
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 2003-2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 24, 2005.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10:15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P.(Deputy Speaker) Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc.(Econ.) (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and the Civil Service) Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Deputy Prime Minister, Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs) (Leader of the House) 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 and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade) Mr. G. W. PAYNE, LLB. Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A.(Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., J.P. (Minister of Labour and Social Security) Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed.,J.P. (Minister of Public Ministry of Public Works and Transport) Mr. R. D. MARSHALL (Chairman of Committees) Hon. H. F. LASHLEY (Minister of Social Transformation) Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.) Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN Hon. Mrs. 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, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil. J.P. (Minister of Energy and Public Utilities) Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc., J.P.,(Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports) Mr. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance) (Leader of the Opposition) 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 Foreign Trade) Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of Industry and International Business) Mr. R. D. JONES. B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Ed.) J.P. 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. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, May 17, 2005.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy

Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, May 17, 2005, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that, Sir.MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER If there are no corrections or observations, then let these Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This morning I would like to acknowledge the presence of five Honourable Members of Parliament from Ontario, Canada. There are

1.Mr. Rosario Marchese, NDP MPP, Critic for Education

2.Mr. Michael Colle, Liberal MPP, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance

3.The Honourable Alvin Kurling, Speaker

4.Mr. Joseph Tascona, Conservative MPP, Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House

5.Ms. Wendy Iwai, Executive Assistant to the Speaker.

PAPERS

The Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I am commended to lay the following

1.Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Newton Business Park Project Company Limited) Order, 2005.

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

1.Annual Report of Needham's Point Development Incorporated for the year 2003

2.Annual Report of Needham's Point Holdings Limited for the year 2003.

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

1.Annual Report of the Barbados National Oil Company Limited for the year 2004.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5) and 43, 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. 7

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225, THE SALE TO ARMSTRONG AGENCIES LIMITED, A PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE AT LOWER ESTATE IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James South.

Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Resolution before Parliament seeks this Honourable House's approval for the sale of 2.5 acres of land, the property of the Crown, to

Armstrong Agencies Limited. The land is situated at Lower Estate, St. George, some people say Lower Estate, St. Michael but I am advised that geographically speaking, it is correct to describe Lower Estate as being in St. George.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the proposed quantum for which the property is being sold is BDS\$1 million. It is anticipated that Armstrong Agencies Limited will move quickly to go into possession of this property. The circumstances of the sale arise out of the Kensington Redevelopment Project for Cricket World Cup, 2007. You will recall that this is a matter that has excited tremendous public attention, in relation to the development of the Kensington Oval, as well as the relocation of a number of households and businesses within the area.

It is anticipated that the relocation of the community will be done in phases, with those two commercial entities, A&R Tempco and Armstrong Agencies Limited, along with two others which occupy the area adjoining the entrance to Fontabelle Road, will be the ones, given the redevelopment proposal, which would have to be moved first. We then will move from the commercial entities to the residential communities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, various arrangements have been made with respect to the relocation of the commercial entities and as you know, there has been a number of issues in relation to the time for them to be moved, what are the prices to be paid for the properties and what kinds of arrangements will be made in relation to their alternative location, et cetera. Sir, in relation to the properties generally, Government has brought previous legislation to this Parliament to confirm the sale, as well as to purchase the lands anticipated for the relocation of the residential community, which has, by far, excited the greatest controversy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Armstrong Agencies Limited is one of the commercial entities which is on the critical path for the Kensington Redevelopment Project. It is anticipated that they will relocate to Lower Estate, to lands owned by the Crown.

H:No.65(1)1020 a.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD:

One of the tradeoffs we made was that the commercial entity would be compensated for their property and disruption of business during the time which they have to set out again elsewhere but it was critical that land should be found to which these various commercial entities could be resited. Sir, that was part of the challenge because given the zoning laws of Barbados, it was critical that we find land which was appropriately zoned for industrial enterprises so as to facilitate immediate relocation and establishment of the new entity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in one situation with one of the commercial properties, they already owned land elsewhere within the outskirts of Bridgetown which permitted them to establish and set up their operation at that particular location. Armstrong Agencies was one of the properties which would have been at a disadvantage because they had no property to which they could immediately move but, of course, had a viable and profitable business for which provision needed to be made.

Sir, given the fact that Government is the owner of numerous parcels of land at Lower Estate which already have the permission of Town & Country Planning for light industrial development, it was thought it was an

appropriate site for the relocation of Armstrong Agencies because they would have adequate car parking, proper access to Bridgetown and other facilities readily available at that site. Sir, also given the fact that there was not a zoning challenge, they could immediately start operations. The question therefore, was, could the Government in the circumstances agree to sell and what would the cost be.

Sir, I have indicated previously to this Chamber that where Government is involved in a transaction with an entity outside of Government, that is, a non-government agency whether a private individual or a commercial or entity, the Commissioner of Land Tax must quantify the value of the lands or property being sold or purchased by the State. In this case we have the appropriate involvement of the Commissioner of Land Tax to value the property at Lower Estate. It has been valued commensurate with that valuation of the Commissioner of Land Tax and once Parliament approves, it is proposed that the sale should go ahead.

Sir, you would recall that apart from the four commercial entities that some 1e residential properties are also due for relocation. At this time, the properties have been valued as follows:

A & R Temprow - \$934 495 00 with an improved site value of \$3.2 million.

Woodville Guest House - \$987 804 00 with an improved site value of \$1.2 million.

Curacao Laboratories - \$1 175 580 00 with an improved site value of \$2.2 million.

Aerosol Limited - \$936 110 00 with an improved site value of \$2.2 million.

The Crown has paid Armstrong Agencies also trading as Curacao Laboratories and

Aerosol Limited, the monies agreed in negotiation as appropriate for that property at Fontabelle and it is now expected that they would purchase from the Crown the property to which the Resolution before the House relates.

Mr. Hinds, the owner of Woodville Guest House has also been paid \$1.4 million commensurate with the valuation attached to that property.

The Directors of A & R Temprow are proposing that they would relocate to land already under their possession and control at Barbarees Hill, St. Michael, which would give them the advantage of being within close proximity to their existing commercial site and they have been paid \$3.475 million in respect of the property.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the negotiations and discussions with the private landowners who are not on the critical path for the re development. The House would recall that the social survey relative to assessing the housing and social needs of the residents of the privately-owned dwelling houses at Pickwick Gap is completed. The Minister of Housing is in possession of all the relevant information. There has been a series of town meeting with those residents over the course of the last three years and there has been one-on-one discussion with the residents.

Sir, it is true to say that despite some controversy and discussion that all of the households at Pickwick Gap have now agreed to the relocation with the vast majority of them having consented to going to Barbarees Hill for a number of reasons. The possibility of keeping the community together as a homogeneous entity, the fact that there are long-standing relationships, that we want people to feel a sense of community without having them distributed to various sites across the island that would tend for the breakup of

social relationship and the interactions which exist in communities where residents provide care for families and look out for each other particular the elderly citizens.

The fact that some of these persons have lived on or around Bridgetown for many years and like the feel of life in the capital city. The important fact that many of these householders, because of the proximity to Kensington, have made a living during cricket matches from activities related to cricket whether by the sale of souvenirs, hats, cricket paraphernalia or by the sale of solid and liquid refreshments to those attending cricket.

The Honourable Member for the City spoke to a time during a test match with Australia when not a single Banks beer was left in Bridgetown, all Banks beer having been consumed by visitors. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reality is that people are able to make a living by the sale of food outside of the formal economy because some of them have shops from which they make their living continuously by the sale of food, goods and groceries. Others only provide this kind of service sporadically because there is a tremendous need for it. The Government in seeking to relocate the community was cognisant of the role which citizens play in providing services for the community and cricket matches and wanted people to be allowed to continue to derive from this sort of activity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, during our discussions with the Barbados Tourism Authority I raised this matter. I am sure it was also raised by the Honourable Member for the City and the Honourable Prime Minister. The whole question in the new World Cup arrangements what access these persons would have to Kensington Oval who had traditionally made a living from selling food at the time of cricket.

H65/10:30

Sequence 2

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of... Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-MCDOWALD: Sir, not only is the food of high quality but in Barbados we are lucky that we have the use of the Public Health Inspectorate. Traditionally, the food was not only of exceptionally good flavour but in terms of meeting our health standards, Barbados has not had a problem with people selling food on the sides of the streets and there has been easy access to water, et cetera, so, the Government felt it was important that people who derived revenue from this activity should continue to make a living either full-time or part-time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have purchased as agreed, the property owned by Sir David Seale by private treaty. Sir, we went this route deliberately because it was critical, to the scheduling of the World Cup activities and the Kensington Redevelopment. It was of tremendous urgency that we should conclude the purchase of the lands, identified for the relocation of private residents. In this regard, we have concluded an agreement with Sir David Seale of \$2.7 million for his land at Barbarees Hill of approximately 2.2 acres.

Sir, there has been a request that the areas should be renamed it Barbarees Gardens. This suggestion was made by persons who reside at the Pickwick area. Cabinet confirmed that Barbarees Gardens will be the name given to the new development at Barbarees Hill.

Sir, it is anticipated that the average lot size for those persons located at Barbarees Hill will be approximately 3 500 square feet or 280

square meters and approximately 21 houses would be accommodated at the Barbarees Hill location.

Sir, it is also anticipated that other costs of the Barbarees Hill site, apart from the monies paid for the land, will be \$16 619 937. That sum would include compensation payable to both residential and commercial owners, payment of legal fees, valuation fees and other fees related to the relocation process.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will recall that sometime ago I spoke at length, in this Honourable House, about the process, the implications and provisions of the legislation when there is relocation. At that time I indicated that where Government is relocating people, whether commercial or private residents, that Government is under a duty to pay all of the fees relative to the relocation and these would include surveying, legal fees or any other professional fees reasonably connected to the transaction.

Sir, Government has to pay for the demolition of the derelict property, known as Barbarees Hill Great House or the Hewitt House, the cost of surveying of the lands at Barbarees Hill, the construction of nine detached units and two sets of four terrace units and two sets of duplexes. There are eight terrace units in total and four duplexes and nine detached units we expect to be constructed at the Barbarees Hill site.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, subsequent to the approval given to us by this Honourable House and the conclusion of the negotiations with the property owner at Barbarees Hill, we immediately entered on the lands at Barbarees Hill, demolished the house and started work relative to the redevelopment of that site for the preparation of the construction. It is expected that construction would be completed within the next few months in order to allow for the relocation of the residents.

Sir, in the interim, there may have to be some accommodation provided for those residents who cannot immediately move to Barbarees Hill. Let me explain what I mean. I already indicated previously that the commercial properties are on the critical path. There are other residential properties at Pickwick Gap, given their location and the way the phased redevelopment of Kensington is proposed, the relocation of some of the residential properties is a greater urgency than others. It would, therefore, be incumbent on the administration to provide temporary residence for those who are in urgent need.

Sir, it is anticipated that interim accommodation will be provided for twenty households. We have immediately identified seven units for the first set of relocations. Six of these units are located at St. Barnabas, overlooking The Pine, and we anticipate that once the new houses are completed at Barbarees Hill, the residents will be moved out of the interim accommodation into the houses which have been built for their full-time occupation.

Sir, you will be aware that as a matter of policy, Government is relocating, not only property owners within the project area but persons who were renting property, whether it was house and land, within the area, provision is being made for them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all of the houses at Barbarees Hill will be single-family detached residences, even though it is anticipated that some terrace units can go at that location. As I indicated, there will be 21 houses, each lot approximately 3 500 square feet.

Sir, let me make the point, since it may arise as a point of query, that where a property owner, who is now located at Pickwick, live on a lot which was larger than 3 500 square feet

they will receive a lot of a similar size to that which they had, but where the lot was smaller than the 3 500 square feet being provided by the Government, the Government will provide the larger lot of 3 500 square feet, so, there will be no parcel of land that will be under the minimum 3 500 square feet.

H65: 10.40 a.m.

Sequence 3

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

House 65, sequence 04, 10:40 a.m.

Continuation of Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD:

The Government's policy is clear that where property owners lot sizes do not meet town planning requirements, and are too small to allow for expansion, the Government would provide a minimal lot size of 3 500 square feet.

I want to repeat it, Sir, so that there is no uncertainty that where the person occupied a lot larger than 3 500 square feet and is the owner of that lot, the Government would provide a parcel of a size similar to that, which they were previously in occupation of, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is anticipated that 20 households and two small businesses outside of the large commercial entities at Fontabelle will be affected by the relocation. Four persons operate businesses and they would prefer to remain at Pickwick, but we know that the redevelopment would not allow people to remain in situ.

Two householders opted for compensation, and remember that we gave them an option of compensation rather than relocation. There are

persons who may say that look, I have been living next door to Miss Jones for the last 20 years and if I could get away from her I want to do so, because sometimes in small communities people have poor relations with neighbours.

Somebody may decide that they do not want to live in the City any more or on the outskirts of the City but would prefer to live in rural Barbados. Somebody else may say that I do not want the Government to build any house for me because I can build a house for myself.

Sir, as people age, there may be an older person deciding that look, I want to go and live with my sibling who lives at another location, or since our children have grown up and moved away from home, it is only the two of us so let us take the cash in hand, because we could live off that, or we could give it to our children. Therefore, the Government has made provisions for all of these arrangements. In fact, two householders said that rather than have the Government build properties, they want their cash in hand and they will be given their cash.

Thirteen householders wanted to be relocated within the same neighbourhood or parish, so of the 20 households, there were two people saying to give them money and 13 people saying that they want to remain in this community with these people as my neighbours, therefore they will opt for the relocation to wherever the Government has agreed.

One householder wants to live in St. George, so the Honourable Members of this Parliament who represent that constituency would be glad to know that one of them will have a new constituent from the City and that is not to say that we have any idea at all how this person will vote. They may not like their new MP or, in fact, they might like him.

Asides.

Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD:
I have no idea. I know that it is one householder.

Four householders said that they have no preference one way or the other. Sir, we have a way of saying in Barbados, 'man wunnah could do what wunnah like', and since we are not allowed to speak dialect in the Chamber, I think that should be interpreted to say, the Government may exercise all of its authority in this matter, since we have very little choice.

Sir, I could go into the formalities of the matter, like the publication of the Section 3 Notices but I do not think that the Chamber really has much interest in those. What people want to know is how much money was paid to whom, when and what sort of schedule there is going to be for the relocation.

Sir, for the residential community, there was an issue as to whether the proximity to Westbury would have created some concern. The residents have said that this is not an issue for them but because we are linked with the Ministry of the Environment - I daresay, Sir, because our Permanent Secretary is a former Chief Town Planner - we recognised our responsibility to ensure that communities are green, landscaped and have a pleasant feel, even if they are in the heart of Bridgetown. This notion that when we do a residential community, it is just a mass of concrete is something of which we have to disabuse ourselves.

Sir, at the Barbarees site, there are a number of existing mahogany trees and very mature trees which give the sight of certain elegance and beauty, and will allow for landscaping around them to develop a community with a really good feel, therefore, we are going to leave in as many of those trees as we can that

will allow for the construction at that location. Equally, a buffer wall will put in at the Western boundary to give the community a sense of security.

Sir, I repeat. We are going to leave in all of the trees on the fringes that would allow for building. We will provide the additional security measure of the wall around the site to facilitate containing it and augmenting possible security, giving a buffer between the residents of the new development and the very much sleeping residents at Westbury Road.

The challenge will come depending on how many persons would have to be relocated. In terms of the construction and redevelopment of Barbarees so far, we are on schedule. I believe that contracts have been awarded to three private contractors of considerable reputation, Sir, to carry out the work at Barbarees. We opted for persons whom we know have a long history of quality performance and a record at the national level of delivering projects on time and within budget.

Sir, given the fact that the schedule here is extremely tight and we needed to have the development kept to a particular timetable, we felt it was prudent to invest in those persons of whose performance we could be certain. I am trying to give as much information as possible today, because it has now been several months since this matter would have last come to the House.

The Cricket World Cup office asked for the lease of Herbert House for use, I think, of a cricketing centre, as part of the Cricket World Cup redevelopment. This is another property which is owned by the Government. It is expected that much of the lands and the facilities of Kensington Oval itself would be directly related to seating and the provision of services related to the matches themselves. It is anticipated that the sale of tickets will go on at

another location and, I believe, some paraphernalia as well and for that reason the BCA asked to lease the Herbert House, which is a house of some historical importance and I think it is one of the listed properties by the Chief Town Planner.

House 65, sequence 04, 10:5014

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD:

Therefore, the lease which would give the BCA access to that property is now being finalised as part of the agreement.

Sir, given the fact that Herbert House is a listed building, it is critical, in terms of the lease, that the lessee cannot substantially change the external structure or those features which have caused the property to become listed. Mr. Deputy Speaker, very often there is some disaffection when people want to redevelop listed buildings because they cannot treat to the property in the way that they wish. Sir, there is a proposal by the Chief Town Planner that when a building is listed, that the particular architectural feature which causes it to become listed should be what is listed and what is defined rather than the whole building itself. This means that you could make changes to the structure but you have to preserve that component of it which causes it to have its peculiar town planning and historical identification and listing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not sure exactly how much progress has been made on the proposal, but until such time as that proposal is completed and comes into being, we have to

work with the law and the regulations as there are. Consequently, the substantive structure of Herbert House would have to remain, and such redevelopment as there has been or as there will be will have to be contained to the interior as extensive changes cannot be made to the property.

Sir, Parliament should be aware that an information desk has been set up at the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment to give information to persons in respect of the Kensington redevelopment and the Pickwick relocation. Sir, since this information is going out to the public, let me say that when I say in respect of the Kensington redevelopment, I mean as it relates to the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment because people may think that this is a general information desk that they can call to find out when we will start selling tickets, that is not really the function of the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment. The information desk specifically relates to the functions which the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment is carrying out in respect of the Kensington redevelopment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, payment has been made for all the commercial properties. I indicated earlier during the course of my comments today that some compensation has to be paid for the disruption of businesses but none of those claims has yet been made to the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment. Most of the properties in the commercial sector have already been vacated. We anticipate that we would meet the deadline of handing over all of the residential properties to World Cup Barbados at the designated time. I have already indicated what the arrangements for the relocation are both long term and short term.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the site was cleared in record time. A project manager for the

Barbarees Gardens redevelopment has been appointed and has started his work in ensuring that the timetable for this redevelopment is met. Mr. Deputy Speaker, tenders for the house construction were received. Tenders for the road works were received and the road works are in progress. The companies which would do the actual construction have been identified. We are waiting on some minor things which are to be done by the utilities companies. There is work to be done by the Barbados Water Authority which has to maintain water supply on the site, and the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited has to remove a utility pole.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the topographical survey which is necessary has been completed. We have an approval which is dated January 2005 for the redevelopment from the Chief Town Planner. We were waiting for the negotiations to be completed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you would recall that there is a disparity between the number of people to be relocated on a short term basis and the number of properties identified. While I am on this, I should take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Social Transformation for the support it has given us in finding a suitable site for short term relocation. However, that has to be concluded and since it has not I do not propose to make the announcement today but will do so at a time that is mutually convenient to both the relevant Minister and myself.

Sir, there is not much more that I can add today. I think I have been comprehensive in relation to where every component of the process is, the time frames, the cost and the responsibility or actions in discharging this responsibility. I give this Honourable House the commitment that we at the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment would continue to do our utmost to ensure that this very important event for Barbados is successful

insofar as this Ministry has a role in the preparatory work for the event.

We have been in constant communication with the Cricket World Cup organisers and the BCA. We give them status reports to apprise them of where we are in relation to the anticipated activities. We are doing our utmost to satisfy the community that their concerns about the relocation are being met.

Sir, after extensive discussions, I think it is true to say that everybody in the community now knows where they are going to be relocated and how the relocation is going to be done. We know that there would have to be some short term relocations. We believe that we have been able to allay the fears and concerns of those who have expressed those in relation to their future and certainty, both about their financial comfort and their social comfort.

House 65 Sequence 5

11:00 a.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we believe that this project can be executed in a way that will not only constitute a successful hosting of Cricket World Cup, 2007, but that we ensure that those persons who are going to have to change some aspect of their lives as their contribution to this national effort, would be made as comfortable as possible in their new environment.

Sir, very often in addressing matters such as this, we can become caught up in the enormity of hosting an event of this ilk, or with what needs to be done. Therefore, our concern is to

meet with those persons involved in the process, to ensure that all of their needs are met and that they are satisfied with the way in which their concerns are being addressed.

Mr. Speaker, we know that we cannot give a 100 per cent satisfaction, as that rarely happens but we are doing our utmost to ensure that we can get as close to that 100 per cent as possible. I trust that the Honourable Chamber will find that I have been exhaustive in my presentation of this matter, so that the Honourable House and the wider public would be aware as to exactly where we are, relative to the development of Cricket World Cup, 2007, and what has been happening behind the scenes, up to this point.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to close by saying that on occasions it does appear that we are moving slowly but the public is rarely aware of what is happening behind the scenes, which would stop us from moving with greater alacrity. Sometimes there are situations that are totally beyond our control, for example, in relation to one of these processes, getting access to a private property became such a major problem that we could not have access. Therefore, that delay had the potential to delay the matter even further.

However, I do agree that if the public is to feel comfortable with what is happening, that we have to be more effective in our communication and that we have to be full and frank in relation to what is happening. I think that maybe the handling of the public relation in this matter, has not been as strong as it could have been but we will seek to strengthen that component of what we are doing.

Sir, I am satisfied that in relation to the management of the process and the satisfaction of the needs of the public who would be adversely affected, that they will, in fact, be happy at their new site. I am also satisfied that

everything is being done to ensure that there will be a top quality development at Barbarees Garden, and that it will be an address of which residents would feel proud, in relation to what is being provided for them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those few words, I thank you.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this administration has a way of dealing with the larger picture and with the bigger things, while paying very little attention to the critical issues that impact the lives of Barbadians, and I think this debate is very much indicative of that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the original acquisition of land in Lower Estate in 1980, was done as a means of resiting the Barbados Marketing Corporation. We are now 25 years on and the Barbados Marketing Corporation has not been resited. In fact, if one would read the debate, which, at that time, would have included a number of acquisitions of land across Barbados, there was considerable passion with respect to the need to move the Barbados Marketing Corporation. As I said, some 25 years later, the Barbados Marketing Corporation remains where it is presently located.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to say that this administration continues only to put emphasis on the larger things in Barbados because we are here discussing Cricket World Cup, 2007, the acquisition of land that would have occurred previously, and now the relocation of a large business, but are not discussing some of the very pertinent issues that would impact on the lives of Barbadians in the Bridgetown area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will explain because I know that my explanation will excite a few on the other side. Sir, once Frank B. Armstrong and the other commercial entities are removed

and buildings and structures replace the existing businesses, how are we doing to deal with a very major issue in that area, which is the issue of drainage? We all know that those areas in Emmerton Lane, the Orleans and Lakes Folly are low-lying areas, and as I speak to you, there is water settling in Emmerton Lane, as a result of last week's rain. Therefore, in essence, the drainage in those areas surrounding Kensington, is poor.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, why it is important that we deal with this matter, is that we are approaching the rainy season. Therefore, if one were to visit the area of Goudy Alley, one would recognise that there is a canal which runs perpendicular to Goudy Alley and the other small gaps in that area, while in the area of Pelican Village, there is a system of pumps that are suppose to control the water that comes from the ocean. There is a sluice gate that is no longer operational but what has happened is that...

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: On a point of order. I do not like to interrupt the Honourable Member but we have to get the facts straight. I would have thought that I would had spoken on this matter so many times on the Floor of this Honourable House, that everybody in here would have known.

Sir, the pumps at the sluice gate at the Princess Alice Highway, do not deal with incoming water; they deal with water coming from as far as Sturges, down through well-known water courses and storm drains, into the sea. They pump water out and not in.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a very small point.

Asides.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I need to make

people understand. It is the most important point of all. Sir, that part of Bridgetown is below sea level and, therefore, it is important that the water can be pumped out. If the Honourable Member does not understand the physics of the situation, he will misunderstand the entire situation. Sir, it is important, that is why at the slightest rainfall, I find myself down there, to make sure that the pumps are pumping.

Sir, the Honourable Member who sits next to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, who has some understanding of physics, may be able to try explaining to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, what is a simple fact of physics.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Asides.

H:No.65(6)1110 a.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Mr. C.A. MASCOLL:

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me tell the Honourable Member for the City that I not only have knowledge but that I employed physics with my small structure to be a champion in the discuss and shortput at inter-school sports, which would be unbelievable to the Honourable Member for the City. Sir, only by the use of physics was I able to achieve such lofty heights in field events that my structure has not been designed for but in that discipline I have been able to employ science as a means.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to explain the more fundamental issue. There has been recognised a drainage problem in the city but it has not been addressed. Sir, if you visit Pelican Village, they have used a picket fence to surround the pump but if you observe the amount of debris and water settling in that area, you have to ask yourself how could Government be so caught in trying to redevelop Bridgetown and Kensington for 2007 but not be concerned with a major problem of drainage in the City which must be addressed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you cannot continue to develop physical structure around Kensington and Bridgetown and not address a critical matter as to how water will get to the ocean, especially during the rainy system. Sir, last year during the high tides around Bridgetown where there was damage, the particular area and the canal of which I speak, I was informed over the weekend that it was as active as the ocean itself because the water was able to go upstream and act as a tidal movement as far as Emmerton Lane and the surrounding areas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am suggesting that in the midst of all the concern about 2007 and the World Cup that a very critical matter such as drainage should be addressed urgently by this Government because all the trappings of the World Cup and the fact that everything is clothed in 2007, cannot avoid and escape the critical matters that currently impact on the lives of Barbadians especially in the area of the city.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is compounded by the amount of garbage that is in evidence around the sewerage plant. There are also canals also at the back of the sewerage Plant and if you travel from Murphy's Pasture and come towards Emmerton Lane through the back roads, you would recognise that there is garbage almost five to ten feet high and twenty feet long at the back of the Sewerage Plant in

the City.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people have complained that the canals are not well kept and that, apparently, it is a question of getting the drainage correct in order for the water to flow from the low-lying areas into Emmerton Lane since the water is now trapped because of adequate working condition. There is someone employed but that persons does not have the tools to do the job. Therefore, in the absence of rain, we are seeing a backup of water towards the areas of Emmerton Lane and beyond. Sir, this matter must be addressed speedily by this administration if it is contemplating hosting the World Cup and providing an environment conducive to the hosting of such a World Cup.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a bigger problem. How do you continue to excuse yourself from the perennial problem of the stench that emanates from the Sewerage Plant? How do you continue to excuse yourself, when every other month there is a problem with respect to the Sewerage Plant. Therefore, the environment of Kensington is critical as part of the overall development of that area for 2007 and for World Cup. Sir, you cannot escape the reality that the environment is the most critical part of it because if you build the most palatial conditions at Kensington for 2007 but the environment is not good with respect to the air quality, you are going to have a negative impact on the overall investment in that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the most crucial thing is for the air quality within the area of Kensington to be appropriate. In fact, it has to be so appropriate that it is not used as an externality and a reason for criticising the hosting of the World Cup in 2007 when we would have invested so much in those facilities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I listened to the HOnourable Minister of Housing, who said that there are going to give in to the requests of

World Cup Barbados and allow Herbert House to be used for the sale of tickets. She then carried on in her usual style with respect to the whole question of the lessee not having the right because Herbert House is a listed property to alter its structure. This has to be irrelevant. What do you need with respect to structure of a building to sell tickets? Why should there be so much emphasis on whether the structure of Herbert House could be altered in order to sell tickets? Mr. Deputy Speaker, what type of tickets are going to be sold at Herbert House to justify or even to contemplate a major restructuring of Herbert House?

Asides.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: It cannot only be for tickets, this is precisely the point. Therefore, Herbert House cannot be acquired only to allow World Cup Barbados to sell tickets in 2007.

I am asking the question. Why would you camouflage the reality of the leasing of Herbert House to World Cup Barbados within the framework of selling tickets? Sir, it therefore, goes on to suggest that there is need to consider the whole question of structure of Herbert House and that it cannot be altered because it is a listed building. There must be something more that will be done at Herbert House. Perhaps, it needs to be explained.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the whole question, therefore, of Frank B. Armstrong. From the time this matter was raised, the Opposition was concerned about the use of private treaty in the acquisition of the commercial buildings only in the area of Kensington Oval. There can be no reason why the distinction is made between a commercial property and a domestic property in the acquisition if such properties for the development of World Cup Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the Addendum to this Resolution, it says that the Government now

intends to sell the land acquired in 1980 to Armstrong Agencies for a sum of \$1 million. We are told precisely what the sale would be. Sir, when we enquired what Government was going to pay Frank B. Armstrong and other commercial entities surrounding Kensington Oval, it was not supposed to be public knowledge. This is precisely why the properties were acquired by private treaty. Now Government is selling a piece of land in Lower Estate to the same Armstrong Agencies and we are now privy to the cost of the sale but could not be privy, in this Chamber, to what Government would have paid the commercial entities around Kensington Oval.

H65/11:20

Sequence 7

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of... Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: .but will know in detail what Government will pay the domestic individuals, those persons who own properties and land and live within the environs of Kensington Oval. It cannot be fair.

Sir, there can be no good principle to employ in this instance to have a situation where we would know what Government will receive from Armstrong Agencies but we will not know what Government gave with respect to the purchase of these entities around Kensington Oval. There must be cause for concern as to how on the one hand information could be revealed but on the other remains a secret. Therefore, we, again, call for Government to disclose what would have been paid to the commercial entities around Kensington Oval and one knows that it is the knowledge of this Parliament. This Parliament is the highest decision-making body in the

land. This Parliament ought to know with respect to what it would have cost Government to purchase commercial entities.

Sir, this Government is now trying to encourage the entire population of Barbados to get involved in 2007 for the World Cup as a voluntary exercise, in some cases, as part of a process that we intend to engage but yet information remains hidden from the average Barbadian. Sir, still the Government is asking us to embrace the whole concept.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, yet, there is an entity called Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. which will manage the World Cup but does not have to answer to Parliament. Nevertheless, it is fully funded by Government. However, we do not have the right except through the Public Accounts Committee to query the operations of the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. but the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. will be responsible for World Cup Barbados providing approximately 94 per cent of the financing in World Cup Barbados Inc.

Sir, again this administration uses mechanisms to get around issues. It almost reminds me of the issue of tax evasion versus tax avoidance. On the one hand you are legally right in trying your best to ensure that your tax liability is reduced, therefore, escaping legal action and on the other, you try to use all methods that are not necessary legal to escape paying a higher tax liability.

Sir, I am saying that in this instance it ought not to be the case that World Cup Barbados which is supposed to be embracing the entire population, as a means of bringing everyone on board, cannot tell us the extent of involvement because we have to go through several different tiers of organisational structures, in order to identify and seek out information that ought to be put in the public domain because it is relevant to the public. It is the public's money

in any case, therefore, we ought not to hide it under structures. This is precisely the concern we had on this entire matter of the acquisition.

In fact, no one has yet fully explained matters that were raised on this side with respect to the legal position of the National Housing Corporation within this matter, whether the National Housing Corporation has the right to acquire land for a purpose other than public. Can we truly say that such acquisition is a public purpose, if World Cup is a private company which is seeking to do something that has a private component to it. That has not been dealt with by any one so far, for you cannot escape the fact that the whole World Cup issue is a private good, seeking to derive profit within a narrow band for a company that has been established. Even though it may be publicly funded, it is a private company. Therefore, are you legally in a position as a Government to offer that kind of structure without having the scrutiny that we brought to bear earlier on it. There has been no explanation with respect to what is World Cup Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are still concerned about this Government placing emphasis on the bigger things in this country and ignoring the smaller things that impact on the lives of the average Barbadian.

Sir, there is no doubt that the relocation of small businesses around Kensington Oval will have impact on the lives of those individuals. It is evident in this debate that a larger business, in less than a year, has already made advances to relocate its business and has been able to find a piece of Government's land, which can be conveniently sold to it in order for such relocation to occur.

However, smaller properties have not been so accommodated within this whole structure, and I go to those smaller properties to buy

lunch when attending cricket. Therefore, I am suggesting that there is need for Government to also give such consideration to small businesses surrounding the Kensington Oval area, who would now be denied the right to earn revenue and ought to given such favourable treatment. In this regard, we notice that the treatment of the small businesses within the area is completely different to the treatment of the larger entities, such as the Frank B Armstrongs and the other surrounding businesses.

Sir, something has to be wrong. Why should the scale of an operation determine how Government treats it? Are we seeking to discourage small business or are we seeking to encourage small business? Have we recognise that smaller businesses are going to be driven to the periphery, therefore, we are more or less accommodating it? How can we justify a search of this magnitude for a company of such large assets, yet we cannot see any need to accommodate a small business within the same Kensington area?

Sir, I have no doubt that in discussion with these large commercial entities that the availability of land at Lower Estate would have been made known to such commercial properties. There is no way that a business would contemplate, having the resources, to be able to identify lots of land across Barbados for relocation and lands that are owned by Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what would have prompted the Board of Armstrong Agencies to take a drive to Lower Estate and identify a particular piece of land as ideal for relocation? I am suggesting that even in the area of relocating such commercial entities that National Housing Corporation or the Ministry would have offered or provided the information with respect to alternative location where land would be available and land that is owned by

Government. Sir, the Government has not considered that small businesses around Kensington could also benefit from such advice and in the negotiation process it should have occurred.

H65: 11.30 a.m.

Sequence 8

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

House 65, sequence 09, 11:30 a.m.

Continuation of Mr. C.A. MASCOLL:

Sir, because the large commercial properties were acquired through private treaty and negotiation, I have no doubt in my mind that because of the environment in which the acquisitions occurred, there would have been a conducive, pliable environment for discussion, with respect not only to the acquisition, and an explanation and negotiation to what would be paid for it and that the persons owning the commercial lands would have been given an opportunity to determine the final price, but that in such an environment which is cordial and conducive, the commercial entities would have been given advice as to alternative areas for relocation.

Unfortunately, once you dealt with the small 20 households in the area and particularly those households which had commercial properties attached, or small commercial properties to them, the matters became contentious. Therefore, it was not now a question of finding any alternative accommodation or location for such properties but even to determine the final price offered, there would have been all kinds of strictures in discussions, and large meetings being held where an individual could not say to the Ministry that I also may consider being

relocated to a place that is acceptable.

Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. There has been no difference in the quality of treatment received by private individuals or private companies. In fact, Sir, the Ministry has been careful to engage the residents in one-on-one dialogue to make sure that all of the resources necessary for them to get the best price possible for their property have been fulfilled.

In fact, Sir, it is because they would be disadvantaged vis-à-vis larger property owners, in other words the large property owners would have their attorneys on record, we have been all the more careful to ensure that private citizens have not been disadvantaged. Sir, nobody is trying or intends to cheat them out of what is due to them. Therefore, the suggestion that we are handling one group in one way and another completely differently is entirely false.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the explanation just given is precisely the point that nobody is talking about who cheats who. What you are saying is that as long as an individual in a negotiation cannot assist in determining his or her price, there will be contention.

Therefore, what I am suggesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that once you do not have the private treaty where you permit and allow for negotiation but where the Government ...

Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member is not correct. He is assuming that there is no negotiation open to the small landowners and that is where he is fundamentally wrong. They have access to valuers, attorneys and all professionals to

negotiate the best possible price on their behalf. The notion that they cannot negotiate is false and wrong.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am suggesting that the environment in which you negotiate is more important than whether or not you negotiate. I am therefore saying that I am privy to the fact that there was a lawyer representing a particular client in Kensington and there was an issue with respect to whether or not the adjoining business or the attached business should be valued and how should it be valued and whether, in fact, you can determine the amount of revenue that the person earned as a consequence of having the small shop at the back of the property and the extent to which they should be compensated. Sir, lawyers had to intervene and lawyers wrote the National Housing Corporation.

Therefore, the negotiation process was not in fact conducive to any persons on the other side, like the small man, being able to finally determine his or her price and once that entered the equation, there would be contention.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, nobody knows what the real price of a property would be or should be, and even when valuers come and make their claims about what a house should cost, it is not based on highly scientific matter. I have seen in my area, where a valuer came and in less than half an hour, was able to increase the value of my property by almost \$150 000. This was not done by any major investigation or interrogation but really by a gut feeling as to whether or not that area is becoming more developed and ought to be more highly valued in the scheme of things.

It had nothing to do with any major scientific investigation or any long look at the house and its structure or what really has occurred within the area. It had to do with valuers believing that they can - and they have done it in the last

five or ten years - come and just with a cursory glance, say that this property has to go up by \$200 000 and increase your tax liability.

Do you know that in fact, when you look at the reality of life in Barbados that a very small set of individuals have been responsible, over the last ten years, for the escalation in land and property values, and that the real value of land in Barbados ought not to be what it is? Sir, not to mention the fact that this Government was instrumental in allowing foreign investors to come and increase the value of our land and properties beyond the reaches of the average Barbadian.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, once you start to see any contention in the negotiating process, as occurred at Kensington, it only occurred among the small people because there was discrepancy with respect to what the real value of the house should be and how the business should be valued.

Sir, one could understand the extent to which the National Housing Corporation would intervene...

Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. If the Government is acquiring a property from me as an individual whether by compulsory acquisition or private treaty, I want to get the most that I possibly can, whatever valuer, lawyer or other professional I use.

Therefore, the acquisition process is in itself conflictual, so the notion that the small people had conflict but the big people did not, is false. There was conflict, Sir, in terms of negotiation and disagreement over the price and there will always be, whenever there is an acquisition because the property owner is seeking to get the most that he or she possibly can, whether or not the property is worth that on the market.

A person may have an emotional attachment to a property that they grew up in which makes it value millions of dollars to them but somebody buying it on the market may only think it is worth \$150 000, based on the land site. In the process itself, Sir, there was conflict and there was divide not just between the owners of small residential properties but with all of the property owners, including the large commercial entities.

The big property owners did not get any big blank cheques signed by the Government. We fought over every cent, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have made your point of order. Please proceed, Sir.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes when you try to argue the way that the Minister is arguing, you have to be careful. Sir, small companies or businesses may not have adequate accounts and may not be able to determine what is the revenue flow or give a proper assessment of their worth because of how they conduct their affairs.

The Ministry may believe that in the absence of such information, it could have a stronger bargaining position with respect to a small entity and therefore enforce its will, as opposed to a company which may be able to provide a stream of accounts for an extended period of time, and demonstrate more forcefully, its position and its worth.

House 65, sequence 09, 11:4012

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House,

but in this case I do not think it is deliberate, I think it is out of innocence, if in fact one can ever ascribe innocence to him, but used in this context, I am using it to be synonymous with ignorance.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a fact that small businesses do not necessarily keep proper accounts. In fact, a lot of professional people do not either. However, when you come to valuing the revenue generated by the business you do not only ask them to say what books they keep and write down their accounts in. If they tell you they built the property cash out of the proceeds of the business, you can immediately make an assessment about what the revenue stream is, you can see what kinds of money they are carrying to the bank and you can go down by them on a Friday night and see if they are selling 80 pork chops at \$20 or \$10 each, therefore, you can assess the revenue of the business, so that you do not have to try to unfair anybody.

Mr. Speaker, it is more difficult if a person is not keeping accounts to determine what the revenue streams are but there are methods by which you can assess it. In fact, frequently banks have to use a similar process in relation to self-employed people who are seeking loans and who do not have proper accounting processes with books because to give the loans or credit lines they have to do an assessment of the revenue stream, so there are methodologies by which one can reach a conclusion or agreement without having a revenue stream projected through a formal accounting process and by reference to books.

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

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to suggest that this is precisely the point, that when Government is seeking to assess a

small business with respect to its performance, especially when Government is seeking to pull it into a tax net, that Government would make the assessment that the small business is doing better than it is suggesting. Therefore, what the Minister said is quite true that you could look and see whether or not the individual built with cash or to see what the individual has been doing outside of the business and therefore make a determination.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with respect to Government acquiring the business, when the individual says his or her business is valued more than Government thinks, it becomes a different argument for Government because it is in the individual's interest to have better revenue streams and better performance but they cannot demonstrate it by way of audited accounts. Therefore, the Government and the Ministry would be in a position to force the hands of that individual which is seeking to sell their property to the Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am therefore saying that on the one hand when Government is trying to push small businesses into a category in order to exploit them for tax purposes that Government would say that the businesses are doing much better. However, when Government is seeking to acquire and the business cannot now show through audited accounts that it is doing better than Government believes it is doing, Government is then in a position to argue the other way and reduce the value. That is precisely the point.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. What the Leader of the Opposition is saying about the Government is contrary to reality. He may have book-learning on these matters but what happens on the ground is a total different thing. The same Government he is talking about is a Government that gave special development areas status to small businesses so that they may prosper. However,

small businesses cannot have it both ways. They cannot hide from the tax man and then when the time comes they want to put a high value on the property. They cannot have their cake and eat it too. Small businesses in Tudor Street, Baxters Road and Roebuck Street are going to be the beneficiaries of special development areas status which gives them that boost they need to get their business off the ground so that like others they can prosper.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed Honourable Member.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would ignore the comments because the Honourable Member for City of Bridgetown is not privy to the work that I have done in Barbados and throughout the region. The nature of the argument becomes ad hominem when you cannot win. It has nothing to do with my lack of understanding. I have a very perfect understanding of the way in which small businesses work.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we are seeing here on the acquisition of this property is an example of how this administration has treated small businesses relative to big businesses; an example of how they blow up things like 2007 but neglect the drainage system within the city; an example of how they would not pay attention to the stench that comes from the sewerage plant, not understanding that air quality is going to be as important to World Cup Barbados in that area as any other, and therefore it has to be addressed and an example of how this administration has to deal with the question of garbage within the city area and how it has definitely to be able to understand that people's needs have to be addressed in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while growing concern

and attention is being paid to 2007, Barbadians, not only in the city, are experiencing all kinds of difficulties with respect to their garbage being collected on a weekly basis. Those are the things that Government needs to address. Those are the things that are critical in the process of the acquisition of this land which has to do with the overall performance of 2007 and the ability of this Government to carry it out. Therefore, they cannot only attribute these issues to the bigger matters of Herbert House and of all the other acquisitions along Fontabelle. Government must understand that there are several other matters that impact on the lives of Barbadians not only surrounding Kensington but Emmerton Lane, Goudy Alley and all the other areas that are important to the Cricket World Cup 2007.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, unless Government sees this for what it is, they are going to neglect the more fundamental issue of developing Bridgetown. Developing Bridgetown is not only about lights. Developing Bridgetown is not only about refurbishing a building. Developing Bridgetown has to be about how to get the smaller matters right with respect to a rainy season that can potentially flood the area, air quality, garbage and other such things.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to speak to this matter the way in which I am doing it because those are the fundamental issues. We can have other critical matters attending Barbados as well. We know of the increasing population in the city areas as a result of migration in recent times.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Not by Barbadians. There are in fact overcrowded houses now...

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition is a senior officer in this Parliament. I was brought up to

understand that you must not lie to the Parliament. We have Standing Orders which requires us not to mislead the Parliament. How is it that the Leader of the Opposition does not know that the smallest constituencies which send members to this Honourable Parliament are St. Joseph, St. Lucy and the City of Bridgetown. The City of Bridgetown is not growing in terms of its population.

Asides.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: The second smallest constituency in terms of population is the City of Bridgetown, so it is wrong for the Honourable Member to say that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed Honourable Member.

House 65 Sequence 10

11:50 a.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, again the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown is failing to understand the issue. If there are persons coming to Barbados, who will not be on the Electoral List, but who currently occupy houses within the City area... Sir, I know what is happening on the ground, because I understand the question of urbanisation, there has been an increase in population and in density population in the City, and not by Barbadians.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is, in fact, at variance with what the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown is saying, is that over the last ten years, the Honourable Member has been on a parade, not only to increase the economic activity in the City, but to bring

greater levels of population within the City. Therefore, what the Honourable Member is saying is that her strategy has failed.

Asides.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member does not understand the process of urbanisation. I have constantly made the point that when people move away from cities, that those cities die if no one continues to live in them. Therefore, because there was out-migration from the City, it was important for there to be a balancing of in-migration. There are people who come and squat in Bridgetown, which has been so from the time that Bridgetown was a town. It is my constituency and, therefore, I have taken that into account.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown does not even know that I co-authored the housing paper that was taken by the then Minister of Housing in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996. Therefore, I have a situation with which I am fully aware of the issue pertaining to urbanisation and housing within the environments of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is, therefore, a question of understanding what the acquisition is about which we are dealing with today. It was satisfying that the Honourable Member for St. James South, in fact, has broadened the debate to include aspects of Cricket World Cup, 2007, the question of what businesses and the commercial properties would do but as is typical of this administration, the Honourable Member did not deal with the issues that impact on the small people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do feel the need to discuss these matters because we cannot have a discussion in which we are contemplating hosting Cricket World Cup, 2007, where we are dealing with bigger buildings or businesses, in which we are concerning ourselves with the rural network, yet we cannot appreciate the importance of ensuring that we do not cluster or impact further on the drainage system within the City.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is such a vital matter that it has to be addressed. It cannot be allowed to go without attention being paid to it because if one were to continue developing the City in the way in which it is being done and it continues to obstruct the natural water courses, while not paying attention to the overall drainage system within the City, then, at some stage, there is going to be even greater damage done to the City, than any investment which would have been made over the last ten to fifteen years. Sir, one, therefore, cannot ignore that reality, neither can Government confine or try to reduce me to discussing only the big buildings for Cricket World Cup, 2007.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I understand the other issues and when I listen to other Honourable Members on the other side... Sir, my favorite subject was Geography. In fact, as I look across this Honourable Chamber, I can see persons who would have taught me at Combermere. Therefore, I have an interest in urbanisation; in understanding concentric circles; in understanding the impact of economic system on population development; on understanding the social issues that cause decay that may result from over population and other such health hazards and have, in fact, written to these issues. Therefore, I will not become side-tracked by the belief that this is only a theoretical contract. I have lived it and will continue to live it.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to close by saying that to my mind, this acquisition brings into focus the way in which this administration treats small versus big. Sir, here it is that a large company could quickly and conveniently identify a piece of property somewhere in the Lower Estate region, which is owned by Government, and is able to acquire it for a specified price, while, on the other hand, we never knew what that company got for the land and property at Kensington that was acquired by Government.

Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, during my comments this morning, I gave the Honourable House the amount of money spent. I gave all valuations, I indicated who were paid and who were not. Sir, in all of them, there has been no attempt to conceal and on a further note, the Honourable Member indicates that it was done very quickly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to say that this process in relation to Cricket World Cup, 2007, has been ongoing for a very long time. The process was not quick but it was critical that we get them moved and so we had to do so expeditiously. Therefore, the notion it has been done by the snapping of fingers is very false, and the figures were disclosed here today.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the bigger issue is that while we understand the need to hurry the process, has this Government taken into contemplation the way in which residents surrounding Kensington ought to benefit from the whole development of that area? Sir, that should have been the concern from the inception and not about how expeditiously we can execute the project at Kensington, nor to what extent we can satisfy the needs of the International Cricket Council.

Sir, the concern should be, to what extent could we use a large project, to ensure that there is genuine enfranchisement of small businesses and small people in the surrounding areas; to what extent are we going to see benefits being derived by commercial property owners along Baxters Road and Westbury Road; to what extent is that going to happen; and how is it going to happen. Sir, it cannot be done by a gut feeling but are plans being put in place to allow it to happen in a way that would benefit the persons who live within the environs of Kensington?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if one would look at the way in which Government has treated the small people living on the periphery of Kensington Oval who, over the years, were able to sell food and drinks around cricket times, one, therefore, has to be concerned about whether or not there would be a genuine benefit for those commercial properties that are even further away from Kensington, than those entities within Kensington Road itself. Sir, if that cannot be guaranteed, then the question needs to be asked, why would Government engage in such a large project, unless it redounds to the benefit of the average small man in Barbados, unless there can be genuine improvement and enhancement of peoples lives. Sir, in the absence of that answer, then all that we are seeing would come to naught.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have my views with respect to the investment. I am a cricket fanatic but this investment in terms of economics and finance will take a considerable long time. In fact, it would take decades for it to reap any benefits, based on the amount of money that we will put into this system for Cricket World Cup, 2007.

Sir, I understand that in life everything cannot be evaluated in dollar terms but I understand more importantly that in life everything can be evaluated by how it affects the human being.

H:No.65(11)1200 noon

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Mr. C.A. MASCOLL:

You cannot use money as a barometer but everything you do in life has to come back to the core of life and, Sir, the core of life is the human being.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have to evaluate a project and come to the conclusion that people will benefit. I am not speaking of those in ascendancy or those who would bring in import to satisfy demand or those who have rooms that would satisfy that demand, I am talking about using this project as a means of truly enfranchising a wider cross section of Barbadian. When you look at the contractual arrangements of ICC where they can determine who sells what, where it is sold and within what proximity to Kensington Oval, you have effectively removed any such benefit from those persons who surround Kensington Oval.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know for a fact that persons will come from Asia to determine how you can get a ticket to go to Kensington and who can sell what at Kensington. I know for a fact that there are contracts in place where the average Barbadian can no way get involved in the real benefits of World Cup 2007. Sir, these things must be told to the average Barbadian.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, therefore, this will be an exercise beyond the cricket because it is important to our soul. We begin to feel spiritually depressed because of the way our cricketers are performing at present. We can now begin to question whether or not there would be real benefits coming the way of the average Barbadians. Mr. Deputy Speaker,

some Barbadians are being told to build properties. I want Barbadians to understand that while the Barbados Tourism Authority is telling people to add a room here and there that they need to know what will happen after they have invested their monies in building a property.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you feel that such a person can get enough revenue to make such and investment meaningful or profitable. Sir, it cannot happen in the space of two weeks. Therefore, there are other things we have to contemplate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I end by saying that this smacks of a typical approach by this administration where they are satisfying the big boys and hoping that the small boys would benefit. This is called the trickle-down effect. It ought not to have happened because from the inception there should have been the approached that was equally satisfying to both the big and small man around Kensington Oval.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Order Paper from which we speak, Item No. 7, in the name of the Honourable Member, the Minister of Housing is moving a Resolution to approve, in accordance with Section 5 of the Crown Lands Vesting and Disposal Act, Cap 225, the sale to Armstrong Agency Limited of a parcel of land situate at Lower Estates in the parish of St. Michael in this island. Sir, it makes no reference to World Cup 2007 but we understand that this matter which is the substance of the Resolution has to do with the fact that Armstrong Agency Limited is relocating to accommodate a rebuilding of Kensington Oval.

Sir, I wish to speak as she who represents the City of Bridgetown in this Chamber on matters which have nothing to do with World Cup 2007 and which only now, coincidentally, will rebound to the benefit of the proposals and plans for World Cup 2007.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, long before there was any thought, concept or idea that there could have been a World Cup 2007 in the Caribbean with the finals to be played in Barbados, there was a Bridgetown Redevelopment Plan. I am talking more than twenty-five years ago. In fact, May 12, 2005, would make it 29 years that this I spoke of a Bridgetown Redevelopment Plan. The first matters that were considered in that plan has to do with the population of Bridgetown. We saw Kensington Lodge, part of urban renewal which is ongoing and will continue to be ongoing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when Bridgetown was first settled 376 years ago, Mr. Ligon at the time wrote to say that it was the worst possible location in Barbados that you could have chosen to set up a town because it is below sea level. It is a fact and is now written in the history books. It was a noisome, loathful swamp and goes back to the original fact that two-thirds of what we know as the City of Bridgetown is below sea level. You only have to look at the names in Bridgetown like Pondside. It is not called Pondside for nothing, it was once an old pond bottom next to St. Mary's Church and Emmerton was also old swamp land. Sir, where Government Headquarters is located today, I recall as a young child, the land being reclaimed so that the headquarters could be built on it. It was an old swamp bottom as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, so many places in and around the city was old swamp land, even where I grew up in Brighton.

Asides.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: No, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is not in a swamp. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is built on a bluff of rock where the old St. Michael's Deanery used to be and it was very carefully chosen. Sir, I know where of I speak because my late father helped to chose that site. It was chosen with great care. Sir, as a child, it was explained to me about the peak bog which was the old river bed of the Constitution River which we still have in Barbados today. You have to be careful not to build there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Democratic Labour Party was the Government and they built a Nutrition Centre on that old river but by the time I became a Minister of Health in 1976 and tour the centre, the building had already broken its back. In the wet season the bog would move and the building would crack. It had a crack from ceiling right up to the floor. In the dry season it would go back and nurses had to jump across a three-foot chasm. Sir, the building had to be condemned and is no more.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people do not understand the workings of the City of Bridgetown. I have given my whole life to it and there is nothing you can bring up about the City of Bridgetown that I cannot speak to. The Honourable Member talked about writing a housing plan that went to Istanbul but that is like the bad economic advice he gave to the Government that brought Barbados to its knees in the early 1990s.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I went to Istanbul to the housing meeting as an eminent person so I know whereof I speak again. Nobody gave any credence to what the Honourable Member proposed.

Asides.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: I well knew

what it was because I was invited as an eminent person to speak to real issues about housing in Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Sir, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition needs to stick to what he does best. I do not know what it is but whatever it is, he needs to stick to what he does and knows best.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this plan for the redevelopment of Bridgetown is going to be a long ongoing plan for Bridgetown. It is not only for Bridgetown but for all the towns in Barbados. Sir, all the towns in Barbados suffer this same problem of drainage. Speightstown, Holetown and Oistins all suffer because the major population in Barbados is to be found on the coastal fringes.

H65/12:10

Sequence 12

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of... Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: Sir, it is only in recent times that we have had population shifts into the higher areas such as St. George, St. Thomas and St. Philip, being the largest, flattest and driest parish in Barbados but the parish with the most water underneath it.

Sir, Barbadians need to learn more about this island and stop abusing by choking the gullies with garbage. It is not mother nature that created these problems. We are the ones who have created them. Sir, I have never heard

about an engineer that has been sued for poor building in Barbados. Lawyers and doctors get sued from time to time but we are the one who choke up the gullies by building across them and divert the water courses and people are still doing this today. The garbage does not get into the cannal, which is a storm drain that runs through Murphy Pasture, or the get into the storm drain that runs behind the back of Goudy Gap by walking into these drains. Human beings deposit the garbage there. Sir, I am appealing to the Minister of the Environment to let have an environmental Clean-up Day in Barbados. Many countries do this. One day of the year we will make special arrangements for the disposal of the garbage, preferably before the begining of the hurricane season where people can clean out their backyards, front yard and the road reserve in front of their properties. I do wish that everybody would clean the area in front of their homes. Sir, we build big fancy houses and the backyard is full of filth and rubbish and we need to clean it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a pile of garbage outside my house waiting to be carted away because I try to do this every year before the hurricane season. Sir, other countries do this kind of thing and we can do it too. We can do this one Saturday where everybody put on old clothes and get out there and do what has to be done so that when the water comes there is a free flow of the water. We know that low-lying areas are going to be subjected to flash flooding. This is not peculiar to Barbados. This happens in the middle of New York and London.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just traveled through Toronto and as soon as I left the airport I smelt the stench of sewerage all the way to town and when I opened the tap in the hotel the water was green. This is nothing peculiar to Barbados. This is Toronto that I am speaking of over the weekend. We have all of these problems which you will find in big developed

countries and we have to learn to manage them.

Sir, there is a proposal for Special Development Area status for Baxters Road and Tudor Street. I am going to a meeting with Officials from the Ministry of Finance to fix the boundaries, because Bridgetown, like any vibrant active city is sprawling. It is sprawling North, along the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's constituency, and it is sprawling East. Bridgetown is now reaching Belleville and Pine Road and it is sprawling South up the Garrison Hill. It cannot sprawl to the West because that is towards the sea. That is the story of Bridgetown.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is how progress works. If Bridgetown did not move from that little settlement in Cheapside to what it is today, we would not be here today. So, we have to accommodate the fact that from time to time over all of the existence of this City's 376 years, people are relocated and then re-accommodated within the City.

Sir, there was a time when the City was all wooden houses and many fires burnt them down and the City was rebuilt. Sir, wooden houses were all behind Marhill Street, which is called the Old City, and Cheapside. I am proud to say that this is what has been going on during my watch.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at Kensington Lodge, with a beautiful avenue of Mahogany trees, and a wonderful playground for children, taking all the elements cited by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Minister of Housing, a community was formed, not just a housing estate, t London Bourne Towers, hard courts and a playground are being constructed. This area is full of bush and I intend to meet with the Honourable Minister of Social Transformation at the nearest opportunity to address that matter.

I am pleased to say that the Inter American Development Bank has finally reached the stage where the upgrade programme for Cats Castle and Greenfield is about to be embarked upon. In fact, I think it is this week or next week where it is expected that officials from that Bank would be in Barbados. I have been asked for the third time to meet with them because it takes time to put these things in place.

Sir, what is happening at Pickwick is a further expansion of that part of the City. As we have done with all the relocations in my 29 years that the Barbados Labour Party was involved in it, always very careful social surveys have been done and in every case people have been better off rather than worse off. In some cases, they are more than better off.

Sir, I have no difficulty with what the plans are for the Ministry of Housing for the people who live at Pickwick Gap and I have attended all the meetings. In fact, approximately 18 months ago, before all of this started or even before the Ministry of Housing was on the scene, I called Mr. Stephen Alleyne of the Cricket Association and took him to residents at Pickwick Gap to begin to explain the process. People were aware of what is happening. The businesses, the small businesses in that gap in particular, are well taken into account and I would not allow less than that on my watch.

Sir, there are other plans which long predated World Cup 2007 and would now be the beneficiaries of World Cup 2007, I hope. The ladies who fry fish, not all from my constituency, mostly come from the constituency of St. Michael West, next door to mine and constituencies further afield from it.

Sir, in this year's Estimates monies have been voted for 21 nice units for the fish fry people

with running water, et cetera, so that there will be facilities for patrons to sit, a location for garbage and toilet facilities. This was planned a long time before World Cup but it will come to fruition and those people will be in a position to benefit at lunchtime and in the evenings, not only for World Cup but beyond World Cup they will be the beneficiaries. Sir, Baxters Road, Roebuck Street, Milk Market Street and Tudor street will benefit from the improvement.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the rebuilding of Pelican Village had nothing to do with World Cup 2007. All of those small business people will be the beneficiaries of World Cup 2007 and beyond.

Sir, I need to say something about drainage. The Drainage Unit has a drainage plan for Bridgetown. An enormous amount of work has to be done with the canal on Murphy pasture. That was a big issue in the by-election campaign in April and May 1976 that brought me into this Honourable House for the first time and it continues to be an issue. People do not understand that it is a storm drainage, that water comes from Sturges, St. Thomas, behind Glendairy Prison and Headley's Land and floods the Weymouth plain, that water comes from the heights of St. Thomas. Sir, we have never in 376 years been able to deal with the question of drainage and we have to do it.

Barbados is a relatively flat island without surface water. We do not have big rivers or lakes, so, the drainage can only be to the sea but the sea is an important aspect of our lives, our tourism product and our environment.

H65: 12.20 p.m.

Sequence 13

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

House 65, sequence 14, 12:20 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER:

The reef is what protects us from the great Atlantic and so we have to be careful that what goes down the watercourses and onto the reef does not destroy the reef, which is our natural protection. Therefore, drainage is a very important matter and we have to deal with it, with greater urgency than we are at present.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a revetment that is going to be built which will move from where the Hilton is, virtually up to Oistins Bay because we know that we have to protect the near shore but we have to be very careful about waste water and that is why Barbados has been zoned.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this brings me to the Sewerage Treatment Plant which was designed to take a certain quantity of sewerage from the mains that were laid, in my time and on my watch as a Minister of Health, 28 years ago. Sir, you will see trucks driving around Barbados with what they call, septic tanks. I am well acquainted with one which was painted in brown and cream and had a big sign saying that they were number one in the number two business. It is business for people in Barbados. There are places in Barbados where there will always be septic tanks because of Zone 1 and Zone 2 areas.

The septage is going to the treatment plant at Lakes Folly, which has taken more than the quantity that the plant was designed to take. It has also allowed the situation to occur where you cannot monitor with any closeness, what these septage tanks are tracking into the sewerage treatment plant.

The Government proposes to build a separate septage facility to which the trucks will go, and they are in the process now of deciding where is the best location for the plant. Of course, everybody is going to say that they do not want it in their constituency but it has to go somewhere.

Sir, once that happens then the plant at Lakes Folly will go back to the levels it was designed to carry but there have been malfunctions and problems. The plant is more than 20 years now and this awful smell that we are getting has to do with the fact that two things are being undertaken now since November last year. There are repairs being done to the plant so that the stench goes away, and there are proposals for resiting of people who should have been resited in the 1970s, because there was a buffer zone designed around the plant to obviate the very problem which is occurring today.

Sir, both of those matters are underway and since last November, there was a Committee set up to deal with these matters. I sit on the Committee and I go faithfully to the meetings. The Minister of Housing has addressed one of those meetings. The Minister of Utilities has addressed two of those meetings. The Chief Medical Officer has addressed a meeting and she is going to come again to report because some people are claiming illnesses, as a result of the stench that comes from the Plant. When she comes back from the World Health Assembly she will speak at the next meeting which is scheduled for 29th June, so these matters are being very carefully monitored.

Barbadians have to take a responsibility because if you want a first world life, you have to take responsibility. Those people who deliberately and knowingly put paint, gasoline, crank case oil and God knows what other deleterious material into the septic trucks, which they know are going to come to the plant because it is a biological plant, are responsible

for that stench.

Sir, I have been in very close conversation over the years about this and there is a proposal now to change the nature of the plant because we have to look to the future. We have to change the nature of the plant because we cannot stop people from doing the wrong thing. Even some of the same people who are complaining now are some of the people who will put the wrong thing into the sewerage plant and then stand up and say, 'wuolloss', look what it is doing to me. Sir, they complain about what it is doing to them but that is human nature and people do it and then there is a bandwagon effect.

I see young boys sitting down beside the fence there old-talking every day, drinking beers in the evening as usual. I do not know how they can do it because I feel the discomfort with the stench when I am there. It is like the problem at the Louis Lynch Secondary School where the teachers are complaining but the children do not complain.

Sir, these are the problems of progress and modernising Barbados but the Third World needs to understand that you have to monitor and maintain. Therefore, there is a proposal that the plant will cease to be a biologically driven plant, and will become a plant now where the tanks will be covered and a different system like the system at the South Coast which would obviate, for all time, the possibility of stench recurring.

Sir, in the meantime, we are dealing with it and every day I call Mr. Lindo, and I am praying that nobody puts anything deleterious now in the system again to foul it up. Those are the realities. It is not right to say that these are small issues. This is what Governments have to do, and not only see the big picture. Those of us in Government do that, and dream the really large dreams and conceptualise for

the future because that is the responsibility of Government but the Government also has to be involved in 'sweating the small stuff', as they say in common parlance today, and we do, Sir.

Sir, Honourable Members of Parliament, every one of us in here has a responsibility - like I do - to get into our constituencies and help to inculcate...I know Honourable Members on This Side who do it, especially the Honourable Member for St. Thomas because when a fly lights, she is there and knows. You have to be there to deal with these issues because most of these issues are man-made.

When I drive behind the ZR vans, I have to sometimes pull off the road and wait because I believe the smoke that is coming from them will choke me. All of that is polluting the air quality. The Ministry of Public Works has to take those things in hand because it is an easy matter to put a stop to, Sir. I see people throwing garbage out of cars.

I would never tire of telling the story that I went to a children exhibition at Sherbourne. A child from a primary school had done a painting of a bus. The child innocently drew in the number of the bus, I forgot what it was, but there was a hand dropping garbage out of the bus. I thought that this should be blown up and put on the television because it was part of an exercise to teach children not to litter Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in a City of Bridgetown where 100 different things are going on at the same time, I think those who have eyes to see realise that now the Bridge is about to change and there is piling going on in the inner Careenage. The last time this matter was raised in here the Leader of the Opposition said that he could not see it with the naked eye but I am prepared to take him on a tour of it this very day, if he feels he still cannot see it with the naked eye.

Sir, all of these things are going on and the whole business of the resiting of the people also from Emmerton is important. The Minister of Housing came to the meeting week before last and she told us - and I will hold her to it - that Thursday of this week, she will bring to the Cabinet, the paper which will allow her eventually to come before this Parliament with a similar Resolution for the acquisition of lands on both sides of Barbarees Hill, to accommodate those people who will move from Emmerton. This is no recent matter. Those are people who should have been relocated a long time ago. As with all relocations, at the beginning nobody wanted to be relocated but that is now beside the point. There are people who ought to have been relocated.

There are people who have, in recent years and some as recent as a year ago, come to be nuisances. I want them to know that they cannot expect that they can be relocated before the people who had their names down at the National Housing Corporation and have been waiting for 27 years for a spot. Somebody who came to rent a house last year, cannot expect that, Sir. I would not support it but those people who were in what was to be the buffer zone and still must be the buffer zone, because there is always going to be a treatment plant, they are the people who are now in process. They are hurting now. They are suffering now.

House 65, sequence 14, 12:3014

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. Dame Billie MILLER:

I know that because I have been to the area several times and I know what is happening with them, but everything is being done to speed it up the process.

We were told that this stench that we are having now is because of an influx of paint sludge. They have already repaired one of the big tanks and the repairs on the second tank would possibly be completed by the middle of June. However, I am advised that by this weekend once we do not have a lot of rain to change the biological situation in the tankage that the stench would subside.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as long as you have the biological system, people are going to find ways and means, very improperly and very illegally, to introduce deleterious matters. That is why the proposal is that we will change the kind of plant we have there. However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as it stands now, we just have to make it so that it is bearable and relocate people. Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we speak there are in the process of upgrading the facility at Lakes Folly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am very happy to give my support to the Resolution that is before the House. I am happy for anything that would uplift Bridgetown. Kensington Oval is not something that you can be proud of in the best of times and if we are going to be the host for Cricket World Cup 2007, it is right and fitting... As I understand it we are not planning a Kensington Oval that is only for the two days or whatever days for World Cup 2007. This would be a Kensington Oval which would have multiple uses for all times. Maybe 100 years from now they may want to do another upliftment and refurbishment of that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bridgetown is a vibrant and live city and a shopping centre for all of the eastern Caribbean and even beyond. Bridgetown is an attractive place not only for leisure purposes. The plans for the redevelopment are massive. The parks are upgraded, the theatres are to be upgraded and the markets are being upgraded. I believe that

Bridgetown is now entering a renaissance, so to speak, on all matters.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to hope that when none of us are any longer in here that there will be another set of people like ourselves, who are prepared to come to this Parliament and vote money to make sure that the capital city of an island, that is a first world location for people to live and work, would always be a place that one would be proud of, a place that is busy and a place to which people would want to come seven days a week.

Sir, this is what it is all about but it cannot all happen at the same time although in the next few years in the City of Bridgetown one is going to see a lot of things happening at the same time. Mr. Deputy Speaker, 90 per cent of those things were in the works long before there was a proposal for Cricket World Cup 2007. Sir, I suppose that I would have to say to the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports that I am grateful that Cricket World Cup 2007 would help to fast forward the plans for the redevelopment of the City of Bridgetown.

I am very much obliged to you, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 130 p.m. today.

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

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 1:30 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

House 65 Sequence 15

12:35 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

RESUMPTION

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This House is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I enter this debate at a time when it is clear to all Barbadians that land acquisitions and land vesting and disposals are quite different, depending on the location in which they take part.

Sir, for many years, I have spoken in this Parliament about the fairness that should be given to land acquisitions and what I had to say in this Parliament has not been accepted by Parliamentarians as having any merit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, today before this Parliament, we have been able to witness advice that I have rendered over ten years ago, now being accepted. Sir, it is rather strange when one looks at the circumstances as it relates to the acceptance of the advice that was given by me. Is it because we are dealing with Cricket World Cup, 2007? Is it because we do not want the people of Barbados to understand the true cost of Cricket World Cup, 2007? Sir, if one were to purchase a piece of land to construct buildings thereon and then demolish those buildings to build new ones, certainly the cost of demolishing those properties, as opposed to purchasing them, would have to be included in one's capital cost.

Sir, I want to know when Government is finished spending, in which account would I be

able to trace these funds, and whether they would be regarded as capital expenditure or as revenue expenditure. I want to know if the money that is being spent by the Government of Barbados, from the taxpayers of Barbados, is going to be added to the cost of Cricket World Cup, 2007, Inc., or whether it would be picked up by the taxpayers of Barbados, as if Barbadians own this new entity. Would these costs be treated as if this entity is a subsidiary of Government, or as if there were no private entities involved in this purchase?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, from the outset, I want to congratulate the private companies that have been deprived by both Government and the Barbados Cricket Association, of prime commercial land in Fontabelle, to build a project, which, in my opinion... Sir, I was very happy to hear that we have had some new thinking on this project and that persons who have previously endorsed the project, have now reflected upon it and are now recognising that the goodies that they had seen up-front, are now not as good as they had first thought, and that those people are now having a change of heart about this project.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no doubt the problem is not Cricket World Cup, 2007, Inc., but the location of this particular project. As I said previously, wherever one goes in the world, whenever there is major project such as this, instead of seeking to consolidate, the Government would seek to expand. Therefore, it is clear to me that this present Government will not gain anything from this particular project and in addition, instead of expanding the economy of Barbados, we have to be very careful that we do not contract the economy because of the bad location of this project.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not care where it is put, once it is not put in an already fully-developed area where this area cannot accept anymore development. Sir, anywhere in the

world, an economic advisor would advise his country that a project like this should be taken and placed where it can get the maximum benefits out of it. Therefore, this project is going to cost great embarrassment to Barbados, for the amount of money that would be expended.

H:No.65(16)140 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

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

Sir, I want to thank the commercial persons who have been able to sell their properties to Government at high cost and have been then able to purchase land from Government at a very reasonable price. Mr. Deputy Speaker, are you aware that there is nowhere in Barbados that you can get commercial property at \$400 000 per acre. I want to congratulate the private sector and their lawyers for being able to achieve what they wanted and pay out much less by acquiring land from Government. The lawyers who work for the private individuals must now show that they have represented the interest of those individuals.

Mr. Deputy Speaker,, I want to congratulate the lawyers of the big businessmen in town for working out a good deal but the lawyers for individuals must now justify how they could accept that amount of compensation on behalf of their clients now that they have seen exactly what is happening.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have said on more than one occasion that I do not believe that the Land Acquisition Act works in the interest of the masses of people in Barbados. I have observed that the Government has recognised a point made by me in this Parliament and that they do not want to be contentious on this

particular issue. Sir, Government is buying land through this Parliament for a third party that has no right to get land through the Land Acquisition Act. I have made this point in Parliament consistently, so I am not surprised that Government is making sure there are no legal complications when it comes to compensating the private sector for their properties and making sure that where the private sector wants land in return that they offer it at a reasonable price so that they cannot claim they have been wronged by the Government.

Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I see that the Honourable Member is wearing his usual mischievous smile. May I stop the Honourable Member from misleading the House into the impression that some concessionary rate has been given to the private sector in respect of the land at lower estate or any lands at all? The reality is that in pricing the land Government is compelled when we purchase as when we sell to be guided by the advice of the Commissioner of Land Tax in respect of the valuation of property and on whose advice we rely in this matter both in terms of attempting to acquire from the private landholders as well as the commercial entities and for the sale to them of our own land. Sir, the Minister of Housing did not use a formula which was mysterious, concessionary, groveling or any of those words that might be ascribed in pursuit of the implication of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to congratulate the Honourable Minister for the attempted point of order, which gave me time to go to my calculator. I have been able to work out a price of \$9.00 per square foot for commercial land. If that is not concessionary in Barbados, I would like to tell the Minister that I want to buy some of that commercial land at \$9.00 per square foot.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not here to argue. I want to congratulate the private sector for being able to get a deal like this. It would be interesting to compare the buying price and selling price from one location to the other location. I want to congratulate the vendor who now happens to be the purchaser in this particular case for moving from the confusion which will be created in Bridgetown and going to location where there would be able to expedite the delivery of their goods without any confusion while getting the land at a reasonable price.

Sir, I want to congratulate the management of this company because they have foresight. Not only were they able to get the price they wanted for their property but they were able to work out a deal at \$9.00 per square foot where they would not have to deal with congestion at a time when fuel prices are high.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is interesting that we are dealing with fuel prices and the removal of commercial properties from Bridgetown to Lower Estate because there is a link between fuel and World Cup 2007. A lot of people on the ground in Barbados believe that the increase in fuel is the surplus money to finance World Cup 2007. When you look at 27 cents per litre for gas which is very high, it cannot be said that it is for culture because that it is for cricket. Sir, the last increase was for culture which we did not know anything about but we know that this increase is for cricket to help finance World Cup 2007.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Barbadian public has been asked through the Minister of Energy to pay 27 cents increase in fuel for gasoline which is substantially higher than anywhere else in the world. Sir, I want to know how World Cup 2007 can justify these funds when oil prices are dropping on the world market. I want to know if we are going to see a decrease

because we were told there would be an increase when the prices go up in the world market and a decrease when prices decrease, when prices drop on the world market.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to understand that the Government has cleverly found a way to generate revenue to finance this project. At the same time, they have found a way to finance World Cup 2007 through the increase of fuel in Barbados, that they have been able to raise a bond of \$150 million while people are crying out for the problem created by the Sewerage Plant, Government is encouraging the Sewerage Plant to operate in such a way as if to create a problem knowing full well they have found the money to solve the problem. Sir, anyone would understand that we cannot have World Cup 2007 with the existing problem at the Sewerage Plant and that there would be a plan in place to solve the problem before 2007, which is the \$150 million.

Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is in breach of the House by imputing improper motives to the Government. I believe I am quoting him correctly when he says that the Government is encouraging the plant to operate improperly. The reality is that Government has had tremendous difficulties in dealing with the matter but is addressing the problem. We are not encouraging any improper operation of the plant such as would harm residents or bring the country into attention in an adverse way.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please rephrase what you have just said.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I am a very good listener, that is from where my knowledge comes. I agree with the Honourable Member for the City when she said that paint and those kinds of things are not supposed to go into the

plant. I want to congratulate the Honourable Member for the City for providing that information to this Honourable House. I do not know if the Honourable Member for St. James South was out of her seat at the present time and did not hear the evidence that was presented to this highest court of the land.

H65/13:50

Sequence 17

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of... Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, we know that those things are not supposed to go there. On the eve of World Cup 2007, why would we allow those things to happen? It provides a good excuse for Government to pump the \$150 million they have raised to solve the problem, since it has to be solved. Everybody knows that it has to be solved before 2007.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order. The scent has to be solved because of the suffering of the people who live in the environs. It has nothing to do with World Cup 2007.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I do not think that you can question the Chair by saying that is no point of order. As far as I am concerned it was a point of order. Proceed, please.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I want to congratulate the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown for a good point of order because people thought that government was attempting to reduce suffering, while solving this particular problem in the City. I am saying that it cannot only be that because this has been

going on for years and we did not hear of the raising of \$150 million, but two years before World Cup 2007, they have been able to work out a deal for the Barbados Water Authority, which is the same entity that has to deal with the Emmerton Lane problem.

Asides

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: If it is for pipes, I want to know how money will be raised to deal with that. I know that it cannot be all for pipes because the number one priority has to be the problem with Emmerton Lane. Do not think that you could come and produce what looks like a googly but is something else so that I would not be able to read it. I am reading it well.

Sir, when gasoline increased by twenty-seven cents per litre, I said that you have to watch this because it is substantially more than what is required on the world market.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. I do not think that he is doing it purposely, but the last increase in the price of gasoline was not twenty-seven cents. He should get his facts correct.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, proceed.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Is it not twenty-seven cents? It is 27 per cent, which is forty-six cents per litre. Thank you for informing me that I am understating it. I am very glad that you have walked into the trap.

Asides

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, the Honourable Member is questioning the quantum per litre but he is not questioning the reason for the increases. I am saying that the increase in fuel

prices has to go to finance World Cup 2007, in the same way it financed National Cultural Foundation.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On what point did you rise?

Hon. A.P. WOOD: On a point of order. Sir, the Honourable Member is grossly misleading this Honourable House when he is making the statement to the effect that the recent hike in the price of petroleum products has something to do with the financing of World Cup project.

Sir, when the announcement was made about the increases in petroleum products, I was very clear to point out that the last price increases had occurred in June 2003 and those price increases would have taken effect approximately ten months previous to the last one because the international price movement would have started soon after those increases were granted. Sir, given the movement in the prices on the international market and the consequential impact they had on the CIF prices to us in Barbados, the company on the frontline, the Barbados National Terminal Company Limited, sought to absorb the accumulative losses for as long as possible. Sir, those losses were in the neighbourhood of \$13 million.

Sir, the Government took a decision that because of the persistent price increases on the international market with their consequential impact on the CIF prices that we were paying, we could not absorb any longer, hence the prices were adjusted. It has absolutely nothing to do with World Cup 2007.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is grossly misleading this Honourable House and I think that those remarks should be struck from the record because there is no truth in the remarks.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, proceed.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: It is interesting that this is the same Honourable Minister that is now telling the citizens of Barbados that if you had a domestic rate and you by chance paid a commercial rate, that they are now going to backdate you, could they not backdate the price of gasoline?

Sir, if you have property and your water bill is estimated on a monthly basis, the next month you might pay a commercial rate and nobody knows what that means. I hope that you understand what I am saying. This foolishness that is being told to the public that they are going to be putting people in court for back rates cannot be done because there is some degree of guessing the amount of water being used. Once there is some degree of guessing the amount of water used, I am telling the public of Barbados that they have a good cause to fight the Barbados Water Authority because the books are estimated some months, so nobody can say what it means.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Honourable Member walks up and down speaking about taking people to court, there is no justification in it. I am saying that if I have an estimated bill in February and in March you are going to correct it, then tell me the amount of water that I used in February. You cannot tell me the amount of water that I used, then you are telling me that you are going to charge me at the commercial rate because when you take one from another, there is a surplus.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is confusing himself. Let me explain to him how the system works. There are interim bills, for example, when the bills are organised, for February there was an interim bill and in January a reading of the meter was made, the bill for February,

which is an interim bill, would give you the precise reading for January, which would be the last official reading taken by the meter reader. If it is an interim bill for February you might pay a little more relative to the amount of water estimated, or you might pay less relative to the amount of water actually used.

Sir, if in March the meter is read, you would have an actual reading for the months of January and March and an interim bill for February. When the actual reading is done for March, you will then know exactly how much water was used for February and March. Then a credit is given if over that period you were overcharged with the interim bill or if your bill was understated when the reading was done, then you would pay exactly what you would have used over the two months. Sir, that is how it works. Credits are given if the meter was read a month after the interim bill was issued, if it is deserving, and if it is not deserving, then you will pay the correct amount over the two months.

Sir, I do not understand what is so difficult about that but it is the Honorable Member for St. Lucy, so you would understand why he does not understand.

H65: 14.00 p.m.

Sequence 18

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

House 65, sequence 19, 2:00 p.m.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, he needs to tell you the amount of water estimated to have been used during the months.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: The point is that they cannot justify it, Sir. Once there is any calculation based on an estimate, it is not an actual so you cannot tell which month the commercial amount was used. Therefore, they have no case and I am telling the water authority that it is in their interest to solve the problem with the clients and get ahead because if they put it in the court, they are only wasting the Government's money.

Sir, we have to understand what is going on because up to now, we are coming to this Parliament and passing money Resolutions and nobody is telling us where this money will be allocated. This money has to be allocated as a capital project. It has to be part of World Cup 2007 (2007). It has to be part of the Government's contribution to 2007 and it must be reflected there, Sir.

This cannot be an expense for the Ministry of Housing and Lands, Sir, and whenever they 'fork' out money to pay for these lands for 2007, they must be repaid. It would be wrong to allow 2007 to create expenses the Ministry of Housing and Lands which the Ministry would have to pay and then 2007 does not carry the expense. The Ministry and Housing and Lands would be starved for the money that they have spent on behalf of 2007.

Sir, this a capital project. This is not recurrent expenditure. I look forward to seeing somewhere in the Estimates, a statement being made from this Floor of the House where the Minister of Housing would tell this House - after coming here for permission to get the money to pay these landlords at Kensington - that her Ministry has bill 2007 in a private company for the lands that the taxpayers of Barbados had paid for. Sir, in the same way we were told that in the Pierhead Project, the Government's contribution would be their lands, I expect to hear the same thing in this particular project.

We have an example. As I said, we were told from the Floor of this House that the Pierhead Project was a private company but the Government's contribution would be their lands. The amount of money that the Government puts up for 2007, must added to the amount of money we have spent in this Parliament to acquire the properties.

Although, as you know, Sir, there is some legal bind when it comes to that particular matter. Can the Government really transfer to a Third Party, lands which were sought and purchased under the Land Acquisition Act? It is no wonder that the Minister has done well and tried hard to make sure that there are many private treaties concluded with this particular project. I know the Minister would have hoped that she would not have been able to come to Parliament and seek...

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am hearing from This Side to ask Mr. Lashley. I do not know who is Mr. Lashley but I am saying, Sir, that the advice Mr. Lashley would give me, whoever is Mr. Lashley, is the same advice that the Solicitor General gave to the Government of Barbados when they wanted to compulsorily acquire the Windsor Hotel in Christ Church.

There is no difference between the Windsor Hotel and the land at Pickwick Gap so I do not have to ask any lawyers on This Side or That Side. I have the evidence already and I am saying that the Government understands quite well what I am saying.

I have already said to the Government that the easiest solution to this problem is to also buy out the BCA and let the property be owned by the taxpayers of Barbados so that they would have no legal conflict. If they do not do

that, Sir, there are people within the BCA who are willing to suit the Government because they are not prepared to give up their properties to the Government just like that, or to get into bed without knowing what share of the responsibility the Government would undertake when 2007 does not deliver the goods it is expected to deliver.

Sir, this is only good advice. We have to be very careful. This project 2007 has the capacity, if it was located in the right place, to make Barbados. As it stands now, all it will do is consolidate Barbados. It will not expand Barbados. I am telling you, Sir, that this present Government has deprived Barbados of true development by locating this project at the old Kensington site.

Sir, on top of that, I am a bit surprised that the Barbados National Trust would allow the Government of Barbados in 2005 to destroy the history of Barbados without a voice.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: North Stars would defend themselves but I find it rather strange that when rain falls at North Stars, they do not have a water problem as they do at Kensington where they cannot even have a practice match.

I do not care how people get vindictive to the people of St. Lucy just because I spoke out about North Stars. If they believe that they could continue to dump anything in St. Lucy and when it comes to anything good, they are running to the University of the West Indies or somewhere else, that is up to them. The shoe will not be in that direction at all times.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Everybody knows that I can get a prison in 24 hours without even a phone call. This is the talk in Barbados.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please address the Chair.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes, Sir.

I am not worried about that but now I am worried about World Cup 2007, which is a project that could have made Barbados a developed country but it has been placed in a location that would not give us our maximum benefit.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes. If it was in the right place, it would have made Barbados a developed country.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Any place different from Kensington Oval or Bridgetown.

Hon. Dame B.A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I beg to disagree. The City of Bridgetown has hosted Kensington Oval from the time it was a cricket ground. It is one of the best known cricket grounds in the entire world and it is absolutely the best possible place to host any World Cup 2007 Cricket fixture, absolutely.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we were speaking about test cricket, the Honourable Member for the City would be correct but we are talking about one day cricket and a one-off situation. This is why Kensington could have remained for test cricket, Sir, and we could have a multipurpose complex somewhere in Barbados to serve the needs of Barbados, without creating traffic confusion and chaos and limiting the poor of Barbados.

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Sir, during my time in this House of Assembly which is just over six years, I have heard some strange things. Sir, for an Honourable Member of this Chamber to stand and say that the location of a project like the World Cup in Barbados would make Barbados a developed country, if it were placed the right place, I think that one takes the cake.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, please.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am very glad that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South has disagreed with me because when he spoke, Sir, I thought I had pointed at Windwards. If he is saying that he does not want the location to be at Windwards, I am not surprised because this is the same Minister that increased water rates, increased telephone rates and increased bus fares on his own constituents.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a contribution in this debate, a little difficult to do so, given the turbulence caused by the presentation of the last Honourable Member. I hope, Sir, to reintroduce the element of reason to the debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the last Honourable Member who spoke indicated clearly that he is in great disagreement with the World Cup 2007 Barbados officials. He has a bone to pick. He is dissatisfied that they did not choose to go to another unspecified location but, Sir, given his strong commitment to the area that he represents, I can only conclude that the only issue he has with the World Cup 2007 is that it is not based in St. Lucy. I sympathise with him

but I cannot help him.

House 65, sequence 19, 14:1014

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Sir, I fully support this Resolution before this Chamber which proposes, subject to Parliament's approval, to sell land to Armstrong Agencies one of the companies which is relocating its business in order to make way for the fullest development of Kensington Oval for the purposes of staging the Cricket World Cup.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the development of Kensington Oval goes beyond the Cricket World Cup. Kensington Oval has been a site for test cricket since 1928. Indeed, some would argue that the territorial games and the matches played there by some touring teams goes back well before that period. Sir, Kensington Oval has a long history. In fact, with the exception of a few stands that were added, the present look of Kensington Oval varies very little from that of the 1950s. Sir, if you look at the photographs showing you the history of Kensington Oval, you have an international cricket ground, the second most popular and most recognised ground after Lords but you are not accommodating any modern facilities.

Sir, the harsh and brutal reality is that if a single test match or a one day international match had not yet been played at Kensington Oval, the regulations governing cricket today would not permit any to be played. Kensington Oval is a non-standing ground. Standards have changed, expectations are higher and in today's world it is no longer suitable.

Sir, the opportunity is taken therefore not just

to prepare a modern cricketing facility for today or for 2007. Sir, recognising that just as our forefathers in the 1920s would have prepared Kensington Oval with a projection of many years to come, we have a solemn and sacred responsibility as leaders today to prepare our cricketing future for the next 50 or 100 years. Therefore, what is being made today is not about 2007. We are not going to close it down. We are not going to mothball it in 2007.

Sir, notwithstanding the current fortunes of West Indies cricket, Barbados has no plans of opting out of cricket. As a matter of fact, we believe that our great responsibility to West Indies cricket is to so invest in cricket in Barbados that we are able to be the spark that lights the new flame that burns eternal for West Indies cricket. Sir, rather than retreat from cricket because of our current form, we need today more than ever to invest heavily in our cricket, not just in the infrastructure which is important but in the coaching, the mentoring, in developing the attitudes and in engendering mental toughness in our young players.

Sir, as Minister responsible for sports, I give the commitment to do all that is in my power to work with the youngsters coming up to ensure that we are able to so improve our cricket in Barbados that we could make the difference in West Indies cricket. Sir, I see this debate not being rooted firmly in the destination 2007. For me, 2007 is just one of the signposts along the way to a longer and further destination, but the reality is that we need to start. Sir, several steps, such as the one we are taking today, will have to be taken in order for us to continue or to start fully on this journey.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in relation to the points made by an Honourable Member who has suggested that there is something inherently wrong and misguided about redeveloping existing facilities, I want to say to him that eight venues have been chosen for matches in

the Cricket World Cup and out of those eight venues five are being based on the redevelopment of existing stadia. Sir, we are accustomed calling them cricket grounds because the concept of a stadium for cricket is not typical for traditional cricketer like me, I still prefer batsmen rather than batters, but the cricket language is changing.

Sir, only three new facilities are being developed and one of them is still questionable as to whether it will play its full role, so there are really two plus a possible one out of the eight. Furthermore, all of those countries have recognised that they needed to build on existing infrastructure and make their improvements rather than squander today. Sir, we also build on our history, and cricket is about history.

Sir, I believe the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is not familiar with cricket. He does not realise that half of cricket is history; who score how many runs and on which ground and whether a team was ever beaten on this ground or the other ground. It is not quite so with football. I guess that eventually football may get there, but with cricket there is that attachment to place and significance. Sir, we already had those arguments and I am not going to go there anymore but just to let him know that what we have done in Barbados is consistent with what has happened in World Cup development all over the world, including here in the Caribbean, for the planning of this Cricket World Cup 2007.

Sir, the Government has been moving forward on all fronts in its preparation for the Cricket World Cup. We have a two-track approach where through the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, we will work very closely with World Cup Barbados and the redevelopment of Kensington Oval itself. Further, a special intergovernmental committee chaired by the Director of Finance and Economic Affairs will deal with all of the

other matters outside and beyond Kensington Oval as they relate to Barbados' contractual commitments under the terms of the Bid Book and the Host Venue Agreement, which the Government of Barbados signed as its commitment to hosting certain matches within the Cricket World Cup 2007.

Sir, in both of those areas we are pressing forward. In fact, the Estimates of Expenditure for 2005-2006 and 2006-2007, would be directly influenced by the programme under the respective ministries ranging from immigration to police services to health services and public works. These will all have elements of the World Cup preparatory programme within these budgets, Sir, over and above the figure of some \$92 million which has been identified directly attributes to the redevelopment of Kensington Oval, but there will be other areas of expenditure which the Government would undertake.

Sir, let us not fool ourselves. The path and the strategy which is being taken by the Government for hosting of the Cricket World Cup is consistent with what countries do with hosting olympics or other world games, that is, that you use the opportunity of hosting this mega event to build a platform on which you launch your country's take-off for the long future. Therefore, the investment in improvement not just to the cricket facility but in the roads, the other public infrastructure and the method of doing things is not for 2007.

Sir, there is no intention on the part of this Government to encourage the country to be so narrowly focussed on 2007 that as soon as that passes and we enter 2008 it is back to old habits, to lack of quality and the lack of being nice. There will be nothing of the sort. This is intended to be the turning point.

House 65 Sequence 20

2:20 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, experience has shown that in all of the countries that have hosted mega games, such as Football World Cup, Olympic Games, or Cricket World Cup, 2007, these games have been the catalyst for a regeneration of the social and economic fabrics of the society. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central knows about this. Cricket World Cup, 2007 is an investment in the future and not only for 2007. Sir, we have to get to 2007 before we get to the future. What are we doing? As I said, we have a structure in place and in relation to the actual development of the cricketing facilities, work is progressing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people are asking if we are going to be ready because of the number of construction that are taking place. Sir, in terms of the programme for the implementation of Cricket World Cup, 2007, there is no where in the Caribbean at this stage that we are seeing such a number of construction going on. We must remember that the facilities have to be developed, while we have our cricketing obligations with South Africa and Pakistan next year.

Sir, it is like anyone of us trying to build a house. We know what we want, but we have to liaise with the Town Planning Department because if the house that we want to build does not meet Town Planning's requirement, if we have to use the bank's money, we would not be successful.

Sir, one of the reasons why none of the areas has rushed off into construction, is that after the detailed designs were done, they had to be submitted for approval by the International

Cricket Council, who are the ultimate holders of the right for the Cricket World Cup, 2007. They were not only interested in the quality of the pitch but were also interested in the seating; access for the disabled; security arrangements; how quickly can the grounds be emptied in the event of an emergency; in medical facilities and in hospitality boxes. Sir, these games, as you would know, must follow international standard guidelines where hospitality boxes have to be provided for officials.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the bottom line is that all of the detailed design work had to be improved and it is only this year that the International Cricket Council technical group met and agreed on a number of these things. Therefore, where we are in our work programme is very much consistent with where we are supposed to be. I believe we may be about three weeks behind schedule. Sir, after the conclusion of the Pakistan tour, one would see significant work going on in many of these countries.

Sir, even if it were a new venue, given the International Cricket Council process, we would only now be getting construction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have also taken care to structure this work in such a way as would not only achieve goals of efficiency and completion on time, but also involve, as much as possible, all local consultants, contractors and service providers. Sir, we all know that one of the benefits of planning for these major events is to inject as much foreign exchange as possible into the economy, so that the benefits to the citizens would be substantial.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of consultants, I can say that Government has checked very carefully and has ensured that World Cup, (Barbados) Incorporated has involved a number of consultants, from the design stages through to the completion stages, so that there is the

lead architect, Arup Associates Ltd., from the United Kingdom, then there are: Gillespie and Steel Associates Ltd.; Tony Brooks Architects Ltd; RWA Architects Ltd; Talma Mill Studios, Consultants Engineering Partnership (CEP) for structural work; Mahy Chaderton and Ridley Ltd; CASSE Engineering Inc; Stantec Consulting (Caribbean) Ltd., for civil engineering; ADB Mechanical Construction; Leverage Consultants, the major two electrical and mechanical engineering; Tower Buck Austin Cooper/Cothman Quantity Surveyors; Eco-Isle for Planning and Consulting and Godson Associates, as well as SB Testing and others.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in relation to construction, the decision was also taken that we would want to involve as many local persons as possible, while the firm of Larsen and Toubro Ltd., of India has been appointed management contractors. Again that was a public process in which five firms have expressed an interest, none being Barbadian, with two being regional and three being international. Sir, this firm, Larsen and Toubro Ltd., has recently built a stadium to seat 40 000 in 260 days. They have a record for efficiency and effectiveness.

We also recognised the fact that their method is one which incorporates several other smaller contractors into their business. Therefore, what we have done by way of deliberate design is to say to them to make sure that overall, everything goes well but that each of the major components of the work is a separate package on which there will be separate tenders, which now allow firms, which may not be of the financial or technical capacity to take on the entire \$92 million project in its complexity and time, to be able to bid for the package that suits them. Therefore, there will be separate packages in the area of demolition, the media centre, the Challenor Stand and the Kensington Stand.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, even as we speak, World Cup (Barbados) Incorporated is in the process of coming to a conclusion on the award of the first tenders. Public tenders were invited for the first package, which would be the Challenor Stand and the Media Centre but I am advised that about eight companies have made submissions, which are being evaluated for the award of those tenders. Sir, therefore, there is opportunity by way of the structuring of these packages and for us to ensure that there is significant local involvement.

Sir, certain Honourable Members can confirm that by way of being direct beneficiaries of that wise structure of local involvement, which is rooted in the highest principles of economic democracy, which would allow for the participation of all and discrimination of none. It might be a record with which those Honourable Members of the Opposition might not be familiar but one with which we hold ourselves to a higher standard.

H:No.65(21)230 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

Sir, in terms of timing and our objectives, it is intended that the capacity of the ground would be 27 000 seats and that the permanent capacity would be in the region of 15 000 seats. We intend that all this work would be done by late 2006 and that no part of this work would go into 2007. In fact, the permanent component of the work being mandated must be completed by October 2006 leaving the additional two-and-half months for the erection of the temporary

stands, to bring us up to the 27 000 seat capacity, which would be removed immediately after the completion of World Cup 2007.

Sir, I also want to say that Barbados has now been approached about the possibility of some warm-up matches. Barbados is looking favorably at this and will make those announcements if we decide it is feasible for us to do so. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are on track and all plans are moving on target. In addition to the staff of World Cup Barbados and the dedicated officers in Government who have been assigned to work on this matter full-time, there are 17 advisory teams, which comprised of volunteers from the private sector and public sector and experts in the respective fields, whose job it is to ensure the implementation of those things to which we have committed ourselves.

Sir, Barbadians can rest comfortably knowing that this country will offer one of the greatest and best experiences that people have ever had for a cricket World Cup. The benefits which this would give us is to showcase our country at its best at a time when we are getting the most exposure we have ever had and which we will have for a long time. I hope that a future generation of leaders would be able to encourage into Barbados something of this scale which we have had the honour, as leaders of the country at this point in time, to do on behalf of our people.

Sir, the majority of our work is not in the preparation of the physical structure like the roads and the airport facility although we have to do those things. Sir, as a region and country we have to be practical and recognise that the excitement of our people about the World Cup would wane if they believe that there is no real prospect of West Indies being a viable competitive force on the field. It has always been the history of cricket in our region that

attendance on Saturday or Sunday at cricket depends on how well the game is going for the West Indies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether at home or abroad you can tell how good things are going with cricket for the West Indies by the extent of 'pep in their step'. Sir, only yesterday I was reminded that in 1983 when the West Indies was beaten in the World Cup in India that a West Indian living in the United Kingdom died in the hotel. The news was such a great shock for him that his poor system could not take it anymore. Sir, the reality is that cricket is very much ingrained in our psyche and is part of our being.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, collectively as well as discharging our respective individual responsibility we have to do all that we must do to make sure that the problems present in West Indies cricket, some of which manifests themselves as problem in national cricket as well are resolved. You cannot have confusion off the field and then have order on the field. Whether it be the national association in turmoil, spending more time on threats to go to court, arguing about the minutes, its language and record-keeping than about cricket itself.

Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the Cricket Association but I have not been to a meeting in a long while because I would rather go to meeting and talk about developmental issues than to immerse myself in administrative matters. Sir, at the level of West Indies cricket, there is no secret of the distance between the board and players and of late between the players themselves.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on one of the sporting programme heard on mornings, the presenter was making the comparison of the way teams function in West Indies and other teams in terms of the interpersonal reaction and things of that nature.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, collectively we have to work on rebuilding West Indies cricket to ensure that the investment we are making whether by the sale of this property to Armstrong Agency for this Resolution, the acquisition of residences and the cost of their resiting to make way for an expanded Kensington Oval, whether by way of the funds we are spending through the National Sports Council and the Ministry of Education on the coaching of cricket in schools, the greater involvement of the persons whom we retain... Sir, between the two entities we retained Sir Everton Weekes, Desmond Haynes, Gordon Greenidge and other persons to do a number of things.

We also have to ensure that through our club substructure, Barbados Cricket Association and the community that we provide any and all opportunities for more of our youngsters to emerge not only with talent but with the right attitude, tenacity and fighting spirit of Bussa and our National Heroes, the spirit that caused them to overcome their grievous circumstances and were able to arise as heroes for future generations. This is the hope that I have along with the successful hosting of the World Cup by the Government of Barbados and its partners for West Indies cricket and Cricket World Cup 2007.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to commend the Minister of Housing, the Honourable Member for St. James South, for the leadership that she has given in this process of dealing with a number of complex, legal and practical issues which have allowed us to make commitment with the confidence that we will be able to follow through on those commitments, that we will be able to so order our affairs in terms of time that this construction work would not be slowed down.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, more important, her

leadership has ensured that this is not treated as a mere project, that the concern, interest, cares and fears of individuals, families and communities are taken very much to heart.

H65/14:40

Sequence 22

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of... Hon. R.R. FARLEY:.. Sir, in that regard it is ably supported by the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West whose constituencies are most affected by this work around the Kensington Oval area but which ultimately is for the benefit of the entire nation of Barbados and indeed the people of the Caribbean region.

I am pleased to support this Resolution. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, This Resolution before this Chamber seeks Parliament's approval in accordance of the Crown Lands(Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225, to sell Armstrong Agencies Limited 2.5 acres of land at Lower Estate. Sir, in the interest of facilitating the relocation of businesses and residences around the Kensington Oval environs, it is on that premise and that premise alone, I will support this Resolution. This debate is nestled within a larger debate about Government's land use and housing policy in particular and most specifically, how Government uses the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act Cap. 225 and the Land Acquisition Act Cap. 228.

Sir, by extension, inherent in this debate is a question of whether these two Acts are used in a positive, or negative or equitable way,, with respect to how they are applied; how Government treats to dealing with the purchase of land from big business interest; how Government treats to the purchase of land from small business interest and how Government treats to purchase of lands from private citizens. This is where I may have a few areas of concern.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, after listening to the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands and other Honourable Members on the other side, I am convinced from the use of the information given that there is a discrepancy with respect to how Government treats to acquiring land from private citizens and how Government treats to acquire land from private sector interest in Barbados and also, how Government sells Crown lands in Barbados.

The fundamental question is whether it should ever be allowed in law that any Government should have a right to sell lands that are owned by the people of the country by something called private treaty and whether taxpayers in Barbados have a fundamental right to know exactly how their monies are spent, and how much is spent. Sir, taxpayers should know whether this concept of private is clandestine in other words, because not only do the Representatives of the Opposition have no knowledge of the terms and conditions of the sale to peruse and analyse it in the interest of the people of the country, but obviously then. the citizens of the country have no knowledge of the particular arrangement. Something is wrong with that Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: On a point of order. Under the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Government cannot sell land by private treaty. All land must be sold through the right

channels and it must be brought here to Parliament for approval. It cannot be sold by private treaty. It has to be brought here and discussed in this Chamber, whereas, Government can purchase land through private treaty.

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this morning I heard in this Honourable Chamber, and my capacity to hear and assimilate information cannot be questioned by the Honourable Member for St. George North, that a private treaty arrangement was utilised with respect of business interest and the relocation project at Kensington Oval. The fundamental point which the Honourable Member is not appreciating is whether or not there should be anything called private with respect to taxpayers money. That is the critical point.

Sir, if the Opposition does not have the opportunity to analyse fundamentally the terms and conditions, whether it is a sale or purchase, then there is something fundamentally wrong with that. That is the critical point that I have a problem with and any right thinking Barbadian should have a problem with that also. I have no confidence in the administration to negotiate in the interest of the people of Barbados. I have no evidence of that but it is my understanding to make those inferences.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the purchases of private sector assets with respect to the Kensington redevelopment, the money approved by Cabinet does not belong to them. If one argues that there is some flexibility by using a private treaty arrangement, I would want to see in any future arrangements that the terms and conditions of purchases brought to Parliament. Sir, it the interest of the Opposition is here to represent the people when taxpayers' money is being utilised and spent on projects in Barbados. Nobody should tell me about a private treaty because the money does not

belong to them. This is a serious matter.

Asides

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Therefore, in the interest of transparency and accountability, that the Honourable Members speak highly about ... In fact, when the Honourable Member for Christ Church East spoke to economic democracy he was almost asphyxiating. In other words he was almost gasping for breath because the words were almost untrue. The sad thing about it is that there was no one on that side that would have given him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. I saw no one, Sir.

Aside

Hon. G.A. CLARKE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is casting aspersions on an Honourable Member's character and I think that he should withdraw those remarks.

H65: 14.50 p.m.

Sequence 23

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

House 65, sequence 24, 2:50 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, please, Honourable Member.

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, after that interruption, I want to revisit the two salient points which are

1. There should be nothing in law called a private treaty when taxpayers' money is being utilised for anything purchased in Barbados.

2. Any such expenditure of taxpayer's moneys should be brought to Parliament and the

Opposition should have the right in the interest of protecting the people of Barbados to review the terms and conditions, with respect to purchases and how much of the taxpayers' money has been spent on any such arrangements.

Sir, this is what I would like to see and then I would believe in transparency and accountability because I do not trust this administration's words on transparency and accountability.

Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Where there is a proposed expenditure of taxpayers' money in relation to an acquisition, it must come to this House for approval.

In fact, you will recall that in relation to Kensington alone, it has been a multistage process because before any monies were paid out, we had to come to Parliament and seek permission for the transaction and indicate the proposed price.

During the course of negotiation, if there is a variation from what the original estimate was and further resources are needed, we have to come back to Parliament, Sir, and to take the process to conclusion, one still needs to return to the House, have the input of the Parliament and seek the Parliament's permission for the expenditure.

Sir, it has gone through all these stages, coming to this House at every stage and making the Parliament aware of what the expenditure is, so there is nothing clandestine about it, Sir. One cannot acquire a property in secret. It has to be done with the consent and approval of this Chamber.

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is an amazing intervention from an

Honourable Member who is supposed to protect the interest of people of this country and their lands.

The reason why it is an amazing intervention, Sir, is because private does not mean public. It cannot. It is a private treaty and the negotiations are done in private. The negotiations are not done with Members of the Opposition who represent the interest of the people of Barbados to determine whether or not their interest is protected. Sir, by the time it comes to Parliament, the negotiations are completed and that is the critical point.

Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. When there is a negotiation, it is with the Ministry of Housing. Whether the process is by private treaty or an acquisition, the process is the same. There is no difference except that you do not publish the notices and the intention, and give publicly in the newspaper an intention to acquire.

Sir, you have to say to the Parliament that you are proposing to acquire certain properties. In both instances, the negotiations are with the Ministry of Housing, so if you are going by private treaty, you do not have to give notice in the newspaper to the world at large, you give it directly to the landowner. If you are going by a compulsory acquisition, you have to go through the notices but whether it is by private treaty or by the compulsory acquisition process, the figures are negotiated by the Ministry of Housing.

When you get to the point where you are going to perhaps conclude the negotiations, you come to Parliament and you say that this is what is proposed, so the Honourable Member totally misunderstands what is a private treaty and how the process functions but there is a role for Parliament in both cases, which does

not change.

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, again if the two arrangements were the same, then they would not be different in law. They would not be established different intersections in law. I am not even going to entertain any more discussion on that matter. I will proceed on what is sensible.

Asides.

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, no notices are published with respect to private treaty arrangements. There is a requirement for publishing of notices with respect to compulsory acquisitions under the law. Sir, what I find to be fundamentally interesting here is the fact that if an individual has a piece of property which is compulsorily acquired, that tells me something.

The only way the Government would compulsorily acquire a piece of land from an individual is if the individual is not getting what they want for it, or if the Government decides to take it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There can be no other logic to that and that is reason why it is called compulsorily acquired. Therefore, it means that the residents in that area are not getting what they are supposed to get. It is simple as that and there is no other deductive logic to that, Sir, this is foolishness we are getting on with in this Honourable Chamber.

Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I believe that the Honourable Member is himself misled that if a property is compulsorily acquired, the property owner does not get what he should. The whole purpose of giving the power of compulsory acquisition to the administration, is to allow the Government to do development and to take land for public

purposes where they deem appropriate. This does not mean that the person is disadvantaged, relative to the compensation that they get for the value of their property.

In fact, the very piece of legislation which lays out the authority to compulsorily acquire, lays out the process and the formula for compensation. I would repeat the point that in both instances, the negotiations are private. The only difference is that with the compulsory acquisition, a notice is published in the newspaper but that does not make it any different in relation to the quantum that the person gets or the negotiation with the Ministry of Housing. It also does not change the fact that whether privately acquired by private treaty or compulsory acquisition, it has to come to this Chamber first for approval.

The Honourable Member is thoroughly confused and will confuse the innocent.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, please, Honourable Member.

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: I ask a salient point. If the two are essentially the same where the only difference being whether one notice is published or not, I would want the Honourable Member to explain to the people of Barbados why it is that the residents had their lands compulsorily acquired and why the businesses around Kensington did not have their lands compulsorily acquired. Then, to further explain why would a private treaty is to be used with them exclusively.

Sir, if that could be explained, then we would be able to tease out the so-called gray areas that the Honourable Member believes and is confused with respect to them but I can assure you that the residents down there who are listening to this debate today are not going to be confused.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Honourable Member likes compulsorily acquiring so much, why does the Honourable Member not compulsorily acquire the land in St. Philip with respect to Hannays Valley and allow the residents there who have been trying to get their own plots for the last eight years to get their plots. Why not compulsorily acquire that and make sure residents are not suffering with respect to their house spots in Barbados?

Sir, it is quick because it is a business interest and you want to fast-track certain things, so you are going to rush to make sure that big business interest get their lands acquired and get the new lots sorted out, but poor people in Barbados who have been suffering for many years cannot get a house spot.

If this Government was really interested in solving the problem, go and compulsorily acquire two plantations in Barbados, 600 acres, subdivide them and give them to poor people which is over 10 000 house spots and the problem would be solved.

House 65, sequence 24, 15:0014

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Dr. D. C. ESTWICK:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am hearing all this nonsense out there about problems with land and housing. Government can use the law and compulsory acquire the land.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not believe that this Government is utilising the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act and the Land Acquisition Act in an equitable manner. Sir, I want to question two other things because it now brings into play the Town and Country Planning Department which is an integral

component in all of this. Sir, all over Barbados we have poor people who own two and three acres lots who are being turned down every single day with respect to subdividing that land to give their children and their grandchildren a spot.

Sir, this is the same administration that sat and allowed Foursquare, Groves and Hannays Plantations, the best plantation lands in Barbados, to be subdivided into housing. Am I supposed to sit here with my mouth shut? This is a discrepancy against poor people. It is a capacity to utilise that type of decision to enfranchise poor people but they are not doing it in the interest of the poor people of Barbados. Sir, three residents in my constituency came to me on that fact and I know of others in the constituencies of St. Philip North and St. Philip South who are having the same problem. If the Honourable Member for St. Philip South chose not to speak about those things that is his business. Sir, if this administration really understood how to utilise the land use policy effectively to enfranchise everybody equitably, why it is that a poor man who wants to subdivide a back lot into two or three spots to give a grandchild or their children cannot have it done but yet massive acres of land in Barbados could be subdivided by big business interests overnight? I can speak to Emerald City Development, Breezy Hill Development Stages 1, 2 and 3, prime agricultural property, and now Foursquare. I can also speak to the development plans for Hannays.

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Sir, I would not keep my mouth shut on these matters. I do not care how the Honourable Members on the other side push up their faces, it makes no difference to me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I phrased my statements in the beginning that this is about Government

land use policy because this is about how Government utilises the law of the land that should be used to protect the poor and that should be used to make sure that the National Housing Corporation fulfills its mandate to the poor people to make sure that those who come to me every single Thursday asking about house spots could get one. This is not only about big business interests down by Kensington being able to get whatever money they want and nobody must know. Why must the taxpayers not know how much money was paid to the business interests around Kensington?

Asides.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Whose money is it? Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I have made my point on that matter and all that is left for me to say is that there should be no purchase by utilising taxpayers money with anything called private. I do not care how minuscule the rational explanation by the Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment that it is only whether one is published or not published. There has been no publishing as to how much money any of those businesses down there got for the land.

Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is being mischievous. The proceedings in here are public and it has been published in here what these business people are getting.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Sir, because the Opposition represents the interest of the people of the country, I do not want a situation where negotiations are executed and agreements are made and then they come to Parliament simply for the approval of money where all the Opposition can do is to say yes or no. How can the Opposition do the job that the Opposition has a responsibility to do in a situation where

such occur?

As a result, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I give critical support to the Resolution because I understand the importance of having the project executed in the interest of the development of Barbados. I am not totally comfortable with the way the project has been organised and tiered because I do not believe that a private company should be utilising land that has been vested by the National Housing Corporation, which under the law is supposed to be for public purposes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the management and the execution of those funds Parliament has no control or determination over them and, I am a little uncomfortable with that because I have seen a proliferation of this type of arrangement in Barbados. Sir, the danger of that is that it undermines the interest of Parliament to protect the people. If every single thing that is being done in Barbados must be done by a private company but none of their revenue and expenditure components come to this Honourable Chamber, I have a problem with that and I believe all Barbadians should have a problem with that because it relates to the expenditure of taxpayers' money without parliamentary approval and parliamentary oversight. That is an untenable position that any so-called old and mature democracy should never allow to obtain in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise in this debate to support the sale of land at Lower Estate in St. Michael to Frank B. Armstrong Limited. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this location is situated between the constituencies of St. Michael North East and St. George North. Sir, when the Honourable Member for St. Philip West said that there was a change of use, he has to understand that the land was bought since the 1980s for commercial activity.

House 65 Sequence 25

3:10 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made the point that at that time, it was bought for the Barbados Marketing Corporation and, therefore, there was no need for a change of use. In fact, if one would visit Lower Estate, one would see a number of industrial activities going on there, such as S&I Tools, a feed plant, a quarry, et cetera.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a number of years, several activities have been going on at Lower Estate. Therefore, this parcel of land is being sold to Frank B. Armstrong, in order to facilitate their relocation from Kensington. Sir, all right-thinking Barbadians have agreed that Kensington has to be redeveloped and expanded, and we have brought all necessary legislation to Parliament to facilitate that redevelopment and expansion for Cricket World Cup, 2007.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the one hand, the Opposition is supporting Cricket World Cup, 2007, while, on the other hand, they do not support the expansion of Kensington Oval. Sir, we have to be able to relocate some of the businesses and residents in the area and we are proceeding to do so. Therefore, all that we are asking for in this instance, is the cooperation from the Opposition, because this is a national affair in which all Barbadians have agreed that we want Cricket World Cup, 2007, to be hosted here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this debate today is a simple one, in that we are asking the

Opposition to agree to facilitating this matter which is about relocating a company that has been in existence in its present location for a number of years. Therefore, it is not a question as to whether this sale is to be done by private treaty or by compulsory acquisition, as it is not. Sir, I wish to point out that all Government lands must come to Parliament through this method, in order for them to be sold.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when one acquires land, it can either be done through private treaty or through the compulsory acquisition process. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West has failed to understand the difference between compulsory acquisition and private treaty. Where a person has land and has the conveyance, where that conveyance or title is good, then the owner can sell by private treaty but in many cases, the ownership of the land has always been in question and, therefore, it would be done by compulsory acquisition but there must always be notices published in the Press. Therefore, the Opposition must not believe nor must not allow the public to believe that we are engaging in a secret deal.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to point out that the Opposition has not been using the rules of Parliament wisely because they can bring a parliamentary question for everything that is done here. Furthermore, these things are published in the consolidated report that comes to Parliament. Sir, in relation to this sale, I do not see the need to discuss whether it was done by private treaty or by compulsory acquisition, they are both processes that have been used over time.

Sir, I believe that even though the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is on record as stating that there is need for an amendment to Chapter 228, I do not believe there is any such need. I believe that these two pieces of legislation will serve this Parliament well and will continue to serve Barbados well over time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also believe that in this particular location, there is a need for further improvement. Since a number of businesses are now being relocated to Lower Estate, we will have to improve both the Lears Junction and the Belle Junction. Therefore, in the next financial year, Government will have to put money in the Estimates, in order to improve those two junctions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, over the last ten years, a number of businesses have been relocated out of Bridgetown and have gone into suburban areas. I believe that we have a lot of land in the St. George area that can be best suited for commercial entities and indeed for housing. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has pointed out that we have acquired land for commercial ventures and not for residential purposes. Sir, this is not true, for over the last ten years, this Government has acquired hundreds of acres of land, including land in the Six Roads area, on which to put houses.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that we are doing the

job which the people have sent us to do. People are acquiring lands and are building. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West will have to point out the reason why so many people are building, that cement has gone scarce. It certainly means that people are building on the lots that they have bought, to develop themselves over time. Sir, there is also a shortage of carpenters and masons, which is due to the building boom.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to point out that the Ministry of Public Works continues to spend large sums of money on improving the infrastructure and drainage systems around the immediate environs of Kensington Oval, and that this year we have spent over \$10 million in

that regard. We will look at the refurbishment of the Town Hall, Holburn Circle, via Fontabelle. That entire stretch will be reconstructed with footpaths. There will also be resurfacing and improvement of drainage. In addition, a number of other areas stretching from Tudor Bridge to Spooner's Hill, to Long Gap; from Westbury Road to Eagle Hall, via Barbarees Hill; Kensington New Road; Mason Hall Street to Lakes Folly will be done. Sir, these are all planned areas, which were discussed during the Estimates.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke today about drainage and about the problems that the residents in New Orleans are experiencing. Sir, if the Honourable Member would recall, in 2001, the Barbados Government had a study done through the Urban Development Commission by CASSE Engineering Corporation. This study is called the Urban Development Commission's Study for New Orleans Drainage Systems.

Sir, the report points out that the flooding is attributed to five main factors. It speaks to the low-lying nature of the New Orleans and its environs and to the associated high water table of New Orleans.

H:No.65(26)320 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. G. A. CLARKE:

Mr. Speaker, it speaks to the presence of slow draining clay soils, lack of well-defined localised draining system, the inadequate sizes of drains within the existing drainage network and the sub-optimal operation of the existing draining pumping plant and the need for better catchment outlets.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this study has recognised that five things need to be done in the New Orleans area. Government has put in place a programme to alleviate flooding within the area. Sir, presently, the pump house is used to pump water from a low-lying area at New Orleans out to sea. The water flows into a well with a sump and the Ministry employs well-contractors to clean out the residue from the well.

This is done on a daily basis, an operator is assigned to the pump house and the Drainage Unit takes the necessary precaution on a daily basis in order to upgrade the drainage in this area. The problem is because New Orleans is a low-lying area and the clay soil retains a lot of water in the catchment area. Mr. Deputy Speaker, a lot of drainage must be done in the New Orleans, Kensington area. We will continue to implement the study done by Casse Engineering, which was recommended since 2001 which I will make a document of the House. Sir, over the next month, we will meet with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Transformation and the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment in order to look at a comprehensive way of how we should dispose of the water within the catchment area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to do a lot of work and this Government is committed to making this area satisfactory not only for residents or tourists but for Barbados as a whole. Sir, we recognise that a lot must be done at this time. We also recognise that we have to fast-track many of our programmes within the Drainage Unit because we expect to have heavy rainfalls this year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I speak, workmen from the Drainage Unit are doing their job on an ongoing basis. We must understand that sometimes the drains are clean but the debris is

sometimes washed but into the drains. We have to appeal to community groups, political groups, CERO and the various organisations across Barbados to get involved in clearing culverts if they are blocked. This used to be the practice in the past where residents and owners of plantations employed persons to clean around them but it is not happening now.

Sir, throughout the country there are plantations which are not operating so there are no workers to help clean drains and culverts and a number of wells become blocked up over time. We have over 300 wells in Barbados but it is unlikely that all 300 would be cleaned in one year. Despite the fact that work is ongoing, the public needs to be involved and over the next week, we will launch a number of public programme sensitising the public to the awareness of flooding and the problems that can arise because of neglect of wells and drainage which exist on a number of properties which belong to persons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government is on record for putting millions of dollars annually into drainage and into how we correct the drainage problem that exists in this country. I have no fear in terms of what we are doing. The Opposition must also encourage their supporters to do likewise and to put a system in place where they can help themselves. Sir, Barbadians can feel free that we are doing the correct thing in helping to curb the drainage problem which now exists in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Honourable Members complain about flooding in their area but sometimes it rains for one day and the water runs off so I do not think that flooding is a big problem. We would like to minimise it as much as possible but I do not think the problem of flooding is as acute as in other countries. There was flooding recently in Guyana and the water remained on the land for at least a week but in Barbados, the water remains on our road

for one day or so. I believe we are doing a good job but we must do more in order to help with the problem. Sir, Government spends millions every year to deal with this situation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the residents who are being relocated from this venue would be in a better position. Sir, the Government always sets out to put people in a better position, it never sets out to put people in a worse position. The residents who were relocated from Church Village and from Murphy's Pasture and New Orleans and you would find that they are in a better position.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when Kensington Oval is redeveloped and we go there to witness the World Cup 2007, we will be glad that we were able to come up with a comprehensive programme to make this country better. We can do this only if we get the cooperation of all concerned. I want to appeal to all members to cooperate and encourage those persons in the area who own businesses to move as quickly as possible. Sir, Government will do whatever it can to ensure that World Cup 2007 is a success. This can be done with the help of all concerned.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to thank the Minister of Housing for bringing this legislation and encourage all civil servants and technicians to work hard, put our hearts and minds in this programme to make it better for our country.

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

Mr. R.D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, two weeks I said that I would not have supported any issue relative to housing and lands in Barbados.

Sequence 27

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of... Mr. R.D. JONES: Sir, I said that I would not support any issue relative to housing and lands in Barbados. Mr. Deputy Speaker, even though I am of that same mind, this particular issue changed my mind. Of course, recognising the dynamic nature of human life and the various decisions must make from time to time. I do not mind supporting Resolution which is before this Honourable House. Therefore, at the outset I support the provision for the reestablishment for this particular business at Lower Estate.

Sir, many Barbadians feel coerced or manipulated if one takes a contrary view, relative to the Redevelopment of Kensington Oval, one might even be accused of disloyalty or treachery. We know that if you are accused of being a traitor, your head could be placed upon the block. Maybe the smile from the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, presumes that the release of the guillotine might be in order, but I do not know if the Honourable Member is bent in that direction.

Sir, one gets the feeling that if one does not support this particular project, regardless of one's concerns, realising the nature of cricket is the blood of Barbadians, one can stand accused of disloyalty. Sir, Caribbean countries hosting World Cup 2007 will experience numerous challenges.

Sir, as a small regional economy with severe economic problems, we will be pressured to realise maximum benefits as we move to ensure that the facilities are in place to deal with the massive movement of people from the other

cricketing nations of the world, particularly here in Barbados where we will be hosting the finals. May be, coming out of England we would get a successful team to oppose a resurgent West Indies team.

I am hoping that within a year we would be able to fix whatever difficulties that the West Indies team might have and we would be able to play England, because one recognises the historical trend that when England or Australia comes to this part of the world, there is a massive movement of people to this region. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South would smile because every hotel room at present and those to be built in the future would be occupied.

Sir, I am familiar with this company because it was part of a family tree. Football benefited from liaison support and sponsorship from the company as it existed then. It provided a product by Smith Beecham Kline which was preferred by footballers in Barbados.

I believe that we have as a Parliament a duty to facilitate businesses and I also believe that as a Parliament we have to facilitate those small businesses, the residents and those who will be affected by the redevelopment of Kensington Oval, the historic ground for the playing of cricket. Sir, Kensington Oval holds a very strong nostalgic, historic, cultural attraction for many people. I do not want this Parliament to stand accused of acting with expediency or with some kind of accelerated delivery relative to large business, but procrastinate when it comes to the redeployment of residents and small businesses if they have agreed with the proposed terms. Maybe, they might be better served if they moved to the second option provided for them. Sir, persons have to make judgements relative to their own comfort and safety.

Of course, there have been instances in this

country where Government has become involved in the relocation of persons because of expansion of facilities, for example, the Airport Expansion Project. I know that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East still receives complaints from persons in that area that, after, maybe ten years, they are still wallowing in the land of the unknown relative to their relocation or when they would be given keys to homes. Sir, work has progressed but there are still some areas of concern.

I hope that I do not stand accused of not having knowledge of that part of the world because I spent most of my life watching planes as they turn around at the end of the runway of the Grantley Adams International Airport, former Seawell international Airport. In fact, I live within throwing distance of a plane's flight path. I have great knowledge of that area. My family owned small lots of land within that area, hence my familiarity. Sir, I do not speak for my family only, I speak for all persons involved in that particular exercise.

Therefore, I want to encourage the National Housing Corporation and the personnel of the Airport Expansion Project to do what is necessary to move with some alacrity to resite residents, whatever residual burdens still rest in the hearts of those residents, because ten years is a long time for those residents not to be comfortable in their relocations to Fairy Valley, Lead Vale or wherever they have to be relocated.

I hope that those persons who reside around Kensington Oval would not find themselves in no-man's land. Sir, cricket might be seen as the lifeblood of West Indian people but where there is disruption of domestic businesses, the Government should provide urgent assistance to ensure that their businesses are established. We would not want to see the continuation of complaints across Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one gets the feeling that when it comes to settling the grievances of persons, who I believe are poor and might not have the kind of academic or intellectual background of others, they could obfuscate the facts and issues relative to the settling of these matters. Or the persons dealing with them could speak to residents in duplicitous ways, confusing them. They are forced to seek the services of lawyers, who by their mandate can be expensive. H65: 15.40 p.m.

Sequence 28

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

House 65, sequence 29, 5:40 p.m.

Continuation of Mr. R.D. JONES:

I have two colleagues on This Side who are lawyers and I do not really have a lot of legal matters to deal with but one understands the legal parameters relative to this, Sir. Therefore, we have to ensure that as a Parliament people are comfortable.

Sir, we do not want to stand accused of standing in the way of rational development because we have had what some people would call irrational development. I would not want to identify at this stage, some aspects of this irrational development.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East would know about some of this irrational development. The Honourable Member for St. James South would know, more than anybody else, about this form of irrational development we have had in Barbados which becomes a burden on the State and the people.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas

would not necessarily be familiar with any form of this irrational development, and I would not join any person in saying that about my colleague. In fact, I believe when we deal with another matter, I will address the surprise which she will get, relative to matters in Rock Hall but that is another issue. Therefore, I would leave her out of any verbal surprise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this matter.

Asides.

Mr. R.D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this country today, there are two many persons who believe that Parliament is not serving their best interest. Those are persons who have had their lands compulsorily acquired and today cannot get one penny, after many years. These persons, Sir, do not know me from Tom Hill or John Skeete, but as I walk or ride the streets, they would complain about the Government.

I am talking about Government as a generic entity because I do not come in here and split hairs about a Barbados Labour Party Government or Democratic Labour Party Government because at the end of the day when Parliament passes laws to compulsorily acquire people's land, I do not care what hat you wear. Sir, for too long, many people have been suffering in this country because the big and mighty rod of the Government comes down on them and they are dispossessed or disenfranchised. It looks as though their lands were stolen by the Government and it must stop.

Sir, people must not feel this way and I am therefore appealing to whoever can make sure that all of those persons who feel aggrieved and those who went to the Ombudsman - even though he might not have to deal with that but I believe he has to - complaining about the Government taking away their lands, have been compensated.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know how our people speak and I would not want to slip into the vernacular by saying, 'dey tek way muh land' but, Sir, the Government compulsorily acquired the properties of people and they are kept suffering for years, as a result of Parliamentary action and decision.

In this instance, there is the reverse. The Government is selling the people's land. The Government owns nothing even though some of the Honourable Members on That Side believe that they own everything but in the fullness of time when one of the best funeral homes will have to come and cart their bodies away - I would not say it carries in the name of Jones - they will realise, the Honourable Member for St. George South, that they own nothing. All fifthly lucre at the end of the day.

Sir, those who trample on people with loud and aggressive tones and voices those who would want to mistreat people in trying to acquire a piece of land or a house, either burnt or not burnt will be dealt with in the fullness of time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by the Lord Almighty because he looks and he watches.

I am saying that this is a reversal because the Government is selling, Mr. Deputy Speaker, land owned by the people to Armstrong Agencies Limited to continue to employ Barbadians, and continue to deal with whatever products they deal with and that is a facilitatory exercise. I have no complaints relative to that and if the Government and all of the persons who sit and estimate the value of land believe that they got a good price for the selling of Lower Estate to Armstrong Agencies and they are satisfied, I am also satisfied.

I really do not walk about and check the cost of land because I might never be able, as a poor Barbadian to own any piece of land. I have to rely on antecedents, historically past from generation to generation. I thank God for the

Panama money. I see the Honourable Member for St. John looking at me relative to these things. Maybe he knows things that I do not know. Sir, you know that lawyers do searches and even though I have been seeking to recruit the services of the Honourable Member for St. George South on another matter, I have been unsuccessful thus far but I will return to that matter if it raises its ugly head. I hope that he would come to my assistance and would not let it be a true or permanent divide.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the facilitation is important to ensure that there is minimal disruption in the earning capacity of persons who are employed there, and for persons who will make a profit because that is how the Protestant ethic operates within domain of the Christian world. Therefore, that is important but do not let us reduce to nonsense or to nothingness, which is the position being adopted by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

It would have been good if at the end of this exercise moving up to the World Cup 2007 that Barbados would have been able to boast of two substantial cricket grounds. They are Windward and North Stars, which are not yet substantial cricket grounds. Kensington Oval is our substantial cricket ground and there is nothing wrong in developing or redeveloping Kensington Oval but if we do not look even further - in St. Philip or St. Lucy because I have connections to both areas - to have another substantial facility then, we would be shortsighted as a people or as a Parliament.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would also want to say that if we are so shortsighted as to believe that we should not have a dedicated football stadium, then we would also be shortsighted. I am speaking to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East who currently carries the portfolio of the Minister of Sports. I am specifically speaking and I know that all of the

Honourable Members who are Sitting will carry the message to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

House 65, sequence 29, 15:5014

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Mr. R. D. JONES:

Sir, when the Minister of Sports brings before his Cabinet or whoever meets on these things, he would say that football is a growing sports. In fact, football is the largest sports right now in Barbados and across the world. When Arsenal, the team in England that I support, defeated Manchester United, the team that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East supports, there were 60 000 people in a stand and millions more across the world were watching the game. Therefore, there is value in the money which flows from that sport, and if we do not tap into this sport we will be shortsighted.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to ask the Honourable Member for Christ Church East to ask the Honourable Prime Minister to remove any prejudice, if there is any prejudice which he might carry in his bosom, relative to football so as to assist in ensuring that we have a dedicated stadium. This will make the Minister of Tourism extremely pleased because something like that is close to his heart. Therefore, when he sits in Cabinet he will support such an issue as well as the Honourable Member for St. Philip South who goes to football.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. John, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, support the sport and give of their presence, but I have not seen any of the others.

The Honourable Deputy Speaker has been one of the longest serving presidents of a football club in Barbados. I am told that they do not even hold elections because they do not want to change him, I do not know about that.

Sir, when it comes to a land use policy, what should be used for commercial development, for housing development, for agricultural purposes, both backyard farming, small farming and commercial farming, and sporting endeavours, we must have a happy mix. At the end of the day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all persons must feel satisfied that the Government and the Parliament have done them justice, that they can sleep at night, that they can serve their God with some passion and commitment, that they can go to cricket and sit comfortably even though they might imbibe gallons of favourably produced and possibly the best rum produced anywhere in the world, I do to care what brand name it carries, and that when they go to football and they do whatever they do that they are comfortable in their minds. This must be the journey of our Parliament and the political representatives of the people.

Therefore, let us act in the best interest of all of our people whether they are poor, whether they are rich as the Honourable Member for St. James Central is, whether they are large businessmen or small business people like the lady who drives here Suzuki van to sell from the back of it, whether they are yellow, brown, pink or white or whatever nationality they are, once they are Barbadians. Sir, we must ensure that at the end of the day the playing field is level and that persons feel satisfied that justice has been done on their behalf so that they would not have to be running to the newspapers and publishing things that are obviously not true, in order to prove a point or for that matter facts which might be true to prove their own point, only to be contradicted in the fullness of time as a result of their own particular actions.

I recognise prejudice, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I see it every day, I read about it and I hear about it. Sir, until we reduce in ourselves and in our minds the extent of our prejudices, then we are going to have difficulties.

With those few words, just like all the others on this side who have spoken, I support this Resolution even though I am on another journey with another matter.

Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wind up now after considerable debate from several members on both sides. I would attempt during the course of my winding up to reply to some of the matters which have been raised on both sides and therefore left at large, in the hope that I could give some clarity to some of the issues raised. I know however that there are those amongst us, particularly on the other side, who resist clarity and truth preferring obfuscation in all forms.

Sir, I start therefore at the issue raised relative to price. It was suggested by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that the price being proposed to be paid by the private sector entities for Crown lands at Lower Estate was uncharacteristically low given prevailing market prices. Sir, he did not express it so well, but as one of those who have had the painful duty of listening to him for the last many years, I was able after much effort to deduce what it is he attempts to say, and in this case the quarrel was to price.

Sir, as I indicated during the course of my initial comments, the price is set by the Commissioner of Land Tax and it is by that the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment is guided. Sir, I am informed that the pricing of the lot at Lower Estate was set in the way that it is because Lower Estate has extremely challenging foundations, it is an unserviced lot and no water or electricity is at

the location. Sir, although it is already designated for industrial use, it is not already in commercial use with full sites and services. Therefore, those considerations influenced the price that a purchaser would pay for lands.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, an Honourable Member on the other side sought to draw an unfavourable comparison or a comparison of unfavourable pricing vis-à-vis what the private sector was paying for the lands to be purchased at Lower Estate and what Government paid at Fontabelle with Government having paid the higher price for the land.

Sir, the Government does not pander to the interest of big businesses as was suggested. The fact, as I indicated, is that the lot at Lower Estate will need very deep foundations, there are no water or electricity services and no property is on it, whereas the land at Fontabelle already has sites and services with water and electricity, a good road infrastructure, is already in commercial and industrial use and structures are on the land. Therefore, of necessity, that land had to attract a higher valuation than the land at Lower Estate. There is no mystery to it. There is no deceit implicit in the methodology. It is a very clear, transparent and open thing which can be well-reasoned and justified. Sir, that is the explanation, though I know that there are Honourable Members on the other side who, either in their innocence or otherwise, would resist and reject the explanation given.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, much was made of the use of private treaty versus compulsory acquisition. Where Government is attempting to buy large parcels of land or multiple parcels of land for public purposes, invariably the process used is compulsory acquisition, but the landowner is not disadvantaged over the price they are given for their property. You go by private treaty where the landowner is immediately amendable to a sale and you can

negotiate between you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was the case with four commercial properties at Bridgetown as opposed to the 20 households at Pickwick who could not decide among themselves if they wanted the land acquired because several of them were saying they do not want to sell and then there was a question of whether they were going to go to Barbarees Hill. Some people wanted to go to Barbarees Hill, others were not, some wanted money, others wanted houses and some wanted land.

House 65 Sequence 30

4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the face of that kind of uncertainty and confusion, we had to go by the compulsory acquisition route, but whichever route is taken, this Parliament has to be told how much money is being spent on an acquisition. Sir, whether it is done by private treaty or by compulsory acquisition, Parliament has to approve the sums which are negotiated and the sums that are finally spent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in relation to the Barbarees Gardens Project, Parliament had to approve the Seale's property which was done by private treaty. When the negotiations broke down, when we could not agree on a price and had to pay a higher price, we had to come back to Parliament for Parliamentary approval of that sum.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no difference in the valuation that a property owner will get. In

other words, the suggestion by the Opposition that if one uses private treaty, one would get more money, and if one uses private acquisition, one would somehow be robbed. Sir, this is really false.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been in politics for 11 years, having been duly elected by the people of St. James South, and each time with a four figure-plus majority. Therefore, I want to thank the people of St. James South for reposing confidence in me. Sir, as a policy-maker, there are things that one starts to see over time, and I worry when I see politicians set up things that they know to be false, in order to make a political point. Today I heard an Honourable Member suggesting that compulsory acquisition was being used to rob and to unfair poor people. In fact, the compulsory acquisition tool is one which was used by respective administrations over time. It is a legitimate tool for the pursuit and acquisition of property for public purpose, which is to benefit the wider society or a community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the compulsory acquisition process in a legitimate one which does not rob anybody and I am deeply disappointed, though not surprised, at the route taken by the Honourable Member, who sought to make his point in that way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have heard allegations in this Parliament that there are no gangs in Barbados, only for that to come back and haunt the speaker of that remark. I am going to suggest that the Honourable Member who was today seeking to malign the use of compulsory acquisition, would find that when they come to Government, a long time from now, when nobody trusts the compulsorily acquisition process and people feel that they are being robbed, they would have themselves to blame.

Sir, we must be very careful how we seek to

ascribe impropriety and unreasonable actions to administrations, in pursuit of making small and cheap political points.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West and interim Leader of the Opposition, during the course of his remarks, spoke at length to the redevelopment of Bridgetown. He spoke first about drainage. Sir, this administration has a proud record in the development of Bridgetown. It was this administration that set up a Drainage Unit and has been systematically going island-wide, whether it is to deal with problems in the north, the south, or in the City.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West can speak to the fact that for generations there have been drainage problems at Headleys Land. He can speak to the fact that this problem was resolved by the work of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, when he was Minister of Public Works.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I lived in the City on Baxters Road and I know of the consequences of heavy flooding. I remember when I had to write an essay at school on the flood of October, 1970. Sir, I remember standing upstairs my parents' business, where we were resident and seeing fishermen in boats and in moses. They were rowing through Baxters Road, which was so inundated with water that one could not have walked, and were rescuing people and little children from their homes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, though Bridgetown continues to be below sea level and we still have floodings, due to the work of the Drainage Unit, those floodings are no longer as severe, but it is a problem which we have to continue to tackle at the policy level and also at the level of getting people in Barbados to understand what are they responsibility, in not contributing to the drainage problem.

Sir, people dump all kinds of things in the drainage system, waterways and watercourses. People are even building on watercourses without the necessary permission, and with very serious consequences for those who live down course of that water course or the water way. It is a problem that we have at Durants Village and I have written numerous letters to the Honourable Member for St. George North and his predecessors and will persist in this regard, in seeking to have that drainage problem addressed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, equally, much of the high quality housing, whether it is at Ponside, Kensington Lodge, or London Bourne Towers, was put in City, and there has been much upgrade of housing by this administration. Sir, at this time no public announcements have been made, and I do not believe that this has been made public before, but we are negotiating with the Inter-American Development Bank for what is called a neighbourhood upgrading programme. As pilot areas, we have identified the Garden Land, which is not far from the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment, lands in the City and lands in St. Thomas, above Allen View, as being appropriate for that upgrading.

Sir,, this upgrading programme will involve the construction of footpaths along walkways which are traditionally used but which are muddy and of poor quality. It will involve the construction of roads, even if there are only small community roads, which will allow at least one vehicle at a time. It will include the construction of property housing the improvement of homes, loans and grants for home improvement to people who are poor and in need, for the upgrading of their homes. It will include the construction of terrace units to give better quality rental accommodation than currently exists because in the City, St. Michael East and St. Michael West, have some of the worst rental accommodation anywhere in

Barbados, resulting with many people being exploited and made to live in substandard housing conditions. There will also be a massive redevelopment programme on the cards.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is this administration which has built new bus stands and new ZR stands in the City, at Lower Green and at Harbour Road. This administration has also upgraded the Public Markets in Bridgetown. Therefore, when the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West said that we are not dealing with the people, all of this redevelopment has been to improve the quality of life to all Barbadians, to give people new micro business opportunities, to cause them to work in better physical conditions, and to ensure that people have the best quality housing available to them.

H:No.65(31)410 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD:

and to ensure that people have the best quality housing available to them. Equally, we are not going to the next step. We have the boardwalk at Bridgetown. We are going to do the necessary work on the bridges. We started the redevelopment of Queens Park. Jubilee Gardens would be redeveloped with the help of the private sector. Pelican Park and the handicraft area has been upgraded, refurbished and new business opportunities given to individuals. Government has sought not only to deal with the environmental component of redevelopment but with the physical component and the social and economic component of the redevelopment of Bridgetown.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Bridgetown is a different looking place. There are less derelict looking building and less decrepit housing. It is a much improved place to what it was ten or eleven years ago. Sir, a lot of it has been done with public funding and some of it through cooperation with the private sector.

I cannot speak to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who insist that Kensington Oval should be relocated and that we should build an airport in St. Lucy. There is no response to illogic, Sir. The reality is that Kensington Oval is one of the international meccas of cricket. One equates Kensington Oval with Lord's. I do not think there is another ground anywhere else in the world that has the history, quality, character or excites in people, who are interested in cricket, the kind of nostalgia that the name of Kensington excites. It would be a tremendous error and misjudgement to move to another location for an event like the World Cup.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people are not just coming to be part of the World Cup but to see Kensington Oval and to savour the heritage of it. This is why it was such a tremendous social and spiritual blow when we were defeated by the British at Kensington in the way we were last year. The humiliation was felt at a level that was almost impossible to describe if one does not understand what Kensington Oval means as part of the stand against colonisation, the way we were able to learn the game of the colonisers, beat them at it and humble them at Kensington Oval. Then to be forced to our knees and have a hat trick by a less than first-class bowler in less than five minutes during the English match last year is something of great shame.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reality is that Kensington Oval is part of the World Cup. We can have a practice field and in this regard I have

to say that there are two fields in the constituency of St. James South at Holders Hill and the Melbourne Ground between Oxnards and Haynesville which are also two historic grounds and of tremendous qualities which would be appropriate to use as practise fields in the runup to the World Cup because both of those fields would have been the nurturing grounds for people like Desmond Haynes, Gordon Greenidge and Franklyn Stevenson who now knows to stick to cricket and forget politics, Tino Best, Courtney Browne and several others who I could mention. Sir, this would be a drawing-card particularly having the pavilion and areas of one of those grounds named after Desmond Haynes who is very much a cricketing hero and a politically prudent individual.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the whole relocation process is being driven not as the Opposition would suggest by the desire to make rich people richer but by the fact that there is a timetable for the development of Kensington Oval which the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment must feed into. Sir, we cannot disrupt that timetable but must facilitate it. Every attempt would be made to ensure that the event can come off on schedule and without hitches insofar as we should contribute to that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I close on what I think was perhaps the point of importance made today in all the speeches made by members on the other side. Two points only emerge. Sir, between them they spoke for two-and-a half to three hours and the sum total of those speeches were two points. Each of them would have made a quarter point if it were divided in that way. Both points were made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North and he is to be congratulated. The Honourable Member said that people have been whipped up into getting excited about the World Cup and rightly so.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a call for increase accommodation which is clearly needed and people are being encouraged to build, add on and develop housing which can become part of the accommodation for World Cup. This is legitimate and important but we have to do serious long-term planning in respect of the rental accommodation with which we would be left after the World Cup is over. While we anticipate that tourism arrivals would increase and some of this accommodation would be needed, a lot of building which is taking place out of hotels and guest houses may not be used after. I do not know how people will recoup the expenditure that they have made in putting up all these building.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, presently, real estate agencies tell you that the rental market in Barbados is 'soft'. It is not a good rental market at this time. If we build all this additional accommodation, many of these places, post World Cup 2007 are going to be vacant. If you do a cost-benefit analysis, it may not benefit people to put up a lot of new accommodation. If you add on a room to your house which you are going to use after World Cup 2007 or if you can upgrade your existing property in a way to get the additional income and give you the revenue and create the space, that would be fine.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am concerned about people who might be left stuck with space for which they have to pay mortgages or loans and after World Cup 2007 there is going to be no rental for them. Sir, it is a legitimate point even though the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West did not articulate in that way but he made the point which I took.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would also like to suggest that even as I say that, implicit in my saying so is an opportunity for business people.....

H65/16:20

Sequence 32

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of... Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-MCDOWALD: ...but this would come to bigger business as opposed to micro business.

Sir, I would like to suggest that there are persons who may be contemplating constructing apartment-type accommodation, multi-family dwellings or detached units, but persons should consider getting involved in an arrangement with the Ministry of Housing. Since this accommodation will come on stream in time for the World Cup, they will make a 'burst' of money using it for short-term rentals they then can be purchased by the Ministry of Housing for sale to persons who are on the waiting list for housing. Of course, prices should range within our housing products on the market.

I am saying to persons, build apartments, for the high short-term revenues to be generated by World Cup 2007 but make an arrangement with the Ministry of Housing so that by post-World Cup you can recoup your investment immediately by selling to us so as to accommodate persons on our housing list. Sir, I throw out the suggestion. I know that people will create opportunities for families and friends getting together to see how they can maximise their investment at that time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the second point relative to World Cup which was made by the

Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, with which I concur, is that I believe that if Barbados is to benefit, not only from showing-off its organisational ability to effectively host an event of international proportions like the World Cup but we have to ensure that the whole society benefits from World Cup.

For instance, I am anxious to see the Ministry of Tourism take this opportunity to encourage hotels and restaurants to put more local produce on their menus. We should start serving more Black Belly lamb in restaurants rather than lamb from New Zealand. Although lamb is one of my favourite meats. I am embarrassed when I go to a restaurant and people boast of having New Zealand lamb on their menu, when we have Black Belly lamb, which is of excellent quality.

Sir, some boy or girl can make money by raising sheep to create lamb for the table. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I go to restaurants in the Eastern Caribbean where, at breakfast you are served bakes, salt fish and a variety of local juices. Every week in Parliament we have access to local juices. Today we had gooseberry drink but you cannot go into restaurants in Barbados and ask for a glass of fresh passion fruit, gooseberry, tamarind juice or juice made from any local fruit or vegetable. You can get local fruit juices in Latin American. It is time for us to create a new market for products like those because there are people who may not be able to extend their homes for World Cup but they can grow additional foods, fruits or things that can be used in hotels and vendors. We have to look at a multiplicity of strategies to ensure that World Cup is not just talked about but it reaches all individuals in society who will benefit from our hosting an event like this.

Sir, the lady in Oxnards, the gentleman from Redmans Village, the young boy who is,

perhaps, at this time coming home from school to go to Spa Hill, St. Joseph, residents in Jackman and the average Barbadian can look back on the World Cup and feel a sense of pride, not only because Barbados hosted it and did well, but that they benefited from being a Barbadian at the time and their economic fortunes made a turn, they were able to seize a business opportunity and their family became entrepreneurs. That is what we need to do to ensure that it is not only the importers of goods and vehicles but that average Barbadians benefit from World Cup. That is the big challenge.

Sir, the smaller challenge is to have the Ministry of Housing Lands and Environment make available those lands, resources, acquisitions and sales necessary to facilitate the redevelopment of Kensington and in that regard we are entirely on stream and very much in progress.

Sir, with these words, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: I beg to second that.

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

ORDER NO. 6

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225 THE LEASE TO AVISENE CAESARETTA CARRINGTON OF THE PARCEL OF LAND THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN SITUATE AT ERDISTON, PINE HILL IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PROVISION OF PLAYGROUND FACILITIES FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE MERRIVALE

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: the Honourable Member for St. James South.

Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-MCDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are four Resolutions standing in my name on today's Order Paper. We did one and this is the second one. Sir, it is 4.30 p.m. and I do not know how much debate we will have on this but the other two Resolutions will be debated next week. This will be the final housing debate for the day and two more will be debated next. They will relate to the Cultural and Heritage Development at Rock hall, St. Thomas and the vesting of lands at Airlie Heights, Cave Hill for the Primary Homes Programmes.

Asides

Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-MCDOWALD: Did I say Airlie Heights, St. Thomas? The Honourable Member for St. Lucy once moved Bulkeley from St. George. Those of us who were here for a long time would remember that and it appears that I have now moved Airlie Heights from St. Michael to St. Thomas. There has been no such relocation. Airlie Heights is still very much in St. Michael.

Sir, the lands which form part of this Resolution is 2 192.3 square meters or approximately 20 000 square feet which Government proposes to lease by way of a three-year period to Mrs. Avisene Carrington who has long and well-led the Merrivale preparatory School. This school is perhaps an icon in the history of this country among private schools. It has an excellent teaching reputation. It is one of the schools that people aspire to send their children. In fact, it is one of the schools from which children tend to receive good Eleven-Plus results. More important, with the Eleven-Plus examinations just completed we tend to focus on the results. My nephew sat the Eleven-Plus examination and he

said the child who sat next to him was so overwhelmed that he had horrible projectile vomiting and was very sick during the course of the exam.

H65: 16.30 p.m.

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House 65, sequence 34, 4:30 p.m.

Continuation of Hon. Mrs. H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD:

Sir, we focus on the Eleven-Plus but Merrivale has considered that it has a broader responsibility. It does not just teach children to pass the Eleven-Plus which is now the focus of many school activities, but has long focussed on having well-rounded, well-educated persons who love learning, have enquiring minds and a love of research.

In fact, that is what education is about that you learn as much of possible about a range of subjects, that you have an enquiring and lively mind, and that you have a desire to do research to gain more knowledge and you have a love of learning and knowledge in themselves, more so than for the fact that if you learn well, you can get a degree and earn more money, or if you learn well, you can pass the Eleven-Plus and so on.

It is proposed, Sir, that the land which is what has become to be known as landlocked, is a parcel of land that because of its location, is accessible to Merrivale but not to other properties or to persons outside of that areas. Therefore, it has that peculiar characteristic in relation to its geographical location, which gives it special value to the school but

diminishes its accessibility and value to its owners and to persons outside of the Carrington property that adjoin the Crown lands.

Merrivale, therefore, is proposing to use the land and, in fact has used the lands in the past, as a playing area for its children. It is proposed after negotiations with them that:

1.The lease would be for a period of three years.

2.Either party to the lease can break it by giving six months notice to the other but this option cannot be exercised before the expiration of the second year of the lease, so we have to give them a minimum period of two years.

3.The lease should contain an option to renew for a further period to be agreed between the parties, the lessors and lessees.

4.The rent should be \$2 360 per annum plus Vat. You would realise, Sir, that the rent is not prohibitive because it is given to an educational institution and could be regarded as almost peppercorn.

5.The rent is subject to a review at the end of the third year of the lease period.

6.The lessees will have exclusive use to it during that time and will be responsible for the payment of land taxes and all other outgoings.

7.It is a condition of the lease that no permanent structure should be constructed on the land under lease and that the tenant must maintain the lands in proper condition at all times. It must be clean and tidy, well-covered and so on.

As you are aware, Sir, the Crown Land (Vesting and Disposal) Act stipulates that the Minister may, with the approval of Parliament,

sell, lease, exchange, grant, assign or surrender any parcel of land belonging to the Crown and it is therefore in pursuit of the provisions of this section that we come to Parliament on this occasion, seeking the approval of the Parliament for the exercise of the Minister's statutory prerogative.

There is a Resolution relating to this matter which is in the hands of all Honourable Members and they are in a position therefore to see that the lands are, as I have described them, landlocked, and accessible primarily to this school but not to others, Sir.

In any event, Sir, it has been the practice of Government and by Government I mean successive administrations, to time to give support to schools from time to time, whether Government schools or private schools to facilitate activities of this sort. We know that all schools must have a playground, however small, so that the children can run around and play games and have recreational and social activity.

Sir, these are the facts which I put before the Chamber and I imagine that there may be some comment from Honourable Members.

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

Mr. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the Honourable Member for St. James South indicated, it has been the policy of successive Governments to make this land available to the Merrivale Preparatory School for use as a play area. It is only 2 192.3 square meters. This is about a half acre but I can say that I know it would be appreciated by the pupils at Merrivale.

I can speak from a position of knowledge here and before I make that point, I suppose on behalf of the Honourable Member for St.

Michael North East, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and all other graduates of Merrivale Preparatory outside of this Chamber, I should thank the Honourable Member for St. James South for so graciously describing the graduates and the skills we possess. I thank her for those very kind words.

Asides.

Mr. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in all seriousness having said that, the one thing that the school lacks, certainly thirty years ago when I was a student there, was an adequate playing area. In fact, I daresay, Sir, had Roland Holder not transferred to another Primary School, that we may not have discovered that cricket talent because he certainly could not have pursued it at Merrivale.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that the 2 000 square meters would be greatly appreciated. I assume it is in an area at the back. I have not been there for many years. Certainly, the last time I went there, I was only in the front. The area involved is landlocked and, again, it should serve as an opportunity for, especially young boys, a chance to run around, frolic, play and so on, Sir.

Sir, what many Honourable Members may not realise is that Mrs. Carrington actually lives at the site. It is a very limited site with nearly 200 students and a full residence actually, is there. Therefore, it is necessary, I believe for now, that we provide this opportunity for the land to be leased to Mrs. Carrington.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, having said that, I would sincerely hope that this Government would recognise the value, perhaps, in encouraging the Merrivale Preparatory School and maybe other schools in that general area, to relocate to other more spacious locations, outside of that urban corridor which is clearly a little congested.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, apart from the Merrivale Preparatory on Pine Road, and St. Michael School which is almost on the bottom at Belleville, if you want to look at it from the top and bottom of Belleville, there are a number of nursery schools and preschools in that area. I mean probably close to ten and I could probably name a half dozen without even thinking, We Care, First Class, Head Start and, of course, the old St. Gabriel's property around the corner, which is used also as a day care institution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a lot of activity going into Belleville, apart from its increased use for commercial activity. These schools, Sir, perhaps should be encouraged to relocate to areas where they can have premises more suitable for the complete development of our young people, in terms of their physical education and, of course, being sensitive to our environmental considerations.

House 65, sequence 34, 16:4014

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Continuation of Mr. R. L. SEALY:

Sir, for example, the People's Cathedral Primary School which is a couple hundreds yards from the site we are looking at in this Resolution, the Merrivale Preparatory site, is planning to move to a compound which is several acres in the St. David's area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you would know, I suspect that funding may not be as much an issue for the People's Cathedral Primary School as it may be for some of the other schools. The church is well-subscribed and no doubt would be endowed through the various fund-raising efforts and tithing and so on,

therefore they can look at these options. Several of these small schools, like Merrivale Preparatory where the Principal is literally the principal in every sense of the word where everything revolves around one individual, are not necessarily able to raise funds to relocate to these other sites. Therefore, I believe that there may be a role for Government to get involved in such initiatives. I see no reason why it cannot be looked upon as a developmental initiative. FundAcess and those other institutions that provide funding for other industrial development initiatives could look at this perhaps as something along those lines.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is nothing wrong with looking at the development of our skills or with developing a stronger primary school network where there is not only the public sector schools but also these private sector schools that have done yeomen service for Barbados over the years. In fact, when one looks at the potential in terms of boarding and that type of thing there is a very real opportunity for foreign exchange to be earned if the value of schools along these lines can be looked at from that perspective.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is another reality. I have already touched on the traffic situation. The Belleville area is sandwiched between perhaps the two busiest highways in Barbados, Highway 5 and Highway 6. Highway 6 is adjacent to the Collymore Rock corner which has recently become a hub for business activity in Barbados. Mr. Deputy Speaker, since the Ministry is already grappling with ways and means of handling traffic congestion particularly in that whole area they could look favourably again at encouraging these schools.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of traffic Barbados is a different country when the schools are out on vacation. One does not recognise Barbados when the schools are on vacation, therefore I am merely suggesting that

while it is nice to rent the land to Mrs. Carrington for now, that in terms of our development of a future national physical development plan, we should look at moving some of the schools out of that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, attempts to deal with the traffic congestion in Belleville have met with mixed results. I heard the President of the Chambers of Commerce - I did not ask for permission to call his name but we all know to whom I am referring, whose office is located in Belleville - lamenting the fact that a consultative process that was established by Government apparently was not used in order to devise those traffic plans. Those are his words, I am not sure if that is the case.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I would say is that clearly there is a need for a future physical development plan to be developed for Barbados that gives serious consideration to dealing with traffic gridlock and not simply look for individual band aids, jambuster here, overpasses there or a few one-way streets in Belleville and yonder. It cannot be done in that way. Therefore, it is my humble submission that we should look seriously at doing something in terms of the use of land in that Belleville area and to encourage institutions that would readily relocate, to relocate. I am sure that schools such as the many nurseries, preschools and even Merrivale Preparatory School would be obvious candidates to relocate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, having said that, I am not in any way encouraging the destruction of the Belleville area as we know it. That Belleville community is unique. In fact, there are 25 buildings in Belleville alone, probably more than any other district in Barbados. That says a lot for the heritage value to be found in that community. Therefore, I would not want Honourable Members to think that because I am advising something that might sound a little

on the extreme level that I want to see the character of that particular community decimated in any way. Sir, I do believe that there is significant potential for this to be looked at.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, adjacent to the Merrivale Preparatory School which is in St. Michael South Central constituency, is the Erdiston Primary School that is screaming out for proper facilities. The very lands that we are looking at leasing to the Merrivale Preparatory School is part of the Erdiston compound.

Sir, months after this Parliament started, we heard in a debate in here that a new school would be constructed in Welches to accommodate both Carrington's Primary and Erdiston Primary schools. We are still awaiting word in terms of the breaking of ground for that project. Carrington's Primary School is one of the old open plan formats. The school is over 100 years old and is in a serious state of disrepair. There are actually cases where pupils have been physically at risk because of rotted floor boards and that type of thing, so it is something that needs to be addressed. Certainly, if we are considering making the environment more workable for the total development of the students at the Merrivale Preparatory School, I would not want us to forget the students of Carrington's Primary School.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, unlike Merrivale Preparatory School, Carrington's Primary School is literally locked by roads. There is no adjacent land to be acquired or leased or anything to give them a playground. As it stands now the students have to trek to the Gully Hill Pasture and there are obvious dangers there in terms of carrying them down there to enjoy their physical education and so on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do believe that there is

a strong case to be made for having these schools over a period of time move to more attractive locations. Therefore, I would encourage the Government to think along those lines. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the physical development plan of 1983 spoke to the need to move the Carrington's Primary School from that site that is inadequate, certainly for the modern needs of education delivery.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to consider all of these facts. I would sincerely hope that in terms of the method that was selected, that is, leasehold as opposed to freehold... Certainly, I would daresay that it was quite likely that in 1980 when the land was first leased to Mrs. Carrington that she would have been in a position to purchase it, but right now with today's land value I am not sure that is the case. It is interesting to see the Government has selected to go that route, and there is nothing wrong with it. As I said Government has been there collectively because both governments opted for the use of the leasehold as opposed to the freehold and I would sincerely hope that this is something that can be explored and developed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has been a clarion call from many sectors of our society to see that the leasehold is used more regularly than the freehold because obviously it permits land to revert back to its original owners down the road. Of course, I speak of the situation on the west coast and the overall view that too many of our prime spots on this rock are being alienated.

House 65 Sequence 35

4:50 p.m.

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Continuation of Mr. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, therefore, I would encourage Government to develop this concept. Perhaps whenever we do get the legislation that was once mooted in terms of restricting the capacity of foreigners to purchase land in Barbados - and I recognise that as part of being the Caribbean Single Market and Economy compliant, by foreigners, I mean people from outside of the region - I would expect that when that legislation sees the light of day, that we would have developed some kind of capacity for encouraging the leasehold. In fact, Government is taking an example here by saying that it is going to lease land, as opposed to selling it, whilst recognising the value to be held by doing such.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would say that it is again part of the overall need to improve the environment of our schools and if necessary to relocate them... We have had a very real example of just how areas such as Collymore Rock and Belleville, where those areas are not exclusively residential, industrial or commercial, but where there is a variety of activities, something that typifies most of urban and suburban Barbados. There was a very real example with the Louis Lynch Secondary School, where the noxious activities of a neighbouring business has impacted on the question of schooling. I thought it was something that was unique to urban Barbados but it has happened even in a rural district, where a farming activity has impacted on the need for schools to be placed in a situation where it would allow for a holistic development of our young people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with that in mind that I suggest that while we welcome the lease of the land to the Merrivale Preparatory School, we recognise that it can only be looked at as a medium-term situation. I also look forward to the day when, as the People's Cathedral Primary School has had the opportunity, that

perhaps the other day care schools, nurseries, preschools and the privately-owned schools, which may have limited resources, can be encouraged and given the wherewithal to move to other sites.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mrs. Carrington is not a young woman. When I was there 30 years, she was not a young woman then and she is still there. I think that she has a daughter who is active in the school, and I believe the school will continue beyond her. Sir, I think that we should think futuristically when we do such and that Government will use its various arms, such as the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment and National Housing Corporation, to see to it that all of the schools in Barbados are given an opportunity to have an environment that is conducive to physical education, agricultural science, et cetera and for encouraging that at the very youngest levels.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to seeing such plans being put in place and that all schools that may have short-comings in terms of limited space, can be given an opportunity as we are giving those at the Merrivale Preparatory School, to develop themselves in the complete sense of the word. I am obliged to you.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to say a few words on this lease. First, let me support the lease and the Resolution, not only because I think it is a good move, not only because like the speaker who has just taken his seat, I too am a graduate

of the Merrivale Preparatory School, but because I honestly believe that Mrs. Carrington and the Merrivale Preparatory School is really deserving to get access to the land that abuts and abounds the school.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mrs. Carrington has been in the teaching profession for about 65

years. It is interesting because my father-in-law, who is now a retired person in his late 60s, was taught by her at primary school, and this is a lady who continues to teach today. Sir, I think that in itself would give one the idea as to the type of person Mrs. Carrington is.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would go further and say that last week when the Common Entrance Examination was taking place, I was with my son, where I saw Mrs. Carrington, at age 85, with her group of students. I think that she has made a tremendous contribution to education in this country and it would be remiss of me not to say a few words on her behalf.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at Mrs. Carrington's school, not only is it a place where she expects one to do the best that one can at all times, she also expects a significant standard of discipline. She was one who was not afraid to use the strap on a student when necessary and to put that student in his place. She was never afraid to help students to remember that above all, she was in charge of the school and that students must understand discipline there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this certainly bode me well. The foundations that she gave to all of us at this school, certainly bode us all well here. I can look around and see, I believe two other graduates of that school. I will always respect and honour the contributions that she has made to education in this country. I have heard of people who went to the school when she had just started it, when it was just small families or small numbers of people. I believe she started the school with about 12 students and she increased and improved that number to about 300 students.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was not only Mrs. Carrington who contributed to the efforts of the school. In addition, there are three or four teachers who have been teaching at that school for over 26 years, who continue to teach there,

and who continue to provide an excellent education for the children and those charges that they have.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, above all, I think the school has suffered from not having an expanse of land for the children to have access to better physical education to be able to play games, to be able to have a good cricket field, or to be able to have a good football field. We used to play on something called the hill, which had a very small area and if we hit the ball over the wall, we would be out, and the wall was not that far away. People like Roland Holder who played for Barbados, has learnt his cricket on that field on the hill.

Sir, I look forward to the day when the people of Merrivale Preparatory School would get access to an additional piece of land, so that they can continue the good tradition of not only education, but also to be able to excel in the sporting disciplines of this country. I thank you.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Merrivale Preparatory School is very well established in this country as a centre of excellence and it is a tribute to Mrs. Avisene Caesaretta Carrington that she has carried this school, for very many years, through all types of times, and that nowadays she can take great pride in the fact that her efforts have been rewarded by the outstanding successes, by the many persons who have previously been under her charge.

H:No.65(36)500 p.m.

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Continuation of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

that nowadays she can take great pride in the fact that her efforts have been rewarded by the

outstanding successes of many persons who had been previously under her charge. Mr. Deputy Speaker, my principle reason for rising to speak briefly on this Resolution is that in circumstances where they still exist in this country a number of private educational institutions that do a lot for this community, Government must always do its utmost to facilitate, as far as that can be achieved, in the interest of education of ensuring the survival of these very important institutions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Resolution at hand seeks to extend a lease. I note that one of the aspects of the Resolution is for the provision of playing facilities for the children. Sir, in ancient Rome, the word ludos most meant school and play. Ludos, which unfortunately is the precursor of words like ridicule and such like used to mean school and play in ancient Rome. In the context of the educational system, it would be expected that children at their tender age be allowed to play.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I support the Resolution because it is unthinkable that in a modern society, small children who go to school would not have an opportunity for play. Whenever I see a school without playing facilities, I get concerned because part of the process from growing up from a toddler to a teenager is to be able to savour life to its fullest at that stage in one's formative age where one can display one's energy, interact with one's peer group, learn the rules of sports, be a good sport and even use sports to facilitate the process of learning. In a situation where mens sana in corpore sana, where there is to be a healthy mind and a healthy body, then clearly part of schooling is to facilitate play.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Resolution is well thought out and very much in order. It gives support to an institution that has played its role and continues to do so. I want to personally single out Mrs. Avis Carrington as a pioneer in

education in this country at the primary stage. I am happy there are still some primary schools being run without having to rely on the state for any great finance but which at the same time are able to do a lot for our children.

I congratulate my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. James South, for bringing this Resolution and trust that ultimately its impact would be felt in that school and the wider community as children benefit, grow up, learn and become worldly citizens in the same way that at least three Honourable Members of this House have grown up and made their contributions to this Honourable House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those few remarks, I am indebted to you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to say a few words on this Resolution. It has been said by two of the previous speakers before me that they had the privilege of attending this school during their primary years. I too must joint with them and say that my formative development in terms of education was largely taken care of by Mrs. Carrington.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it struck me a moment ago when I heard the Honourable Member for St. James North referred to her by her commonly known name, Mrs. Avis Carrington, that I did not know how to say that without feeling awkward because you do not call the first name of your head teacher even if it is to refer to her in the third person in the Parliament of the country. I was further tickled when I read the Resolution and almost thirty years after leaving primary school has discovered here full name in the form of Aversine Ceaseritan Carrington. The name in and of itself obviously reflects that when she was born

her parents expected great things of her. I believe those of us who have had the opportunity to interact with her can well say that their dreams have been fulfilled because Mrs. Carrington is truly a Barbadian treasure, an example not just of a modern educator but also of a successful black businesswoman at a time when women traditionally did not go into wider areas of business in this country. She has been able to take that school of less than ten persons to a school that has successfully had to deal with more than 300 children for the long-term is an indication not only of her educational skills but I venture to suggest of her business skills such that we can speak her today in such glowing terms about the institution and about herself.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is true that while her husband was alive he was also an integral part of the management of the school and provided tremendous support to her as well as the rest of her family. There were also people who worked for her like the lady who was her domestic help who treated to the rest of us in the school as if we were her children and we respected her as if she were a teacher.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to reinforce that point because too often in institutions across Barbados people who hold jobs that are janitorial-type jobs are disrespected by young children who refuse to accept the authority and discipline of these persons not for any other reason than the job which they do is looked down upon by these young children. Mrs. Carrington never allowed any of us who passed through her hands to disrespect any member of her personal staff or the school staff in relation to how we as young children interacted with them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, apart from the educational and the business achievement, her ability to recognise that there must be basis respect for the dignity of each human being and

that children had to be brought up to respect their elders irrespective of their station in life, in my view, was one of the significant lessons that I learn while passing through her hands at the school. If you dared to run into the kitchen and ordered a hotdog or ice block without speaking appropriately to Mrs. Applewhaite, you were disciplined. Sir, to this day, I have clear and distinct memory of a young boy who is no longer living in Barbados but who received the most severe discipline for disrespecting Mrs. Applewhaite in the kitchen. These are the things that truly stay with you as you grow into an adult because it influences how you treat other people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, earlier today with the Minister of Education when we were reviewing a number of initiatives, we once again discussed that schools ultimately reflect the leadership of the schools. I believe we have to recognise that leadership is not only about teaching the syllabus to pass an examination, be it the Common Entrance or CXC but it is also about shaping the character of those under your charge. It is about forcing them to accept that discipline is necessary not just in terms of them enforcing discipline of you but self-discipline is an integral part of the make up of an individual if they are to succeed in life. Further, that the social and emotional development of that child is as critical as the academic achievement of that child.

H65/17:10

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Continuation of... Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY:

Sir, I can say safely that having spent time as a student and having been afforded the privilege of serving as a Minister of Education for seven years, that Avisene Carrington has all of the qualities that would cause us to refer to her as a model in relation to leadership of schools in this country and that the empathy balances by discipline, fairness and firmness, all of these things allowed her to achieve the successes in tangible forms.

Sir, there is a Reverend who was an Honourable Member of this Chamber. He was the Representative for St. Michael West Central and he represented the West Indies Cricket team. Mrs. Carrington taught Wes Hall. There are persons who have longed retired whom she taught, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West has indicated. It is the most amazing thing that as we meet here today, Mrs. Carrington is still teaching in 2005 when others would have retired at the age of 60. She has gone 25 years past the normal retirement age, not just working but working in an environment where children can be at their most rumbustious, difficult, dealing with them and still achieving results.

Sir, I know that she has already received a National Honour in this country but I must be forgiven for feeling that she is worthy of this country's highest National Honour, not only for her service education but her service to business and most important her service to Barbadians, in respect to molding generation after generation and not moving away from the fight, when other teachers and leaders would tell you how much more deviant the children of today's generation is. Sir, with each succeeding generation she has stuck to the task and has remained resolute in her focus in molding the characters of young Barbadians who can build this country.

Sir, I want to say, and the Honourable Minister of Housing knows that I feel this way,

without in anyway approaching any negative comment in relation to Cabinet responsibility. I feel that the lease should have been for more than three years. The fact that since 1981 this Honourable House has been detained on a number of occasions in relation to the lease of this land, I feel that an appropriate long-term lease could have been arranged for the school. I believe that whenever the time comes for her to be called to higher service, her institution is now so entrenched in the national landscape that it would go beyond her mortal presence and to that extent it would have been worthy of consideration of a longer lease.

I also want to publicly disagree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, who, in spite of the fact that he went through the tender guidance of Mrs. Carrington, sometimes shows signs of not having fully benefited but I can understand that because the passage of time may have caused a lot of things to rub off and not even she is capable of perfection in relation to her mission.

Sir, the on point which I want to disagree with the Honourable Member is that I do not believe that it is wise to advocate the relocation of all of the schools out of the urban corridor. While I agree with the move for the People's Cathedral School, because they literally have out-grown where there are, there is a need to maintain a presence of institutions in every community in this country if we are to benefit fully from holistic development across communities.

I do not subscribe to the view that because Barbados is 166 square miles that we should have a single magistrate's court. I do not subscribe to the view that because Barbados is 166 square miles that we should centralise a lot of the services and move them out. I think that every community merits churches, schools, forms of community enterprise, a rum shop and some form of playing facility.

I say that generally, recognising that this country's orderly development over the centuries was effectively planned on that premise. Almost every plantation had a tenantry next to it, which had a shop, church and a school. Those basic needs of the individuals were met and it meant that the character of the community was able to develop fully.

Sir, it is true that we have a traffic problem but let us deal with traffic problems in an appropriate way. Sir, if we were to remove the preschool facilities, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central's constituents in Martindale's Road and Bannister Land would now have to look for bus fare if they do not have a car to be able to get their children to school. I feel that every child, as far as possible, should be able to go to school in the community in which they live because it makes a difference ultimately to the type of child that they become and the freedom and confidence that they have as individuals.

I want to urge the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central to reflect again that they may be a need for one or two of the larger schools to move out but in terms of the danger of it setting a norm for the principle that they should be removed outside of the urban corridor, I would have difficulty with it.

Sir, I have spoken to the Honourable Minister of Public Works already about what I am going to say. I believe that there must be a higher responsibility when we seek to change traffic plans. The truth is, the traffic changes that have taken place in Belleville recently have caused difficulties because there has not been appropriate consultation before introducing them.

Sir, for example, there is a company which depends on the movement of goods as part of

its services and its truck could make the left hand turn into the business premises before, so it has to come over from the avenue and go straight over. That company now, unless it wants to break the law, cannot have its truck enter its premises on a daily basis. The Minister of Public Works has given the promise that they would review it and they accept that there needs to be appropriate consultation with the people affected, particularly at the local level, before these things are done.

I know that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is shaking his head and that I am helping him with his constituency responsibility for this one. I think that it is sufficiently important that the interest of those in Belleville are represented in relation to the specific dislocation that has taken place as a result of measures that I think have been well-intended but, have not been effective in relation to how they have been received, because of the individual dislocation that it causes to the residents and businesses in the area. Therefore, I look forward that this should receive the attention of the Ministry of Public Works and that there can be an urgent and happy resolution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those few words I willingly and happily support this Resolution and ask the Honourable Minister of Housing on the next occasion that this matter comes before her that she uses her good office to make wrong things right and to make sure that we put on a steady footing the access to this land to an institution that has done great things in this country.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. R.D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am glad that I am following on from the

Honourable Member for St. Michael North East because if I had to take my departure from that which was provided by the Representative for Christ Church West, I would have to almost adopted a eulogistic tone relative to my speech on this matter. I thought I was listening to someone who was pronouncing on the departure of such a gentle lady.

H65: 17.20 p.m.

Sequence 38

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

House 65, sequence 39, 5:20 p.m.

Continuation of Mr. R.D. JONES:

Sir, since I am not following on from the representative for St. Michael North East, my tone and my language will be a lot stronger on this particular matter. Let me say from the outset that when it comes to physical education, sports and recreation, I would support any measure which would give young people, and school students, the opportunity to be involved in both playful and productive activity and endeavour.

Therefore, one would always have to question the length of time that a simple matter of coming before the House and continuing the extension of this particular lease to Merrivale Primary School would have taken so long to be brought here, especially from a letter coming from Mrs. Carrington since 21st March 2002, and Cabinet deciding on at a meeting of the 19th February 2004. Now, we are here in this House in May 2005 giving support of this kind of activity. It is almost one of the most painful journeys that we have had to take relative to matters such as this, Sir. I do not understand how something as so simple as this, can find a

Government in a most recalcitrant mode but this seems to be their nature and their name.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have heard from three of the Honourable Members of this House who said that they had the pleasure and I want to accentuate my tone a bit here, and Privilege to be educated at Merrivale Preparatory School. There are not many schools in Barbados that carry this name. Therefore, they are constructed with a particular ethos and a particular purpose in mind.

Those who work in all aspects of Barbados went to schools which were constructs of the village. I want to make the purposeful point that their characters were also molded well by the constructs of the villages from which most Honourable Members of this House come, and schools which have now gone defunct because of transition of time, demographic shifts, et cetera, across the landscape of Barbados. Maybe some time in the future, we will speak of education as to the strength and purpose of these schools in those areas.

I remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, going to a school in Christ Church, not far from the airport and walking between the cane fields of private lands on one side and Fairy Valley Plantation on the other side. We used to call it 'the line'. I walked from Wilcox, right through 'the line' to, in those days St. Bartholomew Boy School, a school, Sir, that you would be familiar with, an area now which is occupied by three or four houses, as I pass on Highway 7 going past the Flash Inn Bar and Restaurant.

If I would want to sound like the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, one can say that the character of individuals such as me was molded in those types of institutions, the Eagle Halls of Barbados, the St. Albans Primary of Barbados,

the St. Giles Boys' School at which Mrs. Carrington would have had her developmental knowledge through teaching, management and leadership that she was able to take to another institution, and continues even now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, schools do not all make the man or the woman. I believe, especially at that very early stage of development, we have characters in transition. Therefore, what necessarily persons such as Mrs. Carrington would have tried desperately to do then, because of characters in transition - she might be in her 80s now I am told - that sometimes when she looks out at some of those who would have received her education, she shakes her head because she would be amazed as to the types of persons they have now become.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all Honourable Members of this House, of course, are exempted from such a reference but there are characters in transition in those early days. Therefore, do not let us fool ourselves that because we would have passed through a certain educational molding and purpose, that as you look at 20 or 30 years down the road, you would see all of the essence of that molding still embedded within those personalities, within the behaviour or characters of those individuals, because that would be a substantial fooling of ourselves. I am sure that many would cry when they see what kinds of citizens persons from any school would have become.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that this is also a debate, because of the extension it has taken, about the emergence of social divisions and standards within a society and a country. I do not believe that Mrs. Carrington would have started out in her mind, wanting to establish a school for the black hope alloy of Barbados. Essentially, the school catered to children of the middle and upper-middle class of Barbados because of its dynamic nature and, therefore, no

condemnation from me. It just goes to demonstrate how societies adapt and change, and create privileges and institutions.

Therefore, we are reminded, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of George Beckford's thesis of the plantation economy, which this country still reflects now, even though we should have passed, over time, through that whole process of the plantation economy.

Sir, if you look, you would find that the society is even now more deeply steeped in the whole notion and the nature of the plantation economy that George Beckford spoke about relative to Barbados. It is also happening within the public school system of Barbados. Do not let us deny the fact that people give excuses that they are working in the Town Centre and therefore they have to look after the welfare and safety of the children so they have to bring them to Erdiston Primary School. They have to try to get them into Wesley Hall School. When Luther Thorne was developed it became a magnet. Charles F. Broome School also became a magnet and schools such as that ilk.

Those schools in the public sector have developed as a result of pressures placed by senior persons, both in the public sector and the private sector, people who have change in their pockets or have access to change in their pockets, who drive the motor cars and the SUVs on their way down to town or wherever their workplaces are, to get their children into those schools.

Therefore, the Ministry of Education from time to time would intervene and say that rather than you do the allocation process, we will do it, which is all part of the construction that takes place within this society. As I said, it is a total social dynamic, highly reflective of an exclusive nature within our society.

House 65, sequence 39, 17:3014

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Mr. R. D. JONES:

Sir, what we can do as leaders in the wider Caribbean is to create a meaningful and beautiful melting pot with all of the people within Barbados benefitting; being persons of good character, even though their character as I say is in transition; being persons who are able to contribute to the development of this country in the 21st Century and beyond and people who would not feel excluded from education either in private institutions or within the creaming system within the public sector either at the primary or secondary level. Sir, this will make sure that the rainbow is truly reflective not only in the sky but among the population of students in the villages in Barbados, both the historical villages that were constructed and the new villages that we are constructing. If we do not do this we would in fact be seeking to perpetuate the thesis of George Beckford over time and down through time within this society?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some persons might accuse me of advancing a socialist argument and it would appear now that there is no room for a counter view to the conservative notions which flow the length and breadth across Barbados and the countries to the north and wherever else they are. Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you advance a socialist view, you stand behind the 'pailing' and you are to be ridiculed and thrown out.

Sir, one would find benefits in both models of thought or both philosophies. If we in Barbados do not make sense of an extremely difficult past, a past steeped in difficulties of our history, a past steeped in marginalisation of

many of our people, even though some now do not want to reflect on that past and bring others through with them as they move forward, we are going to be tied and we will be shamed, even though departed but the spiritual presence might still be around, as to what this country is and will remain.

Sir, I believe that we must find room to create that melting pot. We must find room for people to co-exist with a level of peace, contentment and happiness. We must find room for persons to feel contented within their particular environs and we must find room for society when it goes to sleep at night to rest peacefully.

What I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, does not detract from the efforts and the contributions of anybody. I believe there is still an Honourable Member of the Democratic Labour Party who over time operating out of Speightstown in St. Peter could be placed in the same category as Mrs. Carrington. I am talking about Mrs. Sybil Leacock, who would have done yeomen service in that part of Barbados for students in the north of this country.

Sir, even though she might not be in her 80s I believe that she is moving gracefully and beautifully towards that age which many of us might not be able to reach because maybe of our lifestyles, of our characters in transition or maybe of the changing tone and mood of the country where persons might see us as threats and therefore seek to limit our time here on earth.

Sir, I hope that does not happen to me because I look to represent their interest on each and every occasion. Therefore, I hope that when they, in their anger, look across and still see the perpetuation of the plantation society existing in Barbados that they would say that at least the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central did not get himself caught up in the continuing division of Barbados along

the rigidities of class, colour and race and what car you drive and if you come from off the hill in St. George, even though you would have ascended into this Honourable House, and they would spare my life and my soul.

Therefore, I want to make a slight divergence relative to this matter. Mr. Deputy Speaker, within three years there would be an election in this country if democracy continues to prevail. I can already see the panic on the other side as they scurried about their constituency over the last month or so trying to reconnect to the people because they recognise that three years is a short time. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph knows about what I am speak. Therefore, one could see a more realistic assertion of a lease beyond the three-year period for these persons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also agree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central that we must seriously look at the relocation of the Carrington's Primary School. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East might not necessarily speak on this particular Resolution, but I want to ask him why are the students and the parents of the Carrington's Primary School and the Erdiston Primary still wallowing in obviously terrible conditions. If they were not, there would be no decision taken over time to move them. Mr. Deputy Speaker, do not tell me it is the compulsory acquisition of land because we have dealt with that in this Honourable House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you are saying to me that the students of the Christ Church Girls' School are not deserving of this comfort, tell me that, but do not tell me that it is about land issues. I have been in this House since June of 2003, and if there is one thing that comes to this House, it is the compulsory acquisition of land and the vesting of something in somebody. We have those in plentiful supply.

Therefore, if the Christ Church Girls' School situation has to do with some compulsory acquisition of land in the area, then I would ask the Honourable Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, to ask his colleague, the Honourable Member for St. James South, to act on his behalf to ensure that there is an acceleration of this process. It has nothing to do with the representative for Christ Church East Central, it has to do with the children of Barbados who come from Silver Hill every day, the largest population at Christ Church Girls' School, from Gall Hill, Lodge Road, Water Street, Newton, Durants and Ashby Land who goes to that school every day to be educated by excellent teachers, possibly some of the most brilliant teachers in the primary sector of Barbados. Therefore, I am asking the Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports to use his friendship, his love and his appreciation of his colleague to ensure that there is an acceleration of this process.

Sir, I do not only want to come to this Honourable House and speak in support of a Resolution for this lease of land for Merrivale Preparatory School, I would also want to speak in support of an acquisition of the requisite metres of land for the development of the Christ Church Girls' School on the behalf of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central who represent all of those children and their parents.

I therefore appeal, and if I could cajole, would cajole the Honourable Member for Christ Church East and the Honourable Member for St. James South to do what is right, what is fair and what is decent relative to the Christ Church Girls' School.

With those few words, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure I speak on behalf of all the Honourable Members on this side who said that we will

most definitely support this Resolution.

House 65 Sequence 40

5:40 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise in this debate with a sense of bewilderment. I am not sure why the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central should have gotten on his feet, in an attempt to castigate the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, whom I thought was his colleague. Sir, the speech, when one reads the script, the subscript and the superscript, could only be considered to be a clear indication of the very strong, deep and wide divide amongst the Honourable Member on that side.

Sir, I do not know if this is a pre-annual conference position that the Honourable Member is taking because I have no idea of what position the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is interested in, and in what position the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central may have an interest, but I would just want to offer some friendly advice, because they are both my friends. Sir, my advice to them both is that I do not think that this is either the place or the circumstances, in which to reflect on the circumstances of the Honourable Member's birth, his origin or his destiny. Sir, instead I will use the opportunity of this debate to speak to more practical and more upward-looking matters, than those on which the Honourable Member has chosen to use his scalpel.

Mr. R. D. JONES: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East is obviously misleading this Honourable House,

which stems from his misunderstanding of the melting pot theory, from his misunderstanding the George Beckford thesis and, therefore, he would want to ascribe to me a divisive model or method relative to my colleague.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Honourable Member understands even my origins as a citizen of Barbados, he would not speak in such tones relative to that. I hope that the Honourable Member would fully understand the melting pot method of which I speak and would, therefore, persuade himself, as he seeks to plant fodder that is unnecessary and irrelevant to this debate.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, unlike the Honourable Member who has just spoken, I can admit of diversity and choice in education in Barbados. In fact, I believe that our educational system in Barbados has been stronger for the fact that there has over the years, and continues to be of participation, not only by the State but by private education entrepreneurs in the provision of educational services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the origin of this school, the Merrivale Preparatory School, would have been in an era when there was an even larger number of private educational entrepreneurs, who would have recognised that there was not only merit and social and national service in the provision of education but that as black entrepreneurs in that era, they could chart an independent course and maintain their families, while doing a public good.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would not join with the Honourable Member in reflecting somewhat negatively on the success of the school. The Honourable Member feels uncomfortable with the fact that, over the years, the school has emerged as being an attractive proposition for a number of persons, including his colleague, the Honourable Member for St.

Michael South Central. Sir, my position today is that I would want to celebrate and honour the contributions of the principals of this school, along with others of that generation, who, against all odds, in trying circumstances, would have started small, would have added great value, and would have built a solid reputation, which would have caused them to attract, not only large numbers of persons but persons who in turn, would have a deep and abiding commitment to the development to their children.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to say that the Ministry of Education continues to work closely with the private providers of education in Barbados. Over time things have changed and many of them now are in the primary and preschool areas but they continue to work with us, following the national curriculum. They have been involved in the curriculum reform process, while a number of them have already benefited from EduTech, and we continue to work closely in the provision of educational services throughout the length and breadth of Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to salute Mrs. Carrington, especially as one who, since 1975, has instill good qualities of leadership and dignity. She was the kind of person from whom you could learn a lot, even if she did not say a word, but by the way that she conducted herself. Mrs. Carrington understood quite clearly that being a teacher was not just being a provider of knowledge, but that it was about molding lives, while passing on values, life skills and being persons worthy of emulation.

Sir, and the fact that even today she continues to function, should also be a message to us that age is only a number and that perhaps the governmental system, with its rules and regulations concerning retirement, et cetera, must, perhaps, find a way of making more room, especially in the educational sector, for

those persons who may be past the mandatory age of retirement from the Public Service but who, like Mrs. Carrington, are in a position, physically, mentally and spiritually, to add tremendous value to education.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, education is one of these peculiar areas, because we are molding the lives of young people, that we can benefit greatly from the wisdom of those persons of mature age. Education is not such a young people's business that there is only need for young people to be involved. There is need to have the benefit, experience and wisdom of persons of long-standing and deep character.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the behalf of the Ministry of Education, I want to fully support this legislation and to pledge our continued support to the school and to several others like it in private education, that are providing good service for a range of clients. Sir, whether these schools are called preparatory schools or not, I have no difficulty with that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to respond to a question that was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, which was then reflected as an echo from the walls of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. Sir, there is no mystery to the Erdiston/Carrington Primary. I had indicated that the tender had been advertised for the construction of the Erdiston/Carrington Primary School, at a property at Welches, St. Michael, which is the former Dr. Lyder's property. The tenders were received and were evaluated, with submission being made to the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank. They, however, chose not to accept any of the tenders, deeming them as not meeting the technical standards. They have, therefore, instructed that we need to go back out to tender.

H:No.65(41)550 p.m.

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Continuation of Hon. R. R. FARLEY:

When the replies to the tenders are in based on the new criteria, we will evaluate them, award the contract and we will be ready to roll. It was our intention at the Ministry to have been able to start construction at Erdiston Carrington in January of this year. Therefore, we are more concerned than the Honourable Member from St. Michael South Central and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central that we have not been ready to roll because it is holding up our programme. Given the delay in the start of construction, it also means that we would have to spend money in the existing two schools that we would not be able to get any long-term value from to maintain them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our policy is clear. Even where there is work planned for schools, we still need to maintain the schools as viable concern. We cannot take the position not to do work on them because we are doing construction. We know that construction would take 18 months and, therefore, we would do whatever is necessary by way of maintenance and repairs to ensure that health and safety are kept at reasonable standard at both Erdiston Primary and Carrington Primary whilst waiting for us to be able to do the construction.

I hope the Honourable Member would not repeat that it is a mystery and that he does not know what is going on because from a place no less lofty than this Parliament, I have indicated quite clearly what is the position. We hope to be able to award the tender as soon as possible and get construction on the way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, once again I want to congratulate Mrs. Carrington and her staff at the Merrivale Preparatory School for an excellent job in education as well and salute the several other private providers.

Asides.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: The Honourable Member knows that we have all the plans and designs done and that we are ready to roll on Christ Church Girls School but cannot do so because the banks would not agree to any of our proposals while legal issues are pending concerning the land. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central is aware that the issue surrounding the matter of what is the right of way to the adjacent houses to the eastern section of the school where the boundary of the school ends and the boundary to property next door begins. As soon as the work of the surveyor and others involved is completed, we will start the project.

The Honourable Member may not know what is going on in his constituency but I want to tell him that on a number of visits to the schools, I have looked at conditions and I have also given instructions. Even whilst we are waiting to the technical issue sorted and to do construction, there are certain immediate areas of relief must be done. I have instructed them to repair the bathroom for the girls even though a new school is being constructed because the bathroom will continue to be used until the new one is built and we have to ensure that some level of dignity exists.

Sir, the question of water settling under the prefab classroom at the back of the school, I have given instructions the drainage is to fix. Sir, when I give these instructions, I go out on the road and check that this work is done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member knows that in relation to Christ

Church Girls School that we have upgraded the electrics in the main building. We want to get to the stage where we no longer have prefab classes at the back and where we are able to have a more rational use of the land space, a better connection between the school and the playing field which is used in the Wotton area and generally, to bring Christ Church Girls School up to the same standard as Christ Church Boys School. It is certainly not our interest or intention to have two schools, seventy-five yards apart where one has already benefitted from vast improvements, it is computerised and fully EduTech enabled whilst the sister school catering to the flip side of the gender coin, a stone's throw away, is not up to the same standard. It is not fair to the school, the community or the females that use the school which is not in a good condition.

Therefore, that is also a priority for us. Indeed, across the more than 70 primary schools owned by the Government, we aim to maintain the high standards which are displayed at the Merrivale Preparatory School. It is in the interest of the public sector or private sector to provide quality education to all our children of whatever class, creed, colour or gender.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am happy to support this Resolution for all of these purposes and long may this country continue to benefit from the Merrivale Preparatory School.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: the Honourable Member for St. James South.

Hon. Miss H.E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this debate has been most engaging. I enjoyed the comments of members across both sides of the divide even the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, classics in their nature though his remarks were.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the things which have emerged today and which I think is significant is the value of a good teacher and the influence of that teacher on the life of a student. I smiled when the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East said that she dared not utter the first name of Mrs. Carrington such was the esteem in which she held her and the fact that all her adult life the Honourable Member referred to Mrs. Carrington as exactly that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see it all the time when a teacher exerts a powerful influence on a child and helps to mold the child that always the child speaks with reverence and respect and never addresses that teacher by the first name, no matter how mature the student becomes. Sir, when Miss Symmonds was knighted, I told here that I could not call her anything but Miss Symmonds. I could not call her Dame Patricia because it would mean that I would have to call her by the first name because she would always be Miss Symmonds to me. Again, she is a teacher who has influenced a positive influence on my life.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is interesting that we are speaking in this debate on a primary school teacher because it is often the teachers of the secondary school who get the greater financial reward and the greater accolades. The contribution that the primary school teacher makes in the formative years to the overall development of the child is rarely regarded.

Sir, very often when the child gets a Barbados scholarship or degree and does well later on in life, it is because of the influence and training in the very earliest years. The development of discipline, self-respect, respect of others, a love of learning, a capacity to do research, a facility with language, all of that is shaped by the primary school teacher.

H65/18:00

Sequence 42

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Continuation of... Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-MCDOWALD: Therefore, this is a debate which says to primary school teachers that they have tremendous value and worth in the shaping of the next generation of citizens of Barbados. Very often it is their willingness to stay after school hours to help guide students and enquire what is the reason for their tears. Sometimes teachers encounter problems with children, their parents do not recognise that could make the difference between that child's success and failure.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas is in this Honourable Parliament today because she was such a primary school teacher. In fact, across the political divide when we walked with her in St. Thomas, people referred to her, not as Cinthy but as Miss Forde and they were willing to support her because of the positive that she brought on the many children in the rural parish of St. Thomas who past through her hands, knowing her love, care and ability to make a student interested in the subject and be in love with learning.

In fact, the debate went wide and Honourable Members said many things about Mrs. Carrington. Yet, there is another component that I wish to bring to the debate. In Barbados there are names which one associates with particular discipline or area of activity. One thinks of the Alleynes of Shamrock and the Millers for entrepreneurial enterprise. One can think of families that have embraced the law and some can think of families that have pursued medicine, taken the Hippocratic oath, hippocratic but Avisene Carrington came from

a family that did service to the country and the community. Her sister, Constance Inniss, was for many years a teacher at St. Michael School and retired as Headmistress of that school. I believe that she is still alive. The last time I saw her, having matured, she was as erect and gracious as she was as a teacher.

Mrs. Carrington also inspired her children the desire to give service to the public. Her daughter, Shelly, is a Permanent Secretary. I worked with her briefly when she acted as a Senior Administrative Officer. The quality of her work is spoken well of by all who encounter her. People have great regard for her because of her kindness, professionalism and her discretion. Equally, her son Ian Carrington was posted at the Central Bank of Barbados where he made a contribution to the economic development of the country. Finally, Ronald Carrington, known as Ronnie, who is a reputable videographer, cinematographer and photographer. He is also training persons in his discipline. Sir, this is a family that has taught and given all types of service to the community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the debate moved from education and public service to the area of Belleville. I wish to close on a broad note relating to the Ministry of Environment. Some of you would have observed there is an ongoing programme for the replacement of the Cabbage Palms at Belleville. Some of them have died and others are under the threat of collapse from poor health. The Ministry of Environment wrote to all of the property owners at Belleville enquiring if they would allow us to enter on their lands to replace the palms and conduct greening necessary to ensure that Belleville continues to have a green-scape.

Sir, one of the beauties of that neighbour when it was in residential use, now commercial use, has always been the fact that it

had avenues streamlined with beautiful greenery. That is what makes it, even though the properties are highly developed and densely populated by commercial entities, still an elegant area to drive through. In fact that is the hallmark which I think we need to achieve for both residential and commercial communities. There must be places that are green and beautiful which will form part of the greening of wider Bridgetown. The greening of the ABC Highway is being executed by the Environmental Special Project Unit which, is led by Steve Devonish.

Sir, in begging that this Resolution do now pass, forgive me if I omitted during the course of my comments, in relation to the last Resolution, that several members of the staff of the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment were in Parliament. The majority have left but our Chief Housing Planner is still here. I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the work done by the Officers of the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Environment, who often have to work with great criticism and under tremendous public scrutiny. In particular, in relation to the Kensington Redevelopment because the time table is so tight, they had to work under tremendous pressure, not only to meet the timetable but in satisfying the myriad interests, complaints and concerns of a range of individuals, some of whom had their own agenda and not the national agenda at heart. We can understand those things but the reality is, it does make functioning particularly difficult.

I want to pay tribute to them for the work they have done to date and will have to continue to do to ensure that World Cup Barbados is a reality. I very much regret that at the time of closing that particular Resolution when the staff was still here that I did not make that comment in their presence, in expressing my gratitude and that of this Honourable Parliament.

Sir, I know that since this is something of public importance, even though we may not agree on other things, when our civil servants worked well we should take the time to say to them that they have, in fact, performed. In this regard, I have to say that the staff has performed well and pay tribute to them. I trust that though they may not be here to hear me that these comments could be conveyed by friends, relatives or neighbours who are listening.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it has been a long day of debates. We started about 10.30 a.m., therefore, just under eight hours, with the break for lunch, a housing debate has ensued over the course of today. I give thanks to all Honourable Members on both sides of the Honourable House who have spoken on both matters before the Chamber today. I thank them for their contribution. I even thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael East for his restraint today, though I know that I may not always benefit from it, but I am thankful to all Honourable Members who spoke and look forward to next week when we will resume further debate on other housing matters.

I am much obliged to you, Sir, and beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be now adjourn until Tuesday, May 31, 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 31, 2005 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

H65: 18.12 p.m.

Sequence 44