
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION OF 2003-2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 16, 2006.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday, May 16, 2006.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, G.C.M., B.A., Dip. Ed. (Speaker)
His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P.(Deputy Speaker) 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, Q.C. Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A.(Hons.) Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.) (Lon.), LL.M. (Leic.), J.P. (Minister of Labour and the Civil Service) Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed.,J.P. (Minister of Public Works and Transport) Mr. R. D. MARSHALL (Chairman of Committees) 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 Education, Youth Affairs and Sports) Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc., J.P.,(Minister of Housing and Lands) Hon. Dr. J. X. WALCOTT, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S.(Edin.), J.P. (Minister of Health) Mr. R. D. JONES, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. Ed. J.P. Hon. H. F. LASHLEY (Minister of Social Transformation) Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.) Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN Hon. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A. (Minister of Social Transformation) Hon. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, B.A., B.Sc., J.P. (Minister of State, Prime Minister(s) Office) Dr. D. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B., B.S. Hon. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance)(Minister of State, Ministry of Finance) Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs) Mr. M. A. LASHLEY, LL.B. (Hons.) Dr. W. F. DUGUID, B.D.S. (Comm.), F.D.S., FDRCS., J.P.

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, May 02, 2006.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that

the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, May 02, 2006, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

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

PAPERS

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following

1.Duties Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Barbados Water Authority) Order, 2006;

2.Excise Tax (Rate of Tax) Order, 2006;

3.Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order, 2006.

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

1.Annual Reports and Financial Statements of Barbados Conference Limited, for the financial years ended March 31, 2000; March 31, 2001 and March 31, 2002.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, on the behalf of the Right Honourable Prime Minister, I beg to move that the Banks (Tax on Assets) (Validation) Bill, 2006, be read a first time.

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

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

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, on the behalf of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, I beg to move the First Reading of the Barbados Association for Mentally Retarded Children (Amendment) Bill, 2006.

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

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, on the behalf of the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, I beg to move that the ICC Cricket World Cup, West Indies, 2007 Bill, 2006, be read a first time.

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

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

OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, it is with some

considerable regret that Government is making this obituary speech at this time, but the pressure on our time and a number of important events, did serve to postpone what we are now doing. It is of even greater regret that we have to pay tribute to a former Honourable Member of Parliament, Mr. Peter Morgan.

Mr. Speaker, when the history of Barbados(tourism, especially in its early embryonic stages, is written, there can be no doubt that Peter Morgan would have to be accorded a place in Barbados(history. He was a founding Member of the Barbados Hotel Association, which he joined in 1952. That association is now known as the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association. He was President of that important body on three occasions.

During his tenure as President, he brought an enthusiasm to his chairmanship. He always enunciated the position that in the context of Barbados(need to diversify its economic base, that tourism did have an important part.

Sir, anybody speaking on tourism(s potential between 1960 and 1963, would have, at that time, to have put the position of this most important economic sector but I do not know if it could be said that in 1963, it would have been foreseeable that sugar and manufacturing would have to walk behind tourism, by the time the 1980s had come our way. Mr. Speaker, if it was within the contemplation of Mr. Peter Morgan that tourism would have become Barbados(mainstay to this economy, then we would have to label him as a visionary.

Mr. Speaker, as I speak of him, I am joined by those in the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Authority, such persons as Sue Springer, Senator Ian Gooding-Edghill, and a former member of that association, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, who, I am sure, would say a few words in his capacity as Tourism Minister, on the part played by Mr. Peter Morgan, in the early development of this important sector.

Mr. Speaker, Peter Morgan realised that when one(s vision is to develop a country, one necessarily has to have an interest in politics. Sir, however great a person is intellectually, that person cannot directly assist in the shaping of the destiny of a people, unless a political act occurs, in support of that person(s

vision, mission and objectives. Therefore, he decided to join a fledgling political organisation. He did so almost at the start of the life of an organisation, which we know as the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, in the context of our capacity to exercise freedom of choice, nobody could quarrel with someone else for joining a political organisation of his or her choice.

Mr. Speaker, between 1965 and 1967, before Peter Morgan became an Honourable Member of this Honourable House, he served as Commissioner-General for Barbados and Guyana, the newly independent country, which gained Independence the same year as Barbados. Sir, you would recall there was a Trade Fair in Canada, known as Montreal Expo 1967, and Mr. Morgan played a signal role, in ensuring the success of that particular event. Certainly when you have a new sector and when there are activities of importance within that sector, the marketing of the sector becomes critical.

Sir, for those of us who could remember the Montreal Expo of 1967, this event attracted a considerable amount of attention to Barbados. There are those of us who would recall that shortly after 1967, there was an influx of French Canadians into Barbados, certainly between 1967 and 1975. Unfortunately, that influx has now abated, but there can be no question that the French Canadians played a pivotal role in the early evolution of Barbados tourism.

Mr. Speaker, I am submitting, with the utmost respect, that the Montreal Expo of 1967, in which Mr. Morgan played such an important part, did actually attract people to come to this our tiny island.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Morgan decided to enter elective politics, and I take it that the seat now occupy by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central was the seat he would have contested, which became victorious in the 1971 election.

Sir, by pure happenstance, after that 1971 election, I found myself on a beach called Bath Beach, where the Democratic Labour Party was having their election victory celebration. Sir, based on my own biases, I would not have been invited but it was by pure happenstance that I was at Bath Beach. I was not accompanied by my father, who did have a political belt, not unknown to me. However, at that celebration of the Democratic Labour Party(s victory in 1971, even though Peter(s complexion was entirely different from the masses of people gathered at Bath Beach, he interacted among them with a suave smoothness, which was not the product of any hypocrisy or play-acting but clearly this was a man who was comfortable with black people.

He became Minister of Tourism after that 1971 election and served in this Honourable House between 1971 and 1976. Again, in 1976, at a time of an enormous cataclysmic swing against his Party, he contested against a person called Mr. Maurice Ward, who, from his every proclivity, was a working-class man in orientation and who was also easy with the people. I would say that the swing of 1976 would have been responsible for Mr. Morgan(s defeat. Were it not for the swing, the probability might have been that he would have continued in Parliament as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

The normal system given to constituents differs a little bit from how it was in 1976. In fact, some people believe there was such a constituency as Christ Church North Central in 1976, but my better judgement tells me that it was the area or most of the area now called Christ Church West Central.

Mr. Speaker, he did not win his seat in 1976 but he did not give up fighting for his Party of choice, the Democratic Labour Party. When that Party returned to office in 1986, Mr. Morgan was appointed High Commissioner to Canada and served for more than four years, with distinction. Sir, as fate would have it, he went back to the very country in which he had staged the Montreal Expo, some years earlier.

H:99(2&3)1030 a.m.

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND:

Sir, those who knew him well, gave him credit as something of a political strategist. I cannot vouch for that but it is certainly my understanding that he so understood people as to be able to propose policies on behalf of his Party that he thought would inure to the benefit of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I should go back in time somewhat and by way of a small amount of background to the life of this great man. Sir, by way of background to his political life, he was very much a member of the British Army. It is believed that when he was a member of the British Army, he first visited Barbados. It is believed that he was in the Army in something known as the Gurka Rifles Unit. Sir, I am not a military man so I know very little military history but I am advised that he was part of the Gurka Rifles Unit in the British Army which served Nepal, India and which Unit was one of some distinction. I cannot say that it was a unit that practised shock and awe but, certainly in the context of how the world began after 1945, he would have certainly served on behalf of the cause of freedom against the tyranny of the oppressors who sought to rule the world in World War II after 1939.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that Mr. Morgan was a fervent admirer of the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. He was such an important personality in the Democratic Labour Party that Mr. Morgan always said that very often a Party's fortunes depend very much on its leader's stature and credibility and so, Mr. Morgan thought that when Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow led that he should be so exalted as to occupy a particular echelon where he would stand apart. Sir, it seems to me - modest, political person that I am - that it is really true that in the context of the small islands that the leaders of Parties must stand apart and must be so revered as to be able to give credibility to their underlings and sometimes even to rescue the seats of weaker candidates who work for these leaders(Parties).

Mr. Speaker, to Mr. Morgan's widow, Margaret and children, Jan, Jonathan and Tim; I know Tim well, who is a tall, hardworking person with an interest in the fish business; on behalf of the Government and the Barbados Labour Party, I

wish to tender condolences and ask that the Resolution which is normally prepared on occasions like this, be done.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to introduce this Resolution and ask that at an appropriate time today, after the conclusion of this debate that we stand in one minute silence as a recognition of his life, in regret of his death. Sir, as I say so, may he rest in peace and may light eternal continue to visit him at a spiritual level.

Mr. Speaker, with these remarks, I beg to move that the Resolution be made and sent to his family.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to second this motion and to say that Mr. Peter Morgan has served the Democratic Labour Party well and Barbados as a whole. It is no doubt that Mr. Peter Morgan who came to the Caribbean with the intention to be in Jamaica ended up in Trinidad by accident and for some reason felt committed to come back to Barbados and to live in Barbados. It is no doubt that Mr. Peter Morgan, a person of white pigmentation, chose the political party at the time that one would have expected him not to join. Sir, at that time, the Democratic Labour Party was just formed after 1955 and he joined the Party in 1956 where he supported Sir Douglas Lynch in Christ Church, serving his apprenticeship because, unlike many he started as a canvasser for Sir Douglas Lynch.

Mr. Speaker, it is no doubt that he was a man of vision, that if an honour had to be placed for the development of the country because of the success of tourism, that this man, Mr. Peter Morgan would have been the person to receive such an honour. He served the Democratic Labour Party in many capacities and acted as a worker, helping to fight in various elections. Sir, he ran as a candidate, served as a Minister and also served as Consul-General for this great political party.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most noticeable occasions would have been between the years 1965 and 1967, when he was Commissioner-General for Barbados and when he served at the World Fair in Montreal. Sir, some politicians sitting on the other side would remember well the work that this honourable gentleman did while serving in Montreal.

Mr. Speaker, so impressed were some of those politicians that when they came back to Barbados some of them were undecided of which political party they should join. Sir, the story is told that a particular politician who turned out to be Minister of Tourism later on his political life had to decide whether to join the Barbados Labour Party or the Democratic Labour Party and the story was told that when the honourable gentleman looked over the fence, he recognised that the other organisation was lacking in the particular qualities required for further leadership and instead of joining the Democratic Labour Party that honourable gentlemen joined the Barbados Labour Party with leadership in hope. It is true that the honourable gentlemen would have recognised that the Democratic Labour Party would have been the Party of the day and he was so impressed with the work of Mr. Morgan that he was tempted to remain where he first started but, Mr. Speaker, one has to

weigh one(s) political future and this was done by the Honourable Member.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Morgan started his life in England and worked and traveled with the British Army. Sir, one of the most interesting things is that when Mr. Morgan came to the Caribbean and came to Barbados, he had no desire to leave Barbados because he was very impressed with this (little rock). He could not be accused of a person using Barbados as a base to build a foundation elsewhere. Mr. Speaker, the story is told this honourable gentleman build and kept all his assets in Barbados and, therefore, could not be accused of exploiting the resources of Barbados and sending them elsewhere. If you look at the foundation of his family, one would recognise that his family continued to build resources in Barbados by having ownership in hotels or in the fishing fleet of Barbados. It is to this that we need to honour such a gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, when one considers the status of tourism in the country of Barbados, one has to wonder why a man who has given so much to tourism in this country has not been given a higher honour.

H99/10:40

Sequence 4

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation of Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN:...Sir, I think that it is only fitting that his recognition and work to tourism be acknowledged, and some honour is bestowed on him, even after his death.

Sir, the political Party of which I am honoured to be part thereof has served him well and he has served it well. He was not like others who believe that they could only serve in certain positions. He was prepared to serve in every position requested of him, by that organisation, to make sure and ensure that success was there for the Party. Mr. Speaker, he did it in such a way that he made sure that he canvassed in all areas mandated to him, especially in the Christ Church area, for all candidates. He was even the Campaign Manager for the political Party in the 1990s, when one thought the political Party had a particular problem at that time. The record will show that he was able to deliver the Democratic Labour Party an election victory, under his Chairmanship, at a time when the opponents' weapons were well-sharpened, and prepared to take over. Sir, he was able to use his influence, to ensure that the other side was not able to capture that goodwill that was left after the death of the leader, the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow.

Sir, there is no doubt that there was a special bond between Mr. Morgan and Mr. Barrow. The story is told that they had many occasions together. The story always boiled down to one of a cooking lesson, a trip out to sea or a political strategy to lift the Democratic Labour Party to higher heights. Sir, I am saying that this man has served the Democratic Labour Party well, and the Barbados Government as well.

Mr. Speaker, when one looks at his vision and recognised he was pushing tourism or trying to implement policies for tourism, when one recognised now that tourism is the main industry in this country in 2006, I am saying that his work should be acknowledged and rewarded. This Parliament can only do that by recognising the contribution of such a great man, who had to be a visionary.

Mr. Speaker, all future Ministers of Tourism would do well to take a leaf from his book. There is no doubt that he has paved a way for progress, not only in tourism but for the development of this country. He has demonstrated, without any selfishness, that he was truly a recognised Barbadian, who identified Barbados as the country where he wanted to remain. He worked and demonstrated that he was not only committed to the Party but also to the development of Barbados. Sir, he ensured that he did a good job with the industry that was entrusted to him, and he was good at it and moved it forward.

Sir, it is said that during his tenure that he was able, not only to get the French Canadians to come to Barbados as tourists, but to encourage them to invest heavily in the West Coast of Barbados. The evidence is there, especially in the Sunset Crest area, developments like Golden View. Mr. Speaker, that development is only one example in which he would have played a major role in developing Barbados. If you know anything of the success story of the Sunset Crest area, then you would appreciate the contribution of this great gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, to his family, his wife, Margaret, children, Jonathan, Tim and Jan and all others associated with him, I express our sincere condolences and ask God(s) continued blessing on his grieving family. I hope that this Parliament would recognise and appreciate the contribution of this great man, and that his life and works will be continually used by present and future politicians, and as a foundation for politicians to recognise that after they leave this Parliament, at least they should be known for something. Sir, truly, the name Peter Morgan will be known, not only in Barbados but elsewhere for his great contribution to the tourism industry.

Sir, I thank you very much for entertaining me.

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

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Sir, I think that it is only appropriate that I pay tribute and respect to a gentleman who clearly would have been one of the very early pioneers in developing our number one earning sector. I first met Mr. Morgan when I joined the Barbados Hotel Tourism Association as an Executive in late 1994. Mr. Morgan, even though clearly of a different political persuasion, was always a person to offer serious words of advice, and I was in the Other Place at the time for the Barbados Labour Party. Mr. Morgan knew this and knowing of the deep commitment and interest that needed to be paid to the development of the tourism industry, was not only one to meet on occasion and talk, but actually called me to express his views on the development of the industry.

Sir, when I became the Minister of Tourism he was not as

forthcoming with his advice, relative to the development of the industry. Clearly, he was a man, although not on our political side, who was always very gracious. Sir, you would never have detected in any way that Mr. Morgan was not of the same hue, as most of us in Barbados. As a matter of fact, he acted, in my opinion, in many instances more like a man of our colour, than of the lighter hue of which he was. He was really and truly somewhat of a people's person.

Sir, as a matter of fact, I happened to encounter him at an event, held by the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association, where he said, that at the end of the day, tourism is about the development of all those classes of people, at the bottom of the ladder, who really need their economic and social existence changed, and that tourism was the means by which we could change much of what was happening in Barbados, socially and economically.

Mr. Morgan was one of the early pioneers of the industry, at a time in Barbados where many people, do not seem to recognise that the Canadian market actually dominated Barbados(tourism. As a matter of fact, the Canadian market has been largely responsible for the development of the South Coast of Barbados, at a time when we were looking for a balance with the larger and more affluent West Coast of Barbados. The Canadian market actually offered us an opportunity for those who were coming out of the sugar industry and who were for the first time being involved in the development of tourism. The Canadian market dominated because it showed the profile and demographics that we needed to develop that market.

Mr. Morgan was also one of the early pioneers in the development of what is known as the Apartment Hotel. As a matter of fact, as opposed to what happened on the West Coast of Barbados, where there were full-service hotels, this was an opportunity for people,

H10.50 a.m.

Sequence 5

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

House 99, sequence 06, 10:50 a.m.

Continuation of the Hon. N.A. LYNCH:

...for the first time to come into a marketplace at a budget level - an affordable level - to be able not only to have a hotel but to have appliances within that setting be able to do all the things like cooking and whatever, which allowed them to play an integral part in the economy, even though they were tourists. Mr. Morgan was one of the first people pioneering the concept and pushing that concept forward.

Clearly, the south coast has now evolved into a much different market but he was the one, maybe, the principal proponent of arguing the point that what is now the Condominium Hotel, at that time the Apartment Hotel, really could be the mainstay of our tourism economy and could balance out what we did on the west coast of Barbados.

There are some who would argue that he was the best Minister of Tourism that Barbados ever had. Some people would argue differently, I suspect, but that is not to take away from the tremendous contribution that Peter Morgan would have made to the development of the sector and, by extension, the development of our economy and the development of Barbados as we know it today.

I therefore on behalf of my own family, want to extend to his family our deepest regrets and to say to them that even though this is late in coming, he really did make a fantastic contribution to our development and this is something they should always take with them.

Sir, may he rest in peace.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to speak to this Resolution and to make a contribution to the reflection of this Honourable House on the life and times of a Barbadian that has made a significant contribution to the development of this country, through his work as a politician and his work outside of politics. Sir, like most speakers before myself, it has been said that when the topic of the early development of tourism in Barbados is discussed, one name springs to mind that would be of Peter Morgan. Mr. Morgan was a founding member of the Barbados Hotel Association in 1952, and was a three-term President in the 1950s.

Mr. Speaker, he began his political career in 1956, when he joined the Democratic Labour Party during the General Elections of that same year. While then a chief canvasser for Sir Douglas Lynch in the Christ Church constituency, he was appointed a member of the first Tourism Board in 1958, and was made Chairman after the Democratic Labour Party came to power in 1961, where he served from 1963 to 1970. Between the periods of 1965 and 1967, he was the Commissioner-General for Barbados and Guyana at the famous Montreal Expo.

Always one to be involved in a good and clean fight, he joined the political arena as a strategist and also contested the then General Elections of the Christ Church constituency, when it was a double member constituency with the late Edwy Talma, and he was unsuccessful in his first attempt. He was appointed a Senator in 1966 and there he served until 1970.

Mr. Speaker, he was elected to the House of Assembly in 1971 as the Member of Christ Church North Central when the system was changed to a single member constituency. Mr. Morgan served as Minister of Tourism from 1971 to 1976 and he was the founding Chairman of the Caribbean Tourism Research Centre that was set up in 1974. He served as the President of the Caribbean Tourism Association between 1975 and 1976.

I believe, from my own personal experience with him, as a very popular and likeable politician, that when he lost the election in 1976 - as was said earlier by the lead Speaker on the

Other Side, due to a massive swing against the Party - he lost that election by nine votes at the time, which was testimony to his popularity. When the Democratic Labour Party was returned to office in 1986, Mr. Morgan was appointed High Commissioner to Canada and served until 1990.

As an excellent political strategist and one who assisted the Democratic Labour Party in many of their general election victories and losses, he returned to the political sphere in 1991, as the Campaign Manager for the Democratic Labour Party for that successful general election of that year. In fact, Mr. Morgan was always heard boasting that he canvassed in every single campaign election and by-election since 1956, which indeed is a testimony to his longevity and his commitment to the political development of this country.

I became reasonably close to Mr. Morgan during the 1999 General Elections when I lost that election to the then former Minister of Labour and I always remembered Mr. Morgan's words of advice to myself, that there were many Barbadian Prime Ministers who lost their seats, do not give up young man and keep fighting.

I remember distinctly when I functioned as the General Secretary of the Democratic Labour Party during the periods 2002, 2003, 2004, it was Mr. Morgan's advice that we should reconstitute the Elders Council of the Party, and he played a pivotal role in helping to re-establish that entity, to which Philip Greaves was made the Chairman and Frank DaSilva the Public Relations Officer.

Sir, as a testimony to this commitment to what he considered to be important, I remember during the last days of his illness, when Mr. Morgan was in Canada, our relationship had developed to the point where he would cut out - I would always keep them - all of the scientific literature relating to his particular illness at the time and what were the modern thinkings, et cetera, and he would envelope them and post them to Barbados to my office. Those are documents that I will cherish and keep throughout my entire life.

I would want to say on a personal basis that this was an individual who made a significant contribution to the development of this country, politically and otherwise and I want to take this opportunity to pay my absolute regards on that front.

I want to say to his widow Margaret and children, Jonathan, Tim and Jan that we want to express our sincere condolences and ask God's continued blessing on the family.

I thank you very much, Sir.

Dr. W.F. DUGUID: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to say a few words, with respect to the passing of Mr. Peter Morgan who was a Member of this Honourable House.

First, let me say that Mr. Morgan represented a small part of the constituency of which I now have the Honour to represent, the Sargeant's Village area and even now sometimes when I canvass the area, I often hear people speaking highly of Mr.

Morgan and the various things that he may have done in that constituency. It is obvious that he certainly made an impression in that constituency in his time, almost as much as I am trying to make in my short time in the foray.

House 99, sequence 06, 11:0014

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation of Dr. W. F. DUGUID:

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Philip West speaking about his Curriculum Vitae. Peter Morgan was obviously a remarkable man who has done a lot and has seen a lot not only in India, Nepal and Canada but in Barbados and throughout Britain.

Sir, there is something that I did not hear any of the other Honourable Members mention - this is how I manage to meet Mr. Morgan on a personal level - that is, his work with the Barbados National Trust. He was very much a member of the Barbados National Trust and he often put his house available for show with the Barbados National Trust. I have visited his house on two or maybe three occasions and we often talk, not so much about politics because we differ on that aspect, but about the preservation of the culture and the heritage of the country. I think that was an important aspect to the work that Peter Morgan did, not from a political aspect but from a humanist and from almost a Bajan aspect, to have been so involved in preserving the culture, the heritage and the history of this great country. That is something that he really did for the Barbados National Trust.

Mr. Speaker, when he was at his pinnacle in politics, I was very much a young man now getting into my political conscience. When he lost the election in the 1960s, I do not even think I was born yet. When he became a Senator, I was just four years old and in 1976 when he lost again I was just nine years old. Therefore, I do not have a lot from a political side to say except to reflect on the articles and the columns that he wrote on a weekly basis. Sir, although I enjoyed them immensely and I got an idea to see the type of person he was and the type of mores and values he held, I would often file them in the concept of another view because often he did not share the same views that I share but I nonetheless respected his ideas, his concepts and oftentimes his vision.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is what we have to understand. Sometimes we have to agree to disagree, but appreciate the way that somebody can put over things and the vision that they may have for the country or for a particular area.

Mr. Speaker, in all of my dealings with Mr. Morgan I found him to be very gracious, very forthright and a man of utmost integrity. I would love to say that he was my friend. He was on the other side of the aisle, but we can still have friendships on the other side from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, I give my condolences to his widow and to his children, whom I am sure are feeling that great loss, and hope that this Resolution could give some comfort to the contribution that he had given to Barbados as a whole.

I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to associate this Honourable Chair with the sentiments expressed. This Honourable House, with acclaim, accepts the Resolution of Sympathy and directs that this appropriate Resolution be sent to his grieving relatives.

As a mark of respect, on the passing of the late Honourable Member, I invite all presence to stand with me to observe one minute silence.

One minute silence was observed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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 VESTING IN HOTELS AND RESORTS LIMITED OF THE PARCEL OF LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN, SITUATE AT ST. LAWRENCE GAP IN THE PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH IN THIS ISLAND FOR TOURISM PURPOSES.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, this particular Resolution deals with a Resolution that had already come to Parliament regarding the vesting of these lands at the former Dover Convention Centre site, in Hotels and Resorts Limited.

By Resolution No. 42/2001, Parliament, in accordance with section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225, approved the vesting in Hotels and Resorts Limited of 5 711 square metres of land situated at Dover in Christ Church.

Mr. Speaker, the process of finalising the vesting of this parcel of land at the former Dover Convention site, in Hotels and Resorts Limited, was not completed because the area of land to be vested is part of a larger area measuring 7 539.8 square metres inclusive of 1 809 square metres of accreted lands. The necessary planning permission to subdivide the lands to allow the vesting of the landward part of the land in Hotels and Resorts Limited was not obtained as required by the Land Registration Act and the Town and Country Planning Act.

Sir, the portion of lands that had been vested previously in Hotels and Resorts Limited under this Act, actually had lands going down to the highwater mark. What we are seeking to do, Mr. Speaker, is to retain those beach lands as the property of the Crown and not to vest the lands down to that mark.

Sir, this particular effort has even greater significance for the development of lands on that side. In our opinion, it is really a project that is going to be one of the major projects for benchmarking how we go forward in the future regarding the development of hotels and the development of hotels on beach properties.

Mr. Speaker, I know that some would suspect that this opens up an opportunity to speak wider on another issue, but I am going to keep it as tight as possible.

Asides.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: I know that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is going to chomp at the bait, but I am not going to allow that.

House 99 Sequence 7

11:10 a.m.

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation of Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, why we are vesting these lands, in the first place, has to do with the development of the Dover Convention site. We are vesting the lands in Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL), for the development of a condominium hotel, one which is related to Time Out At The Gap, which is one of the GEMS properties. The intent of Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL) was to be involved in a joint venture project with a private developer, to develop that site into a condominium hotel. This was first conceived as a mix-used property. This site links to Time Out At The Gap.

It was conceived that in building these condominiums, there would be the concept of fractional ownership of these hotels. Sir, what is happening in tourism development, is that not many developers are willing to invest in both real estate and in the management of hotels, at the same time. There is a distinct move globally to separate out the ownership of the real estate, from the management of the properties. This is going to be a pioneering effort on the behalf of the GEMS of Barbados Project, which is to create a condominium concept that allows for fractional ownership.

Mr. Speaker, essentially, an owner would buy a condominium but he or she would put it back into a rental pool, to be managed by a hotel. This concept might be new to Barbados, in many respects, but it is happening all over the region. As a matter of fact, when the bottom of the real estate market fell out in Miami, many of the developments we now know as South Beach, et cetera, pioneered this concept, where many of the leading hotel brands which owned hotels on that site, realised that real estate values were going beyond what

they could not conceivably build on and made a return on, they all created this concept of fractional ownership. What they did was rather than continuing to develop the land, they simply built condominiums or hotel rooms and sold them off to individual owners, who put them back into the rental pool.

The concept of the fractional ownership is that you, as the owner, have to book that condominium like everybody else. In addition, depending on the contract, you would be allowed a number of weeks stay but for the most part, that condominium would be under a rental pool and would be managed under a hotel management brand. It is actually an investment, from which that owner can actually gain.

Mr. Speaker, the decision to create a condominium hotel on the site was clearly in an effort for Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL), who are indebted to the major shareholder, the Crown, for substantial losses on the operations of the GEMS of Barbados Hotels. It also gives it the opportunity to claw back and to bring down some of the indebtedness that has been created over time.

Mr. Speaker, I must say too that the issue of the GEMS of Barbados, which would come up in this debate, the concept of saving those small hotels on the South Coast, is one that I have never heard disputed very widely by a number of people on the other side, including and mostly so, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. The issue of trying to save those small, indebted hotels on the South Coast is a banner, which I think would always be associated with the Honourable Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, it seems as if you are taking a simple vesting of land from the Crown, into Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL) and are making it into a debate. I am surprised. I am taking it from you.

Asides.

Hon. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, it is a very simple matter. The vesting of the lands at that site in Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL), raises the issue of what is the intentions of Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL) regarding the site and why there were being vested. All I was seeking to do was to give an explanation as to why Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL) would have gotten into this joint venture arrangement, in the first place. Therefore, the concept of the joint venture arrangement is to create a basis for creating a condominium hotel on that site, which is not known to us, and to create a basis for Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL) to have a larger room pool than they now have. It would also allow them to move out of some of their indebtedness.

The concept is that we will develop 54 condominium units on six developments, to add to a total of 176 more hotel beds for Hotels and Resorts Limited (HRL). This condominium hotel will be managed by the GEMS of Barbados, Time Out At The Gap. The significant benefits outside having additional beds and the room stock will be that there would be ongoing... The intent is to sell most of these units, through the international market, to non-residents, so that they can be ongoing foreign exchange earnings. In this regard, there will also be the matter of increase year-round employment and the

ancillary benefits, which will accrue to establishments, such as restaurants in the Gap.

As I said before, the hotel units would be sold to non-residents and these units would be put back into a rental pool for a minimum of nine month of the year. In the way we have formed the contract, at least 90 per cent of these units are expected to come back into the rental pool. They would be managed and marketed in association with an upgraded Time Out At The Gap. Part of the receipts from the initial sale of these units would be ploughed back into upgrading Time Out At The Gap, along with other GEMS properties.

The services of an experienced realtor were actually sought for the sale of these units because in 2004, 30 of these units, even before completion, were put up for sale and within three days, were all subscribed, with down payments being made on them. The Board has also agreed that there would be a subsidiary company formed, to provide outfitting and management services for the condominium hotel units. This, of course, would be subject to the management services agreement which would be formed between the owners and the hotel.

Mr. Speaker, this is clearly an opportunity for us to create a concept that is not very well-known to Barbados, the concept of condominiums being managed through a central management contract, through one of the GEMS of Barbados properties, Time Out At The Gap.

Mr. Speaker, with those words, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that this concept was copied from the Democratic Labour Party and that it was first seen in the early 1960s and 1970s, when the sugar industry of Barbados was saved by the Democratic Labour Party, buying a number of run-down estates, in order to create capacity in the sugar industry.

Mr. Speaker, I have always said to my comrades on this side, that one could give the other side the best of ideas but that for some reason, they know how to destroy those very ideas. It is no doubt that in copying the concept that was first given to the sugar industry, when it was the most productive industry, this Government has copied this concept for the tourism industry. Sir, there is no problem on this side, as it relates to the concept, but the problem relates to the project(s) implementation.

Mr. Speaker, if one were to look back at an earlier project, called the Heywoods Hotel Project, at its conceptualisation and implementation, one would be able to see a trace of the policies of the Democratic Labour Party in this new concept called GEMS of Barbados. Sir, our problem relates to how the project was implemented and there can be no doubt that the way in which the project has been implemented, has cost the taxpayers of Barbados a large sum of money, which was not previously

budgeted for.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the new approach of GEMS, as it relates to this vesting, is a clear case that the Government has now admitted that its first approach to that GEMS project has failed and that the concept of managing a normal hotel, cannot now be the concept to be used, when one looks at the profitability of this particular project.

H:No99 (8)1120 a.m.

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

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

Sir, when one looks at the profitability of this particular project, it is clear that if there is no change that GEMS would continue to rack up large losses which would be burdensome to the taxpayers of this country. This is why instead of running a hotel, the Board now has to move towards the concept of condominiums where they would now be able to sell the asset to individuals, get back the cash and hope, on a long-term basis to use the management concept where they would charge fees to the owners to try to defray the cost accumulated by GEMS of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise to this side when one sees that the 1 809 square metre of beach is being held by the Government of Barbados...

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Previously when it was to be a hotel, it was owned by the taxpayers of Barbados and one would not have to worry about the beach and the uses of the beach but now that the ownership is being passed over to individuals, you now have to protect the use of the beach. This is why Government is now forced to come back to this Parliament to maintain the beach access and the ownership of the beach due to the land that would have been accreted to this new development.

Mr. Speaker, today it is this hotel but instead of just talking about having 54 condominiums, it is clear to me that the total package is to convert the total rooms of GEMS into condominiums and that Hotel and Resorts Limited would now be a management company and not an owner(s) company. Sir, in other words, all the hotels will be sold as condominiums. It is also interesting that we have seen a situation that this side has been able to educate the Government of the day about the negatives of condominiums. We should not have condominiums owned by persons who used them on a yearly basis and then closed them and leave the island.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to hear today that the Government is entering an arrangement that has been suggested by the Opposition to ensure that the owners of these hotels would now allow the management company to rent them for nine months. Sir, we have no problem with that. I do not why they want to (take off their clothes) about that point because we have been saying that condominiums were not serving Barbados well. I am happy to see that the Minister of Tourism has not listened to

his comrades but that he has listened to Honourable Members on this side on this particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, there is doubt that what we have been seen in this country is a conversion of people who were able to run yearly businesses, who have been now able to convert them into capital gains, which would be of no benefit to the country. Sir, we have to be careful when we see a hotel being converted into condominiums because they are only selling for capital gains and not for profits. Sir, when you run a yearly operation, that is what is expected but when the capital asset is sold, capital is gained and it is of no benefit to the taxpayers of this country and this must be understood. Mr. Speaker, when we, on this side, advise the Minister, we know of what we speak.

Mr. Speaker, it must be pointed out and put in this legislation that those persons under the Hotel Aids Act and the other amendment which have been made in this House, to give concessions to hoteliers, cannot now use them for condominiums unless they make the arrangements to lease the property for nine months of the year because we would be wasting the money of the taxpayers to allow persons to convert properties into condominiums, live in them for three months, do not rent them to the benefit of the country but yet still they gain from the concessions under the Hotels Aids Act.

Mr. Speaker, this why I am saying...

Mr. SPEAKER: I have said in this House that I am not going to allow a simple vesting Resolution to go on to be a discussion about policy because all of what is being stated here is not even in the Addendum of this Resolution. I will not allow this Resolution to go on any further on matters that are not covered by the Addendum of this Resolution. It does not state anything about condos nor does it state anything about the purpose of any vesting. If Government sees that it has a purpose, it has to come in another Resolution.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I will abide by your ruling but I sat this morning, in this House, and heard about condos.

Mr. SPEAKER: I know you did but I am saying to you that I should not have allowed that because this is where the Resolution is now going. I am saying that you are now taking it a little further and talking about the development of condos in Barbados.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, this is all part of it. The concept of GEMS does not stand alone. This policy of nine months a year cannot be only for GEMS. If we allow this concept to be only for GEMS, then it would be self-defeating. This is why I am asking the Minister to make it all-inclusive, not only for tourism but make it all-inclusive and all-embracing for all those persons who get support from the taxpayers of this country to ensure that they too give up the nine months per year for rentals. Sir, every year when we do Estimates in this House, we allocate large sums for the Ministry of Tourism, from the Ministry of Finance that they could be collecting to hotel sector to build their markets. Sir, if we are giving them concessions under the hotel sector and they are now using it for something else, we have a right to reclaim it.

Mr. Speaker, this particular Resolution as it relates to vesting is vesting because of a particular reason. We are vesting this land in Hotel and Resorts Limited so that they can convert the hotel which they had previously into condominiums. Sir, we have to be very careful how we limit debating in Barbados. If we limit debating, then we cannot correct the problems which we are seeing in the tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important at this stage that we are allowed to expand on it so that the public of Barbados would have a better understanding of the works of this Parliament it, seeing that it concept introduced by the Minister. Sir, we cannot allow this Parliament to behave as if we are just here to gloss over issues. Mr. Speaker, I know you would agree because in your teachings you have always taught us how to expand on topics because, Sir, I do not want you to forget that I sat (at your feet).

Mr. Speaker, this particular seems to be a simple matter but it is an important matter at this juncture of our development. Sir, we are seeing a situation where we are now making a major shift in our tourism industry where previously it was the hotel concept but we are now recognising that we need to shift to the condominium concept. This is why something as new and interesting as this has to be debated and the best time to debate it is now.

H99/11:30

Sequence 9

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

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

Sir, when one looks at the profitability of this particular project, it is clear that if there is no change that GEMS would continue to rack up large losses which would be burdensome to the taxpayers of this country. This is why instead of running a hotel, the Board now has to move towards the concept of condominiums where they would now be able to sell the asset to individuals, get back the cash and hope, on a long-term basis to use the management concept where they would charge fees to the owners to try to defray the cost accumulated by GEMS of Barbados.

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Asides.

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Parliament to maintain the beach access and the ownership of the beach due to the land that would have been accreted to this new development.

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Mr. SPEAKER: I have said in this House that I am not going to allow a simple vesting Resolution to go on to be a discussion about policy because all of what is being stated here is not even in the Addendum of this Resolution. I will not allow this Resolution to go on any further on matters that are not covered by the Addendum of this Resolution. It does not state anything about condos nor does it state anything about the purpose of any vesting. If Government sees that it has a purpose, it has to come in another Resolution.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I will abide by your ruling but I sat this morning, in this House, and heard about condos.

Mr. SPEAKER: I know you did but I am saying to you that I should not have allowed that because this is where the Resolution is now going. I am saying that you are now taking it a little further and talking about the development of condos in Barbados.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, this is all part of it. The concept of GEMS does not stand alone. This policy of nine months a year cannot be only for GEMS. If we allow this concept to be only for GEMS, then it would be self-defeating. This is why I am asking the Minister to make it all-inclusive, not only for tourism but make it all-inclusive and all-embracing for all those persons who get support from the taxpayers of this country to ensure that they too give up the nine months per year for rentals. Sir, every year when we do Estimates in this House, we allocate large sums for the Ministry of Tourism, from the Ministry of Finance that they could be collecting to hotel sector to build their markets. Sir, if we are giving them concessions under the hotel sector and they are now using it for something else, we have a right to reclaim it.

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Mr. Speaker, it is very important at this stage that we are allowed to expand on it so that the public of Barbados would have a better understanding of the works of this Parliament it, seeing that it concept introduced by the Minister. Sir, we cannot allow this Parliament to behave as if we are just here to gloss over issues. Mr. Speaker, I know you would agree because in your teachings you have always taught us how to expand on topics because, Sir, I do not want you to forget that I sat (at your feet).

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H99/11:30

Sequence 9

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation of Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: We cannot

postpone it, because if it is postponed, we might find ourselves in a situation where a year from now, there will be no opportunity for us to debate it or to correct the problems within the system. Mr. Speaker, I am beseeching you, on behalf of the Opposition and the Government side - because it is clear that the Honourable Minister wanted a full debate on this particular issue - to allow the Honourable House and we will be guided by your ruling, which we have always done. The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown, will know that we do not disrespect the Chair, like the other side. Sir, whatever you rule, we will abide by.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, just take your seat a minute, please. The Honourable Minister, in my understanding, was clearly stating, the purpose for the Hotel and Resorts Limited to become the possessors of this land, and that this land was going to be used for the building of condominiums. Sir, is this what you stated?

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: Therefore, this is not the occasion for us to move into any debate on condominiums. The Honourable Minister stated what the land was going to be used for. That is what I understood and therefore I am going to limit it to that. I am not, therefore, going to allow this to go on to be a discussion on whether we should have condominiums or not.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I accept your ruling. I will ensure that the Party discuss this next Sunday, at their Norther Zone meeting, and to explain to the public, in its fullness, the new concept of condos versus hotels in Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, this is not the Resolution before Honourable House.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, we will never make this part of the Resolution before the Honourable House. This is only an aside.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that it is clear that the previous vesting took away the rights of those persons who wanted to use that land area, called the beach area. The previous vesting, gave them the rights to the beach land. Sir, now that it is owned by private individuals, the private beach is not private anymore and this Resolution has now stopped that beach from being private and the Government has now accepted its social...

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: On what do you rise Honourable Member?

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is sitting in the Chair as the Leader of the Opposition and I would wish to believe that the Honourable Member would behave in such a manner when he leads on that side.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member, as all Honourable Members in this Honourable House, including yourself, are fully aware that there have never been private beaches in Barbados. There are not now private beaches in Barbados and

there will not, in the future, be private beaches in Barbados. Sir, to deliberately and provocatively try to anchor whatever point he is seeking to make, in this Honourable House, I am not clear on it at all, on such a basis, is to grossly mislead the Honourable House.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, once you are seeking to do and have not done, it cannot be a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please, please. Honourable Member, move on please.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that if you gave up something previously, somebody had a right, Hotel and Resorts Limited had that right. Sir, it is obvious from this Resolution that the Government has changed and has now taken back that particular right.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Honourable House. Sir, Resolution 42 of 2001, relating to this matter, vested 5 711 square metres of land in Hotel and Resorts Limited. The issue at hand is, that land formed part of a larger parcel of over 7 500 square metres. The accreted lands were never part of the lease. It is from a legal point of view one cannot lease, sell, vest or otherwise, land that has not been subdivided according to the Land Registry Act and the Town and Country Planning Act of Barbados. Therefore, what is being sought, is not to increase or decrease the area of land. It is still 5 700 plus square metres of land. It is now a clear parcel, fully separate from the larger portion. So that the accreted lands of approximately 1 809 square metres, which were never part of the Resolution, continue not to be part of the Resolution. Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House, because the facts are here in the addendum to this Resolution.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East would have to bring the Resolution and show that in the previous Resolution ... I challenge the Honourable Member to bring that the 1 809 square metres were included in that same Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, it is mentioned here.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I am talking about the old vesting. I am not talking about the new vesting. The Honourable Member knows that it was not in there.

Asides

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: It was not in the previous Resolution but because the Government has found itself with new land, it is now protecting that new land. Sir, previously, the land that was leased was to the high water mark, which is not now the same location. That is the point.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is incorrect. There has been no change in the size of the accreted lands. The previous Resolution did not go to the highwater mark. As I indicated in my previous intervention, the larger portion of land, as indicated by the Surveyors(Map, and the Surveyors(Map have accompanied Resolution No.42 of

2001, will indicate that it was part of a larger portion of over 7 500 square metres. The requirements of the Land Registry Act and the Town and Country Planning Act, with respect to having a clear legal subdivision as opposed to merely a subdivision by way of lease, were not met.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, as it relates to this land, this side would need a commitment from the other side that the vendors who operate in that particular area would not now be affected...

Asides

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, what are you trying to do?

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, this is within the Resolution. This is within abutting and bounding.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, all I want you to do is, according to what the Honourable Minister said, he stated what will be the uses of the land. All I am suggesting to you is to make your comments relevant to what the Minister has stated, what will be the use of the land.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I agree with you and accept your ruling, but I can only deal with what is the current use of the land. The Minister needs to speak of what will occur after this Resolution is passed. What will happen to those persons operating on the land and next to the land? That is the point.

Sir, anyone who understands what is going on in that particular area and anyone who knows the area, will know that you cannot debate this Resolution without dealing with the persons who are actually on the land now. Those persons have rights too, and must be told what will happen to them after this vesting has occurred. We as a Parliament need to know what will happen in that particular area after this vesting has occurred.

Sir, we hope that after all of this has been done, for Hotel and Resorts Limited, we will now see a clear policy on this particular matter, and there will be some debate as soon as possible on this changed policy. Sir, out of respect for this Parliament, we came to this Honourable House with one understanding and if we have now changed the understanding, as it relates to Hotel and Resorts Limited, then there is a need for a debate on this issue.

H99: 11.40 a.m.

Sequence 10

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

House 99, sequence 11, 11:40 a.m.

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

This is a national issue and it has to be debated because, if we started off by owning hotels, and we are now changing to

condos, then the policy has changed. What we told Parliament is not now correct and there is a need for a debate on it and I look forward to the debate on the particular matter.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to seek to bring some clarity, based on the presentation of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. The Honourable Member made a number of assertions, which were not rooted in fact, cannot be supported by the evidence and were clearly way off the mark.

This Resolution, Sir, is rooted in a policy background where the Government, in seeking to manage its lands which include beach lands also recognises its need to balance two very important but equally weighted policy objectives. One is to ensure the economic development of this country. There is no doubt that tourism development is fundamental to our future. There is also no doubt, Sir, that this administration will not, in any way, prejudice the right of full access by our people to their beach lands.

The issue of private beaches has never arisen in Barbados because it was always clear. Sir, that law usually speaks to issues relating to the high water mark. The issue of accreted lands has arisen in more recent times, let us say within the last 20 years.

In fact, Sir, those of us who have traveled around the country-and I do not know if the Honourable Member for St. Lucy only knows St. Lucy-but those of us who have taken the time to know the other ten parishes...

Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Sir, we know of several beaches in our times, which have either grown larger or smaller. The reality is that the time has come for us, not only to implement a clear policy on accreted lands, but also to create specific legislation and that is process.

Sir, even while we developed a legislative framework on the matter of the treatment of accreted lands, as we have here in this Resolution, we are taking the opportunity to exercise our judgment and our policy as the owners of the land, in terms of how we would want to dispose of the land for development.

We are also taking steps in this Resolution to ensure that while we are allocating lands of the former Dover Convention site to Hotel and Resorts Limited for tourism development, we are not vesting in that entity, the right of ultimate control over the 1 809 square meters of accreted land, that is from the highwater mark, inland.

The Resolution, as indicated previously, did not contemplate that either because the entire parcel from the road reserve, in front of Time Out on the Gap, going towards the highwater mark, is over 7 500 square meters in size. The previous Resolution, Resolution 42 of 2001, covered just about the same

area, 5 711 square metre in that case and 5 730.8 in this case. Except, as indicated in my previous point of order, Sir, that one needed to have a legal subdivision of the land and not just an administrative subdivision of the land.

Sir, since that previous Resolution, we had the land surveyed, we made application to the Chief Town Planner, and the Chief Town Planner has approved the subdivision of the land into two separate parcels of land. One parcel is now the subject of this Resolution before this House in 2006, to vest that land in Hotel and Resorts Limited. The other parcel of land between the highwater mark and the land for building, that is the wider part of the beach land, remains crown land, in order to ensure continued use of it as a public recreational area.

Mr. SPEAKER: And all this Resolution seeks to do is to vest this portion of the land into Hotel and Resorts Limited. This Resolution does not seek to do anything relating to the usage of the land.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Nothing like that, Sir. This really is the simple matter before us. I hope that my short intervention has clarified for the benefit of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, the intention of this Resolution and more particularly, Sir, what is the relation between this Resolution and the previous Resolution, which has been before us.

Sir, this Government has been very clear and consistent in its programme and policy of ensuring full access to beaches in Barbados, providing enhanced facilities for those persons who use the beach for recreation or otherwise and we will continue to do so, Sir.

With that short intervention for the purpose of clarity in this matter, Sir, I want to give my full support to this matter before us, in support of the Government(s) very clear policy objective.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. N.A. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I now ask that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 6 - THE BANKS (TAX ON ASSETS) (VALIDATION) BILL, 2006.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I had been hopeful that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West would have been present to present this. However, I am told that the responsibility of leading the House, even in an acting capacity, is such that one has to come up to the plate very often, when matters may go off course.

Indeed, there is a well-honoured, time-honoured tradition, Sir, that where a Minister sits in the Other Place that the Leader of the House in This Place, will speak to the portfolio of the Minister above...

Mr. SPEAKER: And you have unlimited time.

Asides.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND: It is true, Sir, that I do actually have unlimited time in respect of the rule but the exigencies of office will see us next week, being in here for such lofty matters, that I rather apprehend that in light of a possible long meeting next week of this House, today we ought to charge our batteries in preparation for this by some rest and recreation at an early stage and so, I shall not make use of unlimited time.

In any case, Sir, there is an irony in unlimited time because if time is unlimited it does not mean that you will make a six-hour speech like Mr. Burton Hinds once did in here or the former Honourable Member for the City, Mr. Ernest Deighton Mottley, who spoke in here for eight hours. But unlimited time actually is clearance space, it is unlimited time. In fact, it actually goes into eternity. Who am I to dare or challenge eternity? I will not be challenging eternity.

House 99, sequence 11, 11:5014

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Sir, on or about the 31st day of March 1982, the late great (Tom) Adams, as Minister of Finance, introduced some fiscal measures on the Floor of this House to the effect that some taxes would be levied annually on the assets of commercial banks. The purpose of that narrow taxation measure was to make commercial banks pay on their assets.

Mr. Speaker, I do not propose, notwithstanding your generous offer of unlimited time, to enlarge this debate to take it into the realm of commercial banking generally, else we would be here for a very long time. I want to limit it to the purpose of this retrospective legislation to ensure that all is done in terms of Mr. (Tom) Adams' wishes.

Sir, as it turned out, the tax that was levied was actually imposed on commercial banks from 1982 to the year 2005. Sir, two important things happened. A search of the statute book at the Offices of the Attorney-General and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, indicated quite clearly that the legislative provision and Order necessary to perfect the intention to impose a tax had never passed this Honourable House, and so, low and behold, Government was collecting taxation from 1982 to 2005, but the law to make right and legal that tax had never been passed, and so it falls now on this Parliament to put that anomaly right.

Mr. Speaker, the second very important issue is that several months ago the current Minister of Finance made an announcement that the taxation on the assets of commercial

banks would be phased out and would end. Sir, here we have this current Government, in this year, the year before and the year in front of that, saying that the tax on the assets of banks will be phased out, we also have the scenario where a tax was allegedly or purportedly imposed that never passed Parliament. Sir, only Parliament can impose taxation, so if it ends up that a Government department collects money calling it tax and Parliament has never passed the tax, then indeed that is a serious anomaly. Sir, in terms of what is before us, I am proposing that the Banks (Tax on Assets) (Validation) Bill be read a second time and be taken through all of its stages today. Sir, this Bill, which is a very short Bill, has as its primary purpose, the validation of the imposition and collection of taxes on banks assets for the calendar years 1981 to 2005. That purpose is reflected in this Bill's long title.

Sir, the actual Bill is extremely short. It comprises no more than two clauses, and because of its brevity, I will read the whole Bill so that Honourable Members would know what they are required to debate.

Sir, the Bill says:

(An Act to validate the imposition and collection of taxes on bank assets for the calendar years 1981 to 2005.

ENACTED by the Parliament of Barbados as follows:

1.This Act may be cited as the Banks (Tax on Assets) (Validation) Act, 2006.

2.All taxes on bank assets purported to be imposed and collected pursuant to the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, are hereby declared to have been validly imposed and collected for the calendar years 1981 to 2005.)

Sir, clearly there is going to be an allegation that the Governments between 1981 to 2005, who did not put this matter right, were negligent. Sir, it often happens that matters of an administrative type can - to descend into the vernacular - (humbug) our processes in Government. Sir, pure and proper perfection will follow not just the passage of this Bill in all of its stages, but to get it completely right, it is going to be necessary for the Minister responsible to lay an Order at an opportune time to give proper effect to the Bill which I just described. Therefore, Sir, Government purposes, under Chapter 59B, the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, to introduce the Banks (Tax on Assets) Order, 2006.

Sir, permit me another two to four minutes, because when taxation legislation is being passed, and this is both retrospective legislation and taxation legislation, it has to be crystal clear, because if there are any defects in it, the defects would be interpreted in favour of the taxpayers. Similarly, with retrospective legislation, if its purposes and wording are not crystal clear, courts which have to adjudicate on them would strike them down because of lack of clarity.

Sir, to put this entire process right then, the Order, which would be laid consequence upon the passage of the principal Act, which is under discussion, would be called the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, 2006. That would say that the Minister,

meaning the Minister of Finance, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by section 4 of the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, makes the following Order.

1.This Order may be cited as the Banks (Tax on Assets) Order, 2006;

2.The rate of tax on the average total assets of a bank is:

(a)for the calendar year 2006, three-twentieth of one per cent;

(b)for the calendar year 2007, three-fortieth of one per cent; and

(c)for the calendar year 2008, three-fortieth of one per cent

made up by the Minister when the Minister responsible for Finance perfects this Order.

Mr. Speaker, I have taken this time, because law students and lawyers would say, putting aside any arguments about a negligent Government or a negligent number of governments, that tax legislation must never leave anyone at all in doubt. The tax must be certain and its incidence must fall where it is intended. If the tax is ever retrospectively introduced, it should even be clearer and more certain. Sir, in any event, as law students and lawyers would say, where legislation is passed today, the 16th day of May 2006, to take effect from 1981, 1982 and 1983, then such legislation, though theoretically possible and from a practical perspective permitted, has to be absolutely clear and cannot leave anybody in doubt.

Sir, there would be those on the side of the commercial banks who would wonder how morally just it is to have the banks pay these taxes over the years when there was no legislation appointing the taxes to be paid. However, as I said, in the course of administration there are slips in Government departments. Sir, it was good that a search was done on Government(s) statute books because in the absence of that research it would never have been revealed that the taxation measures that (Tom(Adam had introduced had never been given legislative effect. Therefore, dark as it may be from a moral perspective and leaving one to be curious as to how these things could happen in a modern administration, today(s Bill before this House and the Order to follow are absolutely necessary to put things right.

Sir, as it would turn out, there would come a point when the tax itself is going to stop because the current Minister of Finance says that some time he would stop this tax on bank assets. In fact, I could say that the present Minister of Finance announced on October 22, 2002, that the tax on banks assets would be phased out eventually. In place of the banks assets, the current Minister of Finance(s thinking is that there should be the establishment of deposit insurance to protect small depositors and to facilitate an ordinary wind-up of any failed financial institution.

House 99 Sequence 1212:00 noon

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND:

Mr. Speaker, even though I have talked about new policies to protect depositors, this debate is not intended to take us along the long, winding road, on the role and function of commercial banks or to the extent to which they have a social conscience, neither would it take us to the extent to which this tax should never be removed, and such like. The policy for the future is that deposit insurance is going to be used.

Mr. Speaker, let nobody say this Government senses that deposit insurance is an urgent necessity. Luckily, the Central Bank of Barbados has been able to supervise commercial banks but as far as we all know, we have never had a failed commercial bank, from the perspective that depositors funds were lost, as has happened in other countries. At the same time, Government has always thought about what could happen in the future, and have put legislation that are far-reaching, to take into account real world possibilities. Therefore, in the future, the Minister of Finance would come with measures to create deposit insurance, so that (Mary(from the Orleans, (Sylvan Edey(from Passage Road, (David Estwick(of no fix place of abode, or (Wren Kellman(from Chimborazo, St. Joseph, who, as small depositors, would have put money in banks, would not find themselves losing their deposits.

Mr. Speaker, as much as it is true that at present the Central Bank of Barbados can require by law, commercial banks to deposit funds with the Central Bank of Barbados, where those deposits are called Liquidity Reserve Ratio, let me enter the realm of finance, without expatiating too broadly. Sir, according to the Liquidity Reserve Ratio, a certain percentage of the deposits made in the commercial banking sector must necessarily be deposited with the Central Bank of Barbados. In fact, had time permitted, I would have shown how adjustments to those deposits could accord with monetary policies, depending on certain circumstances. One could actually increase those deposits to curb demands or one could reduce those deposits, to stimulate demand in accordance with monetary policies, in the same way one could make adjustments to taxation, to achieve fiscal objectives.

Mr. Speaker, I trust that the clarity of what I am saying accords with the reality of what I am suggesting. Therefore, by no means doubtful as to the truth of what I am saying, but by all means being humorous by suggesting that there could have been an inaccuracy in what I have said, I want to beg that this Banks (Tax on Assets) (Validation) Bill, 2006, be read a second time.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that when the Honourable Member spoke and asked for forgiveness, that he remembered well the debate that took place in this Honourable House in 1991, when the then Government was accused of a criminal act for printing money, without the permission of Parliament. At the time, a number of things were said, such as how the Social Justice Commission should have been brought in, and about how it was unfair for a Government to get money without Parliament(s permission, et cetera.

Sir, this was seen as a criminal offence by others. We, on this side, will not accuse the other side of any criminal acts but we will take note that the error that occurred in the 1990s, would have only occurred for one year. Sir, we are now seeing a situation where an error has been occurring since 1982 and will still occur, until we make can this amendment. Mr. Speaker, we, on this side, would not speak about criminal acts. We understand that when managing a country, the possibility exists that errors might occur.

Mr. Speaker, we, on this side, accept the apology from the other side and have put it down to being inexperienced of them for not recognising that when managing a country, the possibility exists that a number of things could go wrong.

Sir, what is interested is that they see one year as being a criminal offence, while 25 years to them is termed as being a genuine error on the part of the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, I could accept they might say it was an oversight on their part but the fact is that it was not this administration who behaved in the manner as if politicians could not make errors. We were told that validations would have been the thing of the past but we have now witnessed this is either the four or five validations coming before Parliament, since 1994, even though validation were said to be a thing of the past.

Mr. Speaker, I hope when the Honourable Member for St. James North winds up this debate, that the Honourable Member would apologise to all Honourable Members who would have sat in Government in the early 1990s, when they would have slipped up by one year and were accused of committing criminal offences, in circumstances where the Social Justice Commission was called for; where, in circumstances, they encouraged some of their writers to criticise the Government of that day because of the fact that the Government of the day had failed to recognise its mistakes during that one-year(s) time span.

It is known that when these matters are brought before Parliament, they should be done within a one-year span. We plea guilty for what occurred in 1991, even though we hardly went over the one-year span. Sir, I wonder what the Barbados Labour Party or any party would plea guilty of, seeing it is now more than 25 years. It is not the Democratic Labour Party who introduced those words to Parliament because of that one-year time span, it was the other side. And so we wait and would expect the Press to carry the apology from the other side, on this particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt they have now recognised that once in Government, it is possible for things to happen but they came and gave the impression that they would be all-perfect, that no errors would occur, yet today, 25 years after, we are now witnessing where this situation has been brought to Parliament, to be corrected.

Mr. Speaker, I sometimes wonder who saw this error and the reason they would now be seeing it. Was it because a bank decided they were not paying taxes or was it because Government was about to amend the legislation that Government now recognises this error? I only hope it is not the

Bank of the Year that has spotted this particular error and decided to put weight on the Government.

One could only speculate what would have now caused this matter to be brought before this Honourable House, since 1982, at a time when there was a great combination of all the legal luminaries. Therefore, one would not expect that this particular matter would have slipped that great combination of that time, as they were portrayed across Barbados as the brilliant legal brains, and that nothing could have slipped past them. One would have recognised that in 1991, they were able to notice the error on this side but could not have noticed the error on their side.

Mr. Speaker, we are not here accusing anybody as engaging in any criminal act. We acknowledge that errors could be made but we expect there would be men and women, on the other side, who would apologise to the Parliament of the early 1990s, for the charges that were made against them. If they do not apologise, then one could easily come to the conclusion that the same charges that were made against that Parliament of the earlier 1990s, could now be made against this Parliament. Sir, I would not want that to happen to this Parliament and, therefore, I would be willing to accept a simple apology from the other side.

I thank you.

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I want to make a short intervention in support of this Resolution today. I want to say that I know that commercial banks, like other institutions in Barbados, such as credit unions, are regulated by the Central Bank of Barbados, in the same way as the insurance companies are regulated. They are all monetary institutions.

H:No99 (13)1210 p.m.

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation Mr. R.D. MARSHALL:

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. James North mentioned that when people put assets or deposits into a commercial bank that they have no fear about the bank going under. Sir, when I was a little boy the Kendall Bank was a small bank at the corner of Westbury Road, which would be well-known to the Honourable Member for the City. It taught people to be thrifty and many school boys could banked their money with the Kellman Bank. Sir, if a school boy wanted to go the cinema and wanted eight cents for the weekend show, then he would have to give two weeks notice to Mr. Kellman to withdraw eight cents but, Sir, those were the days of the (sou-sou)

Mr. Speaker, when people put their savings into a commercial bank, over the years, unless you have millions in that bank, you do not have to give long notice and you can withdraw your money at short notice. Sir, in Barbados, we do not have large sums of money where we would require to give the bank one month(s) notice to accumulate money for withdrawal. Sir, you can go to your bank and at short notice, take off your money because the bank does not put your money into a safe and leave it there. Sir, the bank takes deposits from

customers and invest them. They pay interest out of the deposits, make investments and are answerable to the depositors as to how they invest their money. Mr. Speaker, your money in the bank is well-protected so there is no need to worry about it.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member mentioned deposit insurance, which insures against loss of funds up to a certain amount of money. It does not say that all the money in the bank is insured but that it is insured up to a maximum amount and every depositor can rest assured that the money is insured. Sir, the bank is a safe place to put money and since 1972/1973, the Central Bank of Barbados has regulated commercial banks in Barbados. We have had many acquisitions and mergers over the years like CIBC and Barclays Bank into First Caribbean Commercial Bank but despite these mergers, people should have no fear that anything would happen to their deposits.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to make these few points as the Honourable Member spoke about deposit insurance.

Sir, I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all Honourable Members who have spoken. As usual, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy sought to be political but if I forgive the Democratic Labour Party for any one solecism in 1991 to 1994, there were so many other solecisms that I would be hard-pressed to...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, what is that word?

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I said solecism. Sir, to forgive them for any one thing would remind me of many others that happened between 1991 and 1994. Sir, what I did not say was that it was a credit to the banking institutions in Barbados, notwithstanding the contributions made by the Central Bank of Barbados, that a lot of these institutions have been so prudently run as to have depositors assured that their funds are safe.

Mr. Speaker, most banks reserve the right to notice of withdrawals but men and women go and make substantial withdrawals without notice and because the systems has such integrity in it, it shows that this can take place but there are places in the world where the money of depositors are at risk and where they have to give notice to banks when they come to withdraw reasonably large sums.

Mr. Speaker, once again I thank Honourable Members who take part and beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

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

On the separate motion of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND,

seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. R. D. Marshall in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. R.D. MARSHALL: This House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, Mr. Chairman reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee without amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. R.C. EASTMOND, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Banks (Tax on Assets) (Validation) Bill, 2006.

ORDER NO. 8

BARBADOS ASSOCIATION FOR MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2006.

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

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, this is a simple Bill. We are basically seeking to facilitate a name change in the existing Act, which is the Barbados Association for Mentally Retarded Children Act of 1969/15. This amendment we are seeking to effect this morning would provide for the name of the Barbados Association of Mentally Retarded Children to be changed to the Barbados Association for Children with Intellectual Challenges.

Mr. Speaker, what we are seeking to do is consistent with the current thinking around the world and certainly what is obtaining in Barbados at this point in time and it was also requested by the association.

H99/12:20

Sequence 14

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Continuation of Hon. A.P. WOOD: They indicated that, in line with the current thinking, we should seek to use correct terminology when we are addressing persons who are part of that association. Sir, to move away from labels like (mentally retarded) and to move to the use of terminologies like

(intellectually challenged). We have responded to the request that has come out of that association. As a matter of fact, the President of the Barbados Association of Mentally Retarded Children has requested a change in the name of the association to the Barbados Association of Children with Intellectual Challenges. Sir, basically, as I said earlier, we are responding to the request they have made, and it is also in keeping with current thinking around the world.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I beg

to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

Mr. R.D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, one cannot challenge the association as previously named from seeking to have a name change. One must agree that across the wider world there is the notion of being politically correct. Sir, a name such as the Barbados Association for Children with Intellectual Challenges, somewhat begs the question. Are only those children being handled at specific schools, the only ones who are intellectually challenged?

Sir, in reality, when one examines the structure of our school system, it would suggest that there are many of our students who might, in fact, now fall under this particular definition. The association as previously named, might in fact now have to embrace a plethora of our students in our schools. This is a fact which cannot be challenged, either by the past Minister or the current learned Minister, in relation to this matter.

Sir, I was curious when the Minister did not insert, at the centre of this new philosophical thinking, the Ministry of Education, or the Officers of the Ministry of Education. The Minister simply stated that this was a global or worldwide philosophical thought. I would have thought that the Minister would have used this opportunity to place the Ministry of Education at the centre of this particular new movement, a change of name. The Honourable Member would understand that they have to be changes in approaches to a whole lot of things, because autism, dyslexia and the other psycho-social challenges in educations would somehow impact on the wider school system.

Sir, we speak of children at risk. As I said, I am always to give credit where credit is due. Mr. Speaker, between 1995, 1996 and 1997 there was a plethora studies conducted under the former Minister of Education, studies across the school system. Unfortunately, we have not been able to see, the quantifiable report, which would tell us what particular cohort of the children in our schools are, in fact, seriously affected, in other words, the intellectually challenged.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that yesterday, was the writing of the 11-Plus Examination. Sir, when the Minister is presented with the statistics, they will show that they were several children in our school system who were just marking zeros both in the Composition Paper when the English Paper was presented and

nothing was done on those papers. Mr. Speaker, they were in the regular school system because of the concept of inclusion, a concept again that is worldwide and I have no quarrel with that. Mr. Speaker, they are not moving beyond the same repetition of what they do from year to year.

Sir, as I support the name change, we are not going to keep Barbados on the edge to fall off into the water, but there must be more fundamental vision in relation to the numerous number of our children who are intellectually challenged. I recognise that there has been some work with the Ministry of Education and Mount St. Vincent in relation to a lot of these issues. Sir, there is severe resource scarcity at that level, both human resource scarcity and other material resource scarcity. Therefore, even though I recognise that the Minister said that it is just a simple matter of a name change, there are more fundamental and foundational issues which I am sure that in the passage of time, the Minister would address.

Mr. Speaker, I thought that I needed to say those few words and this I will not condemn but will support this matter before us. I thank you, Sir.

Asides

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

Mr. R.D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make one or two points. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central said that I do not know anything about education and that I know about insurance. Mr. Speaker, we all came in here by votes.

Sir, I just want to say that I support the Bill. I took what the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central said when he spoke about the change and that they are supporting it.

Sir, the system we have at the schools that care for these children that are intellectually challenged ... what are they really doing in the schools? What are we preparing these children for, when they leave school?

Mr. Speaker, I have not been privileged to visit any of these schools. I have seen children being transported and I have heard people talking about these children and what they can offer. I know that persons who attend the school for the dumb and deaf, when they leave school, can sometimes fit into sections of the society to work.

Sir, I would like the Minister, in his wrapping up, to say what are we preparing these children for. Mr. Speaker, I have never seen any of these children in the workforce. I would like to know what happens to these children, when they leave school, whether they just have to stay at home under somebody's care. That is just my concern about what is happening, what are the plans and what will become of them after school.

I thank you.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, what I am going to say today on this particular matter, is not a matter only of a name change. It is the type of support that we have given by this Parliament to associate itself with the name change. There is no doubt that previously people see mentally retarded children are people who cannot see, hear or talk, but now there is a situation where autism has stepped in. The fact is, autism is a disability now affecting the children of Barbados, which was not previously known, there have to be a whole change and the whole concept of teaching in these schools.

Sir, there are children who can hear and see and some who can hardly speak, yet they understand everything that you say.

H99: 12.30 p.m.

Sequence 15

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

House 99, sequence 16, 12:30 p.m.

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

I am fortunate to have one of those kids who is suffering with autism, who he is not dumb, he is not deaf, he is not blind but his ability to communicate at the same speed as other kids is not the same and every instruction given to that child, the child can understand and can respond.

It tells me that in a school setting like this there is a need for a difference in approach to these children. The necessary financing must be provided by this Parliament and what is needed is not a name change but a refinancing of the programme to better the lives of these persons.

Those persons who understand children with autism would know that with the right amount of coaching and the right amount of support, these children turn out to be brilliant. It might be that they are slanted in a particular direction but the brilliance is there. I am telling the Minister it cannot be a situation where you just come to Parliament to change the name but the necessary infrastructure must be put in place to support the brilliant kids of Barbados, who people see as retarded, but people who really understand them would know that they have a brilliance that if tapped in the right time, could excel to go on much further.

I would hope, Sir, that out of this debate, we will not only get a name change but we would get the necessary Supplementary before Parliament, so that the Challenor School can deal with autism, and many other things that would be affecting the young children of Barbados.

Sir, people who understand documentaries would tell you that if you study their cases, these are some of the most loving kids, and can (pick up) things that normal kids would not be able to (pick up), but - and sometimes the problem is not with them - in truth and in fact the problem is with us. They know how to relate to us but we do not know how to relate to them. That is, the educational system has to be changed not for them,

but it has to be changed for us.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. A.P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, in my wrap up I will just remind the House of a couple of things. Based on what I said earlier, we are basically seeking to rename the Barbados Association of Mentally Retarded Children to use a name that is more in line with current thinking.

The Honourable Members, while recognising that consistent with what came out of the Headship of the association - we should use more appropriate terminologies and labels for these special kids - sought to widen the debate and agreed that it is appropriate at this time to utilise more appropriate terminologies.

It is not just an issue of a name change, but they have now taken it into a realm, so as to have us engaging in a discussion on a matter and in a manner, to which this Government has certainly been paying very close attention in this section of our Barbadian society.

This Barbados Labour Party administration has been providing support for the Learning Centre and the Challenor School. The amount given to the Challenor School is about \$600 000 a year now, and when you add what is given to the Learning Centre, it takes us in excess of \$1 million. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, I am glad that he spoke because he mentioned the efforts that this Government has been making in regards to special needs education, within the formal school system.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East would have been there and previous Ministers of Education when we said that in the context of the normal school system, we need to have our school system better prepared to deal with special needs education.

When I spoke in here during the Estimates, you would have heard through the partnership with Mount St. Vincent University, the strides that we are making in regard to having more teachers within the school system with specialisation in various aspects of special needs education.

This Government is also committed to a more continuous assessment type approach within the formal school system, which would allow us to better and earlier identify those students who are autistic and those students who are dyslexic, so that we could make the necessary, early interventionist moves to help those students along in the formal school system.

Therefore, I agree that it may not be a simple name change, but in the context of what we have come here to discuss, it is a simple name change that is driven from inside the association. But the other things that can be generated from addressing this topic in a narrow way, you can rest assured that the Government is addressing those things and will continue to do so in a very assiduous way.

We will get our opportunity to engage in an extensive discussion because it is not only what happens in the school system with these individuals, that is, those who are at school age, but as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central asked what happens to them when they move beyond school age. The Government is very wary of the need for the system to provide better for these very special kids in our society. Those are the things that we are addressing, not only the requirements of them in the school system but the requirements of them outside the school system.

Let me tell you something, in the case of the Barbados Association of Mentally Retarded, we have the Challenor School, the Learning Centre and a programme called BOVIEW, which is an independent living home programme that caters to the issue that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central addressed. We also have the adult training facility, which was developed in response to the frustrations and concerns of parents about the lack of facilities for persons 18 years and older.

The aim of this adult training facility is to provide relevant skills training and work experience in the following areas for these persons who, up to this point before we made this change, were members of the Association of the Mentally Retarded Persons. The areas we are talking about is agriculture and landscaping, woodwork, sewing and crafts and food preparation. Therefore, we are taking our responsibility very seriously in this regard.

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

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

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

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

House 99, sequence 16, 12:4015

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 - 3 inclusive were called and passed.

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

On the Separate motion of Hon. A. P. WOOD, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Barbados Association for Mentally Retarded Children (Amendment) Act, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government Business for today(s) Sitting, and in the circumstances I beg to move that this Honourable House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 23, 2006 at 1000 a.m. in the morning.

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

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 23, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

House 99 Sequence 17

12:47 p.m.