Macys and looking for a silk blouse, but of trying and see some of what is happening in the rest of the world and how economies are run.

I refuse to believe that of all the countries in the Caribbean and other places, and all the times that they are to be seen, that not one of them understands what are the economic benefits that a marina has been to any of our sister states in CARICOM. Sir, are we supposed to be trying to not only compete but also to secure an advantage in the competition.

Mr. Speaker, this is what hurts me about the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. He lives in the north. Everybody from St. Lucy knows that Barbados is the first stop after you leave the African coast but the Honourable Member would ask why it is that we lost the race. Everybody knows, Sir, that is the closest point to the Canaries. Everybody knows we lost the race precisely because we did not have the

institutional infrastructure with which to deal with what we were trying to attract.

Mr. Speaker, where do we go from here? It is important for us to recognise that the future of the cruise tourism industry in the Caribbean is at stake. If we believe that forevermore we are going to be able to attract such a massive volume of one of the world's most lucrative businesses, without ever buying into it or trying to reshape it to suit our interest, then we are hopelessly out of touch with reality.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip West made the point that we were, in his words, discriminating in favour of investors. I think that is what he was trying to say.

Asides.

Hon. K.D. SYMMONDS: We started from point zero. We owned little or nothing. We do not own the boats. We do not own the companies. All we have is the resource that people come to see. What we saying, Mr. Speaker, is that it is important for us to try to build a framework, which is so attractive that people will want to come here and invest heavily in our product.

In that context, Mr. Speaker, and in the context of a Caribbean that practised industrialisation by invitation and offered people in the commodities trade 10-year tax-free holidays, who set up an industrial park that, comparatively speaking, offered far smaller returns to the Caribbean economies, what is it that we are doing so wrong, if 15 years is offered to an investor?

Mr. Speaker, the things that the Honourable Member for St. Philip West quarrels about within the First Schedule of the Bill are marketing expenditures. Sir, let me say to this House that there are Barbadians who made it abundantly clear, to the visiting

delegation from China that just left the Caribbean, that they are willing to work with them in a venture along the lines of cruise tourism.

I told this House already, Sir, of a Barbadian businessman who was able to say that he had approximately US\$20 million to invest along the lines of self service gas stations but because of the fact that we feel, as a Government that this would only augment the pool of unemployment, it is not the best form of investment, that he should think again.

Mr. Speaker, having said all of that, when we have demonstrated that there are Barbadian businessmen of calibre, who are prepared to come forward to add to what can only be an opportunity to further employ people in the country, what is wrong with having marketing expenditure being given some sort of a tax exemption? This is what we are offering to exempt, Sir, payments to an agent who is engaged in the promotion of yachting or boating tourism, working overseas.

Obviously, if you are going to invest in something of this magnitude, you are going to have to get into the capitals of the world. You are going to have to go up to the United States of America, England, Scandinavia and let people know about the Barbadian or the Canadian/Barbadian product, if it is a joint venture.

Mr. Speaker, there is also the cost of advertising or other means of soliciting business and publicity outside of Barbados. Again, if you are going to make the investment, you must be prepared to put money behind the investment, so that people know it exists and what it is about. The cost of providing pamphlets or brochures to quote the Honourable Member, he said, "it is a waste of taxpayers' money."

First of all, it is not coming directly out of the taxpayers' pocket. What it is, Sir, is a waiver of taxes but, ever if one is to accept that, one is saying that the cost of supplying pamphlets or brochures, in order to advertise an investment of the sort of proportions we are talking about...

I ask, is the Parliament serious? Sir, let us understand that there are financial moguls in the Caribbean. In the same way that there was a businessman in the Caribbean that could own a major airline, there are business people in the Caribbean who are prepared to put money into cruise tourism. Are we not making sport of the issue, if we are not going to say to these people that we also recognise that it is not just about building or purchasing the infrastructure, but about advertising that which you are offering as a product? Sir, it is that product which is going to put Barbadians to work in the repairs, Servicing and maintenance areas, when you have to purchase provisions for vessels. There are countless ancillary industries.

Sir, I go back to the question of just the yachts. If you go to Florida, you will see the big storehouses, taller than this building, where yachts are stockpiles one on top of the other. People will store the yacht for a fee and pay people to maintain the yacht. It is a massive business and when we create the infrastructure where little Barbados can get into the business, and have the legislative framework that will make us competitive and attractive to people who will want to spend money, based on Barbados' excellent international reputation in tourism and in governance, then you will have an Opposition that comes and 'pooh pooh' and seeks to make light of the issue.

Mr. Speaker, I hear talk about the FTAA and I make the point that it is necessary for us to become literate in what we are speaking about before we speak.

Continuation of Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS:

Mr. Speaker, we, as a Government, do not need lessons on how to fight discrimination. Sir, for the benefit of my friend, discrimination is being fought on a daily basis in all the trade negotiations. This Government was one of those governments that took the lead in recognising, that under the World Trade Organisation and the Free Trade Area of the Americas, cruise tourism is not recognised as a service. Mr. Speaker, that means that cruise tourism fills up this anonymous little category which means little or nothing called maritime transportation. Therefore, the benefits of the service negotiations are being lost in many ways to the cruise tourism and the ancillary services connected to it.

Sir, if little Bonito Restaurant is to attract people that come here on a cruise liner they cannot get on to the cruise liner before it comes to Barbados with somebody that they paid or retained in a port to say look this is where you are to go in Barbados because this has the best buffet luncheon in town. Sir, the catchment area for the tourist is where the cruise controlling group says they should go. They will tell the passengers to go to Sandy Lane and play golf for the day and to have their lunch there. Those are the kinds of little discrimination, the 'soft' prejudice, that we fight at the trade negotiation level every single day.

Therefore, it should not lie in the Honourable Member mouth that we are discriminating against anybody or that we are not trying to do anything about discrimination. We fight a fight against discrimination on behalf of the small players, the same taxi-drivers the Honourable Member talks about all the time, because of the vertical integration of the system.

Asides.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: That is not the fault of the Government, it is the fault of an unholy alliance whereby a man would own a cruise business, an airline, the charter company and the travel agency and he will fill the plane or the boat with everybody that he can get and will hand-pick or cherry-pick one individual or one company down here in Barbados and that individual or company, knowing full well that they are the beneficiaries of all the sweets, will buy three or four big buses and squeeze out the small taxi-driver as a result of that process.

Mr. Speaker, you have been in here long enough, sitting in that chair and I would wager you, not that you are a betting man, but were you willing to bet, that you have not heard a word from that side about the difficulties of vertical integration since you have been sitting in that chair.

Sir, when we went into the World Trade Organisation and made all the commitments, the Honourable Member for St. John was the Minister of Finance. Therefore, part of the problem which the Honourable Member for St. John will have as an enduring legacy is his failure to realise that which he was committing Barbados to without dialogue. He will blush with embarrassment now but he would have to continue to hear it. That is what we fight against.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious piece of legislation, and we have to recognise that it is not supposed to be treated lightly by just coming and saying that we do not support it because of the fact that there is some tax incentive which is being given.

Sir, in a market which is as lucrative as the cruise market in the Caribbean, you cannot start from a zero position and try to compete in

terms of ownership against the rest of the world. What makes it more interesting for somebody to invest in Barbados or in any of the Caribbean countries today rather than going into the Mediterranean? Mr. Speaker, the only way that can make it more interesting to the investor is that he is going to get a return on his investment.

Therefore, when he comes here, he has a lovely market, a lovely climate, good governmental structures for the most part - long may it remain that way but we would have to hope that the people keep their eyes on the Honourable Member for St. John - and on top of that he has an exciting piece of legislation which would give him an investment framework so that he can see financial fruits and fulfilment. If the investor sees those financial rewards on the horizon and he can work within the investment framework, why then would he not invest? That is what this legislation is about.

Mr. Speaker, there must come a time, I suspect, when the Opposition will realise a good thing, and in spite of the political divide which is really only a few feet across the Floor of the House, would not instinctively, in a knee-jerk way, condemn, but in the interest of the broader well-being of the country, seek to associate themselves with it.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I opted to enter into this particular debate because the contributions of the Honourable Members on this side all of which I thought were very dutifully carried out, as is the obligation and responsibility of Members of the Opposition, not to the Government but to the people of Barbados, missed one important element that must never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, this Government

continuously brings pieces of legislation to this Chamber to facilitate either sector specific incentives or in some cases individual specific incentives or project specific incentives, and on every occasion the Opposition has supported the Government, based on the very lofty declarations of fairness, equality and transparency and how these incentives are going to develop a sector, only to discover months or a year later that these well-crafted pieces of legislation very often benefit a very narrow category of individual investors. This Government consumes much of its time crafting and drafting legislation to give incentives and benefits to its private sector friends and sponsors and to individuals who come here very often with projects which have neither the prospect of being implemented or the prospect of success.

Sir, this Parliament was engaged in all kinds of exercises and gyrations to hustle at the behest of the Honourable Member for St. Peter, so that no stone would be unturned to facilitate Port St. Charles. The Honourable Member for St. James Central, the novice that he is to these things, or I should say pro-initiate...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Come on, please.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: We did not have to pass laws for that, we did it under the law. We had to pass laws to help his friend, the Barbados Shipping and Trading, to get what they wanted and we had to pass laws to facilitate Port St. Charles. At the time when this House went through those gyrations we were told that the developers had tears in their eyes when they saw the ARC race begin moved from Barbados to St. Lucia, so they had to rush to mobilise investment to get a marina built in Barbados to facilitate those kinds of development only later to discover that the Port St. Charles Development had nothing to do

with any ARC race or with what people might consider the lower end or lower class yachters, but had everything to do with facilitating a very unique limited number of persons who would own properties in the marina and who would also own both.

House 56 Sequence 25

3:10 p.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, we were not told that at the time, therefore, while the Honourable Member for St. James Central was crying at the arc race going to St. Lucia, they apparently were crying too and those persons whom he is now facilitating by this legislation, he was with the Honourable Members of the Opposition then, saying that we should not facilitate.

Mr. Speaker, there is one thing about Opposition Members quarreling with each other. Opposition Members may quarrel with each other, trying to get an outcome but when you are quarreling with yourself, you have a problem. People who stand by their principles do not quarrel with themselves. People who believe in something do not have to quarrel with themselves. People who are consistent do not have to quarrel with themselves. People who do not do deals behind the scenes do not have to quarrel with themselves.

Asides.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, as far as I am concerned, it obviously would cause some Honourable Members on that side great difficulty because they would have been

leading the charge on the streets for empowerment of the black masses, the people who they wanted to represent, the small water sport operators in St. James, the people who had small yachts and a number of jet-skis and catamarans, and the same Government in office was then being accused of standing in the way of the progress of these young people but now...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You represented one on my behalf, one I grew up with in Fitts Village, whose yacht was stopped from parking by the Barbados Beach Village, but you would not remember that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He owned the catamaran but you would not remember that now. You are too detached from that.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, and I speak especially to the Honourable Member for St. James Central, I am begging you, do not interrupt this House. We have had enough of that. Do not interrupt the Honourable Member.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I am going to pass on that because this Opposition is accused of all manner of petty nonsense for undertaking its duties on the behalf of the people. All that Ministers need to do, unless they are the repositories of all knowledge, is to make note of the criticisms and to respond to them. Honourable Members on that side seem to get so offended. People on this side can be accused of not walking through Bridgetown, and if you did not notice six concrete blocks on the ground and two bags of cement, you would not know that they were building a market. If you did not notice two pieces of plywood and a tarpaulin, you would

not realise that the Government has started a project, so you do not live in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, that is the level to which debates have sunk in here by a Government which does not have any new ideas, a Government that does not have the prospect of implementing anything, because this legislation is the product of budgetary proposals from way back. This is not an original thought of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South. He may have many original thoughts but this is not one of them. I have not seen many either, but I know that this is not one. This is not the original thought of anybody over there and, of course, the Honourable Member for St. James Central was not with them when it was talked about, so it is not his thought either.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the point I am trying to make is that this legislation is the product of statements made about shipping legislation in Barbados, about five or six budgets ago.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You go and check and see when the first debate on the Shipping (Amendment) Bill would have taken place in a Budget in this House. We debated it then and legislation was to come to the House. Sir, how long does it take for a Government, which is in such a hurry to traverse the new frontiers, according to the Honourable Member for the City, a Government in a hurry, to get things done? A Government using the most modern technology and the most advance administrative process to get Barbados going, and it takes three years to put in place amendments, the language of which is so similar to the Special Development Areas legislation, to the legislation covering other specialised development and sectoral

developments in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing unique about the legislation we see here. There was a Tourism Development Act, which gave similar kinds of concessions and even that, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South was able to get before this Honourable House in record time, accordingly by this Government's standards. Sir, now four years later, we are debating a Shipping (Amendment) Bill as if it suddenly....

Mr. Speaker, let us take the Members of the Cabinet or the Honourable Member for St. Michael South to Trinidad. Trinidad attracts thousands of yachts and there is a reason for that. They are perceived as being out of the hurricane belt. At Chaguaramas they have set up major maintenance facilities and they have a pretty elaborate arrangement there. Sir, we have to find out why and how that is successful. We are acting as though we are the only country in the Caribbean that is now traversing this road.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You obviously are not listening to what Honourable Members on your side are saying. It is true that you are an Honourable Member longer than they have been but the impression was given, and it was said, that your Government is in advance. I can only understand the word 'advance' to mean one thing.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, you are in retreat, if you are not in advance.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Jamaica has about five marinas and Tortola has a major

marina project. I am saying that the experiences are there. I am in support of it. Nobody is quarreling about it but Honourable Members of the Opposition are raising legitimate concerns, concerns that have arisen in other territories in the Caribbean, concerns about the pace at which this Government operates, concerns about the absence of ideas and concerns about the way the Bill will be implemented.

Mr. Speaker, having passed all of these pieces of legislation to facilitate incentives in sectors and for individuals, there still is a perception of Barbados as a place in which decisions that are made under ministerial discretion, under these pieces of legislation, are not made fairly. There is the perception that there are people who can get through faster and quicker and for whom the wheel is greased. Yet there are others who make applications, whose applications remain on the minister's desk for year, just like the legislation.

H:No.56(26)320 p.m.

Tuesday, March 1,
2005

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

I believe that if Government is going to pass legislation of this type, that the highest integrity needs to accompany it and commitments must be given that people who make application will have them dealt with in a timely manner and that they would not be victimised. Sir, if they have legitimate investment projects coming to Barbados, they would be given the same fair and equal treatment as anyone else.

Sir, one of the reasons why Barbadians often feel like second-class citizens in their own country is because they cannot afford to wine and dine people like professionals, engineers, town planners and all kinds of other

advisors down Sandy Lane to explain their projects. Sir, they have limited resources and time and often limited skills to put together a project proposal. I am asking that the Government exercises greater fairness and balance in dealing with the applications of people who come under these areas of incentive legislation in this country and to cut out the favoritism and the fast-tracking of certain applications so that people would not have to question the integrity of the systems as they are now doing legitimately.

Sir, the second concern I have is about speed and efficiency. I do not know why we have stop writing into these pieces of legislation that the Minister must give a decision within a specified time. Everywhere else in the world, Government departments are publishing charters in which they indicate that they are going to make decisions within a specified time as long as all the information is available. Sir, we have published a few in Barbados which have all been meaningless. Government has promised to publish a list of all the applicants made in certain areas along with what happens to the application, where they were sent, if they were dealt with or if they were not approved but, we do not see these things anymore. Sir, all of that was just old talk.

The role of Parliament has been removed from the Shipping Incentive legislation because the question of the Negative Resolution Section has been amended. There are no time frames for applications to be dealt with, the Minister exercises the widest possible discretion in relation to these pieces of legislation and the process often grinds to a complete halt for some people in this country.

I believe this is something that the Minister must address. I want to hear how quickly legitimate applications can be processed from anyone, not just Barbadians

because we live in a Caribbean Single Market and Economy as well as we have international obligations. We need to give those kinds of commitments that those applications will be dealt with quickly and swiftly to the benefit of investors in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the third point relates to the widest possible participation and how we are going to help those people who want to benefit from legislation of this sort if they do not have the professional advice or the other intellectual skills to do it. It is pointless walking around and saying that we are committed to the small black man and the water sports operators, that we would never allow people to come to the island to do this or that but there is nothing in place to facilitate their accessing benefits under legislation of this sort. We need to say what is it that we are going to put in place.

The best thing about the small business regime as they are wont to call it, is the fact that in addition to the legislation which came down, that Government was persuaded to put in place arrangements to assist people in accessing the benefits but that seldom obtains in Government.

Mr. Speaker, we live in an era where Government departments interface with the public but if someone cannot fill out a form, God help them, because there is no customer assistance, no information booth or public person to assist citizens in accessing information about what they are doing. We have shipping incentive legislation, some of which are going to impact on people making moderate investment, but what is Government going to do to ensure that people have access to the benefits being prescribed under this Parliament legislation. This is one of the reasons why average Barbadians view themselves as second-class citizens in this country. This is something we need to deal with so that people do not feel that they are

being squeezed.

A lot of Barbadians who want to make modest investment in this country are being squeezed. They are being squeezed at the bottom by declining wage rates in some sectors and at the top by persons who have access to incentives and other benefits that they cannot access because they do not have the wherewithal to come to the place where those benefits exist. This is why you find that there is so much unrest at the Bridgetown Port by taxi drivers because a lot of highhanded decisions are made without reference to them. Therefore, the modest investments they make are being compromised because they invest in taxi permits, in the taxis, trying to get into the port and then finding that all kinds of regulations are imposed on them in an era where every other barrier is coming down.

Sir, the barriers for professionals like doctors and lawyers are coming down but in Barbados, we impose more and more restrictions and licences and mechanisms which create an environment of oppression and alienation for the average Barbadian; then members of this Parliament who are Ministers of Government empower administrators to put in place all kinds of absurd procedures for people to operate in the only environment they know. Likewise, the problem also exists with water sports operators and they too have been alienated. It is not surprising as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said that despite what the Government was proclaiming for years about people in that sector, which is akin to the shipping sector, many of them have lost their assets because they were merely eking out an existence on the coast of Barbados.

The definition of the word beach does not give them access to the people who sit on beach chairs. The other kind of restrictions that exists because Government allowed the unbridled development along the west coast

without windows to the sea, have shut them out from access to tourists coming off tourist liners and there were other environmental restrictions put in place.

Sir, I am not knocking any of these things, I am simply saying that the cumulative effect of that, all-inclusive tourism and larger companies coming into Barbados seeking to set up mega operations to facilitate the same tourists who come off the liners, have met with a lot of small Barbadian entrepreneurs in water sports and other areas gone out of business in this country.

Sir, that is the reality, yet Honourable Members on the other side want to give the impression that up and down the coast of Barbados there is a private water sports sector and that they have done everything in their power and control to facilitate it. We all know that jet-ski licences are being sold and that places which once previously facilitated water sports have gone out of business. For example, Bombas, which previously facilitated water sports is now closed.

Asides.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: the Honourable Member for the City says that we cannot tell the owners what to do with their property, so as far as she is concerned, what the water sports operator lost, they have lost. Sir, somebody has to bear that burden but I used to go to Bombas and, on a good day with boats in the harbour, I used to see taxis bring thirty or forty young men because it was the only place they could walk through and access the beach. Sir, this is why the water sports operators were there.

H56/15:30

Sequence 28

Tuesday, March 1,

1005

CONTINUATION OF Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Sir, the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown said that the new owners can do what they like with their property. She knows the new owners better than I do.

Asides

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. He can take that kind of attitude and tone in here because he does not care about a single word that he saying. I do not know who the new owners are or ever were. I am making the point that it is a private property. This Government cannot dictate to a private owner of a property what to do. This is a free country.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Sir, when we came in this Honourable House to acquire John Moore Bar we heard that no foreigner can stop Barbadians from access to the beach and that the Government is going to acquire those properties where Barbadians are being alienated from their rights. I am now hearing the Honourable Member for The City of Bridgetown demonstrating her true outlook on these things, that you cannot tell the owners of properties what to do. Nobody is telling the owners what to do. I am asking the Government, which is sworn to protect the interest of small people of this country, to do something. I am not asking you to ask anybody else to do it. No owner of any snackette on the west coast was elected in here, as far as I know.

Sir, Honourable Members who are elected in here are elected because they go out to the public and say that they are going to protect their interest. Therefore, when things happen in a society which are inimical to the interest of the people, the vast majority of whom go out

and exercise their vote, you would anticipate that a Government would say that it is their responsibility to do something but this Government is very selective about that. That is the point that I am making.

The time will soon come in Barbados that if you want to operate a jet-ski as an independent operator you will have to go to Bath, Cattle Wash or Bathsheba because there are certain parts of this country that will not be accessible to you and that is the story of the vendors in Barbados as well. Many of them have been alienated from access to pedestrian traffic and many of them have not been able to see their true potential growth.

It amazes me that the person who is about the place warning us most about barriers coming down, free trade and so on and who is responsible for foreign trade and leading Barbados into free markets, economics and the era of global blocs, is the Honourable Member responsible for the area in which the vendors are having the greatest difficulty and having the greatest restrictions being placed on them to operate in their own country.

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, could you get back to the Bill, please?

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Sir, that ties very much to areas like the harbour and other parts of Barbados where people who come off ships and yachts should be able to interact normally with Barbadians because we are by and large a peaceful and law abiding society. Sir, those are my concerns and I hope the Honourable Minister can answer some of them.

Thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a small contribution to this debate. I want to start by pledging my support for the matter that is before this Honourable Chamber. Over the years that I have been in this Honourable House I have had to question the quality of what is delivered in here by way of speeches especially from Opposition bench.

I have been in this Honourable Chamber for about six years and there is a common thread running through every speech of the Honourable Member for St. John.

Asides

Hon. A.P. WOOD: He is not out of form. It is just that you have not been hearing him recently. Sir, when you hear the Honourable Member and some of the other Members of the Opposition you would think that nothing is happening in this country and the country is grinding to a halt; that in certain section of the Barbados society whether it is economic or otherwise that nothing is happening.

Sir, we come here with the Shipping (Incentives)(Amendment) Bill, 2005 and the draft Value Added Tax Order, in which we are seeking to facilitate, after going through a process of consultation with individuals who are centrally and peripherally placed in the boating and yachting sector, which yielded a set of recommendations to propel and facilitate the development of the boating and yachting sector as an integral part of our tourism product. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South is correct when he said that as the tourism product matures, paying extremely close attention to product development, we should seek to make the range of activities in that sector a little expansive and attractive. Sir, all we are seeking to do is to further diversify economic activity and, indeed, diversify activity within the tourism sector and

related activities.

Mr. Speaker, we believe and all Barbadians believe that the Honourable Members for St. John and St. Michael North West are on a collision course and we saw it here today. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West was questioning the relevance of these incentives in our attempt to facilitate the development of the boating and yachting sector. He is asking why are we doing it for this particular sector area of economic activity and why are we doing it in such a discriminatory fashion, that is, why are we not paying similar attention to other sectors. He is saying that there is a focus on this particular sector by way of the provision of incentives to get this sector going and we are doing it to the detriment of other sectors.

The Honourable Member asked why this sector and not the others, is there something special about this particular area of activity and the people who are central to this activity and why are we giving it this treatment over another sector.

Sir, since I have been in this Honourable Chamber and this Government has taken the reigns of power in 1994, we knew that it was extremely important to reach out and lift up all economic players in this country and no administration previous to this one would have been so accommodating in providing such a wide range of incentives over the ten years of this Government's existence, whether it is agriculture, financial services, tourism or small business. Sir, no administration before this one would have provided such a range of incentives.

H56: 15.30

Sequence 28

Tuesday, March 01,

2005

House 56, sequence 29,
3:40 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. A.P. WOOD:

We heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West saying that the Government has been coming up short in the provision of incentives to the other sectors. The Honourable Member for St. John said, and he has been saying it over and over, that the Government cannot be faulted for providing the incentives, the enabling environment and the platform for business to establish and grow but, the problem with the Government is the lack of effective implementation for the intended customers to reap the full benefits of these incentives.

It does not surprise me that today we come in here with this Shipping Incentive Amendment Bill, and we hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West saying one thing; that is these incentives are applied in a discriminatory fashion and they are doing it to starve other sectors, but the Honourable Member for St. John is saying something completely different; that is, the Government cannot be faulted for providing incentives but they do it over and over, for sector after sector, but the problem is the lack of effective implementation. They are at it again but I will leave it for them.

Mr. Speaker, some of them on the Other Side would have supported this and, one or two others for lack of proper understanding of what we are trying to achieve here, would have chosen not to support it. The Honourable Member for St. John saw it fit to go back to using allegations when he made the following statements that the Government has been facilitating its friends and its sponsors.

Sir, he also said that some applicants get through faster than others when certain persons' hands are greased, and others applicants are victimised because they cannot treat honest and hardworking civil servants in the Town Planning Department or in other areas of Government to lunches and dinners at Sandy Lane. He also said that Ministers are empowering administrators to put absurd procedures in place to prevent persons from succeeding in Barbados and that the Government is selective in its treatment of economic citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I take this job extremely seriously. I am certain that the Honourable Members on This Side do the same. I know that Barbadians who listen to this debate are still waiting for the Other Side to rise to the intellectual challenge and to treat them to a series of discussions, either through this Honourable House or directly to them, about what they intend to do, in order to move this country forward.

The idea of coming in this House, not the Honourable Member for St. John because he hardly comes, week after week and to continue this smear campaign, trying to pull down people's character and belittling honest and hardworking civil servants who come to work to do their jobs, is sickening. We are tired of this type of politicking in this Honourable Chamber and the sooner we move away from this type of behaviour, the better.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill did not come here by happenstance. This Government has set itself apart from the other administration by determining that whenever we think that there is something of importance which can help to move the economy forward, we engage the particular sector in a consultative process.

Sir, we engaged those who are involved in

the boating and yachting sector in Barbados. The result was a set of recommendations which led to the drafting of a policy paper for the development of the boating and yachting sector, and we have come here seeking to ground it in the legislation.

The Honourable Member for St. John has argued that it has taken long. Some may agree with him and others may not but, the important thing is that we are trying to locate the development of the sector in its proper way, so as to ensure that something which is central to the development of a mature tourism product, can get fair treatment, and this should be our focus.

All I am saying is that This Side does not treat this as something to be scoffed at, like the others Over There. We treat this as something that is extremely important. There is great potential in the boating and yachting sector. The Honourable Member for St. John made mention of some jurisdictions in which this sector is reasonably well developed. Sir, we never said that all the answers reside here and that we are starting anything from scratch. All we are saying is that there is great potential and as we seek to further develop the tourism product, more and more attention should be paid to the boating and yachting sector.

Sir, I close by saying that what we have seen exhibited here by the Opposition Members is just a continuation of presentations being made by the ill-informed. Once again, the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West are at odds with what the Opposition would want to say on this particular issue.

Sir, I would just want to provide some encouragement for all those who want to make contributions in here for the future, to just lift the standard a bit and leave the smear campaigns from this Honourable Chamber and

further debates, because others out there are listening.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I would just want to make a few brief remarks on this Bill. Sir, from the outset I must say that it has been agreed...I think that if we listened to the Honourable Member for St. John when he spoke today that quite, in essence, sums up the feeling of the Opposition. He agreed that incentives have been given by both Governments and he made the point that as Minister of Finance in his time, he gave considerable concessions and incentives to many persons, preferably the Royal Westmoreland, Inc.

He also made the point that incentives were not only given by this Government but by Governments across the region. Indeed, he made the point that in Trinidad and other parts of the world, incentives have been given to the boating industry, in particular the pleasure boats.

House 56, sequence 29, 15:5014

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. G. A. CLARKE:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that what we are doing here today would help to stimulate not only activity within the boating industry but would help to provide incentives for tourism. Mr. Speaker, this Government will no doubt look to the future by looking at Barbados as a place where industry and commerce can flourish, so by giving incentives to this sector it will surely help to encourage more businesses into the sector.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West wanted to find out who will benefit. I believe that many people will benefit in the long run from opening businesses in the shipping area. Of course, large investments of over \$200 million, would get capital incentives. Mr. Speaker, these concessions, according to the Opposition and Government standards, are very generous and they would simulate activity within the shipping industry.

Mr. Speaker, this Government has not only given incentives in this area. We have given incentives to agriculture, to manufacturing and to the cooperatives. We gave incentives all across Barbados and the people are benefitting.

Sir, Honourable Members, particularly the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, wanted to find out how the permits for taxis are being issued and allocated by Government. Sir, over the past year a number of permits and applications were given out.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, are these permits for jet-skis or boats?

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: The question was asked today about taxis operating in the Port.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, there are two taxi associations at the Port and we have met with them. Sir, there is no confusion at the Port. The taxi associations have said that they are making money and they want to take up additional permits in order to reap the benefits from the spin-off of tourism. We met with them and we told them that any BT permits will be given to them first.

Mr. Speaker, there are approximately 89 tour coaches operating in Barbados mostly within the tourism industry and the shipping

industry. There are approximately 1 598 taxis in Barbados, and there is a demand for another 500, so we are looking at how we can help with this situation.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is this for taxis at the Port?

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: In the seaport. Mr. Speaker, if we have more ships coming into Barbados and we have more tourists on these ships, we will definitely need to have more taxis. We have been encouraged by the Minister of Finance to meet with the operators in the Bridgetown Port to see how we can help them form cooperatives so that they can take up the excess capacity that we are trying to provide for them. Mr. Speaker, this would definitely help in a large way because we believe that the way forward is not only to help the big operators as the Opposition is trying to say but to give incentives to the small operators in the Bridgetown Port.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is giving incentives not only for the large shipping agencies but also for the small operators like taxis, jet-skis and so on.

I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South will now wind up.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all Honourable Members on both sides of the aisle who spoke in support of this legislation as well as those who did not speak in support of it. Some of them offered critical support which we on this side respect as their right and certainly those that we consider to be legitimate and relevant, we will treat to. Sir, that has got to be the nature of how we conduct our business in the House.

However, Sir, I am constantly amazed at some of the 'off the rail' stances that are taken by the Opposition regarding some of the more relevant initiatives that are going on toward the development of this country. Sir, I cannot get it in my mind how it is not clearly a part of everyone in this Chamber, particularly so the Opposition, that no one set of initiatives are going to cause any revolutionary change in any aspect of life in Barbados.

Sir, by putting these initiatives in place we created a basis for moving the industry along. By amending the Shipping Incentives Act in this way, nobody should think that overnight we are going to get a million yachts off the coast of the Carlisle Bay or out in St. Lucy or somewhere else in Barbados.

Sir, it is clear to me and to this administration that by putting these incentives in place we have given this sector, that has not been given the types of support, the legislative framework, the legislative and regulatory support or the concessionary support, a legitimate opportunity to expand and to develop. Sir, that has got to be the basis of the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Objects and Reasons of the Bill are very clear to anyone who would take the time to read them. I believe that if the members on that side had taken the opportunity to read the Objects and Reasons of the Bill, we would not be caught up in a lot of the debate that we are caught up in, because that is where it begins and ends.

Sir, I want to address those things that were raised by Members of the Opposition which I consider to be relevant to the legislation that is before us today. Sir, I do not understand what it is that the Opposition wants when you bring legislation to this House, maybe someone can explain what they really

want. Sir, every time this Government seeks to expand any area of operation in Barbados to help the small people or anybody for that matter, we get condemned and are accused of helping a very narrow band of people. However, Sir, if we do nothing at all, we still get condemned and are accused of having no original thought and that nothing is new and this thing and the next thing.

House 56 Sequence 30

4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, this is an Opposition, which was once a Government, when they were the Government, they did more to decimate the small man, who we are now talking about.

Sir, I believe that the Honourable Member for St. John was the Minister of Finance at the time when the Government of the day sold off the Heywoods Hotel to Barbados Shipping and Trading (BS&T), to create Barbados' first all-inclusive hotel. I heard the Honourable Member today speaking on the issue of all-inclusive hotels and what all-inclusive hotels have done to jet-skis operators and to the 'small man'. They were the ones who created the first ever all-inclusive hotel in this country. Sir, unlike the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, I do not think that all-inclusive hotels are the worst thing in the world. I believe that all-inclusive hotels contribute...

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House by giving the Honourable House the impression that I am anti- all-inclusive tourism, and by saying that Heywoods Hotel was the first all-inclusive hotel. The Honourable Member knows that the

first all-inclusive hotel can be found in the Holetown area.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, the first registered all-inclusive committed hotel in Barbados that claimed to be an all-inclusive hotel... Sir, there are packages such as Continental, Modified American Plan (MAP) and European Plan (EP) but the first hotel which dedicated itself exclusively to the all-inclusive product in Barbados was the Almond Beach Hotel.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has raised a number of pertinent issues in relation to this Bill and to a number of things that were raised during the presentation of the Bill. Sir, first of all, with regards to the issue relating to the number of people getting off ships and the number of taxis exiting the Port, I was wondering if, at one time, a gentleman who is well-versed in arithmetic and who understands more about arithmetic than I suspect I do, would not have considered that, first of all, the taxis in the Port are not all one-seater taxis. There are also a number of vans and coaches in the Port as well.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, it is precisely because I am better versed in arithmetic than the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, that I know that cruise ships do not come into Barbados every day of the week. Therefore, when I divided the amount that comes by 365 days, I have already made provision for the fact that more than one person would get into a taxi. I did not want to complicate the mass, that is why I divided by 365 days, instead of dividing by the appropriate number of days on which cruise ship passengers would come to Barbados, which would be about three or four times per week, as opposed to seven days. Therefore, that is a non-point.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member,

you have made your point.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, we do not want to belabour the point but there are people who walk out of the Port, some go out in taxis, some in coaches or some go to the cruise terminal. Therefore, what nonsense to try to justify that.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you cannot refer to the Honourable Member's statement as nonsense.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that statement. Sir, for the Honourable Member to try to corral the debate into the number of taxis and dividing it into the number of days in the year, is really to be ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the additional marketing dollars for Barbados' support not being embraced by the National Tourism Marketing Committee, that Committee cannot come up with every marketing initiative and cannot endorse every initiative under their charter. The point is that this area of operation in Barbados will become a legitimate area for expansion and development, as we seek to provide a better and more varied tourism industry.

Sir, with regards to the issue of taxi drivers being disadvantaged at the Port for larger operators, what is now apparent in this industry is that when people go on cruise ships, many of them would sit together in groups of fives or sixes, so that as they leave the Port together, they are demanding larger coaches or vehicles for them to be able to stay together.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has gone the extra mile to take taxi operators to Miami and pay all their expenses, to do exactly what the Honourable Member has said that the larger operators have done. We have given them the

opportunity to negotiate at the table. Sir, the Honourable Member was correct in this regard, but what was necessary is that the cooperatives and independent taxi owners need to be better organised to take advantage of what is developing within the sector. Sir, at every turn, the Barbados Port Authority Incorporated has tried its best to bring them together. They have even endorsed the new system of taxi rotation at the Port.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of Barbados finishing at position 21 out of 24 in the Caribbean Tourism Organisation's survey for the number of arrivals, I do not know how the Honourable Member, who claims to know a little about the tourism industry, who some time ago sat on the Board of the Barbados Tourism Authority, could ever take a list of people in a tourism set and can compare them like with like. They are not all not like-with-like. Sir, the Dominica tourism industry is a fledgling industry that does not even have 80 000 people a year, as compared to a destination that has over 600,000. It is easier to move from 80 000 to 100 000 than to move from 500 up to 6 000.

Sir, if the Honourable Member compares Barbados to mature destinations that show a similar development profile and understands exactly what it is that we are putting in the market, he would then be able to compare, but to say that Barbados has finished at position 21 out of 24, is again a ridiculous statement.

Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the statement of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, relative to different modes of transportation, particularly given the congestion of our roads, of the probability that we may have to look to the maritime environment. Sir, I believe that this piece of legislation will, in some way, seek to accommodate that. I think this is the opportunity that will be created for things like this to emerge out of this sector.

Mr. Speaker, with regards to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the Honourable Member, in his very unenlightened manner, spoke to the issue of jet-skis and to the incentives to all-inclusive hotels that would damage the sector. The Honourable Member is a crusader against the all-inclusive sector, so sometimes I ignore most of what he says.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to say that as a Government, we have met with all these people at the Port. Recently there was an issue in the Carlisle Bay area where jet-skis operators were not allowed to ply their trade and Government intervened in that regard. There are now two channels opened up within that area where jet-skis are operating.

Sir, nobody has stopped the jet-skis operators from continuing to ply their trade and to make a living but I want to make the point that if the industry is moving to a point where the independent jet-skis operator is being disadvantaged, Government would seek to put the right initiatives in place to help them. However, the way the industry goes is that many jet-skis operators make their own commercial decisions relative to whether or not they would continue with the ownership of their jet-skis.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that there may come a point that even though we are trying to facilitate all of them, that some of them maybe disadvantaged. Sir, we have been making every effort to keep these operators in business and to help them as much as we can, with initiatives such as this piece of legislation, which will allow for them to continue their trade.

Mr. Speaker, with regards to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, who spoke of the removal of the Negative Resolution and whether or not this should come to Parliament, I do agree with the

Honourable Member for St. Philip West that there are many instances in which this may not be used. Sir, given today's activity and given how fast we are developing, I do not think that we have removed any level of transparency by a Minister being able to make these types of initiatives by an Order.

H:No.56(31)410 p.m.

Tuesday, March 1,
2005

Continuation of Hon. N A. LYNCH:

I feel that it is about time that we repose the confidence in the people who are elected to govern the affairs of this country in a sensible and respectable way. I am not going to be party to anything nor do I believe that if the Democratic Labour Party becomes the Government of day that I should be 'peeping under' any Minister to figure whether or not he or she is an upright person or if he/she would allow anybody to do these things. Sir, I do not believe in that.

Sir, I do not buy the issue that we should wait over any expanded period of time. The Honourable Member should understand that we have to move quickly with these things.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip West spoke about the cost of marketing not being given income tax concession. I respect his opinion but it is necessary for Barbados to continue to improve and increase the level of marketing spend, which is done globally to help Barbados overall. Sir, any incentive that is given to allow for any company operating in the sector to continue to create a larger marketing pool for Barbados' generic marketing or for any specific area of marketing under tourism, I believe is money well-spent and is a concession which I endorse.

Sir, Honourable Members are nitpicking about spending money on brochures. We are not spending money but are opening up and giving people an opportunity to be able to make it and to contribute to the wider pool of marketing funds for Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I want to make the point to you that members are not understanding your peeping up, nitpicking and so on. Please try to use standard language.

Hon. N A. LYNCH: Sir, your point is taken. I am not going to overly scrutinise the work of any Minister at any level nor at any point. I am not going to get into the minutia of these issues that people seek to bring in as red herrings to put us off track. As far as I am concerned, it is necessary that we create a basis for everyone in the industry to contribute to that overall marketing pool for Barbados.

Sir, of the 156 boats which are small craft in Barbados, there is no exact scientific way to gauge the situation. The requirement is that a Barbadian or a permanent resident must be the owner when these boats are registered. It has been said that one may never know whether a Barbadian may be 'fronting' for someone else but the regulation states that the person must be a Barbadian or permanent resident. Therefore, the Harbour Master has concluded, from his own experience, that most of these small vessels are registered and owned by Barbados.

There is the issue of repealing Section 6 of the Act to include this new section. Sir, we believe that these provisions are even more healthy and more acceptable relative to helping a company. Honourable Members on the other side spoke about getting dividends, profits and gains and putting them to a separate account but we believe this section that has been substituted now creates a basis now for these persons who are gaining profits to be able to create the write-off and the tax concessions

needed in the long term in a better way than what has been said under the existing provision under Section 6 of the Act.

Sir, I believe there are some areas that we still need to guard for Barbadians but if we want to encourage greater overseas investment in a sector as vital as this, I do not see anything wrong with the removal of the discriminatory practices which we have.

The Honourable Member for St. John raised the question that the legislation benefits a narrow band of investors. He also spoke about people quarreling with themselves but I want to know why the Honourable Member is quarreling with himself. Sir, they did not 'chop up' Heywoods and sell it to small people in Barbados. They literally gave away Heywoods Hotel to the largest conglomerate in Barbados at the time when the Honourable Member was the Minister of Finance but yet they speak about issues related to investment and the small man in Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. John was also the Minister of Finance when Royal Westmoreland was built and many concessions were created for them to be able to build the most villas and the biggest golf course we have in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, all of a sudden the Democratic Labour Party is a champion and the Honourable Member for St. John is the champion of the small man who the Barbados Labour Party is trying to disadvantage in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member said that we are creating narrow pieces of legislation to help select people and that there is altruistic and idealistic thinking. Sir, this was a Government that sold off all the family silver in this country to big business in which small people sought to invest. Sir, the Democratic Labour Party sold off and sold out Barbados to big business but today they want to say that we are seeking to create narrow pieces of legislation.

Asides.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: The concern over the application process and the timeliness of them is a legitimate point and I take the Honourable Member for St. John at his word when he says things like this.

Sir, Government has already recognised that there is a need to ensure that everyone is treated equitable in the system and that things move through the system faster than they presently do. However, to try to 'straight-jacket' me into the issue of how fast how I should fast-track applications through the system, particular when there are environmental concerns both socially and physically, is also to 'straight-jacket' the Government as well. Sir, I hope that Barbados never comes to that.

Sir, I believe in a small jurisdiction when you give permission for building, construction and the like that in a small land mass like Barbados, that we close a door forever. I would like to think that when Government makes a decision on where a person is going to build whether on a beach, golf course or in the yard of someone that we are protecting the patrimony and the future of Barbados for those who come after us.

Sir, I will not be 'straight-jacketed' into claiming that matters should be approved in 60 or 90 days. It might be good for Puerto Rico, Jamaica or places where there are large land masses where people can expand easily. Sir, as far as I am concerned, I believe that things could move a little faster but I want to make the point that we need to continue to protect the environment of Barbados for the future generations of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want anyone to think that we can simply open the door and let everyone come here, nor I will not join the

Honourable Member for St. John in that. I have already spoken to the issue of the all-inclusive and about Almond Beach Hotel being the first one.

H56/16:20

Sequence 32

Tuesday, March 1,
1005

CONTINUATION OF... Hon. N.A.
LYNCH:

Sir, I believe that it is again necessary to make the point that while this legislation will not revolutionise this important boating and yachting sector and create a basis for its development overnight, if this legislation is given time to work itself into the fabric of this particular industry and the facilities come on board - facilities that are now being built as we seek to expand Bridgetown - I think that Port St. Charles will benefit from what happening with the marina that is being built in Bridgetown. The Bridgetown marina is going to cost \$300 million and this is not an easy amount of money to raise overnight.

Sir, the other issue is that there is a lot of scientific research that needs to be done to protect Barbados. I do not know why some people believe that we should rush into thinking that things can be done overnight. I believe that Barbadians will benefit substantially from the development of this sector. I also believe that small players in Barbados will benefit significantly from this.

Sir, a lot of jet-ski operators will be allowed to flourish. There are times when some of them will be disadvantaged, and I do agree that, but I make the point that overall this legislation will benefit the majority of people

operating in this sector and will create a basis for the expansion of the sector to the good of all Barbadians.

Sir, with those words I beg that this Resolution be read a second time.

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

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 were called and passed.

Clause 5 was called.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Mr. Chairman, there is correction to Clause 5. I ask that the words "Barbados Port Authority (Watersports) Regulations, 1990" which appear in sub clause 6.(1) (b) be deleted and substitute the words Shipping Watersports Regulations, 2004.

I beg to move that Clause 5 as amended stand part.

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

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

Clauses 6 to 8 were called and passed.

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

The First Schedule was called.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Mr. Chairman, there is an amendment to the First Schedule. In the First Schedule paragraph 11 should read

"Costs of electronic marketing of yachting and boating tourism in Barbados via websites" instead " Costs of electronic marketing or yachting or boating tourism in Barbados via websites."

I beg to move that the First Schedule as amended be the Schedule to the Bill.

The question that the First Schedule as amended be the Schedule to the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The Second and Third Schedules were called and state the motions for these Schedules passed.

On the motion of Hon. N.A. LYNCH, seconded by Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee with amendments and Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. N.A. LYNCH, seconded by Hon. Hon. R.R. FARLEY, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Shipping (Incentives) Amendment Act, 2005.

ORDER NO. 7

TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$33 394 855 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES

**2004-2005 AS SHOWN IN THE
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO.
12, 2004-2005 WHICH FORM THE
SCHEDULE TO THE
RESOLUTION**

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

**HEAD 43
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
YOUTH AFFAIRS AND
SPORTS**

\$33 394 855

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

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, the matter before to expend \$33 394 855 to cover a number of expenditure, the bulk of the expenditure relates to the University of the West Indies and to the Structures Vote under the Education Sector Reform Project.

H56: 16.30

Sequence 33

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

House 56, sequence 34,
4:30 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. R.R. FARLEY:

The remainder of the expenditure relate to adjustments required, consequential upon the change in the rates of payment of national insurance and the need, Sir, to make the adjustments, in order for the Government to pay National Insurance for the members of its staff.

Sir, taking the Heads as they fall in the Schedule, under Programme 040, National Insurance contributions, an increase of a half percentage point leaves the Heads short by \$23 922, in relation to primary, composite and secondary schools.

In relation to other items of expenditure, the Utilities vote under the Subprogramme 070: General Management and Coordination Series, is anticipated to be short by some \$38 505, after an original provision of some \$626 552. This is based upon unanticipated utilities consumption to the end of the period.

In relation to Teacher Training at Erdiston College, the Other Personal Emoluments vote which was originally provided with some \$554 045, Erdiston College has an addition to its core teacher training programmes. A number of programmes are offered in the evening, not only for teachers but in its ongoing general education programme. The teachers for this programme, who are not necessarily tutors at Erdiston College, are paid out of Other Personal Emoluments, and that vote will be short by some \$226 023. Sir, these short enrichment programmes are, in fact, self-financing and there would be income to balance this, but we need to supplement this vote by some \$226 023.

Sir, another major area is the matter of the Education Sector Enhancement Programme. Originally, some \$9 359 317 were provided under the Structures Vote, which would not have represented the total vote for that

programme.

The Education Sector Enhancement Programme involves not just the physical works component, the repairs to the schools by way of this Structures Vote, but a component relating to human resource development, primarily teacher training and training for administrators in the education system.

It involves as well, Sir, the procurement, installation and maintenance of information technology into the school system, so that the students are able to utilise information technology for their regular teaching and learning, as part of the wider reform process. It also has a component relating to curriculum reform and strengthening of the administrative capacity of the Ministry but, specifically, this vote deals with the structures.

I should say to you, Sir, that by way of progress, some 36 schools have been repaired under the Education Sector Enhancement Programme. In fact, one of the reasons for this Supplementary of \$3.8 million is because we have already exhausted the funds which have been provided, during the course of this year, and we do not want to have a slowing down of the work, which is planned for completion, going through to the end of the financial year. We will, of course, make provision during the new financial year for the further progress of this work. Sir, some \$57 million would have been expended in the repair and refurbishment of those 36 schools across the island.

Sir, work continues on a number of schools. As we speak, West Terrace is being brought to conclusion. Work on the final block by way of the casting of the concrete for the ramp, which is to allow the physically challenged to be able to move from the ground floor to the upper floor, is on its way to completion.

Bay Primary was completed recently and, indeed, the students returned to their very pleasant, fully refurbished school in the second week of this term.

Work continues steadily on St. Lucy's Primary, and it is projected that the completion date would be in early March. Work continues as well at the Coleridge and Parry School.

Certainly, during the Estimates, Sir, I will be speaking to those additional schools that will be included in the program, out of the list we have of those which are of major concern to us.

As it stands now, Sir, the expenditure which we face this year relates, basically, to a few simple categories. First of all, we have what we call the final accounts, which have come in for a number of schools. As Honourable Members may be aware, when a contract is awarded for construction work by the Government, a number of things happen. Sir, for standard contracts, a mobilisation fee is usually paid for the secondary schools but no mobilisation fee is paid for primary school.

Sir, contractors are paid based on work that they have completed, using their own funds. The quantity surveyors will check to ensure that the work is done. When the engineers and architects sign off on the work, they are paid based on what are called certificates. Even after the work is completed, there is included in the project, a retention fee, usually 10 per cent of the contract value and that is withheld by the Government until the defects liability period has expired. This is approximately six months and during that time, the architect and other consultants will inspect the school to ensure that there is no cracking, peeling of paint, or defects in electrical work. If they are satisfied that there are no defects, then those final accounts are presented.

Therefore, the schools for which final

accounts have been presented in this financial year, will be schools that work has been completed in the previous financial year, and we need to bring those to account. The other category where you will get expenditure being incurred, would be in relation to work which is ongoing.

In fact, Sir, by way of breakdown, we have something in the order of \$1.1 million of bills before us, which were presented by our contractors and approved by our consultants for work that has already been done during this financial year. We anticipate that between now and the end of the financial year, a further \$1 million in work would be completed and certified by the contractors.

House 56, sequence 34, 16:4014

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Sir, it is against that background that this \$3.8 million is required in order for us to settle the final accounts for those schools that have been completed and to meet the bills which are currently before us and those which we anticipate would be presented to us between now and the end of the financial year at March 31, 2005.

Sir, one of the challenges that we have had with this project has been in relation to some of the other components. In relation to the installation of the technology component of the EduTech Project, we have had some slowness there as it relates to a couple of issues. There was one in relation to the contracts as they are awarded, the slow turn around times either on the Government side going through the Solicitor-General Chambers or on the attorneys for the contractors and the banks.

Secondly, we have had a major problem in relation to meeting the requirements of the bank, because as you know, Sir, this project is jointly financed by the InterAmerican Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank.

The InterAmerican Development Bank is a 47 per cent financier, the Caribbean Development Bank is a 19 per cent financier and the Government of Barbados is to provide the remainder of the finance, some 34 per cent.

Sir, we had a situation in which, based on the rules of the banks, contractors for the information technology component are required to buy their products, their hardware, their switches and other components from eligible member countries of these banks. Sir, with globalisation such as it is, you may buy a computer out of the United States of America but the mother board might have come from Taiwan, the case might have come from Mexico and the monitor might have come from Japan. Such is the nature of work in the world of information technology.

Sir, we have had a situation where sometimes funds which are voted in a given year for information technology could not have been utilised during that year and they had to lapse. Because we had disputes in relation to the contractors meeting the rule of origin criteria, we made an application to the bank to have that rule of origin criteria relaxed. I cannot say as yet whether we would be successful or not but the bottom line is that when a contractor bids and is awarded the contract, the products, when they land, are subject to inspection.

Quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, that has been a major source of frustration for us, and it has caused some slow-down on the information technology side, but we will be seeking to address that by making proposals to the bank

concerning a change not only in their rules but also in the nature of technology which is used. Clearly, since this project was originally designed there have been changes in the world of technology as technology, changes every day. Therefore, we obviously would want to capitalise on the newer forms of wireless technology which would allow us to make another important change, so that several of our institutions which would have been designed to make use of cabling and having a network based on running wires through the buildings, which obviously have implications for the amount of physical work to be done, would no longer have to do that.

Sir, because of the way the project was originally designed based on the technology of the day, and like I said in the technology world that is only a couple years ago, you had to go in a natural sequence of doing the civil works first before you could even contemplate putting in any form of technology. In shifting to a wireless solution you are able to have a more judicious blend and a better sequencing where in certain schools you are able to move in and at least ensure that each school is connected to the internet or through the internet to the servers at the Ministry; that each school even prior to a major physical refurbishment would be able to tap into the educational resources that are being provided via this technology medium; that by way of the wireless technology you are able to move your computers around your building with greater ease and freedom, you are also able, outside of classroom periods, to more adequately provide security for your computers.

You would appreciate, Mr. Chairman, that one of the challenges we have is the issue of security. It is a problem that we face as a country generally. Sir, as we increase the value of investment in education resources, there are one or two persons out there in the wider society who would be looking at ways and

means of robbing us of that value. In fact, we have had situations outside of EduTech in which you get persons breaking and entering the schools to carry away the video and the television sets that were donated to the schools.

Therefore, the use of the wireless technology would allow us to even further consolidate the security issue where rather than having equipment permanently defused or spread around classrooms in the school, we would be able to secure them in fewer locations and therefore deal with that challenge of security.

Sir, both on our own as a Ministry as well as jointly with the InterAmerican Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank we have done our review by way of the last administrative meeting which was held last year and we are in the process now of making the formal representation to those institutions for those changes such as would allow us to capitalise on the new technology and to be able to have a speedier process on the side of the information technology. So this particular component of the structure is one on which I think we are making reasonable progress in all circumstances.

However, Sir, we must never forget that this does not represent all that EduTEch is about. In fact, on the side of curriculum reform there has been a full reform process involving all the stakeholders, the principals, the teachers, their representatives and the parents. As a result, curriculum guides are being published for the various year groups throughout the school system, training continues for teaching staff in terms of the implementation of the new curriculum as well as training in the areas related to technology mastery, teaching the teachers how to use technology in the lessons, geography, history, mathematics, whatever the subject may happen to be.

Sir, one of the other components in which there has been great progress is in the area of recognising the weaknesses which we have had with respect to teachers trained in the delivery of special education. Part of the education sector reform programme was to put in place specialised training. In fact, last year 50 teachers graduated with Master's degrees education psychology from Mount St. Vincent University which had run the programme here jointly with the Erdiston Teachers' Training College. There are another 15 or so persons who are currently pursuing the Bachelor's degree programme in special education. The students with Master's degrees had their graduation last year.

House 56 Sequence 35

4:50 p.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, that is an important component as well, therefore, not only are we investing in Structures, which is the most visible, as that is what people look for, we are having 103 schools in our system and still have more to go. We have obviously sought to put our list in place, so that we first tackle those schools which are in the worst conditions.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to this programme which, under the Structures Vote, provides for full comprehensive refurbishment of facilities, there is, in both primary and secondary schools, a programme in which, during the summer vacation, we seek to do not only maintenance but any short-term rehabilitation work which can be done, in order to ensure that our schools are safe and comfortable places. Sir, there is still much work to be done and as I go around visiting the individual school, I would be the first to

recognise, and I am usually among the first to speak to my building unit, about what are some of the things that have to be done, with some things being great and others being small.

Sir, I am using this opportunity to assure this Honourable House that there is, in fact, a programme but as we go on in the course of this Supplementary, I will be willing and able to provide details on the 25 primary schools on which maintenance was done last year; on the 17 schools on which we propose to do maintenance during the coming financial year; the details of the 36 schools which have been the beneficiaries of the total refurbishment programme under the Ministry of Education Sector Enhancement Programme thus far; and what are the schools next on the list for consideration, in terms of the physical refurbishment in subsequent financial years.

Mr. Chairman, the two other items for which we are requesting Supplementary expenditure relate to the University of the West Indies and the School Meals Department. Sir, the University of the West Indies is supported by the Government of Barbados through two forms of funding. There is one form of funding called the economic cost, and provision is made by the Government for that Head. Sir, we are never able to say what the final cost would be and, indeed, for as long as we have been a Parliament, every year there has basically been a Supplementary coming to the end of the financial year, to deal with the adjustment of the accounts of the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Chairman, during this financial year, the Estimates as approved have reflected expenditure of \$50 million for the economic cost portion at the University of the West Indies. In the previous financial year, \$57 million was in the approved Estimates, while the final account was approximately \$74 million. In the previous financial year, the final

account was approximately \$62 million, while this year the final account will be short of \$75 million. Therefore, in addition to the \$50 million that was approved in the Estimate, we need to provide a further \$24 million by way of Supplementary expenditure, to bring to account the expenditure in relation to the economic cost of providing education for our Barbadian students at Cave Hill Campus, Barbados; Mona Campus, Jamaica; and St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad.

Mr. Speaker, the other component of cost as it relates to the University of the West Indies is under Subprogramme 287: Higher Education Awards, Object No.3 EX14 - Grants to Individuals, which is where the tuition fees component of the cost is provided for.

Sir, the reason why the University of the West Indies would have come up with this split between economic cost and tuition fees, is that the Governments of the region have generally embarked on a policy - some Governments are looking at changing some parts of it - but generally speaking, the Governments of the region pay 80 per cent of tuition cost and the students pay 20 per cent. The Government of Barbados has made a determination that it will pay the full 100 per cent tuition cost but in terms of how the University does its billing, all Governments in the region are billed economic cost and tuition cost for student. Therefore, in making our provision here, we provide accordingly.

Mr. Chairman, we had made a provision in the Estimates of approximately \$15 million for tuition cost, with over \$12 million going to the Cave Hill Campus, \$2 million going to the St. Augustine Campus, and approximately \$400 000 going to the Mona Campus, Jamaica

Sir, the final accounts having been received from the University of the West Indies for tuition fees across those campuses, have

bring us to full accounting at the end of this financial year, where we will require some \$3.162 million in order to bring this matter to account.

Mr. Chairman, under this Head provision is made, and there is no supplementary required for that, but the Ministry does provide for other grants and other support to be provided. Indeed, students at the University are being provided with enabling grants to assist them, particularly in the final year of their studies, especially medical students who go off to do electives to enhance their situation.

Mr. Chairman, provision is also made for a number of ad hoc awards where students at tertiary institutions generally, who are in a financial bind with respect to books and other expenses relating to their studies, are able to make an application to the Higher Education Section of the Ministry and based on the assessment made of students who are progressing in their academic programmes, but who because of family economic circumstances, find themselves in financial binds, are provided with grants to provide relief.

Mr. Chairman, the total allocation of funds to the University of the West Indies for this financial year will be in the order of \$96 million. Included would be the support for the Seismic centre, the law schools, et cetera. Recently we had the issue which arose in relation to the University of the West Indies proposing to charge its students an amenity fee. Sir, that is a matter which was decided by the Council of the University, and one which falls outside of the tuition fee and economic costs, which are billed directly to Government. Therefore, the Government's position is very simple. We do not have a problem with students being ask to make a contribution to those services which are provided by the university, over and above the matters that are

provided by Government.

Mr. Chairman, as the matter has been put to us, the Government of Barbados, as part of its contribution to the universities over the last several years, has included, for example, Government guarantees for bond issue and other forms of financing, to cover the cost of much of the additional student infrastructure that has already been built.

H:No.56(36)500 p.m.

Tuesday, March 1,
2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Additionally, the private sector has made cash contribution. CLICO has donated a new teaching centre, SAGICOR has donated a new sports centre and several other private sector companies, I am pleased to say, have made contributions.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 43 stand part.

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

The question that Head 43 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmation without division.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

Mr. R.D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I have listened quite attentively to the Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports as he brought this Supplementary which calls for \$33 394 855 to supplement the provisions made in the Estimates.

I listened carefully because I wanted the

Honourable Minister to point specifically to two or three issues contained in the Addendum listing points of explanation as to why this money is needed. He spent time in explaining the issues relating to EduTech particularly in the area of the refurbishment of schools, referred to in this document as Structures, and just under \$3.9 million is being called for to meet the civil works component at schools which were identified by him.

Sir, we recognise that this project commenced around 1999, that it is now 2005 and the Minister has reported that 35 schools have been completed or are near to completion. If we use those schools at an average of six per year, we would want to find out if this is as a result of the unavailability of finance to deal with schools.

The Minister should be aware that the programme should have had a faster momentum relative to the civil works component of EduTech. Therefore, there is cause for some distress by us on this side and distress by the number of students, parents and teachers in our schools who were previously given a schedule as to when their particular schools would have been part of this movement.

Sir, in speaking and having conversation with people, they are at a loss to understand when they would become involved in their own deliverance relative to the civil works component in relation to their school. When the Minister speaks again, we would want to know the status of the programme as of 2005 and which schools would fall under the programme of EduTech.

Sir, we want to know why it is taking so long to equip some of these schools with the hardware and software outside of the difficulties encountered with IADB and CDB with their rules of origin. It is more than two

years and schools which have been completed relative to their civil works have not had one piece of technological equipment placed in those schools.

Sir, teachers are complaining that after having been trained in the mastery of technology that they are still unable to interact with the technology relative to students learning another pedagogical techniques to influence education within Barbados.

It seems to me that there is a need for deeper explanation as to these problems in this segment of EduTech. The calm and smooth way of delivering on this issue does not satisfy the Opposition relative to this particular area.

Sir, there is a need for a deeper explanation which might be understandable but simply to scoff and skirt the issue does not in any way enhance the Honourable Minister and his command of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports. Sir, one looks forward to a greater explanation on these issues.

It is agreed that there are technologocial changes and shifts and it is sensible to move from a cabling technology as part of the wider network within the school into a wireless network but that in itself brings challenges. There has to be careful planning and location because a lot of schools utilise line-of-site technology in order to connect and several of our schools have different parts scattered about the properties.

We have the talents to put the wireless technology in but we have to be careful of moving and shifting sometimes even though one would want to secure the technology from deviant elements who from time to time want to take property which belongs to the citizens of Barbados. As the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports advances EduTech

vis-a-vis the civil works component and the infusion of technology into the school, one has to bear some of these issues in mind otherwise we will spend \$5 million without seeing the requisite benefits being derived by the students, teachers and the country of Barbados.

Sir, it is an interesting investment and once it is made by the people of Barbados, it should bear fruit. After six years into the programme the Democratic Labour Party is not comfortable that we are seeing much light at the end of the tunnel. We have been supporters of technology going back to the mid 80s and would want to see a greater consolidation of these efforts and greater level of transparency and productivity in relation to these efforts.

H56/17:10

Sequence 37

Tuesday, March 1,
1005

CONTINUATION OF Mr. R.D. JONES:
The second issue which has captured my attention in this Supplemental has to do with the University of the West Indies Programme 273, Tertiary, where just under \$25 million, as explained by the Minister, is being called upon to meet the economic costs of Barbadian students.

Mr. Chairman, over the last three weeks we had rancid debate in this country relative to the imposition of what is called an amenities fees on Barbadian students and which was subsequently adjusted to include all students who study at the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies.

I want to say at the outset that my contribution must not be seen as \$300, \$150, \$700 or \$1 000. I do not believe that must be

the central core of the issue. Sir, persons have taken to debate to suggest that students cannot pay \$700 for their education to contribute to the development of the campus and Barbados. One of the things that this country and both parties have been noted for and have been steadfast in the determination that they would provide "free education" from the basic level through to tertiary education. This would seem to me to be a slight variation in that deeply embedded philosophical underpinning of this social democracy. I think that is where it is at and it is not about paying fees.

Sir, every Honourable Member in this Parliament who has accessed education either at Cave Hill Campus or one of the other campuses of the University of the West Indies has paid maybe \$100 or \$150 as petty fees during those periods. There are many persons in the wider Barbadian community who would have accessed education from that institution and who are now saying that \$700 is not too much to pay. If it were \$3 000 they would also be saying that it is not too much to pay.

Sir, it seems to me as though when we climb and reach the top it is easier to push the ladder down and say that others can struggle their way up the ladder. I think that kind of argument reminds me of the argument which emanated during the Reagan/Bush era in the United States of America when the notion of affirmative action in the United States of America was being ripped from under the bellies of those persons who were determined to be deserving and to be given that hand up and push up. Therefore, this kind of argument, solidly based on a neo-conservative philosophy, is beginning to find its roots and origin in Barbados. It is a most dangerous imposition in this country at this stage.

Sir, it is suggesting to me that persons believe that Barbadian students have arrived and, therefore, we can start a process of

backdoor entrances, rather than front-door behaviour, to suggest to students that they have to pay something called amenities fees.

Sir, if, in fact, 60 per cent of the Barbadian students there are part-time or evening students, that would suggest to me that they are hardly using the various amenities because they rush from works to the University of the West Indies and return home at 10.30 p.m. or 11.30 p.m after going through their lectures and tutorials. The most that these students would be using is a physical hall, a tutorial room, walking or driving the driveways to get home.

Sir, I have no difficulty and neither would the Democratic Labour Party have any difficulty in the expansion of the infrastructure for the creation of drama, theatre and music because it adds to the life of a tertiary campus. I have some difficulty with the Minister saying that they have no difficulty at all with students making a contribution to their economic cost.

Sir, I would move to suggest that every single day when the taxes are taken from the pockets of their parents and themselves that they are in fact contributing directly to the economic costs. Barbados is heavily taxed and it is taxed because of this notion that your taxes will be strategically place in health, education, welfare and all other services for the development of all of the people of Barbados regardless of the strata of society from which they come. Therefore, I would believe that the notions of giving guarantees on bond issues and maybe manipulating and coercing the University of the West Indies to then charge fees is wrong. I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central with what can only be considered to be

a most curious presentation. He tried to be sitting, standing and lying down all at the same time.

Asides

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member went on a tirade and he tore at the very foundation of what he purported to espouse. We in Barbados have an excellent social system. We basically pool the funds through taxation, primarily to be used for the social advancement of the broad mass of people. Sir, for the Honourable Member to speak about backdoor fees and so on, he goes on to suggest that because part-time people may not spend as much time at the university that the fees should not apply to them because they are not as great consumers of the amenities as those who are there full-time. Therefore, that, to me, strikes at the very heart of the whole argument of this collective effort that he purports to make. I am very clear on this matter.

In fact, it is curious that the Democratic Labour Party, of which the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central is its principal spokesman on education, should even have the gall to speak on this matter because it was his side that had already hatched their plan to charge tuition fees at the University of the West Indies, the Polytechnic and the Barbados Community College.

Asides

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House and he would have to withdraw those remarks because there is no evidence in Barbados to suggest that the Democratic Labour Party has ever charged any student any fees, not even in hard economic times in the 1990s.

H56: 17.20

Sequence 38

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

House 56, sequence 39,
5:20 p.m.

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

The Honourable Member knows that and he is also well aware that he is now using the disguise of EduTech's failure...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, Honourable Member.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, thank God for the Election, otherwise, the Democratic Labour Party would have gone on to charge a fee. I said that they hatched a plan but there was an election and the day was saved, and that is the bottom line.

Sir, this matter of the fee, as has been discussed publicly, has nothing whatsoever to do with the economic costs and tuition fees, both of which are already picked up by the Government and will continue to be, Sir, but the bottom line is that the consumers of the services...

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East is misleading the House because he is giving the impression that, for example, Barbadian students going to Mona in Jamaica and St. Augustine in Trinidad pay an amenities fee.

The Amenities Fee is unique to the Cave

Hill campus and it is as a result of the failure of the Barbados Government to do as other Governments do, and I am laying the blame for that entirely on the previous Minister of Education, not the immediately previous one, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.

Therefore, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East is not being candid with the House, Sir, in indicating that amenities fee is peculiar and unique to Barbados. Why is that so?

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am not here to speak about Jamaica and Trinidad and their campuses. I am dealing with a fee at the Cave Hill Campus in Barbados. The bottom line is that an audit of student services across the three campuses, indicated the woeful absence of a range of student services at Cave Hill, as compared to Mona, St. Augustine, and several universities in other parts of the world and a plan of action was devised by the campus.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East is misleading the House because in a press conference which he held, he publicly expressed, to my recollection, both concern and doubt about the action of the University in charging the fee.

Is the Honourable Member now apologising to Barbados and saying that he has suddenly found out that there is justification for making Barbadian students pay for university education?

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I do not know what the Honourable Member for St. John is up to, but, if he had done one of two things, check the Advocate, Sir, - you cannot make reference to the press but they got it right - or he could go back to the tape of the press

conference at CBC, and the matter would have been very clear.

I did, in fact for the benefit of the Honourable Member, draw...

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Sir, I am dealing with the Honourable Member for St. John.

The Honourable Member would know that I was quite clear that the Government had one matter on which it needed clarification. The matter as was reported, and we do not believe everything we see in print, is that the fee related to Barbadian students only.

The Government's solution is clear. If you are charging a fee for the consumption of services, the consumption is not based on nationality. The consumption is based on your presence. Therefore, a fee which is designed and based on the consumption of services in Barbados by students of Cave Hill, could only apply to all students at Cave Hill and that matter having been clarified, we had no difficulty with the matter.

Mr. Chairman, we are clear that the Government of Barbados by the support of this \$97 million per year is covering the campuses, as we have done over the years. In fact, if you look at the Cave Hill Campus over the last ten years that we have been in Government, you will notice not only the expansion of student intake in the region of 6 000 now, but a total expansion of the physical features of the university, for example, a new teaching centre opposite the main building, new dormitories, expansion of the social science faculty and the new CERMES building, overlooking Free Hill.

Sir, as a matter of fact, the university has now, finally after many years, fully developed its 37 acres in its present location and now has

to expand over on the other side of the road, which is where the new cultural arts centre is being constructed.

It has made a request of the Government to have access to lands in the region of the Lazaretto, which are owned by the Government, in order to be able to expand further to provide for a proposed new medical faculty, which they are now taking through their various stages of discussion. This is to provide for a new computer centre, additional student accommodation, a new student recreational centre and several other facilities and amenities. Therefore, Sir, the Government's record of support for the university has been very solid and clear.

Mr. Speaker, we see a very clear and direct role for us to continue to play. We have made our commitment to provide the full economic cost, full tuition fees and all of the capital expenditure. This will be done by way of Government guarantees and other support.

Sir, we are financing, in this current financial year and for the next two financial years, a special expansion programme at the university, which has included the new Master's of Arts degree in International Trade Policy which includes several new areas of teaching. It is a \$9 million expansion programme that the Government has financed by \$3 million a year. Therefore, all of those are matters that relate to the capacity of the university to be able to deliver its programmes fully funded and supported by the Government of Barbados.

I indicated earlier as well that the private sector of Barbados, I am pleased to say, has ended the relationship of unfamiliarity which they tended to have with the university over the years, and they must be commended for what they have done. The lion share of all of the expansion that you see there, and what will occur at the other side of the road, Sir, is as a

result of the full financing by the Government of Barbados.

House 56, sequence 39, 17:3014

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2005

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, let me also respond to some other matters raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. The Honourable Member raised some questions in relation to the Education Sector Enhancement Programme and its work programme. The work programme as prepared by the Project Coordinating Unit of the Ministry has been communicated out there to principals and so on. What unfortunately may not have occurred is that in cases where principals have been informed of what is happening they might not have informed their staff. Therefore, I cannot say that teachers would always be in the know although they should be.

Mr. Speaker, what I can tell you for sure is that given the preliminary work which is involved, the testing of the schools, the preparation of the preliminary designs, is that the designs, as the Honourable Member would know, are sent to the schools for discussion. At some schools the principal would share those plans with the staff and get an input, but at other schools, unfortunately, we learn afterwards that the principal might have made a decision based on the plans and only the principal is aware. Sir, the Ministry would take the view that there has been consultation. Therefore, if that has happened, we apologise.

Sir, we had hoped to have started work on the Erdiston/Carrington Primary this year, but that has been subject to some difficulties with tendering. Tenders were received but the

InterAmerican Development Bank did not approve any of the submissions. The criteria is going to be changed and they are going to go back out to tender, that means several months have been knocked off of that.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, at the Christ Church Girls' School the designs and preliminaries have been done but we need to acquire lands adjacent to the school in order to execute the work, but we are encountering difficulties with respect to those lands. It is the same thing with the St. Martins Four Roads Primary School. There are specific difficulties with those cases.

Mr. Chairman, we have identified a core of schools which are of greatest concerns to us and which will form the basis of the next package of work. These include the Foundation School, the St. Michael School, St. Giles Senior, St. Martins Four Roads Primary, St. Martins Mangrove Primary and St. Ambrose Primary. We are also doing a full assessment of the Lodge School and Harrison College.

Sir, we basically tried to identify those schools which are in the most precarious conditions so as to advance them in the programme because it certainly would not be practical to do work on new schools or schools that are in good condition like the Hilda Skeene Primary School or the Deighton Griffith Secondary School when we have other schools which are in obvious need of repairs.

Sir, I hope that I have answered the Honourable Member questions, and I will come back later.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a contribution to this Head and to say that I am indeed very disappointed with the

Minister of Education who I believe would be speaking in putting the position of Government on this matter.

Sir, after this country would have utilised education as the only mechanism via which Barbadians could become reputable worldwide for their skills in various disciplines, it is indeed quite disappointing in the 21st Century to hear the Honourable Member responsible for this Government indicating that he had no problem at all with persons having to pay a contribution towards tertiary education.

Mr. Chairman, I am somewhat disappointed because I do not buy the logic of those individuals who claim that because there is a worldwide trend in this and that, that Barbados should necessarily give up its unique position. Our unique position has been that we may very well be, rather large or small, the only country that provides such an opportunity because it is the only capacity we have to develop our human resource. Therefore, when I hear individuals with that logic, it bothers me fundamentally because it makes no sense. They are removing the only thing that Barbadians have that have given them the capacity to go to the United Nations or to move all over this world by creating a conditionality that allows for an opportunity to be removed based on cost. It is an error.

Sir, I want to link the logic, or the illogicality of the rationale to data that has been presented in this Honourable Chamber on multiple occasions. There are some who seem to believe that because you have children going to university, you can afford it. There are some who seem to believe that many persons are not struggling to send their children to university.

Sir, I want Honourable Members to listen very carefully. I will now refer to three reports that were presented in this House, the first one is the Barbados Risk Survey where evaluations

were done with respect to income levels in Barbados. Sir, this was the income distribution that we had from way back in 1995, and it shows that less than 31 per cent of Barbadians were earning less than 600 per month, 18 per cent were earning between \$601 and \$1 000 per month, 4 per cent were earning between \$2 000 and \$3 000 per month, 1 per cent between \$3 000 and \$4 000 per month and 1 per cent above \$4 000 per month.

Sir, I want now to revisit that with the data from 1997 from the White Paper on Housing, which was presented in this Honourable Chamber, in which it was shown that 31 per cent of Barbadians earn less than \$700 per month and 20 per cent earns between \$200 and \$300 per month. I will bring that up to 2004 to speak on the Green Paper on the Elderly of 2000 which was presented in this Honourable Chamber in 2004 where it shows that 81 per cent of Barbadians earn less than \$3 100 per month.

Sir, if you include in this the cost of water, electricity, telephone, paying a mortgage, buying food, buying toiletries and so on, it could be a burden for many persons. Therefore, I will not support, and I do not think that the Democratic Labour Party would support, a position where you can impose such hardships that can remove a percentage of persons from the only opportunity that allows them a chance to make it in Barbados, in the region and outside the region. That is what the history has demonstrated to us.

Sir, it bothers me that a Minister of Education who is responsible for policy could sit in a Cabinet on Thursdays with other members and devise these types of positions that go at total variance to the development of human capital in Barbados. Sir, I cannot understand the thinking of this administration, but it is not surprising to me because this is the same administration that said way back that if

you establish free education in Barbados, who would cut the canes in Barbados, so this is nothing new.

Sir, this is just a continuation of a philosophy that you should pay for everything you get. Sir, it is not a government responsibility to help with the development of individuals, so in a case where they cannot pay, well then God help them. That is the reason I have to speak against this particular Head because I do not believe it is in the interest of the development of this country in the future given the competition in which we must now engaged. That competition requires that we educate more, that we retool and that we re-educate. Therefore, all of those people who are in the low income and middle income brackets must never have the opportunity taken away from them because of cost.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

House 56 Sequence 40

5:40 p.m.

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, it is clear to me that we are in the fishing season and that the Minister of Education, who represents one of the constituencies in Christ Church, which is near Oistins, has come to this Parliament to fish for some Blue Peter sharks. Sir, I want the Minister to understand that the fish that he is hooking for is not on this side and who he wants to expose, is not on this side.

Mr. Chairman, it is clear to everybody that at this stage of our development, when services happen to be the main feature, that no serious minister would come to Parliament to stop the educational progress of its people. I am clear in my mind that the Minister of Education, who

happens to be the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, will not be that Minister in Barbados, who would be charged for depriving the masses of a higher education.

Mr. Chairman, it is clear to me that the Minister has been dealt a hand, that the Educational Sector Enhancement Programme is a programme that has been undertaken for him, and that he has used the opportunity of the new talk on campus to divert the attention of Barbadians away from EduTech. Sir, neither does the Honourable Member want the members of the Barbadian public to be aware that in the international arena, EduTech has been divided into two parts. I do not know if it was of the Honourable Member's making or if it was a demand from the financiers of EduTech that we now have to separate the revenue expenditure from the capital expenditure, and the programme has been divided into two parts.

Mr. Chairman, seeing that this programme has been exposed on the international market, it is quite clear that the baby that was supposed to have replaced free secondary education from the womb to the tomb, has been served its death notice. It is clear that the Minister of Education now has to divert the attention from this particular path and has to behave, as this Government has forgotten the mass support that it has been able to appeal to, and has now used a red herring to divert the attention from EduTech to free tertiary education.

Mr. Chairman, it is clear that grandstanding will occur at the University, and that the cosmetologists are now at work where they will be able to expand the campus over to the other side of the street. They will tell people that they will now be using capital expenditure - and not capital works, which is the same thing - to be able to promote and to give the impression that they are doing something in education, when, in fact, all they would be

doing, would be providing more buildings to achieve the same thing that had previously occurred, where they can be disguised and camouflaged in the eyes of the Barbadian public.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member understands quite well that once I am in this Honourable House, he cannot continue to put that particular programme. Sir, if the Honourable Member is serious about that programme, he would have to make the point that no matter what is said by the Opposition today, he is going to go ahead and implement these fees. Sir, this is not an issue for Parliament, this is an issue that has to go to the public and, therefore, if the Minister is serious about it, let us go to the public and discuss it.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the Honourable Member is not serious about it because he will not take it into the public to be discussed. Sir, I challenge the Honourable Member this evening, to come and go to the people of Barbados to discuss this particular issue. This is not an issue for 30 Honourable men and women. This is an issue that must be discussed amongst the people of Barbados but at the same time, I cannot stop the Government from implementing their policies. If this is a policy of the Barbados Labour Party, I cannot stop them from implementing it. Sir, I will wait until the Barbados Labour Party implement that policy, then I will comment on it.

Mr. Speaker, I am challenging the Honourable Member to state that he is not changing his mind; that this is what has to occur; that he does not care about poor people anymore, neither does he care about the effect that it would have on poor people; that this is what is right for the country; and that this is what he will take the country forward with. Sir, if we do not believe that services are important anymore, let us bring it to the vote. Let us make a decision on it whether or not we are backing

the masses.

Mr. Chairman, when the Honourable Member for St. Philip South wanted to increase bus fares in this country, I remember well the effect that it would have had on the masses was taken into account. I want you, Mr. Chairman, to tell me that if we charge fees for tertiary education, if it would have as much damage as if we were to charge increase bus fares.

Mr. Chairman, I am wondering if the Honourable Member for St. Philip South is telling me that I am wrong, that that is what should occur. If that is so, then let it happen. Sir, I expect that when the Minister of State in the Ministry of Education gets up to make the particular point, that she is going to say she supports increase in charges. I live in the Honourable Member's constituency and, therefore, she has the opportunity to do that.

Mr. Chairman, this is a war between EduTech and free tertiary education, from the womb to the tomb. Sir, the Minister of Education will have to make the decision as to whether or not he is going along with a hand that was badly dealt for him or whether or not he is coming with new policies.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I want to make an intervention in connection to the Supplementary. I know that much time has been spent on looking at the physical structures but I want to refer specifically to the more social and health aspects of the Supplementary with regards to Subprogramme 294, the School Meals Department's request for maintenance of property to the tune of \$82,800.

Mr. Chairman, we are all aware that for the last 35 years, the School Meals Department has been offering very good quality service. I believe that in order for the workers there to

continue offering that quality service and to ensure that the highest of health standards are maintained, that they need to get the additional funding to be able to carry out their work with the industrial cleaning of the five centres and ensuring that conditions there are up to standard. For example, the cupboards for the various nutrition rooms, the water heaters that are required in all schools, to ensure that hot water is available for cleaning the equipment and for the cleaning of the grease traps.

Mr. Chairman, as you are aware, the grease traps need to be cleaned every two weeks and, therefore, I would wish to support this Supplementary to ensure that the School Meals Department fulfills its role.

Sir, there are seven vans which run the entire stretch of the island and, therefore, I would wish for that aspect of the vote to be supported. We know that over time the vans will depreciate, having to be used everyday, stretching from St. Philip to St. Lucy.

Asides.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I want to be able to hear the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in silence.

H:No.56(41)550 p.m.

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Continuation of Miss. C. Y. FORDE:

I believe that we should be looking at all parts of the educational system as it refers to this particular Supplementary. While I appreciate the discussion which is taking place, it is important to be speaking about EduTech and the university, it is also important that we focus on more aspects of the primary school such as the school meals programme.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the seven vehicles that service the entire island should always be in peak condition because you would appreciate that anything a vehicle is down it means doubling up of the other vehicles and hence they would reach schools late thus pushing back the programme in the schools in the afternoon and depriving many of the students of a good quality education. Sir, I want to support the exercise of the maintenance of the vehicle to make sure they are road worthy.

Sir, the ovens, slicers and mixers must always be in peak workers condition. Mr. Chairman, workers are on the plant as early as 5:30 a.m. and in order for them to maximise their time, the equipment must be in good working order so that there are no accident. This funding is to assist with the maintenance of equipment at the School Meals Department.

My final comment has to do with the remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West about free education. Sir, the Barbados Labour Party must be praised for the free education at the Princess Margaret School where the Honourable Member for St. Philip West received his education.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a few comments on this important Head. The question which needs to be asked is who will pay the additional \$700 00. Apparently, the Opposition is of the view that we should ask 81 per cent of Barbadians earning less to pay the additional \$70. If the Opposition is of the view that we should tax Barbadians more to pay the \$700 00 they must say so.

Sir, one has to understand that Government pays \$96 million every year for tertiary education and will continue to do so. Mr. Chairman, \$700 works out to less than 1 per cent of total cost for incidentals which represents things like security and lighting. At the university students must be properly secured so the security and lighting must be paid for. The university also has to pay janitorial staff and library services.

Mr. Chairman, many of these students have to study late at nights and they use the facilities of the university. Are we saying the Government of Barbados should pick up the additional cost for these students?

Mr. Chairman, education is totally free in Barbados. Students at high schools pay a petty fee and the students at the Barbados Community College pay an incidental. Sir, I support this fee of less than 1 per cent because we cannot ask the public of Barbados of pay more.

Mr. Chairman, we have just increased the double lane to facilitate more cars going into the university, students are paying attention to buying cell phones and all types of things and I do not see the need for Government to pay and additional \$700 00 which will fall on the backs of Barbadians.

Sir, I think that the students can pay the \$700 00.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. John.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Almighty God that I have lived long enough to hear Honourable Members on the other side who were in this Chamber in 1994 completely reversed themselves without qualifications or conditions.

They did not turn red in the face or there was no nervousness, not a bead of sweat on their brow.

Sir, in 1994, during Budget debates and at every opportunity when an educational debate came up in this House, Honourable Members on that side, including the Honourable Member for St. George North, would get up and attack the Democratic Labour Party for what it said were decisions taken to impose user fees on students at the University of the West Indies.

Asides.

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Sir, they criticisms are irrelevant but it is the terms in which they couch the criticisms in those days. What they said about the Democratic Labour Party did not bother me then nor does it not bother me now. What bothers me is the fact that the Barbados Labour Party projected itself consistently as a political institution that would stand between anybody and anything that sought to impose a single cent in additional cost or any expenses associated with attending the University of the West Indies in Barbados.

Sir, we heard long speeches about the education sector being the fourth economic sector. I would not say who said that because she is very selective in her memory. She spoke about the human resources frontier in Barbados and said the Barbados Labour Party was committed to ensuring that not one cent would be paid by students as part of the rights of passage of our institution because our navel string was buried here and the hair piece somewhere else.

Sir, behind the backs of the people of this country, totally concealed, decisions were systematically being made during that time and subsequently. I do not blame the Honourable Member for Christ Church East except for not being frank and having the courage to come out

and say that he was not responsible for it. I blame him for trying to force the administration of the university to hold the bag on the issue because it is not an issue that relates to the administration of the university since no amenity fee is being paid in Trinidad even by Barbadians students attending the university there. Sir, I want to know why this is so. I checked when I went to Jamaica last week and no amenities fee is being paid by students in Jamaica including Barbadians student attending the university in Jamaica.

H56/18;;00

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1005 Tuesday, March 1,

CONTINUATION OF Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON:

Asides

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: I want you to check the cost of the road from Massiah Street to Society that you underestimated in the last Estimates. You can go and check that.

Asides

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East, in my view, is not going to take the blame and should not have to take the blame because he knows that what I am saying is absolutely correct and he knew when he went to that Press conference, despite his dancing around on the issue as to whether only Barbadians would have to pay the fees, that was never an issue. That could have been dealt with in one telephone call either to the Principal of the university or the minister who agreed to the amenities fee. He only had to call his colleague, who is not now in the Ministry of

Education, and ask her what was agreed to. That did not require a Press conference. Sir, it was never any doubt and I am saying that is almost hypocritical for us to engaging in a debate of this type in which all of a sudden we are hearing that those very fundamental principles with which the Barbados Labour Party was parting company with the Democratic Labour Party in 1994, in relation to the costs associated with the university education have now been shattered and trampled in the recent scenario with the students.

Sir, what kind of engagement is taking place between the Government of Barbados and the students who attend the University of the West Indies? What kind of engagement is taking place to discuss these issues between the administration of University of the West Indies and the students? Did they wake up one morning and discover that money would have to be paid?

Sir, if the Honourable Members on the other side want to get with the chorus in Barbados who are saying that they have cellular phone so they can pay for their university education, well they can say so instead of walking around trying to pretend that you defend all kinds of principles.

I agree fundamentally with what the Honourable Member for St. Philip West said. There has to be a Barbadian way and even if they may have been errors along the way, the commitment to free education is almost a right in this country. They may be other countries in which that is not so but I assumed after that debate in 1994 that the two political parties were at idem on the issue and this would be a dead issue, politically.

Sir, in the situation that has emerged, we have found out that they have gone behind the backs of the students, parents and all the people

that have elected them in the last general election when they were shouting from the roof tops about these fundamental principles and about the education sector being the fourth economic sector and rather than paying for education that they would help people to go to university and we would offer them loans and make major investments.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East just told us that the sum total of Government's investment in the university over the next three years is \$9 million.

Asides

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. John, as he sits with a smile on his face, does not even believe what he said because he knows full well the sum total of Government's investment in the university is not \$9 million neither in capital works or anything else. In fact, in trying to compare \$197 million per year to the university and on top of that where there are additional special programmes being developed - that \$9 million that was mentioned had nothing to do with capital works. It has to do with additional teachers' programme including a Master's degree, International Trade Policy.

Asides

Mr. D.J.H. THOMPSON: If I were to refer to the Auditor General's Report for 2004 and I were to add the amount of money across ministries, statutory Boards and government corporations that has been wasted and squandered by this Government in one year alone, it would come to more than the \$9 million in additional expenditure that is going to be spent over the next three years at the University of the West Indies.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St.

George North has the temerity to ask us to tell him whether the Government of Barbados should continue to pay for free tertiary education.

Sir, I thought we had passed that but the Honourable Member for St. George North, armed with a copy of the Auditor General's Report, armed with all the wastage in government that he has knowledge of and all the nonsense that is going on in the accounting procedures of Government could still get up in the House of Assembly and ask the Opposition, he did not ask his colleagues. Sir, he did not go down to the university when they were demonstrating and confronted the students; he did not tell the police who were there. He did not tell the parents of the children and he is not even touching the Honourable Member who is sitting next to him because he has created more distance between himself and the Minister of Education since he spoke; he is not telling them but he wants the Opposition Members on this side to say whether the Government should pay the \$700 for students.

Sir, the ball is in the Minister's court and I urge the Honourable Member for Christ Church East to start over because he started wrong. The issue was not whether Barbadian students were paying and not other students. That was never the issue. Check across the university system and you would see whether it is fair and just, for that imposition to be made on the students at the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Sir, I rise to make a contribution to this debate. I am going to speak very clearly because one of the things that I try to do is to be extremely honest, forthright and frank especially since I have become involved in elective politics.

Sir, on this particular issue of the \$700 amenities fee at the University of the West Indies, persons have come from many different places and they have shown how hypocritical and wicked they can be on this matter, all in the name of seeking to gain some political mileage on the issue. I am going to speak in the fifteen minutes allowed to me on this issue as passionately as some of the Honourable Members but I am going to be very honest and realistic in what I say.

Sir, I came out of a family that had to pay for education at a secondary level. This business of free secondary education when it is bandied about, especially by the Honourable Members on the other side, would seek to give the impression that every secondary school child in this country from the time it was thought to be introduced, would have gone to every secondary school in this country without having to pay a cent for tuition. This did not happen since the Barbados Labour Party took over the Government in 1994, even at the Common Entrance Examination stage when the placements are done, some of the students are sent to school where their families have to pay for their education in part.

Sir, let me also say that the bursaries that are given, in case the Honourable Members on the other side do not know, are never enough to cover the cost of the education at those schools.

Asides

H56:18.10 p.m.

Sequence 43

2005

Tuesday, March 01,

House 56, sequence 44,
6:10 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. A.P. WOOD:

It is a myth that education in this country has been free at any secondary level. Two of my sisters and one of my brothers went to Christ Church Secondary School. A lot of the private schools in Barbados have been maintained not by the public's purse, in full, but the students who go there have to pay and they have been paying for the longest while.

Mr. Chairman, we also have a situation in this country where a number of students who went to secondary schools, once they reach a certain age, whether they would have gone to those schools like Princess Margaret that some of us would have gone to in this Honourable Chamber, or whether they would have gone to Harrison College as some of us would have gone to, or whether they went to St. George Secondary, all the students, over the years and this will continue, who do not get the requisite level of certification to move to education at a higher level, find themselves having to go to either the Barbados 'O' Level Institute, or to take classes on evenings at some of the same Government school plants.

Mr. Chairman, those students pay for the three, four or five courses that they take. The investment in their education at that level is less likely to reap the type of returns that an investment in human capital at the tertiary level of the University of the West Indies is likely to gain. The students also pay for their exams and the tuition at that level. Thank God for the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, who gives a number of scholarships to facilitate students who go to the Barbados 'O' Level Institute, but there are many students who do not get those scholarships and they have to pay for their education in full.

Sir, I want to disassociate myself from anybody who comes into this Honourable Chamber or outside, who seeks to give the impression that a tiny investment in human capital at the tertiary level should not be made.

Mr. Chairman, we have a situation where many Barbadian families, whether they are families of significant means or not, draw on the Student Revolving Loan Fund, thousands of dollars a year to send their children overseas to study.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members let us hear the Honourable Member. When his time expires, another member can speak but let him speak, please.

Honourable Member, you have 10 minutes more remaining.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Thank you, Sir.

Sir, I am not only talking about those who are only doing postgraduate work, but quite a few of them draw on the Fund to send their children overseas to do undergraduate courses and that is a solid investment in human capital. When I compare the amount that they draw down on the Fund, because there are limits to the Fund, depending upon the class of degree or the level of study, the \$700 a year cannot compare with the thousands of dollars that families, who recognise the importance of investment in education make.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. John wanted us to compare what is happening at the other two campuses. There is not an amenities fee paid at the other two campuses but the structure of the fees across the university system will have economic costs and they will have a tuition fee. The students at Mona in Jamaica and St. Augustine in Trinidad,

pay 20 per cent of the economic costs.

Asides.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Sir, when you take 20 per cent of the economic cost at Mona and St. Augustine, it is well in excess of \$700 a year. If he wants to compare across the university system, I am going to compare for the Honourable Members over there and, whereas it may not be called an amenities fee, it is called the tuition fee and they pay 20 per cent of that fee.

Mr. Chairman, this is where the hypocritical part comes. I said earlier that I came up in a family where my father had to struggle and send my brothers and sisters to a secondary school that funds had to be paid for their education. We lived with that, so the way they are going on about free secondary education, would seek to give the impression that every secondary school student in Barbados had the same privilege once they got on to that level of education. This was not a fact. It was not a fact back then and it is not a fact today and, going forward, it will not be a fact.

There will always be the case where students at the level of the secondary schools will have to pay some part for their education. Once they do the common entrance examination, there are not enough places in the Government run schools for the students who will be graduating from primary school, and that will always be the case.

Mr. Chairman, I was not here when the Honourable Member for Christ Church East spoke. I am very passionate about this but the lowest cost faculty at the University of the West Indies per student would be economic cost of \$22 780 and tuition fee of \$4 626 which gives a payment in any one year of \$27 406 per year, per student, in the Faculty of Humanities

and Education. This gets higher when you go to science and technology, and it gets even higher when you go to medicine.

The university administration is asking the students to pay \$700 in order to provide better student amenities. Mr. Chairman, \$2 100 as an investment in human capital over a three-year period, where the returns to that investment on leaving the university for the individual's family should be high and collectively to the country, should also be high.

House 56, sequence 44, 18:2014

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. A. P. WOOD:

The Government has been on record as saying that no portion of this economic cost and tuition fee in the foreseeable future would have to be met by the students, and that is what I am supporting. However, I do not think that persons who benefited from education at that level and who recognise and understand the true value of tertiary level education and the type of strides that we have made both individually and collectively, would in their true conscience come in here or go out there and seek to have problems with persons paying this fee even if they have to access a loan.

Sir, there is a Student Revolving Loan Fund in place and if that needs to be topped up, it can be topped up for the benefit of all those persons or the university can have its own funding mechanism that would allow those persons to borrow that \$700 a year for three years because we would hope that once they access the fund, they would pay very close attention to what is happening at the campus and would want to get out in the shortest possible time. They can be given a grace period like is done with the Student Revolving

Loan Fund where some students access from \$25 000 to \$50 000 a year depending on the type of programme.

Mr. Chairman, once persons finish the course of study at the university their earning capacity would be significantly greater than a student whose parents invest in getting them certified at the CXC level, so are they not going to be able to meet the cost. They will meet it because they know the value of getting three, four or five CXC certificates. Some families struggle and pay for that. Sir, I do not understand how a serious politician or serious people in Barbados at this advanced stage of its development could have a problem with that. Mr. Chairman, I do not care what happens after this speech, I am extremely passionate about this. I know the value of education. I stand here as a product of significant investment in human capital. Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that at the end of the day when the dust is settled, the students would understand and would agree with me that the university is not asking too much of them to pay a tiny investment of \$2 100 spread over three years, even if they have to borrow it and seek to repay it after the course of study.

I thank you.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Chairman, I have never heard in my short political life such a surprising speech delivered by a Member of Parliament. It was surprising because I would expect that a man who has not only benefited from the provision of free education but who has had the benefit of understanding the difference between a social good and an economic good would come and respect that this debate is not about the pricing of a product to exclude those who wish to consume but to make available this product to all who wish to consume. That is basically the distinguishing feature between a social good and an economic good.

Sir, to have listened to the Honourable Member for St. Philip South delivered so passionately on this matter, I am still short for words because I cannot understand the extent of his passion given the way in which he delivered. First of all, there are approximately 6 000 students on campus. Therefore, in the aggregate, the university is expecting to raise \$4.2 million. Sir, what is really at the heart of this discussion and debate is whether or not this is going to constitute a policy position on the part of this administration because the provision of amenities to students on campus cannot be confined to campus, just as we cannot confine tertiary level education to those who have reached university level, because you go from primary, to secondary and on to tertiary level.

Therefore, if we are really serious about developing amenities, I supposed football, cricket, the creative arts and the other things, then it may become necessary to start such a provision prior to tertiary level education. Therefore, it may become a policy of this administration quite soon to establish a broader framework of creative expression and of the arts because we had discussions about it before at the secondary level. Therefore, if we reach the stage where we spread that philosophy below tertiary level education, then we can anticipate that this Government would suggest that any Board of Management at any secondary school would be able to implement amenity fees because the school is thinking in terms of expanding the provisions of such services to its children.

The thing about it, Mr. Chairman, is that only two short years ago the Prime Minister of Barbados identified the creative economy as the way forward for Barbados. Sir, what is a creative economy? Is a creative economy not about people? Is it not about allowing Barbados to have greater expression beyond the

so-called confines of academia? Are we not seeing something similar being now projected at the University of the West Indies where the principal is saying let us have a creative arts section, let us open up and develop the cricketing facility, let us have more football and let us have greater provision of amenities across campus. Therefore, the principal and his body would have been able to say to the students that they have to make a contribution of \$700 per year.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot understand how you could put that kind of unnecessary pressure on your student body to yield a mere \$4.2 million, when in actual fact you have an entire Barbados economy in which there is an abundance of wastage. In actual fact, if we are serious about the creation of the creative economy, we could seriously contemplate allocating more resources toward the university, toward education and toward developing our students and our people.

Mr. Chairman, we then had the Honourable Member for St. Philip South trying to compare the payment of a 20 per cent of economic costs in Jamaica and Trinidad to amenity fees in Barbados. Barbados' whole social mobility has been built on giving ordinary Barbadians, not only the opportunity to go to secondary school, but also to go on to university level education. All Barbadians have had such an opportunity. There are several of us who could not have graced this Chamber or could not have had in the life of Barbados, any kind of recognition in the absence of being able to bring something to the table which we would have gathered from going to university or to a proper secondary school in Barbados.

House 56 Sequence 45

6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Mr. C. A. MASCOLL:
Mr. Chairman, it is well-known that unless you are of a particular ilk, that unless you bring a particular kind of quality to certain arenas in Barbados, that you are not going to get that kind of recognition. Therefore, education has been the wherewithal for many Barbadian boys and girls who otherwise could not have been recognised.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: That is well-known. Sir, I have heard talk about overseas study and about comparing universities. I have heard this discussion in the public domain that if you are going to give access to free university education, that it should not be confined to Barbados only.

Sir, there is a misguided argument in all of that because if you pay for Barbadians to go to a university in Barbados, then the dollar is going to multiply itself on campus. Therefore, for the most part, the dollar spent by Government is not going to the student. If properly divided, the dollar is going to go a very long way towards employing Barbadians and other individuals. That money is going to be used to employ people from Barbados. It is going to employ workers on the cricket field. It is going to employ security guards. Money is going to be spent on feeding persons at university. Whereas, if you take the same dollar and send a person somewhere across the world, that same dollar is not going to have the same kind of effect on the economy that it will have in Barbados. Therefore, there are all kinds of reasons for Government to get involved beyond the provision of free education for Barbadians, to get involved in providing such education. Therefore, you cannot then say that because a student has a cellular phone, that the student

ought to be making this contribution, on the basis of the fact that student has a cellular phone, when, in fact, the majority of the expenditure on campus would be going towards the payment of ancillary and professional staff in Barbados and would be employing substantially a number of people trained at much higher levels than one would expect.

Mr. Chairman, there is a reason why, to some extent, the cost at the university is what it is, because back in the earlier times when it was a University College and we had to attract predominantly British lecturers to the Caribbean, we had to pay those lecturers above the going rate in the local economy. Therefore, several British lecturers came to the Caribbean because they were offered a salary which was above the average salary in Barbados or in the Caribbean, and that has remained and rightly so.

Mr. Chairman, if we are saying that education is so valuable, then those who are imparting the education ought to be paid at a premium rate. Sir, to some extent, if we know what is happening at the university, there is a built-in proportion of one's salary that has to do with the historical reality of the establishment of the University College, which was more related to salaries being offered in the British environment, than in the West Indian or Caribbean environment.

Mr. Chairman, I am surprised, and I mean it from the bottom of my heart. In fact, I think that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South got trapped in trying to be overly political, in trying to protect the Party on the basis of what he perceived to be a challenge from the Democratic Labour Party with respect to this so-called amenities fee. The Honourable Member was hoodwinked almost and was drawn into an argument where he has lost all of his ideological bases for argument. He was drawn into a discussion, purely on the basis of

finance for such an important venture, as to educate persons within the region and to provide an opportunity for social mobility. He was to have explained that he has come from a circumstance in which his siblings would not have been able to pay, or were forced to pay for secondary education. Therefore, for the Honourable Member to come and argue along the lines that he has done tonight, I cannot believe it.

Mr. Chairman, let me say here and now that I believe that if the Honourable Member's speech had been heard by a wide cross-section of the Barbadian public, that he would have lost complete favour in the eyes of many Barbadians for the stance which he has taken and for the arguments which he has used to justify the position that he has taken in this particular debate.

Sir, the Honourable Member cannot go that wrong ideologically because in this instance he cannot equate the provision of this education to money, especially if the Prime Minister has identified a creative economy as being the basis for the way forward, especially if the Prime Minister has identified enhancing people's abilities as a basis for ensuring competitiveness and ability of Barbadians, to be able to compete in the new world. Sir, how then could the Honourable Member have reached the positions, the arguments and the conclusions which he has reached in his delivery. It is also disappointing because the Honourable Member should be from a younger school of thought.

The Honourable Member cannot be confined to seeing education purely in terms of dollars and cents. The Honourable Member cannot be arguing on this issue, on the basis of protecting an administration. He has to argue because ten years from now, the Honourable Member must be able to look back and have a conscience with respect to the arguments which

he has advanced in this Honourable Chamber this evening.

Mr. Chairman, that is why from the outset I have said that it is the most surprising speech that I have heard from a Honourable Member of Parliament in my ten years, in both the Lower Chamber and the Upper Chamber of Parliament in this country. The Honourable Member cannot be forgiven for the position which he has taken, nor for the lack of philosophical moorings with respect to the provision of education and the way in which he has advanced his arguments to defend a political party. The Honourable Member needs to defend his conscience.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the tenor of the debate so far is somewhat surprising. It is surprising to me because I have always been under the impression that both sides are committed to the provision of free education in this country as an important tool and component in development. I did not think that there was any argument about that, but listening from the sidelines and hearing all the passion, one would get the impression that there is a great philosophical divide between the two Parties.

Mr. Chairman, it is interesting to hear the Honourable Leader of the Opposition contrasting the social good with the economic good. Sir, this argument about the social good of education, vis-a-vis, the economic good, is one that was put with a great deal of vehemence during the period of the early 1990s, when the Government at the time was getting ready to impose recovery of cost for tertiary education in Barbados.

I am sorry that the Honourable Member for St. John has left because he was the Minister of Finance at the time and was present

in Parliament at the time when I raised the question of recovery of cost which was set out in a number of documents that passed through the Cabinet and the Ministry of Education in those days, when there was a proposal for recovery of cost for the university.

Sir, the recovery of cost was a euphemism for gouging out fees out of the pockets of Barbadians.

Asides.

H:No.56(46)640 p.m.

Tuesday, March 1,
2005

Continuation of Mr. L. R. TULL:

It was raised by me on the Floor of Parliament when the Minister of Education was a Cyril Walker who had great difficulty in being able to extricate his Government from those commitments. Sir, you were to pay fees at the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, Erdiston Teachers' Training College.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central was then a big 'maguffy' in the teachers' union. I do not recall the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, as the head of the Barbados Union of Teachers, uttering one single word against this contemplation by the Democratic Labour Party to do these things.

Mr. R.D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. George South is seeking to mislead the House. If the Honourable Member was paying careful attention to that most difficult period in the political and economic history of Barbados and since he referred to me as a 'maguffy' in the trade union movement at the time speaking on

behalf of not only teachers but students and education generally, he would have recognised the strong tones relative to the imposition of any user fees or cost recovery mechanisms coming from my mouth, emanating out of the streets of Welches or when I was on the streets of Barbados. Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member doth protest too much. The Barbados Union of Teachers in those days had more time to spare to tell teachers not to supervise morning assembly because they were not preachers or to look after the young children in the schools. They said that if you wanted someone to look after young children, that you should pay attendants. Sir, I did not hear the Honourable Member speak about those days.

Sir, I did not hear when the Honourable Member and his union were telling the people of Barbados that teachers were workers too and were entitled like any other worker under the ILO Convention to take an hour for lunch. Therefore, they were free to abandon the little children between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. I did not hear the Honourable Member speak when teachers were leaving the school compound at lunch hour. Mr. Chairman, since I do not allow loose words to come from my lips, I am not putting all the teachers in Barbados in that category.

Mr. R.D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House again. I know that the Honourable Member has a particular burden relative to the onslaught of the teachers unions on himself when he was the Minister of Education. At that time, I was not the leader of the Barbados Union of Teachers. In fact, my sojourn would have been under the reign of the Democratic Labour Party and one year under the Honourable Member for St. Michael North

East. The Honourable Member is speaking of a different time and person and he should remember his history relative to this period.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, the Honourable Member said he was not a 'maguff' in those days but he was a camp follower which makes it worse. The Honourable Member went into Bethel Auditorium and Marine House taking these stances in those days.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, on this question of the cost recovery at the university, I am challenging the Democratic Labour Party to deny on the Floor of Parliament that there had plans that were aided and abetted by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, who was then an advisor to the Government on these matters like the Inter American Development Report which put up cost recovery as an option recovery in this economy.

Sir, I am challenging them to deny that these things are a reality. Now today there is a big song and dance about the imposition of an internal fee by the university which is bringing out all the hypocrisy that is becoming so common and apparent in these days.

Mr. Chairman, there has been some discussion....

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The major advisor to the Democratic Labour Party during those days is presently the Minister of Agriculture in this administration. Sir, the major advisor on finance, education, offshore sector, fiscal policy and monetary policy is today the Minister of Agriculture in this administration.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman....

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. It is perfectly well-known and history would record it that the good and sound advice offered by the then Director of Finance and Economic Affairs was not accepted or followed at the time. Sir, it is well-known that seven senior advisors left the then Prime Minister and Minister of Finance at the time because he would not take their advice.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, what the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West had done is again typical of the other side. When they cannot take the licks, they shift it to the civil servants. The Honourable Member speaks of the then Permanent Secretary or Director of Finance of Planning. Sir, before this debate is finished, he will get up and attack half dozen other Permanent Secretaries.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the philosophical position is whether this country is committed to the provision of free education or not. I thought there was no divide in this matter. This Government is totally and unequivocally committed to the provision of free university education at the University of the West Indies. Sir, that is the commitment of this Government. I do not mind what the Minister of Education says or does not say because, when I speak, I speak from an abundance of knowledge of the Government of the Barbados Labour Party then and now. Sir, that is the commitment of this Barbados Labour Party.

H56/18:50

Sequence 47

CONTINUATION OF... Mr. L.C. TULL: Sir, I want to make a detour. I went to secondary school in Barbados and my parents never paid any school fees. If they had to pay school fees today, I might probably would have been a bad carpenter. This happened before the Democratic Labour Party became the Government of this country in 1961. Mr. Chairman, we heard that free secondary education started after the Democratic Labour Party came to Government in 1961. I went to secondary school before then and I did not pay school fees at Harrison College for the eight years that I went there.

Asides

Mr. L.C. TULL: Mr. Chairman, in those days some paid school fees and some did not.

During the period 1961 and 1976 when the Democratic Labour Party was in Government some students paid school fees and some did not pay. In the period up to this moment there are Barbadians who are paying school fees at the secondary level.

Sir, the frightening thing about it is that the people who are paying school fees at the secondary level in Barbados are those at the top and those at the bottom. They are the people who go St. Gabriel's and St. Winifred's who are the ones who can pay school fees and they are at the top but those people who are still paying school fees at the secondary level and that is because there is a shortage of government spaces available to them.

Sir, let me give you a little history because people talk without a knowledge of what they speak. When the Democratic Labour Party was the Government in 1961 and 1976 there was an acute shortage of secondary school places in

Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, let us hear the Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. L.C. TULL: There was an acute shortage of secondary school places and they were not enough places to go around. The Barbados Labour Party, after 1976, negotiated with the World Bank and borrowed large sums of money for the construction of primary and secondary schools in this island. The St. James Secondary and Roebuck Secondary School, now Louis Lynch Secondary School, were built and there was expansion of existing secondary schools.

Mr. Chairman, in those days the Democratic Labour Party had a clumsy, awkward and socially offensive way of dealing with the shortage of places in secondary schools in this country. The Democratic Labour Party dealt with the shortage of places in secondary schools by putting children out of school at the age of fourteen to provide places for the children who were coming into school. Perhaps, we inherited all kinds of the social problems today. I am not skilled in that area but I can guess like others that a number of the social problems that we experience today are a direct result of little children being put out of school at an early age and left to wander the streets of villages of this island.

Sir, the Barbados Labour Party Government had to move quickly to build schools and provide the places that we now hear the Democratic Labour Party saying are free. I do not know how a place in school could be free when there is no place at all. Sir, children are not going to school but we are hearing that they are going to school free.

Sir, we not only put the children back into school but I brought legislation to this Parliament to increase the school age to

sixteen which required that every child to be in school until the age of sixteen. Let us talk about these things. I like to hear the Honourable Member for St. Philip West speak and I want him to get some of this history interweave in all the rhetoric that I am hearing.

Sir, those are the things that happened. We built schools, provided places for children and we made it possible for the reality of children going from nursery school to university for all Barbadians to be free. If everybody is going to talk about primary and secondary schools, why not talk about nursery schools? Sir, children were not going to nursery schools in those days in Barbados.

Sir, a few primary schools had a wing where some children of preschool age would go but there was not the type of universality of nursery education as is both the dream and the near reality that we have in this country at the moment. Let us not play games with these things because these things are too important to get the kind or partisan rhetoric that I have heard in this debate today.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you have two minutes more.

Mr. L.C. TULL: I heard the Honourable Member for St. Philip South being unfairly attacked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West. When you do not have an argument you pick on a man and pummel him. That is what is happening.

Asides

Mr. L.C. TULL: I think that the criticism that was made is unfair. Sir, the argument about the social good versus the economic good, I do not believe that I have to stay in here and have anybody in this Parliament put that argument for me. That has been at the center of my public life. I am more concerned about

the problems of those who cannot afford, struggling to make ends means and are disadvantaged in anyway, that has been the hallmark of my political contribution to this country.

Mr. Chairman, when the Honourable Member talks about social good versus economic good he should talk to the Honourable Members on his side who cut the money in the 1990s for education, the Child Care Board, Welfare Department and everybody in sight and who was in need. Sir, children were not able go to school because they had nothing to eat and their mothers were sent home from the public service. Over 4000 workers were sent home. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, who says he is a trade unionist, did not say a word about it.

Asides

Mr. L.C. TULL: If the debate allows me to speak again I will come back because I have some other things to say.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Philip South, the debate has half hour go and we will hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and then I will ask the Honourable Member for Christ Church East to wind up. Honourable Member for St. Philip South, I will hear you now.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for allowing me to make another contribution. I can assure you that it would not be more than five minutes.

I think that I really have a duty to intervene at this stage because the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, in attempting to show that he is the champion of the cause of the poor, he sought to put this issue in perspective, distorted with economic good

versus social good and that I am an opponent of a philosophy which seeks to exclude certain persons from tertiary education because of the amenities fee that has been introduced at the University of the West Indies.

Sir, listening to the Honourable Member for St. George South, it brought into sharp focus the hypocritical nature of how Honourable Members on the other side behave. This administration is eleven years in office.

H56: 19.00 p.m.

Sequence 48

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

House 56, sequence 49,
7:00 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. A.P. WOOD:

I want to tell you that back in 1994 at the University of the West Indies, there was no mention of an amenities fee. There was no clear programme identified at the time for which this \$700 will go, separate from economic costs and tuition fees. Sir, what the Democratic Labour Party at the time was seeking to introduce, when they were very ceremoniously gotten rid of, was cost recovery, at the University of the West Indies, which would have seen Barbadian students paying a significant portion of their economic cost and tuition fee, and in the area of amenities, the university would be literally starved.

Asides.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Sir, that was documented. It was spoken in this very Chamber, the Honourable Member for St. George South would have participated in that very debate, and he would have defended the

introduction of cost recovery measures for the university that would have Barbadian students, 11 years ago, paying a portion for economic cost and tuition fee.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West was part of a team that sought to bring untold hardship on Barbadian students. Sir, where was his conviction at the time in the provision of social good through education for Barbadians, be it at the secondary school level or the tertiary level?

Sir, I want him to understand that I am not seeking to defend any party position on this matter, because this amenities fee was internally set by the administration of the University of the West Indies. This would have started at one level and worked its way to reach the highest organ of the university system, when this fee was agreed to, so this was not a Government position. It was an entirely arrived at position by the University of the West Indies.

I am not speaking on behalf of the any Party. I am speaking to my conscience and I maintain that when the dust is settled on this issue that a student pursuing a course of study at the university, who is called upon to pay \$2 100 over a three-year period for a developed amenities programme, because of the potential returns to such a minor investment, the students themselves, the families of the students and Barbadians in general would conclude that it is not unreasonable for the university to ask a student to pay \$2 100 over a three-year period, especially in the context and against a background that those students who may find it difficult to make the payment from internally generated resources, the families income, that the appropriate mechanism will be put in place.

The Principal at Cave Hill campus has already said that would be the case. If it falls to the Ministry of Education, through the Student

Revolving Loan Fund, or some other pocket, that the funds would be made available on the most generous terms for them to repay.

The returns for a student pursuing tertiary level education are too high for us to come in here and grandstand and seek to gain political mileage on an issue as important as this. Sir, as far as I am concerned, this Parliament's time could have been much better spent today with all of us speaking to our conscience and this debate would have been out of the way long time, and accepting that this is a very small ask that the university administrators are making of the students, \$1 200 over a three-year period, that could be accessed via the loan approach with very soft terms and, if a generous grace period is required, that could be obtained.

I am not going to be part of any grandstanding on the issue. I said that I am not defending any party position. This is the university administrators' position, not the Party position and I do not think it is fair for anybody to seek to back the Minister of Education up in any corner. They are not backing me up in any, and he can speak for himself, but I will speak for him on this matter as well.

Sir, what they were seeking to do in 1994, eleven years ago, would have translated into amounts well in excess of \$700 a year. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, nobody heard him at the time, when they cut the allocation to the social services. Where was the defender of the provision of social goods in Barbados at the time? We are talking about the cut to the welfare and the cut the National Assistance Board. We are talking about the reduction over the period on which unemployment benefits were to be paid. We are talking about the cut in the entitlement to severance.

All we are talking about in a modern day

is to develop a students amenities programme in a very expansive way. We are not touching economic cost or tuition fee but we want to provide to the participating territories, and the contributing Government, a very well-rounded student. All the university administrator is saying, \$2 100 over three years, a tiny investment, compared to what the Governments are making.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. L.R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I just want to wrapup what I was saying earlier with a few additional points. I have been for many years, a member of several committees in the University, such as the University Council, the University Finance and General Purposes Committee, the Audit Committee, and the Grants Committee, so I am very much au fait with what is happening at the university and particularly, Cave Hill.

Sir, one of the things that one has been hearing over the last few years, is that the Minister of Finance in Barbados is unequal in his generosity to the university, from the Vice Chancellor down. They all sang the praises of the Minister of Finance in Barbados for the tremendous generosity to the university. In fact, sometimes I used to wonder how he could continue to be making more and bigger commitments to the university in the economic circumstances of the island.

Sir, it does not sit well in the mouth of the Opposition that when you have a period where a Government and his Minister of Finance has been better than any previous Minister of Finance in his generosity to the university, for us to hear these reckless statements that are being made.

Sir, the Government of Barbados spends over \$90 million a year on the university. This is a lot of money by any reckoning and the

figure has to go out that we spend over \$90 million a year on the university, so that Barbadian children and adults can have the benefit of university education for their own personal development and for the development of this country. Education is the bedrock on which development stands.

House 56, sequence 49, 19:1014

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Mr. L. R. TULL:

We hear a lot of arguments sometimes, I do not mean debates, we hear a lot of debates too, over a lot of economic esoterica, things that people do not understand. They understand education and they know that this Government by its commitment, in its pocket as well as in its mouth, is doing whatever it can for the benefit of our people.

Sir, there is one final point I have to make about this \$700 fee. The Barbados Labour Party made operative a Student Revolving Loan Fund back in 1977 so that the children of parents below a certain income level could get the money from this fund for their post-secondary education. Sir, that fund is available and I am telling all the Barbadian students at Cave Hill who feel that they cannot find the \$700 over a year to find the Ministry of Education on Constitution Road and make them miserable because that fund was set up for them for that purpose and to go and besiege them to get the money because that is the exact purpose for which the fund was set up.

Sir, years ago the Ministry of Education, and I believe it still exists, was given the power to make enabling grants. The Minister has a fund where he can give assistance to needy students. Certainly, the students at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill who

are pursuing their degrees and who do not have this money should be able to draw on it. Sir, I am telling Barbadian students all across this country if they are listening to me to go to the Ministry of Education and ask for what this Government has set up to assist them in these circumstances.

Sir, this is not a Government that turns its back on those who cannot afford to pay for services. If you are old, we will repair your house. If you do not have running water in your house, this Government will put running water in your house. This Government do not feel that there should be any standpipes anymore. This is a Government that will give you food vouchers every week if you do not have food. If you are a student and you do not have the amenities fee, this Government will provide the resources and the facilities to assist you.

Thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central you have five minutes and then the Honourable Member for Christ Church East will wind up the debate.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I believe that many of the citizens of Barbados particularly those young people at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus and those who are now filling out their applications to go to that university would feel a sense of betrayal after listening to the various pronouncements which were made on the other side.

Mr. Chairman, when the Honourable Member for St. Philip South spoke, it seemed to me that he spoke without understanding the evolution of the education process in Barbados right through to this current time. Therefore, for him to speak in the manner that he did by suggesting that his siblings paid for their

education... Many of us in here also paid for secondary education and we understood the deep philosophical basis of what was evolving through the system of Barbados. We understood as well that in that period of time there was a need for the Modern High School, the Washington High School, Wakefield High, the Barbados Academy, Community High and Christ Church High. These were schools across the length and breadth of Barbados where many persons access education.

Mr. Chairman, I am tired of the demarcation and sometimes the stupidity that emanates from the mouths of others. Sir, there came a time in this country right through to this period when education, embedded by the early infancy as planted by Grantley Adams and the others, was made free for all. However, the deep and philosophical underpinning, of where we are now owes itself to the words and the policies of the late Right Excellent Errol Barrow, but we are not dividing that. It is unfortunate that today the 1st of March 2005, the Honourable Member has gone on record as saying that the payment of the \$700 fee is nothing, it is meaningless, it is trite and that the students could be called upon to pay it.

Sir, the Honourable Member eyes of March would come some day, I can guarantee him that just like the eyes of march would come for the Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Asides.

Mr. R. D. JONES: The bells might toll for a lot of us.

Sir, that statement betrays the position that a socialist and a nationalist like the Honourable Member for St. Michael East would have espoused over time but now there is guarded silence. Sir, I wonder what the Honourable Member is waiting for that he cannot speak on

a fundamental issue such as this. I wonder if he has been promised a ministry and that is why he cannot speak with the tone and passion that I know an individual like him who went to the University of the West Indies is capable of doing, his education being buttressed by what was provided by those persons down there. I know that the professor would not speak unless he is not given what he was promised.

Sir, I will wrap up by saying that the principal and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor today shakes his heads because as a student of his, I know that his deep commitment and philosophy has somehow been betrayed by the Government of Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for Christ Church East would you please wind up the debate.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, we had a very interesting debate on this supplementary. Mr. Chairman, in the few minutes that are left to me to wind up I want to say that this administration's record in education in all of its terms in office going back to the 1950s, 1976 to 1986, from 1994 to 2005 and continuing is a strong clear positive record that has not been matched or even come close by the other side. I listened to the 'speed wobbles' or should I say 'speak wobbles' of the Honourable Members from that side. They are obviously not familiar with either the issues as they are now or the positions that their side has taken over time.

Mr. Chairman, this administration, building on the excellent work of previous administrations, has made a fundamental change in education in this country. In fact, while they were speaking I pulled out a copy of the Estimates to look back to see the way they treated education, not only at the tertiary level but overall.

Mr. Chairman, this Government has almost doubled its allocation to the education sector over the ten years in was in office. With respect to tertiary level education \$216 million was provided in 1993 and \$392 million was provided in the current year's Estimates which is almost double what was provided in 1993.

Asides.

House 56 Sequence 50

7:20 p.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, in 1993 the Democratic Labour Party had allocated \$35 million to finance the University of the West Indies. I wonder how they made it. Perhaps the allocation in that year was based on the clear plan of the Democratic Labour Party to introduce user charges, that is to charge students for going to the University of the West Indies. Sir, this year we have almost trebled the allocation with \$96 million being provided to the University of the West Indies.

Sir, our commitment to tertiary education is borne out in numbers at two of the other institutions, which are the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, where, in 1993, the Democratic Labour Party provided a mere \$4 million and today we are providing \$10 million.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East is not deliberately misleading the Honourable House but the information which he is providing, is, in fact, contrary to the argument that he is making.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Chairman, I said the Honourable Member is misleading but not deliberately.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is advancing the argument that over the last ten years, the budget at the University has increased from \$35 million to \$96 million. The Honourable Member, therefore, needs to ask some very searching questions about the cost of delivering education at the University and, therefore, needs to tell us whether or not the enrolment has trebled and why fees are, in fact, being charged.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please continue, Honourable Member. No point of order.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, at the Barbados Community College, another premier tertiary institution, we have provided over three times as much in expenditure and there has been an expansion of enrolment at all those institutions with thousands more Barbadians having the opportunity of attending these institutions and obtaining training in a wider range of areas. Sir, the number of students who were enrolled back then have almost doubled. There is also the expansion in the physical facilities. There is also the clear and firm commitment of this administration, backed by the dollars, to fund education in this country.

Mr. Chairman, those Honourable Members know that the commitment is there to enhance tertiary education but that even at the secondary level, petty fees, games fees, textbooks loans fees are charged. Sir, separate from that, do you know that the structure of our university is one where the university is an autonomous regional institution? Sir, even at the level of the campuses, Cave Hill Campus is not a department of the Government of

Barbados, neither is St. Augustine a department of Government of Trinidad and Tobago, nor Mona Campus a department of the Government of Jamaica.

Sir, at the level of the campus, there is a governance structure that mirrors that of the overall university. There is a council, a finance and a general purpose committee, and in keeping with tradition of the university, as the Honourable Members for the City of Bridgetown and for St. George North, as former Ministers of Education can confirm, there is a democratic governance structure in which students, lecturers, administrative staff, Governments of the region, and other stakeholders are involved and, therefore, the university being separate and apart from the commitments of the Governments for funding education, can, will and do, make provision for other charges.

Mr. Chairman, so far the charges at the Cave Hill Campus, as was set by campus administration, have been in the region of \$240 per year. The university, in its deliberate judgment, has made a proposal to move in a further direction. Sir, that has nothing to do with the commitment of this administration, which is unlike that of the Democratic Labour Party. Our commitment is to make full and adequate provision for the financing of the education of our people. Sir, that is our commitment and we will proceed along those lines.

Mr. Chairman, I want to draw the contrast between this administration and that of the Opposition. In this level of funding, they provided a mere \$216 million in 1993, which we have almost doubled. There was no provision for an Education Sector Enhancement Programme or no provision for school repairs and school rehabilitation. In fact, that was the period of time when there were not even a maintenance programme, let alone a

programme of rebuilding and expanding our schools.

There was no funding for introducing Information Technology into schools. There was no programme for teacher training. In fact, training at the Erdiston Teachers' Training College had been suspended. That programme did not include many of the other achievements that we have been able to note, such as the creation of the Barbados Hospitality Institute; the building of the Pomarine Hotel

to provide advance practical training in hospitality management; the provision of training through the Barbados Language Centre, among a wide range of areas.

Mr. Chairman, suffice it to say that rather than standing on principle, the Opposition is trying to make a cheap political point which, unfortunately, their collective actions, as well as the individual action of key Members, will not be consistent because they have said one thing and have done another.

Sir, whether it is the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, as the chief architect, along with the International Monetary Fund programme of austerity and hardship for Barbadians, including hardship in the educational system... Sir, the Honourable Member is proud of the hardship that he has inflicted upon Barbadians.

Sir, whether it be the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, as a key voice in education in those days, who stood by mute, an observant, while havoc was being wreaked on the education sector. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. John who spoke and fled, was the Minister of Finance in those years, but our hands are both clean and clear in this matter of education.

H:No.56(51)730 p.m.

Tuesday, March 1,

2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Sir, we have not even had time in this debate to reflect on the long history of strong involvement and expansion of education in Barbados because it happens that in this year of our Lord a number of schools are celebrating their anniversary of 50 years. Sir, we created the Princess Margaret School, the Grantley Adams School and St. Leonards Girls and Boys Schools.

Sir, in this Party's first term of office in 1950s, the provisions of the opportunity for Barbadians to benefit from free education was a hallmark of this administration. We do not have to be ashamed about these things because they are historic facts.

Mr. Chairman, this Party which cuts its teeth on social advancement for people will not turn back at this stage. As the Honourable Member for St. George South pointed out, there are financial mechanisms like student loans and the like which are readily available to those who need them.

Sir, time has expired and, at this stage, I beg to move that Head 43 stand part.

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

The question that Head 43 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmation without division.

On the motion of Hon. R. R. FARLEY, seconded by Hon. A.P. WOOD, Mr. Chairman reported THE passing of one Money Resolution in Committee of Supply to Mr. SPEAKER 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.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 815 p.m.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 8:15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended the House accordingly.

H56/19:35

Sequence 52
Tuesday, March 1, 1005

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

ORDER NO. 6

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

On the motion of Hon. Dame Billie MILLER, seconded by on. R.C. EASTMOND, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. R.D. MARSHALL in the Chair.

**COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE
SUM OF \$4 523 484 FROM THE
CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE
IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE
GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE
ESTIMATES 2004-2005 AS SHOWN IN
THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
NO. 11, 2004-2005 WHICH FORM THE
SCHEDULE TO THE RESOLUTION AND
THAT THE EXPLANATORY NOTES
TO HEAD 25 BE AMENDED AS SET OUT
IN SCHEDULE II TO THE
RESOLUTION**

**HEAD 13
PRIME MINISTER'S
OFFICE**

\$1 743 622

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Mr. Chairman this Head, Prime Minister's Office, this sum is sought partly to provide an additional sum of \$1 494 to cover the costs of Travel allowances for officers as a result of the revision of traveling allowances, these are known as fixed. In respect of Maintenance of Property an additional sum of \$25 000 is being required in order to cover the upkeep of vehicles, furniture, equipment of buildings at Government Headquarters as a result of the expected shortfall of funds due to repairs which are currently being carried out to the balcony at Government Headquarters.

Sir, in respect of Structures, the sum of \$196 000 is required to meet a commitment given by the Government of Barbados to pay for the cost of an elevator for the new headquarters building of the new CARICOM Secretariat at Guyana. In respect of General Security, an additional sum of \$28 200 is required to cover the cost of a shortfall in the approved amount as well as due to the revised

travel allowances.

Sir, also under this Head, the Barbados Defence Force, the sum of \$871 396 is required to meet the costs of the payment of special operation allowance to members of the force for duties performed during the official tourist season and the Crop Over Festival of 2004. It also includes subsistence allowance for personnel in Grenada following the passage of Hurricane Ivan, the procurement of rations, maintenance and fuel for the coastguard vessels, outstanding insurance premiums due to the Insurance Corporation of Barbados for the coastguard vessels, vehicles and additional contributions due to the Regional Security System.

Sir, under the Subprogramme dealing with Special Projects, an additional sum of \$621 452 is required to meet additional costs associated with the construction of the Rock Hall Freedom Village monument at Rock Hall in the parish of St. Thomas.

H56: 20.20 p.m.

Sequence 53

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

House 56, sequence 54,
8:20 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER:

Sir, I beg to move that Head 13 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 15 CABINET OFFICE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1 282 663

Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, an amount of \$104 338 was approved in the current Estimates to meet the cost of Travel, in respect of the Cabinet Secretariat. Expenditure to date is \$83 124 33 leaving an available balance of \$21 213 67.

An additional \$7 000 is required to pay the cost associated with the increased travel rates and arrears payable, including those for the financial year 2003/2004.

In respect of Professional Services, there is a small sum of \$62 which was the a result of an underestimation of fees due for a consultancy.

There is also a supplementary of \$1 213 800 required as donations toward the reconstruction of Grenada, as a result of Hurricane Ivan and natural disasters in Southern Asia, Guyana and Dominica. If I may be a little more fulsome on that, Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are proposing that the Government of Barbados should donate a total sum of \$103 800 made up of \$100 000 for general rehabilitation, and \$3 800 specifically, toward the Universal Postal Union Special Fund to the South Asian countries to assist in their general relief efforts expected to run into billions of dollars.

What has happened, Mr. Chairman, is that across the Caribbean, countries have chosen to give to specific areas of interest. Certainly to my knowledge, the Jamaican Government has earmarked their gift for UNICEF. In the case of Barbados, we have sought to earmark it toward the Universal Postal Union Special Fund to the South Asian Countries.

In respect of the Dominican earthquake which took place in November of last year, we

are proposing that the amount of BDS\$10 000 be given to assist in Dominica's rehabilitation efforts.

Mr. Chairman, we all know that the Guyana flooding is a very serious situation. I think that there is not a well enough understanding of the fact that Georgetown is below sea level. Many years ago, the Dutch built the sea wall and a series of dykes which control the movement of water and that is why it has been so difficult for the run off, which we would take for granted in a place like Barbados through our gullies, to occur.

CEDERA which is the Caribbean agency that deals with relief matters has been urging participating states to contribute an initial sum of US\$10 000 toward the Guyana relief effort. We in Barbados feel that an amount of \$100 000 would be more appropriate in the circumstances, in view of the magnitude of the damage suffered in Guyana and, particularly, in light of recent reports that CARICOM has not responded adequately to the situation in Guyana.

The Secretary General of CARICOM has also written a letter to all states encouraging them to come to Guyana's aid. An amount of BDS\$1 213 800 is being sought to provide assistance to the countries of Southern Asia, Dominica and Guyana in their rehabilitation and relief efforts.

Mr. Chairman, the sum of \$57 801 is required to supplement the vote of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, to facilitate the payment to the Advocate Company Limited and Nation Company Limited, respectively, for publishing the names to be deleted from the Electoral Register. I have to assume that, as I have done, all Honourable Members of this House would have taken note of those deletions just a short while ago.

I therefore beg to move, Sir, that Head 15 stand part.

Mr. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, in my brief contribution, I want to say that the Members on This Side would not have any difficulty with the decision by the Government of Barbados to assist those countries that have been afflicted with natural disasters, during the course of last year.

Of course, it was a year where an abundance of disasters occurred and while the amount is not large, one could argue, I am sure that it will be received in the spirit which it is offered. It is a token and it is obviously intended for us to say that we are very sorry about what happened and want to assist in some way toward mitigating the very terrible situation. We recognise, of course, that today it is them but tomorrow, it could be us.

I also want to say that I hope that we, as a country would wake up and take note and come up with a proper disaster relief plan. It is very clear from what happened with Storm Lily a few years ago and from Ivan this year that the Central Emergency Relief Organisation, as well-intentioned as they may be, are woefully inadequate in dealing with anything even remotely on the scale of what Grenada or Dominica went through last year.

I would sincerely hope that the Central Emergency Relief Organisation (CERO), can live up to their name.

This whole concept of emergency relief, it is very clear from what transpired in my own constituency, in the wake of Hurricane Ivan that it is really an information gathering organisation. They come around very neatly dressed and gather a lot of information, driving these huge SUVs and lovely vehicles and absolutely nothing happens.

They just pass it on to, what they say, is the relevant department, so you are left to still struggle and fight to bring relief to people who have been set back from a natural disaster. I recognise that the Government cannot insure everybody on the island against natural disasters and I would always support any effort to encourage people to have insurance in place.

I think that all Honourable Members who had their experiences with CERO, would recognise that we need to put something very significant in place, or we may find ourselves, cap in hand, in the international community as well, begging for assistance to return life back to normalcy, in the event that we are confronted with some sort of disaster here.

Sir, not only are we in the hurricane belt but it is not often known that we are also prone to earthquakes. Many do not realise it but there have been serious earthquakes in Barbados' history, and we can find ourselves in a similar situation as happened to our neighbours.

Therefore, I think that as we give this money to our neighbours and, of course, our friends in South East Asia, we should recognise it is a situation where we could find ourselves. I hope that we would take the lessons on board and put the necessary measures in place so that we do not find ourselves in such a terrible situation.

Thank you, Sir.

House 56, sequence 54, 20:3014

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: I beg to move that Head 15 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 19
MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
\$62 352

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Sir, under Head 19 the sum of \$20 731 is required to meet the cost of salary for one temporary statistician II and one clerical officer. The sum of \$5 381 is also required to meet the cost of arrears of travelling for the period April 01, 2003 to October 31, 2004. Under Supplies and Materials the sum of \$1 600 is required to purchase computer supplies to the end of the financial year 2004-2005. Also under Head 19, subprogram 144, Town and Country Planning, the supplementary sum of \$35 000 is required to meet the cost of electricity, telephone communications and water systems to the end of the financial year 2004-2005.

I beg to move that Head 19 stand part.

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

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a brief intervention on this particular Head to speak specifically to what I believe is the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance and Economics Affairs and their various planning departments as it relates to how one appropriates the allocation of revenues to the various departments and by extension to various projects.

Sir, from my short period in this Honourable Chamber I have recognised and have echoed my concerns with respect to the magnitude and the frequency of these supplementaries, even though it is usual at the

end of the year to find that there are multiple supplementaries. Without a doubt I believe very strongly that is a reflection on the management of the fiscal affairs of this country. Sir, when I look back at the number of supplementaries we have had over this year, they totalled over \$80 million.

Sir, the strategy of detaching the budgetary proposals from the Estimates which is being practised by this administration is the wrong way to go. One of the reasons I believe we are having these types of supplementaries is simply because we do not have a budgetary process close enough to the Estimates to determine where our shortfalls would be or where our gains are going to be so that we can even it out over a period of time. I believe that is what the Budget was designed to do and I think it is an error for this administration to continue to establish that sort of detaching by bringing the Budget significantly far away from the Estimates.

Sir, if the Central Bank is responsible for capturing expenditures of Government in its publications... I have had the opportunity to ask a few questions, there would be a time lag between when these expenditure are executed and when the Central Bank will capture them as central government's expenditure. What that mean is that when the Central Bank indicates a fiscal deficit position, it would be understated until that 'catch-up' is realised in the documentation.

Sir, I just want to caution the administration that it is about time that one starts to appreciate that we need to plan more effectively with respect to when our Estimates are being put in place and those planning structures are being determined. I do not think it can be argued that this is proper management of the fiscal affairs of this country when you are coming for close to a \$100 million in supplementaries when you would have had an

Estimate document for the 2004-2005 fiscal year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, I just want to respond to the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West. The matter of the time at which what he calls the budget, that is the indication of what revenue raising measures the Government would put in place as compared to the expenditure area, really has no bearing on this matter.

At the end of the day, Mr. Chairman, Government, in making a determination as to what its expenditure would be, during the course of the coming financial year, would make a projection of what its expected tax revenue would be which would either be based on a plan not to increase or to increase taxes. As a matter of fact, the fundamental difference between the approach to the Budget, as the Honourable Member refers to, between this side and their side is that the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, has taken the step of putting greater certainty on the matter of tax collection and revenue projection.

For example, the adjustments to the income tax level are not given out as they were some gift every year coming out of the 'black box'. The policy was set up years ago and it has been set in law so that the income tax reduction which would have come at the beginning of this year was passed in the law back in 1993. Similarly, with the land tax adjustments.

Sir, this is not the day when the Budget used to be the matter of how much you were going to raise corned beef by and what you are going to lower kerosene oil by, we have gone past that. This administration has taken us in the direction of making an economic policy

statement which will contain where necessary, some elements of tax adjustment, but it is not primarily used for that purpose but will deal with the broad economic strategy and economic policy of the Government.

Sir, I understand where the Honourable Member is going but I do not agree with him that the timing between the Estimates debate and what he calls the budget debate would have any influence on this process. In fact, this matter of supplementaries is really a reflection of two things. Sir, you would notice from the debate today that these supplementaries are as a result of salaries agreements, reimbursements for travelling, adjustments to national insurance rates and the change in fuel cost resulting in a change in utilities bills. Supplementaries are for these unforeseen things that come up every year.

Sir, this Government has taken the decision that it would do a mid-year review of its expenditure and its revenue from the point of view of two things. First, what are those things that have emerged which we would like to do that were not in the original programme. Secondly, what are those things we would like to have done but which for some reason or some externality are no longer possible. For example, in the case where funds would have been allocated to start the Erdiston\Carrington Primary School, but because of tendering issues that is no longer possible.

House 56 Sequence 55

8:40 p.m.

Tuesday, March 01,
2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Chairman, we cannot move the expenditure, neither can we erase it out of the Estimates, without having to come back to Parliament.

Therefore, it remains there as a number but in order to be able to re-allocate that money, we have to come to Parliament with a Supplementary, but knowing full well that a Supplementary of equivalent value will not increase the deficit.

Sir, our strategy is very simple; we will, as the financial year progresses and new issues need to be taken account of, for example, last week the funds we approved for fighting the giant African snail and the contingency voted here for the Disaster Relief Fund for our neighbour, are all things that we take account of but we do it against the background of looking at what savings are there.

Mr. Chairman, I understand where the Honourable Member is trying to go but I do not agree with either the direction nor the speed and, therefore, bringing these Supplementaries are not, in fact, a breakdown of anything but a strategy which we use, to be able to incorporate and take account of new issues which have arisen, while maintaining overall management of our deficit. Sir, we have not overshot our targets as far as the deficit is concerned, and I just wanted to add that to the discussion.

Asides.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I take the points being made but the Supplementary that is before this Honourable House is for \$4.5 million. In one instance we are hearing sums such as \$62 000 and in another instance, \$20 731. One cannot plan right down to the exact figure, but the management process as described by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East is in good hands.

I beg to move that Head 19 stand part.

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

The question was put and agreed to in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 25
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
IN THE AMOUNT OF \$642
695

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is seeking a Supplementary in this sum which is broken down as follows

Object No.3 EX17 - Subscriptions and Contributions:

The sum of \$30 797 is required to pay arrears to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

Sir, of the \$30 797, \$10 670 is requested to go to the Food and Agriculture Organisation and \$26 015 is requested to go to the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Management Mechanism (CRFMM). Crfmm

Mr. Chairman, these arrears have resulted from an increase in contribution rate. Therefore, this is not something that we could have anticipated. It is not that we are mismanaging our affairs, so that we have allowed ourselves to fall into arrears. If the organisations put up their rates, we have to comply.

Object No.2 EX. 08 - Rental of Property:

\$6 700 is requested to meet projected expenditure in the current financial year.

Travel - \$2 640 is requested to cover the cost of the increase in rates, including the payment of arrears.

Again these are rate increases that one could not have anticipated.

Subprogramme 161 - Special Development Projects:

\$199 692 is requested to meet expenditure for the facilities at Spring Garden, including site preparation for vendors operating behind the Cheapside Market.

Mr. Chairman, as we all know, there are a number of so-called wholesale vendors located on the outside of the Cheapside Market, who are operating under the worst possible public health conditions. The proposal is that what might be described as a farmers market would be set up at the Spring Garden site, so that the vendors may be resited there, where they can operate in good public health conditions, and other conditions that are more conducive to good marketing.

Object No. 1 EX03 - National Insurance Contributions:

\$890 is requested to cover a projected shortfall.

Subprogram 163 - Food Crop Research, Development and Extension:

\$12,990 is requested to cover the cost of the increase in rates, including the payment of arrears of

\$2 790 and a shortfall of \$10 200.

Object No.2 EX06 - Travel:

\$2 847 is requested to cover the cost of the increase in rates.

Subprogram 165 - Livestock Research, Extension and Development Services:

\$18 195 is requested to pay a substitute for an officer who is on long-term sick leave.

Object No.1 EX03 - National Insurance Contributions:

\$1 706 is requested to pay the contributions for the said substitute.

Object No.2 EX07 - Utilities:

\$18 650 is requested to cover expected utility charges.

Subprogram 167 - Scotland District Development:

Travel - \$10 186 is requested to cover the cost of increase in rates, including the payment of arrears, including a shortfall.

Subprogram 169 - Plant Protection:

\$34 500 is requested for bee control purposes.

Mr. Chairman, I think Barbadians are aware that we are having a difficulty with the bee population in Barbados and that it has to be addressed.

Subprogram 170 - Veterinary Services:

Travel - \$3 738 is requested to cover the cost of increase in rates, including payment of arrears.

Subprogram 171 - Regulatory:

Object No.2 EX12 - Other Operating Expenses:

\$9 396 is requested to pay expenses relating to the operations of the Smoke Control Board.

Subprogram 172 - Quarantine:

Travel - \$14 317 is requested to cover the cost of increase in rates, including payment of arrears.

Programme 163 - Fisheries Management and Development:

Subprogram 173 - Fisheries Services

Object No. 2 EX06 - Travel - \$2 297 is requested to cover the cost of the increase in rates, including payment of arrears.

Object No. 2 EX07 - Utilities:

\$39 740 is requested in order to meet utility payments for the remainder of the financial year. The increase in expenditure is as a consequence of the electricity being utilised at the fish bays at Moon Town, and I regret that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is not in his seat, Oistins and Paynes Bay.

Object No. 3 EX14 - Grants to Individuals:

\$47 200 is being sought in order to pay outstanding rebates to boat owners who have made the necessary repairs to their boats.

Subprogram 175 - Marketing Facilities:

Object No.2 EX06 - Travel

\$5 446 is requested to cover the cost of the increase in rates, including payment of arrears.

Object No.2 EX11 - Maintenance of Property:

\$60 000 is requested to allow the Division to continue its maintenance programme.

Object No.6 EX23 - Structures:

\$90 000 is required to fund the laying of new pipes and installing control switches to reduce water usage.

Object No.5 EX25 - Plant Equipment and Furniture:

\$24 880 is required to purchase a floor scale costing \$22 000 and 12 stacking chairs for the Cheapside Conference Room, costing \$2 880.

Mr. Chairman, I am reminded that there is an amendment to the Explanatory Notes in respect to Head 25. I beg to move that Head 25 stand part.

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

The question was put and agreed to in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 28
MINISTRY OF HOME
AFFAIRS
IN THE AMOUNT OF \$560
000

Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Chairman, there are two small items of expenditure to be provided for. There is a small amount of \$60 000, which is needed for covering utilities, occasioned as was explained by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, that is the matter of increases in fuel and energy charges, which one would not have anticipated.

The other amount is to supplement the original provision of \$2 121 000, to cater towards the payment of allowances as provided for prison officers, as is the case with the Police Force, salaries and allowances for temporary staff and substitutes.

H:No.56(56)850 p.m.

Tuesday, March 1,
2005

Continuation of Rev. J.J.S. ATHERLEY:

The original amount is insufficient and we have to request from Parliament a supplementary vote of \$500 000 to take care of this. Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 28 stand part.

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

The question that Head 28 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 43
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
\$232 153 00.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: This supplementary expenditure is requested under this Head to add to the \$475 000 annual subvention which we provide to the Challenor Creative Arts and Training Centre. Sir, this institution provides a very important function in the area of special education. It caters to 100 persons at present, 50 of those in the age 5 to 18 age group and the remaining 60 are 16 plus.

Mr. Chairman, persons who attend this institution have a range of disability both those at the school age as well as those young adults who, essentially at the end of the day, need to be put in a situation where they are not only given as best an academic programme as possible but also that they are equipped with life skills and occupational skills to allow them to earn their way in the world.

Sir, as it stands, the adult programme

represents a two to three-year programme which concentrates on food preparation, woodwork, agriculture, sewing and various crafts. The work of the centre, particularly in the five to eighteen year range, includes the provision of the purchasing of services of a social worker, rehabilitation therapist and a range of specialities such as is required.

Sir, as it now stands the school has had to use some of its savings and investment to meet certain expenditure. Government was requested to provide this additional assistance and this \$232 000 is assistance for this financial year. We have taken the decision that as of the next financial year, we would provide and increase of approximately 25 per cent increase in their subvention of an additional \$125 000 to bring them in the region of \$600 000 annually.

We believe that institutions like the Challenor Creative Arts and Training Centre and the Learning Centre are important aspects of our educational system.

I want as well to acknowledge and thank the many volunteers and private citizens, as well as corporate Barbados who quietly and without fanfare over the years have been providing the bulk of support for these two institutions, particularly as it relates to sponsoring particular programmes.

We have found over the years that Government can best cooperate by providing funding to cover the cost of staff, assist in aspects of building and infrastructural maintenance and that the private sector and various benefactors are usually happy to do specific construction projects or to specifically fund a programme for autism, woodwork or things of that nature.

I want to acknowledge their contribution in this effort, to pledge the continued support of Government and to urge the House to fully

support this Supplementary because of a shortfall this financial year. I will speak to the other matters in the upcoming Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 43 stand part.

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

The question that Head 43 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmation without division.

On the motion of Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER, seconded by Hon. R.C. EASTMOND, Mr. Chairman reported passing of one Money Resolution in Committee of Supply to Mr. SPEAKER and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER, seconded by Hon. R.C. EASTMOND, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government Business for the day. I wish to compliment Honourable Members on all sides for a good day's work. It is nine o'clock in the evening. I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, March 8, 2005 at 1000 a.m.

Speaking on the adjournment, I wish to advise Honourable Members that it is proposed on that day, March 8, 2005, the Estimates of Expenditure would be laid. It is proposed by the Government that those Estimates will be debated for the entire of the week of March 14, 2005.

We will start on Monday, March 14th and work through, as is our custom, until Friday, March 18, 2005.

Sir, the Estimates will be laid for the perusal and consideration of Honourable Members and the debate will take place in the week of Monday, March 14, 2005.

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

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, March 8, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

H56/20:59

Sequence 57