THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2003 – 2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, November 28, 2006

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, November 28, 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. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.) (Leader of the Opposition)

Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A. (Oxon.)

Mr. G. W. PAYNE, Q.C.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), (Lond.), 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)

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. Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P. (Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

Hon. J. X. WALCOTT, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S. (Edin.), J.P. (Minister of Health)

Mr. R. D. JONES, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Ed.), J.P.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Hons.)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Minister of Energy and the Environment)

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Deputy Prime Minister) (Minister of Economic Affairs and Development) (Leader of the House)

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A. (Minister of Social Transformation)

Hon. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, B.A., B.Sc., (Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office)

Hon. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance) (Minister of State, Ministry of Finance)

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, Q.C., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)

Mr. M. A. LASHLEY, LL.B. (Hons.)

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Mr. R. L. SEALY, B.Sc., M.B.A.

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, November 21, 2006.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Minutes were circulated, and subject to any observations or corrections, I beg to move that these Minutes be confirmed.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am in receipt of the Annual Report of the Ombudsman for the year 2005.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, l6, l8, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the rest of this day's Sitting.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move a motion that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South be nominated as Chairman of Committees for this morning's Session.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I would just like to make a comment. I will put the proposal to this Honourable House, as there is nothing I can do, but I think it is downright ridiculous that so often we do not have a Chairman of Committees ready, when we have the Business of the House to conduct. I do not feel it is fair. Is the Motion before this Honourable House agreed to?

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

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

On the motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by the Hon. G. A. CLARKE, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. H. F. LASHLEY was appointed Temporary CHAIRMAN of Committees in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

ORDER NO. 14 – RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF $4 510 469 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 2006-2007 AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 4, 2006-2007 WHICH FORM THE SCHEDULE TO THE RESOLUTION

HEAD 37 – MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT IN THE AMOUNT OF $4 392 114

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, the sum of $4 392 114 is required to supplement Head 37, program 510: Network Services – Subprogram 511 – Highway Construction and Maintenance Services.

Mr. Chairman, if you would look at the Addendum, there is a further breakdown of $746 589, which is required to meet the payment of wages for 46 general workers, who, earlier in the year, were transferred by the Urban Development Commission.

Mr. Chairman, I must say that since these workers have been relocated to the Ministry of Public Works, as we have shifted them or have sent them to various depots, we have strengthened the capacity of areas in the Christ Church, St. John, St. Philip, St. Lucy, and to some extent, St. Michael. They are scattered across the country and are doing a good job.

Mr. Chairman, persons will see these persons working constantly in that area of Highway, between the Grantley Adams Airport and the Bussa Statue. Some of them are providing heavy-duty work across the island. This money is required to supplement that Head.

Mr. Chairman, the sum of $300 00 is also required to meet the cost of increased travel by some Public Works officers. As you are aware, we are now increasing the work across the country, where every area and constituency across the country have seen an increase in work by this Ministry. Therefore, most of the officers, who are responsible for the depots, would have to travel from time to time. Sir, this sum is required to pay them up to the end of the financial year.

Mr. Chairman, we must also bear in mind the heavy workload that is associated with the Cricket World Cup, 2007. So far we have completed a number of roads in this program and it is expected that most of the work would be completed by the end of February, 2007. At this present

time, we are completing the ABC Highway, from the Grantley Adams International Airport to Graeme Hall Roundabout. This is being done by C. O. Williams Construction Co. We are also doing work at Maxwell, from the Roundabout, going towards the Texaco Service Station, Kendal Hill, Christ Church. We are about to resurface the Rendezvous Road to Highway 7. This will be started within few weeks. This road is a link between Highway 7 and the ABC Highway and it is in bad shape at this time. Therefore, every effort must be made to resurface the Rendezvous Road.
10.30 a.m.

We have also looked at a number of side roads off the ABC Highway especially in Amity Lodge 1 and 2, which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has been asking for and, we are hoping that we could do some work within the Amity Lodge area as well.

I am happy that the World Cup related roads are doing well. There are some challenges within the Fontabelle area, and we constantly have to remind the utility companies that they need to get their act together within the programme. However, they have assured me that they would be going full steam ahead, in order to complete the Fontabelle Road.

Sir, so far, we have completed most of the roads leading into Bridgetown. We have one other road, which must be resurfaced. This is the one moving from White Park Road to the National Stadium. This one would be resurfaced only after we have completed the Hindsbury Junction from Roebuck Street to Eastmond Corner. Sir, the workmen of the Ministry of Public Works are currently upgrading, to some extent, that stretch of road, which has taken a long time because we had to put in a number of culverts and we had to completely refurbish this road. It now looks very good with new pipes and the utility companies have put in a main at Hindsbury Road as well as natural gas. It should be completed by December 15, 2006, and traffic would be able to move, at least to some extent, to the Barbados Workers' Union.

Mr. Chairman, when that stretch is completed from Eastmond Corner to the Barbados Workers' Union, we then have to go back to the southern end and complete the road works between the roundabout and the Barbados Workers' Union Headquarters, so more work is to be done at this junction. When this is completed, we have to resurface the Bank Hall Main Road as well as the road leading from White Park Road to the National Stadium. This will then complete what we have termed "The World Cup related roads", that are in need of refurbishment.

Mr. Chairman, it is also necessary for us to look at Highway 5, leading from Dash Valley into Bridgetown. I am speaking primarily about the road from Dash Valley to Bussa Roundabout. This has to be upgraded, it is now very congested, especially on weekdays at peak hours. It has to be improved to provide laybys as well as to improve the carriageway for that busy street.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to make the House aware that there are a number of other projects we are looking at, which need supplementaries and we are asking the House to supplement this road vote by $2 569 000. This money is required to provide assistance for a number of projects that were started in this financial year. I want to mention a few of these roads, which were started and what we are doing to upgrade them.

Mr. Chairman, we have started Lion Castle in St. Thomas. This project is currently in progress with paving approximately 75 per cent completed. The sum of $195 000 was allocated to this project. However, a further $295 000 is required to complete the paving work as well as to completely reconstruct the bridge, which was destroyed as a result of bad weather two years ago. This would allow the project to be completed by the end of the financial year.

Mr. Chairman, I must say that the Endeavour Bridge at Lion Castle is a deep one and that the weather destroyed this bridge two years ago. It was built at the turn of the century and is an old bridge, which needs a lot of structural engineering work, which must be completed within the next few months. It would not be completed in terms of paving but, I believe that most of the structural work could be completed within this financial year. The sum of $295 000 is required to complete this. We have already started and the residents of the district are happy that, once again, the road would be opened. Sir, if you remember, this road was closed off in the early part of this year and last year.

Mr. Chairman, the other area that needs to be refurbished and which, to my mind is a busy residential area that is used by a number of persons trying to avoid the ABC Highway, is the stretch of road between *CBC* and BET Hill, the Parkinson Field. Mr. Chairman, you have asked about this road for a number of years and I am happy to say that the sum of $235 000 has been earmarked to fully refurbish this part of the road. We will put a two-inch asphalt surface. We will not be putting sidewalks, at this time, in that street because there is no need for them but it would be fully refurbished.

Sir, already, as you are aware, we have refurbished, in this financial year, the road leading to Wildey and Banks Breweries and it is well-used. We have also refurbished the Princess Royal Road and when we complete Parkinson Field, it would mean that, in that geographical area, most of the roads leading in and out of the Pine would be completed.

Sir, the only one which needs to be done is Mount Friendship and the Lower Burney area.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am extremely thankful to the Minister.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, $276 000 is required to complete Jackson No. 1. Sir, the project at Jackson No. 1 has been started. We have excavated a lot of the road but we still have to do a lot more. It is unfortunate that we had to stop work on that road early this year but, we are expecting that the legal work could be completed within the next few days. We have met with the landowner and are moving the road at Jackson No. 1 on to the highway so that residents can get in and out of that road. There is a problem right now and there are some dangerous bends in the Jackson area, which we are hoping to resolve at this time.
10.40 a.m.

This sum of $276 000 is required to repair this road. Another sum of $290 000 is required to resurface the Prerogative, St. George area. This is not in St. George North. This is in St. George South. This sum is required to complete a lot of work in the Prerogative area.

Sir, at Sunbury, Stage II, St. Philip, we are voting $225 000, for the area of St. Philip South, running from Six Roads to the St. Philip Parish Church. This sum of money is required to finish this road. It has taken a long time, but this road has cost Government over $1 million so far. We had to refurbish the entire road, dig it up, because it was on mud.

Sir, when I came to the Ministry, I found an alarming situation. We were patching this road, with patches on top of patches. I told the Ministry to let us bite the bullet at this time. Let us dig up the road and fully refurbish it, and we have done so. One of the problems I have found in the St. Philip area is that the roads are too flat. I have spoken to the engineers...

Asides.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: The roads are flat and there is a problem with drainage.

Sir, even though you may say that the land in St. Philip and St. Lucy is flat, and I agree, I believe there is a drainage problem because most of the roads are built below the surface, this problem has to be addressed. Sir, the sum of $225 000 is required to complete this road, provide material as well as to complete the junction from Sunbury to St. Philip Parish Church. I believe that project is doing well.

Mr. Chairman, there will be a review of the Padmore Village Road as well. I understand that the stretch of road from St. Philip Parish Church to Padmore Village is in bad shape. When this project is completed, we will look at the Padmore Village Road.

Sir, there are several other roads in the St. Philip area that will be targeted within this financial year and the next financial year. A special package will be brought to Parliament for the refurbishment of a number of roads in the St. Philip area, this does not mean St. Philip South only, but also the north and west. The Cox Hill area, as well as Thicketts Road, from Codrington College, across Thicketts and Eastbourne, St. Philip, will also be refurbished. This will be the subject of another Supplementary.

Mr. Chairman, another road that will require $230 000 is the road at Bath, St. John. The road at Bath beach, St. John has been eroded, over time, to a point where it has become very narrow and it is expected that this road will cost in the vicinity of at least half a million dollars. In fact, the estimated cost from the Ministry's technicians is $530 000, to be allocated to the project. We need a further $230 000 to complete the work at Bath.

Sir, Bath is, indeed, one of the popular bathing sites across Barbados. It is used heavily and work has commenced there. It is expected that by the end of this financial year, we would have completed the work at Bath. I must say that the depot at Bath has been doing a lot of work, and I want to compliment them for their work over the past two years. That road will be widened from 16 feet to 21 feet to allow for a pedestrian walkway and cark park facility. This will be a good road when it is completed.

Mr. Chairman, Massiah Street to St. John's Parish Church, a road approximately three miles long, has been fully refurbished. We are only allocating another $200 000 for this road. Of course, this road which has been completed in three phases has cost the Government a large sum of money. We started at Massiah Street, through to the Lodge School, the old Colleton factory, and now going to St. John's Parish Church. This work will be completed within the next few months, allowing persons travelling to Lodge School, Massiah Street and moving between Massiah Street to St. John's Parish Church the comfort of a smooth drive. Sir, they have been complaining about a number of roads, Massiah Street is one of these roads that has been completed.

Mr. Chairman, it is true to say that this Government has spent a lot of money in the St. John area. We have completed Bath Hill, the road from Colleton, from St. John's Parish Church to Colleton Housing Area. Indeed, at the beginning of our term in Government, Highway 3 was refurbished from St. John's Parish Church to Golden Ridge. That was fully refurbished. It is a good stretch of road, but between Golden Ridge and Charles Rowe Bridge is in bad shape. That will also be refurbished later in this financial

year. Sir, money has been allocated, under the package for C. O. Williams Construction, to refurbish Highway 3, which leads from Golden Ridge, St. George to Charles Rowe Bridge. That will be done as well.

Sir, we have done work at Collins Phase V, St. Peter. It has taken several years, from Phase 1 to Phase 5. We have made available a number of areas where persons will be able to build homes, a new tenantry which has been very costly. A further sum of $200 000 is required to provide a small bridge at Collins, to provide a route for vehicular traffic for the residents in that area. Sir, it is substantially completed, and we expect that this will be the final phase. Mr. Chairman, every year for the past five years we have voted money for Collins. I believe that we are in the final stages, and this sum of money is required to complete this work.

Mr. Chairman, I have spoken about Kendal Hill, Christ Church. We are allocating $380 000 for the Kendal Hill area, and we believe that this money will help to widen that street and provide some sidewalks for persons travelling in the Silver Hill and Gall Hill areas. Sir, anyone travelling that road would recognise that it is too narrow, persons have no where to walk and the entire visibility of that area must be improved.

Sir, we will also provide the opportunity to repave the road, between Christ Church Boys' School and the Deighton Griffith School. That road is in a bad shape.
10.50 a.m.

Sir, for the last two years, the utility companies, especially the Barbados Water Authority, have cut across the street on numerous occasions. There are several connections that were made between the Deighton Griffith School and the Christ Church Boys' School, and we have to refurbish that street. We will take this opportunity to do it in the next financial year, as well, after Kendal Hill.

Mr. Chairman, a further Supplementary is required to provide and upgrade Sea View in St. James, which is the connection between the St. Thomas Parish Church and Highway 1. This is a very busy street, but very narrow, and we had many difficulties within the Sea View area. I want to make the point that the Honourable Member for St. James Central has been constantly asking the Ministry, and we had meetings on this development. One of the problems we had over the years is that some landlords have refused to give permission to cut their land.

I know the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has been saying that the Land Acquisition Act needs to be amended but I am of the view that the Government must take land from time to time, in order to improve the country and provide wider streets. We have to put in sidewalks, and we have to cut down the outcrop rock, because as you know, the street narrows in as you get closer to Holetown.

When we talk about the connection from Christ Church to Holetown, we are looking at this road, which would allow persons to move from Holetown to St. Thomas Parish Church, through Content into Shop Hill, and down to the Cane Wood area. We believe that once this road is opened, it will provide not only an opportunity for traffic to move faster but it will help those persons in that area to develop their land. We will do this over time. Of course, I have spoken at length of the need for us to do more, moving from Christ Church to this area. Therefore, the sum of $2 569 000 will be needed to supplement this particular road programme.

Mr. Chairman, we are also asking for a further sum of $200 000. This is required under Programme 513, Subprogramme 518, Major Works and Renovations. Already we have heard a number of complaints from the Government Electrical Engineering Department (GEED). This sum is required to help provide the material.

We recognise that the workers at the GEED are working under strenuous conditions and we need to do something for them. We have to relocate the GEED from Bay Street to the Pine area, but it will take some time. We may have to relocate them somewhere else, before they get to the Pine.

This sum of money is required to buy material. We will provide for our workforce. Mr. Chairman, you are aware that we have people who do good quality work. When one looks at the work that they have been doing at the West Wing of Parliament, one would have to compliment them for work well done.

They will continue this work. Some of them will be moving from the West Wing here and they will be going to the site at the Pine to provide the building. The building has been approved by the Town Planning Department and we are hoping that we could do more work in the next financial year, to complete this for the Government Electrical Engineering Department. We want to say to the workers that we understand their condition and we would do everything in our power to make it better for them.

A further sum of $½ million is required under Programme 516, Subprogramme 526: Parking System, Car Parks, to upgrade the River Bus Terminal. This has taken some time but we believe that the time has come for us to further this upgrade. We have noticed a number of vendors in this area, and we will use this opportunity, not only to upgrade the terminal, but to provide opportunities for cleaning the entire River Bus Terminal.

We are also taking this opportunity to upgrade the old Queen's College building for the transport inspectors. As you are aware, we started work there several years ago. Sir,

we have to provide better washroom facilities as well for those persons who now use the River Bus Terminal.

This entire Supplementary will be used over the coming months not only to facilitate better transportation for the public service vehicles but to improve many roads across Barbados.

I would like to take this opportunity also to say to Members that we now have a lot of equipment that was bought by the Government over the years. We have purchased additional pieces of equipment recently, such as bobcats and backhoes, and we are hoping to do the work. I believe that once the depots are property outfitted, in terms of equipment, machinery and the resources in terms of human capital, they would be able to do the work.

I also want to say that we are working across the island, and not on one particular area and leaving out any. Sir, from St. Lucy to Christ Church, work is ongoing, and we will continue. Of course, we do not need a Supplementary for St. Lucy at this time, because we have just completed from Six Men's to Sherman Hill, and I understand that there needs to be a further widening at Shermans.

Sir, in the next financial year, we have money earmarked to do the road from St. Lucy Parish Church to the Secondary School, where we would be providing sidewalks. We are also looking at the Police Station and Checker Hall to Crab Hill. These are all the things that are being done in the St. Lucy area.

I am happy therefore, Mr. Chairman, to ask that this Head stand part.

Mr. Acting CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Head. I say from the outset that I am happy the Minister of Public Works has finally admitted that there is a relationship between proper roads, and a proper transportation system. In his last few words, he said that because of the repairing of the roads, we would have a better transportation system.
11.00 a.m.

Sir, it is rather clear that the Minister is admitting that in order to put those 75 new buses on the road, he would need to do substantial work on the roads in rural and urban Barbados, otherwise by this time next year we will be back before Parliament seeking a further sum to get more buses. Sir, if one looks at the number of buses that have been purchased by the Transport Board over the years, one can only come to the conclusion that it is because of the deplorable roads in Barbados that we had to go back to the manufacturers.

Sir, it is clear to me that this Government is foreign in thought and that companies like ACME Manufacturing will have no interest in the substantial sums that are being spent. Sir, we as a country believe that everything must be foreign led and does not understand the importance of the multiplier effect when work is done locally.

Mr. Chairman, I have looked at this supplementary and it is clear to me that this supplementary has given...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: This supplementary is very wide-ranging. It runs from the south of the island to the east and to the west but for some reason it has not reached the north of the island. Sir, is this in compliance with the policy of the Barbados Labour Party that Barbados stops at the Judge Gap, which means it ends at St. Peter and that there is not a parish called St. Lucy?

Sir, I cannot see why in a day and age when we speak so much about gender that we will look after all the men and left out the only woman, Lucy. Sir, this Government tells me that they care about women but not one mention is made in this particular supplementary of that fair lady named Lucy.

Sir, in 1998, this same Government started a road at Colleton, and right after the elections, the equipment was moved off the road leading to the late Roy Brathwaite's house and no equipment has returned there even though that junction at Colleton is the most dangerous junction you could ever see anywhere in the world. It has nothing to do with the trenches that are on that particular road. Sir, the overgrown grass on that road is such that one cannot dictate between the road and the gutters on both sides, yet not one mention of this is made.

Mr. Chairman, I know that this has slipped the Honourable Member for St. George North, who would remember that a promise was made to this House that the road leading from Colleton to Crab Hill and the road leading to Nestfield, to the supposedly police station, would be fixed in this financial year. Sir, it seems that something has happened and this financial year now happens to be next year because instead of the Minister telling us that the work will be done this year as promised, I am now hearing that it will be done next year. This reminds me of the fairy tale that once you say next year and you get to next year, it will be the next year and when you get to the next year, it will be the next year. Mr. Chairman, I do not want to hear about next year, I want to hear from the Minister whether it is 2006 or whether it is 2007. I do not rely on next year because next year will never come.

Sir, I am also happy to see that the Honourable Member for St. George North has not forgotten his buddy, the now acting Chairman. They are now the new tag team. Sir, I am happy that the two Honourable Members have agreed that all of the roads in the constituency of St. Michael South East will be completed. I am happy that the rastaman from The Pine is getting his commitment from the Honourable Member for St. George North. Sir, I hope that the same commitment that has been promised to the rastaman from The Pine will also be promised to Lucy's son Elmo and that the 115 roads required for St. Lucy would be completed as well as those roads in St. John.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member said that a lot of roads have been done in St. John, but I want the Honourable Member to understand that there are a lot of roads to be done in St. John. Sir, if you add together the roads in St. John and St. Lucy, they would equal or be greater than the roads in all of the other constituencies, that have to be completed.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, there are 115 roads in St. Lucy to be done.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South only needs $34 million, which the Prime Minister said he would protect him with. Therefore, the Honourable Member should not be complaining. St. Philip does not have any more roads to be completed. Therefore, I can only come to the conclusion that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South need not worry because the $34 million for St. Philip is an election issue and those roads will be done before the elections. Sir, he will get his share.

Mr. Chairman, this debate tells us a lot about Barbados. It tells us that we need to stop this piecemeal approach to development. Road structure cannot be dealt with in a piecemeal approach. We have to come with a proper programme to deal with the transportation system as it relates to roads and the finances of the Transport Board.

Sir, people have to understand that the roads affect the tourism industry. Sir, those who believe that they can have a proper tourism industry without dealing with the roads in rural Barbados are fooling themselves. Sir, if you are talking about sightseeing, then you are speaking about rural Barbados. Therefore, in order to enhance the tourism product, you have to ensure you deal with those roads in rural Barbados.

Sir, the problem is that this shortsighted Government is only interested in the Cricket World Cup 2007 and is not looking at the bigger picture, which is tourism. Sir, if we were to look at the bigger picture, we would not be about to spend $120 million to widen a road that would develop nothing. Sir, when you look at the development that is happening on the ABC Highway nothing will change in terms of development when it is finished. Sir, had the Government taken that $120 million and widened the roads leading to the north, south, east and west of Barbados, they would have gained more in terms of development.

Mr. Chairman, I was very happy when I heard the Honourable Member for St. George North making the point that when you repair these roads, you are adding to the development. I could not believe that the Minister and the Cabinet were aware of this fact because if that were so one would have expected the $120 million to be spent on widening the roads throughout Barbados so that you could develop the tourism product. This $120 million to be spent on the flyovers will not develop the tourism product and it will not enhance the development of Barbados, what it will do is create a crisis for Barbados.

Sir, if they had done an opportunity cost on this particular financing, they would have recognised that it would have been more beneficial to widen the roads going off the highway into rural Barbados and also into urban Barbados rather than concentrating on spending that money at this point in time.
11.10 a.m.

Mr. Chairman, it is a matter of choice, and in everything you do, you always try to find out which choice is better. Sir, as it stands, we had two choices and we went for the one that was not beneficial to this country, at this point in time. Sir, whereas, as the Honourable Member has said, had we spent that money trying to develop a road from Seaview, through Content...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, that is good logic but it is not new. The Honourable Member knows that it is not new, as he would have already heard it. Sir, had we done that, along with some other roads going through St. Thomas, so that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas would not have to worry about the broken bridges, bad road, and falling trees, we would have been able to develop Barbados more.

Sir, we have to understand that we need to be able to spend that money better in Barbados and that $120 million on the "flyovers" at this time, cannot be priority money spending, when we have a situation in Barbados where one parish alone has 115 roads to be constructed or to be

repaired. These roads lead to poor people's houses, yet we are spending this money on flyovers that lead to the same place that the highway has led.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that if the Minister of Tourism and International Transport is 'hot in his pants', that the Honourable Member needs to come and debate Head 18, where we would deal with the $113 million, which is being sought for the rental of one ship.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has three minutes more.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: That is okay, Sir, I can come back.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South said that I am wearing a big flag on my jacket. The only problem with the Honourable Member is that he cannot keep the flag in his mouth, and that he misleads this Honourable House all the time.

Mr. Chairman, we have to understand that when there are constituencies that have a requirement of 115 roads to be repaired or constructed, it would mean that concentrating on one road cannot or should not be a priority. If you were to go into St. George South, you would find that requirement is about 55 roads to be repaired or constructed.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Sir, we have just been told there are roads in St. Philip, St. John, and all across Barbados, where there is a dire need for roads to be done, where poor people live.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your time has expired.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I will come back. Sir, in closing, I would want to say that I have always wondered why there was such a mad rush to have these flyovers and for us to borrow this $120 million. Sir, it was not until last Sunday that I suddenly realised we were spending this $120 million for one car. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I would want to make my intervention by extending sincere thanks to the Honourable Member for St. George North and his Ministry, for the road works and upgrade that have taken place, not only at Lion Castle but in the entire parish. Sir, I would want to say that I think it is unreasonable for the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to be talking about a shortsighted Government. I also recognise there are ten roads that are being addressed in this Supplementary.

Mr. Chairman, we all know of the funding that was requested during the Annual Estimates in March this year. Therefore, for the Honourable Member to make such a statement, I think is totally out of place and not understanding the whole essence of what is taking place in our road works and in the road development of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say this Government has plans, not only for urban Barbados but indeed for rural Barbados. You would have heard the Honourable Member for St. Lucy speaking about the road upgrades to be done in the parish of St. Philip. Sir, St. Philip is not made up only of St. Philip South, there are three constituencies in that parish and I believe that all Barbadians would benefit by the road works that will take place there.

Mr. Chairman, it is not in this Supplementary, but I want to speak specifically to the road works in the parish of St. Thomas, in relation to work being done by the depot at Bagatelle, under the supervision of a Mr. Marshall, who is working with a team of very dynamic people. I think there is only one member of staff there, who lives in the parish of St. Thomas, while the others live elsewhere, but they all have a focus and are committed. Mr. Chairman, I want to commend them for the excellent work they have been doing, over the past two years, since Mr. Marshall has come to the parish.

Mr. Chairman, the Lion Castle road has been a sore point for a number of years. Sir, because of the way the road was built and because of the terrain, water rushes down the hills, where the largest number of residents live. As you would have been aware, it is a tenantry and therefore over the years, as a result of the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act, persons have been able to purchase their properties and have expanded. Therefore, because of the prosperity that Barbadians are enjoying, because of the plans, policies and programmes of this Government, people are now able to own cars.

Mr. Chairman, Lion Castle is a closely-knit village, where the numbers are spiralling as a result of the ability for the security of tenure to those spots. Sir, in this regard, the roads have deteriorated over the past 15 to 20 years, thus discomforting residents, about which they have been complaining.

Mr. Chairman, you may not know as well as we do, but for most of their lives, many of the residents have to walk with two pairs of shoes; one pair to get them out of the

village, which is flooded and the other pair is for when they get to the bus stop. Sir, some even had to wear boots, while those who could not afford two pairs of shoes, had to put plastic bags over their regular shoes.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to be associated with this Government which has sought, not only to improve the road works, but to do a number of other things to bring a measure of ease and comfort to the lives of those persons living in Lion Castle.

Mr. Chairman, I want to talk about the upgrade of water mains that would have happened under the Ministry of Public Works and the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, the upgrade of the water mains from that of 1.5 inch, to a 4-inch main, to serve a number of households. It has added a measure of ease and comfort to the lives of those persons. Sir, every day, especially during the crop season, there would have been water outages.

Sir, added to that is the well-paved roads these folks are now able to enjoy. Sir, to top it off, about five to six months ago, because of the upgrade of the road, never ever before in the history of the parish of St. Thomas or in the village of Lion Castle, has there been a bus service. Sir, I want to thank this Government for acceding to my request. Sir, there is now a bus service on that route and the folk at Lion Castle no longer have to walk that long stretch, instead, the bus now takes them to their doors. It is because of the upgrade of the road that the Transport Board has undertaken that experiment, where the Sturges bus is not only facilitating their needs, but is now going to Highland, where one would have never gone, unless on an excursion.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. The Chair is only hearing the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. The Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, I will not preside over an unruly Chamber.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, you should know better, Sir.

Asides.

11.20 a.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas, please continue.

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Sir, I was making the point that never before in the history of those villages in the parish was there ever a bus service and that service has been welcomed. I also want to thank the members and staff of the Transport Board for acceding to my request to have that bus moving through Lion Castle, Highland, 1st and 2nd Avenues Welchman Hall, Bryan's Road, Allen View on to the Vault Road and back to Bridgetown. It is phenomenal and now that the new buses are in, even though this Supplementary is not to do with the Transport Board, I am asking for a bigger bus because the bus is now packed to capacity and the folks are complaining that they cannot get the bus, which was sent for them.

Mr. Chairman, that has come about, as a result of the road upgrades being offered to the people in that village. There are still a few minor things to be done but, I know that the Supervisor at Bagatelle, with his team, wants to effect small sidewalks and so on to make sure that the road does not get washed away when it rains.

Mr. Chairman, added to this Supplementary for the $295 000 is the bridge at Endeavour. It is an excellent link bridge for at least six other communities, namely, Hangman Hill, Vaucluse, Lewis Village, Deane's Village, Hopewell and over the past two and a half years, no one has been able to get out. This is why I feel very pleased with the Honourable Member and his team for acknowledging that the bridge needs to be reinstituted because there is no dedicated exit from Lion Castle. It is like a cul-de-sac, and has been that way for a century with the same way in and the same way out.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that refurbishment of that bridge would lead to a better flow of traffic and less dumping because, since the bridge has collapsed, the whole Lewis Village/Endeavour Road has been overgrown with bush and people from all over Barbados – unscrupulous Barbadians, not all Barbadians, but the few who do it cause others to speak of us as a people – have been bringing their garbage in large amounts and strewing it all across that link road that runs from Deane's Village right into the same Endeavour Road.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this link bridge would help to alleviate that kind of challenge, as well as to allow easier passage in and out of Lion Castle so that those hundreds of people, who live in that closely knit peaceful village, would get an opportunity to be able to move to and fro, to transact their business in an orderly fashion.

Mr. Chairman, I want to humbly thank the Minister again for his commitment to my request and the request of the people of Lion Castle and the adjoining communities. I heartily support this Supplementary, not only for this village but for the other 10 communities across Barbados, both urban and rural that are very much in need of the road upgrades to be able to enjoy a better life.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and will make another intervention as the time goes on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want to use this occasion on behalf of all the Honourable Members of this Honourable Chamber to extend a sincere welcome to the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs of Botswana, the Honourable Major General Moeng Pheto and his delegation.

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

Mr. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make my contribution to this Supplementary. I listened to the Honourable Member for St. Philip North as he outlined his plans for St. Philip and I want to centre my information on the constituency of St. Philip North. I believe that on many occasions I have asked the Honourable Member for St. George North about some other roads in St. Philip and I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South is familiar with the road which takes us from Long Bay and Eastbourne to Well House corner. Sir, that road was in a bad state for more than 10 years and I would welcome the intervention of the Honourable Member for St. George North to make that road as good as all the other roads, especially in St. Philip South. Sir, when you compare some of the roads in St. Philip South with those in St. Philip North, the roads in St. Philip South are better than those in St. Philip North and the Honourable Member for St. Philip South would admit that, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, I want to draw the attention of the Honourable Member for St. George North to the Lucas Street road next to the Windward Cricket ground. Sir, we are trying to develop Windward Cricket ground as a regional ground because regional matches are held at Windward Cricket ground but, it is appalling. Again, I urge the Honourable Member for St. George North, if he could do a tour, to look at that road in Lucas Street in St. Philip.

Further, the Honourable Member for St. George North has information from the residents in Padmore Road in St. Philip, through a person who is very close to me, who has drafted a petition about Padmore Road and, Sir, that road is in a terrible state.

Mr. Chairman, as soon as you pass Marley Vale, you have to travel Wiltshire Road to get to St. Catherine's cricket ground and, Sir, if there is a little rain, the whole road is flooded. He mentioned that the roads in St. Philip are too flat. When I visited the area, someone from the Depot mentioned to me that the road should be raised.

Asides.

Mr. M. A. LASHLEY: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South did a lot of work in St. Philip South and they were wondering at the time if some of that work could spill over to St. Philip North but I have now been assured by the Minister that the roads in St. Philip North would be well taken care of. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South and I meet throughout St. Philip and he is aware of the state of the roads in St. Philip North.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to draw attention to Coles Terrace in St. Philip and drainage in that area. Again, when there is rainfall, residents have to take off their shoes, use plastic bags and this was happening in St. Philip for the past 10 years or so.
11.30 a.m.

Sir, in Eastbourne, the road was started but not completed. Again, during election time, I must state this, there was a rush to fix a particular road in St. Philip, the road leading to Lucas Street. It was patched and in a few months, rains came, and the road was again in a state of disrepair. I believe that there must be a proper assessment of the roads in St. Philip.

Sir, I know that there was mention of $34 million. All of a sudden, three weeks ago, this Administration recognised that the roads in St. Philip North were bad, and $34 million is now being allocated to St. Philip. I would urge the Honourable Member for St. George North to take a tour. In relation to Apple Hall, I journeyed through Apple Hall Sunday morning, and I recognised that the residents were complaining. Even to get out of their homes, they were having problems. They need some assistance in terms of road repairs.

Sir, I believe that Thicketts road was mentioned, and I hope that the Honourable Member for St. George North would move very swiftly. Sir, the road I mentioned, from Long Bay to Well House corner, there were about two motor vehicular accidents there, that stretch of road, after you pass Eastbourne. We had two accidents there a few years ago that resulted in death. I hope that the Honourable Member is taking good note so that he could assist my constituents in St. Philip North. Sir, I will come back again.

Thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make a very brief contribution in this debate. It is, perhaps, good for me to speak after the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, and just to support him to some extent, but to correct him also.

Sir, before the Honourable Member took his seat, he was going reasonably well up to that point, because he is correct that I traverse many of the roads in St. Philip, so I know the condition of the roads in the entire parish. Sir, the

Honourable Member for St. Philip North, said that three weeks ago the Government realised that the roads in St. Philip needed fixing and the Prime Minister gave a commitment to release $34 million for the upgrade, repair and the construction of roads in St. Philip.

Mr. Chairman, nothing could be further from the truth. I stand here as a proud parliamentary representative for St. Philip South, a constituency that still has a lot of roads to be done. I could assure the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, that this Barbados Labour Party Administration has been good to the people in St. Philip, and in St. Philip South, as it relates to the repair, construction and the upgrade of roads.

Sir, because the Prime Minister has given a commitment to spend $34 million on roads in St. Philip, it does not mean that the Barbados Labour Party Administration has not been spending considerable sums of money on roads in St. Philip. Sir, what it does mean...

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression that because the Honourable Member did a lot of roads in St. Philip South, that St. Philip South happens to be St. Philip.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Sir, I just want to continue. I would not even respond to that. I was making the point that the fact that the Prime Minister, a few days ago, gave a commitment to expend $34 million on roads in St. Philip, is not an indication, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip North is saying, that the Administration has not been spending on St. Philip. What I can tell you is, it is a reflection, certainly from the time I took over, that there was such gross neglect, certainly in the constituency of St. Philip South, under the watch, and consistently so by the Democratic Labour Party representatives, for the last thirty-something years, that there was a need to spend a portion of $34 million on top of what was spent, certainly under my watch, between 1999 and today. I just wanted to clear the air on that. I am not going to give you the list of the roads that were actually done in St. Philip South, because ...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order, order.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: I will concentrate, Mr. Chairman, on looking after the interest of the persons who are located in Ruby Park, that want the network of roads there completed. The Honourable Member for St. George North, who sent in his team in the last financial year...

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression that when the Honourable Minister was responsible for Rural Affairs, the only commitment that the Honourable Member had was to St. Philip South. Mr. Chairman, you would know that when you are a minister, you are supposed to be a minister, for the whole country, and not for a constituency.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, I never mentioned anything about the Rural Development Commission. Sir, he is the head Honourable Member, who comes into this Honourable Chamber, and praised me for the manner in which the resources at the Rural Development Commission, under my watch, were distributed.

Sir, I want to continue, but take the Honourable Member for St. Lucy off me, please. I want to say to this Honourable Chamber, that I have a duty to continue to remind the Honourable Member for St. George North, that the roads in Ruby Park, Part A were finished about eight months ago, and we need to complete the job in Ruby Park.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Sir, the road in Ruby Park is badly in need of fixing. The Honourable Member for St. George North responded, and he did Part A, but the Part B is coming nine months after the Part A, so you can imagine the anxiety that is being created in that area.

Sir, there is a densely populated area in St. Philip South. In that area, the road leading from Heddings, coming from Foul Bay, Rices, through Heddings, and you will meet Industry High School, along the way, and you will go back onto the St. Martins main road. That area is densely populated. There is a school in that area, and for all the tea in China and India put together, I cannot understand why it would take the Honourable Member for St. George North so long, after numerous site visits, to understand that in an area that is densely populated, and where there is a secondary school, that he should move to upgrade that road.

Mr. Chairman, it is not only that the area is densely populated and there is a school in there, but also most of the buses that pass through Oistins going to Sam Lord's Castle or to College Savannah, take in the Foul Bay, Heddings, Rices, St. Martin Main Road stretch, at my request, of course.

11.40 a.m.

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

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I want to talk in this particular debate about three areas in particular. The first is St. Philip, where I happen to live. I hope that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South is well aware of the correct interpretation that the people of St. Philip have placed on the statements made at Six Roads, which is that between now and the next election, $34 million will be spent throughout the constituency of St. Philip on roads.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well if that is not the case, you could tell them how long it will take, and tell them the roads that are going to be fixed. There is no need to bandy around figures because right now in the parish of St. Philip, I am only aware – maybe I do not travel on all the roads – of two areas where major work is being undertaken. Sir, I mean the area from the bottom of Station House Hill to Sealy Hall, and across from Six Roads to St. Philip Parish Church.

Therefore, I hope that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South would not find himself as much a victim of the Prime Minister's promise, as the previous Member for St. Philip North was a victim of the policies of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I hope we would not find that particular scenario taking place in St. Philip.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. I am not responding to the last thing he said but I just want to inform him, he is correct that he does not drive through the parish of St. Philip enough but that is expected of him, not to know what is happening, not only in St. Philip where he lives, but what is happening elsewhere in the country and that is reflected in many things he says and does, but that is the trait of the gentleman, who is representing St. John.

I want him to know that in St. Martin, there is a big sign opposite Pelican Drive that leads into Harrington – a road done under my watch. Opposite Pelican Drive, if you go around from the supermarket in St. Martin, the Rural Development Commission is doing a road, which used to be a mud area, from St. Martin, going through to Cane Gardens. I have asked them to take the road further so that it meets Durette Gardens. Therefore, they are helping the many families who are living in those areas. Mr. Chairman, if the Honourable Member for St. John is so keen on the candidate for St. Philip South he would go around in that area and would know that things are happening on that side as well and not spend all of his time in St. Philip North in support of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North.
11.50 a.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point of order has been made, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. John.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, that was not a point of order. We are dealing with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. Sir, from the time I said St. Philip North and the former representatives, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South thought of the Rural Development Commission, but I am not surprised.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. John were ordered expunged from the records by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Continue, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please continue, do not be sidetracked.

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Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It was a sound track for a movie called the Demise of the Member of Parliament for St. Philip North in the last election. Mr. Chairman, I am not going to stick on that.

Mr. Chairman, there are only two major road work projects being undertaken by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in St. Philip right now. Therefore, we would have to play a lot of catch up to be able to undertake $34 million in road works alone in St. Philip. It is a bold promise and as I said I hope it is not a promise targeted at the Honourable Member for St. Philip South because he must deliver the roads, if not he would not deserve to be reelected. It was a promise and a pledge made by the highest political officer in Barbados, the Chairman of the Cabinet, the Minister of Finance, the person who would determine the Honourable Member political future. Therefore, I assumed that the promise would be met because the people of St. Philip rightly expect $34 million out of the millions that are being spent on the Cricket World Cup and on all kinds of projects.

Mr. Chairman, even with that $34 million, the Government would have to do a lot of catching up, but the pledge has been made and we would hold the Honourable Member for St. Philip South to it because he was there, and he did not look surprised, he did not look alarmed, he did not look upset and he did not even look concerned, unless he

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Mr. Chairman, even with that $34 million, the Government would have to do a lot of catching up, but the pledge has been made and we would hold the Honourable Member for St. Philip South to it because he was there, and he did not look surprised, he did not look alarmed, he did not look upset and he did not even look concerned, unless he

was asleep. Sir, $34 million in expenditure is anticipated for St. Philip.

Mr. Chairman, I am equally as concerned about St. Joseph because not a single project has been identified here in relation to the constituency of St. Joseph. Mr. Chairman, I am bounded on one side in St. John by St. Philip. I know that a lot of work is going on in St. George North, but there is nothing at all in St. Joseph or for St. Joseph. Sir, St. Joseph is a constituency which has a road network which is also in a deplorable condition. Sir, it is clear that major works need to be carried out in St. Joseph, and I am extremely concerned that this debate could proceed without any reference at all to that rural parish.

Sir, during the Cricket World Cup thousands of visitors are going to be going to the East Coast Road, Barclays Park and to all parts of St. Joseph, yet the people of St. Joseph stand totally unrepresented because no allocation is made for them and there is no concern for their plight in relation to the provision of roads. Mr. Chairman, that is totally and utterly unacceptable and I hope that the Minister could respond and explain why.

Mr. Chairman, I have always said that I have feared slightly better in respect to St. John under the stewardship of the Honourable Member for St. George North than under any other Minister. Sir, when the Minister said that a lot of roads have been done, he is not saying that roads are being done, that is a gross misrepresentation.

There is not a single road project undertaken by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in St. John that has been completed. A whole section of the road from Four Roads to Mount Tabor in front of Wakefield Plantation has been left out. The road from Edgecliff to the bottom of Station House Hill in St. Philip, a road which we were told for the past 12 years will be given priority, is not yet totally completed. The road leading down to Bath through Colleton is being worked on and I am glad to see the work that is being done and the progress that is being made. The Minister has been sensible enough to widen this road. I believe that the kind of work that appears to be done will ensure that road has a solid foundation. Sir, there is also the road down into Bath itself.

Sir, there is also the road in New Castle which broke away in 1994. Gabion work has been done there and the bridge is completed but one still has to divert down through St. Margaret's. Sir, it is unacceptable that for such a long period of time, about 10 of those 12 years, nothing was done in that area. That area is an area that connects St. Philip to St. Joseph and St. Andrew. It is an area where a lot of tour buses pass. Sir, because of the new heavy traffic placed on their road through the diversion of those tour coaches, some of the people who live in St. Margaret's have suffered structural damage to their homes because the road was not built to withstand such heavy traffic as well as the fact that it is an area that is prone to land slippage.

Mr. Chairman, those are my three principal concerns. The first is that the $34 million which has been earmarked for St. Philip between now and the next election will actually be spent and that the work...
12.00 noon

Hon. A. P. WOOD: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member continues in his attempt to mislead this Honourable House and by extension, is also aiming to mislead those on the outside.

Mr. Chairman, at no time was it said that $34 million would be spent on roads in St. Philip, between now and the next election. Mr. Chairman, I was there at the meeting at Six Cross Roads a few nights ago, and all the Prime Minister said was that $34 million would be set aside for roads works in St. Philip. The Prime Minister never said those roads would be executed within any time period.

Mr. Chairman, if the Honourable Member for St. John wants to come here and make a political speech, I would not allow him to get away with it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, your point has been made.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I did not know that is what the Prime Minister said, and I am so glad that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South has explained to the people of St. Philip exactly what the Prime Minister did not say.

Sir, the impression was given otherwise, that major commitments were going to be made before this Government went back to the electorate and asked for an endorsement of their stewardship. Therefore, the people of St. Philip South would have to think very seriously about the performance of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, if, as the only sitting Honourable Member of Parliament for St. Philip, on behalf of that Government, he cannot convince the Prime Minister, the Minister of Public Works and others, to at least get those road works done before the election is called, so that he could justify his presence in this Honourable House.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. I would like to inform the Honourable Member for St. John that since the last election, this Barbados Labour Party Administration have fixed 12 roads in my constituency. I want to remind him that the only reason we have had to fix upwards to 30 roads in St. Philip, was because of 35 years of unbroken representation from them.

They did such a terrible job that they left all the roads in St. Philip South for this Barbados Labour Party to fix, and I will continue to get them fixed at the pace we think fit.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point has been made. The Honourable Member for St. John, you have three minutes more.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure what point the Honourable Member was making. I am talking about the pledge made by the Prime Minister in St. Philip. I said what the people of St. Philip understanding was, and what was the understanding of the rest of Barbados. Sir, the Honourable Member then got up and said that was not his understanding. Sir, I am not quarrelling with the Honourable Member. I started by saying that I did not think it was possible for this Government to do $34 million in roads between now and the next election, and the Honourable Member has now agreed with me, but wants to pretend that he is quarrelling. It cannot be done.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: On a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. John is a stranger to the truth, time after time, over and over again. Sir, two minutes ago, the Honourable Member said that the $34 million was earmarked to be spent between now and the next election. Sir, the Honourable Member is so much in the habit of speaking things that are contrary to the truth, that he cannot remember what he says sometimes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you have made your point. The Honourable Member for St. John, you have one more minute.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, no where did I say it would be spent before the next election. I said the understanding of the people of St. Philip was that the Prime Minister said it would be spent between now and the next election. I was not at the meeting in St. Philip, so if the Honourable Member, who was there and was awake and in his full faculties, is saying that the people of St. Philip have been misled, then I am not going to quarrel with him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South, on what point do you rise?

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. There is no one in St. Philip, who has been misled. It is a figment of the Honourable Member's imagination, as is normally the case, that $34 million, in the opinion of the people of St. Philip, is to be spent between now and election. Mr. Chairman, no one in his or her right mind would expect $34 million in road works would be done, between now and whenever that election is called. I do not know from where he would have gotten that interpretation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you have made your point.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member does not have to become so flustered. I am saying that he and I are *ad idem*. The Honourable Member and I are in full agreement that this Government would not be spending $34 million on road works in St. Philip. Sir, I was only reiterating what I said.

Sir, point number two is that there is no reference in this Supplementary to any Public Works project in St. Joseph. That is a fact incontrovertible. I am saying that is regrettable. Point number three is that I am explaining to the Minister that though the Ministry of Public Works is doing work in St. John, there is more that needs to be done, but it is not correct to say that any of the projects in the past 12 years have been completed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And point number four is that your time has expired. I am now hearing the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I did not know I would have to rise and perhaps speak on points of the Honourable Member for St. George North. Let me say on behalf... Perhaps I prefer not to do so because it might appear that we are contented with the progress that we have seen happening in St. Joseph.

Mr. Chairman, I too would say that nothing for St. Joseph appears in this Supplementary, and that is incontrovertible, but I am able to say that any individual, who walks the ground in St. Joseph, would have to come away with a measure of satisfaction at both the quantity and quality of work that is happening in my constituency. Sir, for that I would wish to thank the Honourable Member.

Mr. Chairman, the constituency of St. Joseph is one that suffers from tremendous slippage. It is a fact that this constant slippage presents problems for the maintenance of roads across my constituency. I, therefore, begin by accepting that the Honourable Member and his team at the Ministry of Public Works and the hardworking, decent people from the St. Joseph depot, begin labouring under a challenge that does not present itself across the rest of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, when roads are being done in Christ Church, St. Michael or St. James, the workmen do not have to contend with slippage, but the one-fifth of Barbados that is made up of the Scotland District, being an area that is susceptible to constant land slippage and landslides, present particular challenge for the people at the Ministry of Public Works. Sir, that is not to excuse them failing to meet the demands that I make on them constantly. Mr. Chairman, the

fact is that communities are alive and well in St. Joseph and therefore, they deserve to have their road infrastructure maintained out of taxpayers' funds.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say to Honourable Members that over the last three years, we have had significant road works in St. Joseph. Sir, Cambridge Road, on which Barbadians travel to see the Semifinals and Crop Over, has been done by the Ministry of Public Works depot in St. Joseph, and has been done to a high standard.

Mr. Chairman, Clifton Tenantry is an area, I have to confess, that is located in St. Thomas, but is within the constituency of St. Joseph. I have to confess that when I went into Clifton Tenantry, I was told that the people had already heard the talk about road repairs, but I would wish to say that working together with the Honourable Member for St. George North, we have delivered Clifton Tenantry Road to the people of that community, after they have been labouring without it for many years.
12.10 p.m.

We have also had road works done in Proutes. We have had road works done in Hortons Village. Sir, Hackleton Cliff was recently completely paved and there is a substantial project to come across that road...

Asides.

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL: They must go and see it. Sir, apart from that, the road in Easy Hall is expected to be paved shortly, I have had that commitment from the Honourable Member. Mr. Chairman, Orange Grove has had its road done and Orange Cottage is another area in my constituency where the people there were suffering for a road for a long time, they had absolutely no road. Sir, in this Honourable House, since being elected, I had occasion to speak about a lady to whom an ambulance could not get, who was going into labour. Sir, that road in Orange Cottage is very near completion. I am happy to say that the Honourable Member for St. George North has been working hard to deliver these things for us.

Mr. Chairman, in the last few months, we have had Hillswick Road being paved and Tent Bay is expected to start during this financial year. The work on Bloomsbury has just been completed, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas would be able to corroborate that and we are expecting shortly to have a concrete path at Coconut Grove.

Mr. Chairman, more importantly, I want to talk about Fruitful Hill. Since being elected, I have taken the Honourable Member for St. George North to Fruitful Hill on three occasions to see the great challenge that the people from Fruitful Hill have to labour under. It is to my regret and, I believe it is a matter that would bring shame and embarrassment to any Administration that last year, during the very heavy rains, the people in Fruitful Hill could not get out to work for two days.

Mr. Chairman, I want to earnestly, sincerely and publicly thank the Honourable Member for St. George North for allowing the MTW Depot to start working on Fruitful Hill. Sir, they have started that work about three or four weeks ago. Mr. Chairman, Fruitful Hill is an area, I am told by the residents, that did not have a road since during the 1960s but this Administration and this representation, has been able to bring that much needed and much deserved relief to the people of Fruitful Hill. Sir, that road is expected to be completed by year end.

Mr. Chairman, that is not to say that we are satisfied. The fact is that we have constant challenges due to slippage and the area of Joy Road is one where the slippage over the years, causes the road to be so undulating that I must express the opinion that it is unsafe. Sir, an individual who does not know that road, driving down there, could find their car shifting suddenly and the steering wheel wrenched out of their hands. I have to say to the Honourable Member that I am deeply concerned about the condition of the road at Joy Road, that especially needs the attention of the Honourable Member.

Mr. Chairman, again I want to thank the Honourable Member for the work he is doing. There is a lot that still has to be done. He has given me commitment in relation to widening the bridge at Joe's River. I believe all Honourable Members would know that this bridge is a very narrow bridge and that it is over 100 years old. Clearly, it was designed and built for a period in time when there were no motor vehicles to traverse that bridge but now, if a bus or any heavy duty vehicle is on that bridge, nothing can pass and apart from that the bridge is around a corner so it is difficult to see approaching traffic.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member has told me that he has heard my plea and the plea of my constituents and has agreed to widen that very narrow carriageway to make a 26-foot wide bridge over Joe's River. Sir, that bridge is used by thousands of tourists every week, it is used by thousands of Barbadians and it is, I fear, a disaster waiting to happen. I understand that the metal segments and some parts of the bridge have already been ordered and I am hopeful that we would be able to see the fruit of that particular request materialising by year end.

Mr. Chairman, there are other works that have to be done in the constituency. There are challenges and when you are in an area of high rainfall, the depot is challenged to keep the bush down but, I know that the Honourable Member is hearing my plea.

Mr. Chairman, I use this forum to thank the hard-working people of the St. Joseph Depot. All of the work that is happening in my constituency is happening through the hard work of the people in the depot. Mr. Chairman, I speak to the people in the depot every week and, I have to say that some times I feel I am being unfair to them because no sooner than we have 'licked' a particular problem, we have to deal with a situation of slippage.

Mr. Chairman, I had hoped they would have been able to do the work in the Spaw but they had to contend with severe slippage and erosion in the area of Parks. The depot with its limited resources is really serving the people well and I want to commend all the hard-working staff and the supervisory staff at the depot and ask them to continue to give 150 per cent as they have been doing. As I have said, there is more to be done and I continue to speak to the Honourable Member for St. George North, but I believe the evidence is there and that he is hearing the plantive cry of the constituents of St. Joseph and of the representative.

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

Mr. R. D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. It is almost like a plaintive cry of all Honourable Members when Supplementaries such as this come before the House and I too would want to add my cry as well. I am sure that the Honourable Member would have in some file in his Ministry, the long list of roads to be repaired in Christ Church East Central but I would only wish to add my voice and reiterate just the few that I believe are deserving of some attention. I know that there has been some work in Christ Church East Central and I am pleased for that.

Mr. Chairman, the Vauxhall Road, which leads from the highway into the back of the Vauxhall Senior Citizens Village has been completed and we are thankful, since that was a project of the stand-in Chairman this morning. Sir, work has commenced on the Rockville road in Kingsland but one would want to see greater alacrity. It has been going on for some three or four months and one sometimes wonders why things like this take so much time. One understands that there is always a paucity of resources but, work has commenced and one would hope that the residents of Rockville and the side roads of Rockville would see that project at least completed before Christmas, so that they would enjoy their turkey, ham and "Proper Pork" during that period on roads that would allow their vehicles to enter with some safety.

Sir, before they exit Kingsland, there are two other roads, one no more than 150 metres, to be fixed opposite Albany. Also, in Kingsland Heights, particularly the hill, coming through Chelsea right up into Kingsland Heights, there would be some work in that area. Sir, they should not leave Rockville without some completion of the road in Chelsea and into Kingsland Heights. I am sure that the Honourable Chairman would know what I am speaking about because he traverses that road as he goes into his home, and also Durants Development and Durants No. 5.

Mr. Chairman, there is a road, which spans the constituency of Christ Church East Central and Christ Church West Central as you come out from Aberdeen Centre and turn right into Gall Hill No. 1, which would take you into Church Hill.... as you proceed into Windy Ridge, as you rejoin Highway 7, that is in a deplorable state. The residents told me that it has not been done in an extremely long time, Gall Hill No. 1, into Church Hill, through Windy Ridge and onto Highway 7.
12.20 p.m.

I am pleased that the work has been completed from Thornbury Hill to Windy Ridge and Oistins, to rejoin the road from Top Rock to Oistins. Sir, in truth and in fact, the sound of the tyres on that road is something to behold, so, I am pleased for that.

Mr. Chairman, Stanford, Lodge Road, Wilson Village and Lodge Road B, as well, some work has to be done. One knows that putting barber green on all these surfaces, because the resource might not be available... but the use of the colas, tar and that kind of stuff, can at least improve the conditions of the road.

I am pleased that the drainage work continues but it is a bit slow. We went on a tour with the Minister and officials, and I am pleased to see that work started sometime ago, but that work has to be extended up to Lodge Road, to take that water from that area. Sir, they have made that commitment, but to me, as a person who is not trained in drainage works, it appears to be progressing a bit too slowly. I believe that there might be challenges. I do not know, but it appears to me that way, but there is work still going on in that area.

Sir, I am pleased that the Minister said that within this financial year, which would conclude on the end of March, that the Montrose Road, that is the one from the Christ Church Boys' School to the Deighton Griffith Secondary School, would be completed. That also spans Christ Church West Central and Christ Church East Central. It is a main thoroughfare for residents.

Sir, if you consider the amount of traffic, which is met at the junction of the Deighton Griffith School, below Kingsland and the ABC Highway, there might be need for consideration of a roundabout at that particular junction. I am hopeful that the Minister would consider a roundabout or some system could be put in place in that area. I am not a road works specialist.

We know that there would be greater expenditure, but I would also want to make a call that when these roads are put in, persons who are doing construction, pay some attention to these roads so that they do not have to turn concrete on the road. The two do not gel, and it becomes quite unsightly.

Sir, with those few words, I thank you.

On the motion of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, seconded by Hon. G. A. CLARKE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second that this House be suspended until 1.30 p.m.

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

The question that the House be suspended until 1.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.
12.30 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

When the Suspension was taken, this House was in Committee of Supply and to that, it will now revert.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee of Supply. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to give my support to the Resolution before the Chamber today and to congratulate the Minister for a job that he is doing quite well. I do believe that he makes his genuine best effort, and he is achieving some measure of success.

I would also say, Mr. Chairman, that in my constituency of St. Michael North, generally speaking, the road network is relatively in good condition. Sir, work in that area accelerated from 1994 and for that, I have to be thankful.

Indeed, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. George North may not remember but he was also the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Public Works, post-1994. With his assistance, I was able to get some work done in the St. Michael North area, in Green Hill where a very dangerous rock bluff was cut down that had caused some loss of life before, and road works as well in Cave Hill.

Mr. Chairman, the fact that a lot has been done, does not mean that there is not more still to be done. I want today to repeat the need for more work to be done in St. Michael North. In the area of Cave Hill, some work was done, but more work still has to be done, because that area was badly neglected, under the previous Democratic Labour Party Government.

In fact, the former representative used to boast after winning his elections before 1994 – he used to lose in the Cave Hill area – that he did not have to worry about them, because he can get his votes in the Eden Lodge area. Sir, for that reason, we saw Cave Hill being neglected, over the years.

Mr. Chairman, there are three roads in the Well Gap and Lodge Hill areas that I am appealing to the Minister to address, as soon as possible. Mr. Chairman, there is one thing I would like to make clear from the start. I think that it has to be clearly stated, certainly to Members of Parliament and, perhaps, in the wider public domain, exactly which roads the Urban Development Commission is responsible for, and the roads for which the Ministry of Public Works is responsible.

Mr. Chairman, it happens too often that you approach, in my case, the Urban Development Commission, in respect of roads, to be told, that does not fall under that department to go to the Ministry of Public Works. On the other hand, sometimes you approach the Ministry of Public Works and they in turn say, that is for the Urban Development Commission to do. Therefore, sometimes you can be quite frustrated trying to find the actual agency that you have to approach. My understanding is that certainly the Ministry of Public Works has to play a role in relationship to the roads in Cave Hill.

I am therefore appealing to them, Mr. Chairman, for some urgent action. Some of these roads in Cave Hill are still in a condition, where residents who live next to them still find it very difficult to access their houses when there is serious rainfall, in terms of combatting water. When there is no rainfall, the terrain is so rough that sometimes they bring shoes to me, showing the damage, that walking across the area to get to their houses is doing to their shoes. I am therefore making this request, please, as a matter of urgency.

Aside.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: These are roads in Well Gap.

Mr. Chairman, I have shown these to both the Urban Development Commission and the Ministry of Public Works, on many occasions. One thing that I do not want to

hear mentioned again, in relation to St. Michael North, is that we can do another tour. Mr. Chairman, the personnel from the various ministries are quite willing to be taken to sites and shown what the concerns are, but it is the response that I am more looking for at this time. Mr. Chairman, I have had so many tours that I believe that I can open a tour company, so I really do not want to hear about any more tours, I want to see some action.
1.40 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I also believe that when road works are being done particularly when they are going to be of a fairly radical nature or when other radical development is going to take place in an area that would impact on road use and the number of vehicles in an area, that it should be incumbent upon the Ministry to have constant dialogue with the residents of the area so that they would be fully aware of the implications of that development that is going to be taking place.

Mr. Chairman, I have the honour to represent a constituency that has in it an area that is quickly emerging, in my view, as the next town in this country, the Warrens area. It has tremendous infrastructure and businesses of every kind, therefore, I believe that it has to be seen now as a town. Mr. Chairman, as part of the infrastructure comes some massive increase in road use in that constituency. It is estimated that when the Government building is fully occupied by the various Government departments that there is going to be an increase of some 700 cars per day visiting that area. Mr. Chairman, that is a tremendous increase in vehicular use of the road.

Mr. Chairman, we have had a town hall meeting at Queen's College School some time last year, but as I go through the constituency, particularly in that area, I recognise that far too many residents have a very strong apprehension about what life is going to become when those Government offices are fully occupied and that increase in the number of cars on the roads literally. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I am appealing to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport to have, again and more regularly, dialogue with the residents of that particular area. It is no mean feat to wake up one day and find 700 more cars utilising the road.

I believe that while the town hall meeting that was held at the Queen's College School was helpful, it is nowhere nearly enough to have informed adequately the residents of the area as to what life was going to be like. A number of proposals were outlined and subsequently we heard mention that there was going to be the convergence of some streets into one way use and so on but there is still a need for people to be constantly given an update on what is going on.

Mr. Chairman, I perhaps stand to be corrected on this, the Minister can correct me if I am wrong, but the Police obviously would have to play an important role to any change in the directional flow of traffic. Mr. Chairman, I am told that some weeks ago when an enquiry was made of the Police Department as to if they were aware of what they had to do in relation to that area and the response was in fact no that they had not yet been communicated with, from or by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. If that is so, Mr. Chairman – and the Honourable Minister can inform me as to what the true position is – certainly that is a state of affairs that has to be rectified posthaste because if the Police are not informed and involved in the process, then any plans, no matter how elaborate, would in fact come to naught.

Mr. Chairman, the very thorny issue at present in that area is how are people going to be able to access their homes when this increase in traffic starts to really take off, so Mr. Minister, I hope you are hearing me loud and clear. Mr. Chairman, sometimes it is important for officials in ministries to monitor the adequacy of roads as certain developments take off.

Mr. Chairman, at no time at all, prior to 1995 was there a Transport Board bus service running through the Husbands New Development and Reservoir Road area. I have the honour to be able to say that I was able to have a service introduced in that area.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North, I want you to stick to the road programme and not the bus service, please.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Mr. Chairman, relevance will be established very shortly because the road in that area over which the bus has to travel needs to be widened.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are not here talking about a bus service for your area, you are talking about the road.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: Yes, I am talking about the road.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Okay, go on.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: This has become clearer because of the fact that since 1996 a bus service was introduced. The problem is that for the bus to get out of Husbands New Development onto Reservoir Road, cars often have to reverse to allow the bus to get in or out as the case may be or the bus has to stop and reverse to allow another vehicle to get by because both vehicles cannot pass at the same time. Therefore, as developments take place there is a need for the Ministry's officials to monitor what adjustments have to be made to the road network of the particular area. Mr. Chairman, this has also been pointed out to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport and the Urban Development Commission, and I have been assured

that some work would be carried out, I sincerely hope in the near future.

Mr. Chairman, sometimes little things can go a long way. I am somewhat surprised about the abandonment of the use of the speed humps in areas across Barbados. I really cannot understand why a project that is so simple but so effective has been regulated to the back-burner. Mr. Chairman, I have been requesting speed humps, whether it be for Lodge Terrace, certain parts of Eden Lodge, Cave Hill and Grazettes, only to find that quite often you do not even get an acknowledgement of the letter that you submit or you are told by some experts in the Ministry that speed humps are not effective and they are moving away from them. Mr. Chairman, unless I can be presented with some very scientific evidence proving that, I am prepared to say that it is a very simple, cost-effective and effective way to regulate traffic and safeguard the safety of users of any roads in this country, especially for children.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to stick to my guns and ask the Ministry to respond to my requests, some of which have been written and some of which have been oral, pointing out on some occasions areas that need these speed humps. Sir, I want them to respond to that in a serious way. Mr. Chairman, experts have their way of looking at things but sometimes a little local knowledge and street sense can also inform very well about what really needs to be done to correct the problem.

Mr. Chairman, my last point is my request again to the Minister for that walkover on the ABC Highway between the Hinds Hill and Reservoir Road area. Mr. Chairman, since 1994, I have been butting my head against a wall, it seemed, on this. I was assured in December of 1994 or early 1995 that funds were going to be allocated in the Estimates for 1995-1996 for this walkover.

Mr. Chairman, it is a broad highway and vehicles travel on it at a very rapid pace and both children and adults have to hustle to get from one side of the street to the next. Sir, their safety is my paramount concern. I do not believe that the Minister would consider that the lives of the residents of Reservoir Road and Lodge Hill are any less valuable than the lives of persons anywhere else in Barbados. Sir, those residents have a right to safety.
1.50 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, on occasions, I have heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael East making the point that he needs a "walkover" for a part of his constituency in the St. Barnabas area. I heard the Minister, subsequent to that Member, making that point, outlining plans for "walkovers" and he only mentioned the one requested by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, who has only requested it less than a year ago.

Mr. Chairman, since 1994, I have been requesting mine, and have been doing so over and over again. I have even done so at the same town hall meeting, where I made the point in public forum. Sir, the officers and the Minister have been sympathetic but I want to see some action. It is not good enough that after 12 years, an obvious project, one dealing with the safety of individuals, could be put on the back-burner of Government, especially at a time when the Minister of Public Works is a Minister whose heart is in this.

Mr. Chairman, I do not know when these things are signed off by the Minister, if it is these experts who again get involved and relegate them to the realm of nothingness or wherever they relegate them to. Sir, I am urging the Minister that on issues such as these, he must override these experts. I understand it is an expert's opinion that "walkovers" are useless and that around the world, they have proven to be ineffective.

Mr. Chairman, I want to submit that if somebody has to use a "walkover", they would have no choice but to use it. If one has a choice of running across the road, at the risk of being knocked down and killed or using a "walkover", common sense would dictate that you would use the "walkover", and the people from Cave Hill and Hinds Hill have a lot of common sense.

Asides.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: They voted for me three times, in the first place. Mr. Chairman, it is alright for us to have a joke, but this is a serious matter. I cannot understand why, after 12 years and numbers of requests, this has not been complied with.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to be looking at the Estimates very carefully when they are brought here for the next Estimates debate, and I would be expecting that my request, on this occasion, is going to be carried out. I heard outlined today of a lot of plans for a large number of roads across Barbados, but no mention was made of St. Michael North.

Mr. Chairman, in the past 10 years, St. Michael North has been fairly well-served with a number of road works but work has to go on and I fear that, for the last four or five years, things have started to slow down in a way I would not like to see continue.

Mr. Chairman, with those remarks, I would want to give my support to this Resolution but with the *proviso* that I want to see my request being taken care of. I am a very reasonable man, I do not expect the impossible. There is no minister who could say that I have harassed him/her unreasonably, but little things and important things, are things on which I will stand.

Mr. Chairman, I am indebted to you.

Mr. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make a few comments on this Supplementary. I suppose these Supplementaries provide the opportunity for Honourable Members to speak of the road network system within their constituencies and about what needs to be done or has been done already. We are clearly hearing from Honourable Members on the other side, that they are quite satisfied with what is happening in their constituencies. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South and others, have said that they are quite happy with all the works that is going on in their constituencies.

Sir, some of us, of course, cannot say the same thing but I supposed, to some extent, I am happy to see what has happened in Flag Staff, Streats Road and Ifill Road. After a number of letters and meeting with the personnel, we had some activity over there, at long last. Sir, it has taken a number of years but it has happened and I guess I should be somewhat grateful. I would have been happier to have seen something done in McCleans Gap, Brittons Hill, but I assume that would happen as well.

Mr. Chairman, I always like to put these things in the context of the need for us to have better national planning and maybe we could have a better system of planning, I do not suppose the Honourable Member for St. Michael North was saying that we should dispose of expert advice. I guess he was saying that we should combine it with local knowledge, which would make sense, and as they say, if commonsense had prevailed in relation to plans for the Greenland Landfill, the Treasury would have been saved a few million dollars. Sir, I endorse that point of view.

Mr. Chairman, what I am saying is that perhaps we could be a little more technical in how we approach our road maintenance program. We could even take the politics out of it, so that when we have these debates, all Honourable Members would not have to get up and plead for what is or is not happening in his/her constituency, instead, we could take a more national look at how things are to be done.

Mr. Chairman, what I would say very quickly on the roads that have been identified, is that I hope the maintenance program would be looked at seriously, because that is an area in which the Ministry has proven to be quite weak. It is all very nice to have lots of roads fixed for Cricket World Cup, 2007, and beyond but what are we going to do to maintain these roads? Sir, there is a lot that is lacking in that department.

Mr. Chairman, ancillary issues like drainage, for example, is another weak area. Very often the roads are constructed and the drainage considerations are not always kept utmost in mind. Therefore, invariably we have conditions that could akin to flash-flooding, as a result of roads being developed. Sir, we need to see consideration being given to our drainage system.

Mr. Chairman, the other point I wish to make has to do with when we are working on roads and are forced to have detours. Sir, very often the roads that we detour through are not capable of handling the load with which the major arteries may have been dealing and therefore a lot of collateral damage occurs on these smaller roads, so that while we repair major roads, we end up damaging the minor roads for those purposes. This, to some extent, has happened in the Martindales Road area, such as Taylors Gap and Campaign Land. There are still some damage that needs to be corrected from when Martindales Road was being resurfaced.

Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that given how long the Hindsbury Road is taking before it could be finished, you are going to have to go into a number of the roads, not only in Carringtons Village, in my constituency, but the Honourable Member for St. Michael West would tell you that over in the Hindsbury area as well, it has naturally become a short cut. Those roads are more heavily used because of the fact that you have lost that artery, resulting in a situation where we now have to do work on other smaller roads that have been forced to be pressed into service as major arteries.

Mr. Chairman, I hope those few concerns could be kept in the minds of personnel at the Ministry, as we look to improve our road network program. It is clear that there is a lot of confusion going on at the moment, in terms of trying to fix everything for Cricket World Cup, 2007. There are a lot of officers running all over the place. In this very Supplementary, we are hearing of a sum of $300 000, to meet the increase cost of travel for officers. Sir, that figure sounds a little high, to say the least.

We were hearing how wonderful the depot network is. I know for a fact there are officers based there, especially in my constituency at the Pine. If there are depots based throughout Barbados, why would such a large sum be required for officers, just because Government is doing a few extra roads? That figure sounds somewhat high, given the fact that the Ministry is already decentralised and has technical personnel at its various locations. Maybe it is that you need to upgrade some of the depots and have a higher level of officers available at the depots. If that could be done, we would not find ourselves having to spend that kind of money in travel. You would have to spend some because the reality of working on roads is that you have to be on the road but I am just a little puzzled as to how the Government would find itself in that position.

2.00 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, also in this Supplementary, in the few minutes I have left, I wanted to touch on this issue of

workers being transferred from the Urban Development Commission to the Ministry of Public Works. There is a sum of $746 580 allocated for that purpose. I will readily concede that I am not sure what those workers were doing at the Urban Development Commission. The Urban Development Commission is a very interesting saga in the political history of Barbados. There have been internal reviews on the operation of the Urban Development Commission. We had a consultant do a review, the Auditor General did a regular audit and he was called in to do a special audit. There were a few changes at the top that were precipitated by the need to...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, let us deal with the roads. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, I am speaking to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Mr. R. L. SEALY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sir, Head 37, votes a sum of money for workers in the Ministry of Public Works, which is responsible for maintaining the road network in Barbados. Sir, workers were transferred from the Urban Development Commission to the Ministry of Public Works and, given where they are coming from, I think it is only fair to the Ministry of Public Works because it is obviously stretched to capacity and beyond capacity, hence the need for this Supplementary and hence the need for further remuneration for the travel officers.

Mr. Chairman, we just need to understand precisely what these 46 workers have been doing. We just need to know as a Parliament because, to the best of my knowledge, the only thing that the Ministry took over from the Urban Development Commission, that we know of publicly, is that they have been cutting trees but I do not think that they are all cutting trees so, I am suggesting that we need to have a better idea of what is occurring.

Mr. Chairman, we also heard from the Minister with respect to the workers at the Government Electrical Engineering Department, who would be moving into new facilities after many years of complaining of the building at Bay Street. I am very happy for the workers in that department and I would only say that I hope that the other Government departments like the Government Building Services Unit in the Ministry of Public Works could, in fact, deal with other buildings where we have Government employees working in buildings, which are clearly dilapidated, over 100 years old, in the case of the Geriatric Hospital and other places as well. We need to move ahead apace to see that the improvements are brought to them also.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard about the new building in Warrens, where several departments would be housed. Again, it is a little unfortunate that resources, which could have gone towards improving facilities for workers like those in the Government Electrical Engineering Department, will find themselves going towards the settlement of a court issue, involving sums of money for the development of that property in Warrens.

Mr. Chairman, we need to do something to ensure that we have a clear idea of where the Government is going with respect to the accommodation of civil servants, generally, and not only those employed with the Government Electrical Engineering Department. I see also that there is $0.5 million for upgrading the River Terminal in the Head under the Subprogramme of Parking Systems and Car Parks. There has been some movement, certainly in the car parks in Bridgetown, they have been taken over by Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated and there was some concern the workers had over what would happen to their rights as civil servants, given the fact that a statutory body was taking over the running of the car parks. Mr. Chairman, I just raised those concerns in the context of this overall Supplementary.

Sir, I am much obliged to you.

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to deal with the 46 workers, who came from Urban Development Commission and to make the point that it might be a good thing. I would like to believe that they are all artisans. I honestly believe that the Ministry of Public Works has a division again for looking after the repairs of buildings.

Sir, it is clear to me that there is a dire need for this to reoccur when one considers that there is a stated notion in this country, that a healthy country is a wealthy country. If we are to premise that based on what we see at the Drug Service, where those persons are asked to work on a daily basis, clearly, these 46 workers could easily go there and do some work on behalf of the Ministry of Public Works, so that those persons working in the Ministry of Health could have a better place from which to operate. I know of what I speak because I go there on a monthly basis and, Sir, you would agree with me, it is not the best place for anybody to work. I hope that these 46 workers would be able to help with this particular matter.

Mr. Chairman, as you would know, being a former Minister of Public Works, these officers have to do a lot of travelling in rural Barbados and, I am not surprised that money is included in this vote. It is also clear to me that this $300 000 has to be money owed to the workers for back travel. I think that when you consider that work that we have told you about today, I think it is regrettable that these officers could be doing the work for the Ministry of Public Works.

I am going to support the Minister on this particular matter. I believe that this money should be supported now so that these officers could be paid because looking at these figures, it has to be back travel.

I think that it is regrettable that we would have to come to this Parliament to vote for $300 000 for poor men and women, who are working hard for the Ministry and who, most likely, went for months, without getting their travel allowance. Mr. Chairman, I know that if you were the Minister of Public Works that you would join me in supporting them to get this money in their pockets today.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the depots, especially in rural Barbados, cannot continue to have only six weeders. I am supporting the Minister of Public Works in bringing the necessary Supplementary to this House to ensure that there are more weeders, especially in rural Barbados, where you have large tracks of land, which are still in agriculture. Sir, when one considers that the weeders are not weeding as they used to, that the roadways are now left to the Ministry of Public Works, it is impossible for six weeders to weed the whole of St. Lucy.

Mr. Chairman, if you doubt me, one only has to take a tour to the rural constituency of St. Lucy and one would understand the problem that is being confronted by those six weeders, who have to weed such a large area. I am calling on this House because it is unfair for six persons to have to do all this work. Sir, I have already said to the Minister of Public Works that all of those persons who want asphalt roads, let them keep them. Sir, I want some more equipment in St. Lucy, so that the workers in St. Lucy can continue to use colas, and cheap.
2.10 p.m.

Sir, let me say that the work being produced at the depot in St. Lucy, I will challenge anybody, I do not care what material you bring, they are producing good roads. The problem is, they do not have the equipment. I am happy to hear the Minister state that beside the equipment you left for him, there will be some more equipment. I would like to see some of that equipment going north of Barbados and north of St. Peter.

Sir, I want to repeat this point. I want to see the equipment going north, but also north of St. James and St. Peter, because in this Honourable House when they speak of north, they speak up to the Judge Gap, as the Honourable Member for St. Andrew would know.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I said that already today. I said that for the ears of the Honourable Member for St. Andrew.

I was going to make a point on the Honourable Member's behalf, but the Honourable Member for St. Andrew is in the House now, so I do not have to make that point. I did not say, St. Andrew, St. Joseph or St. Lucy. I have already been told that we do not have to worry about St. Joseph, because they are getting roads and have no reason to quarrel, and there are no more roads to be completed, so, I am going to make the point, on behalf of St. Andrew and St. Lucy. I am making the point that we need some of this money spent in these constituencies, not only because of the tourists, but there are people living there too.

Sir, can you imagine that there are a hundred and fifteen tenantries to be done in one constituency. Sir, a hundred and fifteen as per the list. Sir, you have the list. Sir, I keep making this point in this Parliament and people seem not to understand the point. In a constituency like St. Lucy, where there are a lot of independent landowners, as soon as you complete one road, there is a possibility that six more might come on, for the simple reason, the people own their land. They do not have to wait on Government for land, and they place their homes where they have the land. Sir, people need to understand that in a rural constituency, like St. Lucy, the land is not only owned by plantations, but most of the land, in terms of numbers, the land is owned by individuals. Sir, when I come to this Parliament and speak about a hundred and fifteen roads, I might get seven roads done, but it does not mean that it has reduced the number of roads, because people go and live elsewhere, and there is a need for more roads to be added.

I am supporting any supplementary that is brought here by the Minister of Public Works. I honestly believe that the Minister needs some money. It is only regrettable that he did not look at an opportunity cost when he had that $120 million for the flyovers. Sir, had the Minister used that $120 million, to be spent on the flyovers, on the whole of Barbados doing road works, the Minister would be the most popular minister ever in any part of the world.

Sir, we know in this Honourable House that the Minister was not supportive of that expense. It was a hand dealt for the Minister. The Minister said that it was scrapped, and within one day of making the point that it was scrapped, the Minister came back... we also know your position, Sir. It is well-documented that if you had anything to do with what I am speaking about, that you would have concurred a long time ago and you would have spent the $120 million throughout Barbados, instead of widening one road for $120 million.

Sir, I know that you know the opportunity cost of money and how to use money well, and I am supporting you on that particular point, and I will continue to support you on that point, providing that you have plans to spend some of that money in St. Lucy.

Mr. Chairman, I think that it is also regrettable that at this point in our development, when the demands on the Government Electrical Engineering Department are so great, that we can have a department like that, housed in the condition that they are housed. Every day, anybody building a new house, extending a house or whatever they are doing, they depend on these workers, yet, these workers find themselves operating in the same conditions as those operating at the Barbados Drug Service in Jemmotts Lane. I think that it is regrettable, and it should change.

Sir, another point, based on what was said in this House today, I cannot understand why there are so many supervisors within the Ministry of Public Works and Transport still acting, considering the work that they are delivering. I am saying to the Honourable Minister that he has my support, bring the necessary document before the House and I will support the Minister. Sir, if people are producing, they should not have to act, which reminds me of something which embarrassed me. I was wondering if you were smiling last week.

Mr. Chairman, even in our own Honourable House we do not have a Clerk of Parliament. I do not know what we have, yet, on important occasions, we can hear about the Clerk of Parliament. I am saying that based on the praised levelled on the Acting Clerk of Parliament, I am saying to bring the Supplementary and I will support it. It is about time, based on the work produced, we should not have an Acting Clerk of Parliament in this Honourable House anymore. We should have a Clerk of Parliament. I know that the Honourable Member for St. George South would support that too.

Sir, I do not want to hear that because of the magnitude of the work done by the gentleman, that we conveniently refer to him as the Clerk of Parliament, when we know that he is not the Clerk of Parliament. Let the correction be made and I will support it.

Sir, I want to leave on this note. This place is not Hollywood. Let us stop acting, and deliver.

I thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central will speak for ten minutes, then the Honourable Member for St. George North will have ten minutes to wind up the debate.

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL: Mr. Chairman, first of all I would like to support this Resolution, which is before this Honourable House. Over the last few years, a number of roads have been done within the constituency of Christ Church West Central, but these roads were done by the Rural Development Commission. However, I am glad to see that the Honourable Minister has realised that there are some roads in Christ Church West Central which are in need of repair. Sir, I understand that the road between Maxwell Hill and Kendall Hill area will be repaired. This road has not been given any sort of work over the last twenty years. Indeed, it is a very important road that feeds into the highway, as well as the South Coast road.

Sir, there is also a relatively small road in the Sargeant Village area, which I had the privilege of showing the Honourable Minister about six months ago. He told residents of that area and me, that this road would have been repaired within a very short time. I was in the area only yesterday. This road is located by an old gentleman called Mr. Holford, who had many cows and is a very well-known man in Sargeant's Village, up to now, although that promise was made to me six months ago, nothing has happened in terms of that road being repaired. Indeed, it is not a very long road. As far as I know, it is an eight-foot road. It is no more than 125 metres and it serves hundreds of persons within that area.

Sir, another road which is in need of some widening is the road in Silver Hill, which goes down to the Silver Hill Landing Scheme. That road is used extensively by the minibuses and minivans in that area. Being so narrow, and the fact that it is such a narrow and busy road, it is becoming more and more dangerous to pedestrians, especially children in the Silver Hill, Kendall Hill and Maxwell areas.
2.20 p.m.

I am hoping that the Honourable Member for St. George North would seriously consider doing some work in that vicinity. I am not asking for a road. I am just asking that the road be widened in the corner, so there would be a reduction of accidents, loss of limb or life.

I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central speak earlier, about the Church Hill Road. I understand, having talked to many persons in the areas, that road has not been repaired for the last 40 years. This road serves a very large community, as a shortcut to get to Thornbury Hill, Gall Hill and Lodge Road. Therefore, it is very important that something is done to this road.

I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East refer to the roads being done as World Cup roads. I do not see how people could think about these roads being World Cup roads. These roads are for the poor people and for the people in Barbados, generally, not for the World Cup. It so happens that these roads are being done, at a time when World Cup is about to take place in Barbados.

I think that there are some roads, which need humps. I have called various persons at the Ministry from time to time, requesting that there be some humps in certain roads,

especially roads that are used by the ZRs and the Minibuses. Sometimes we need to slow these people down because it is very dangerous, as I said earlier, to the children, as well as the adults in the constituency.

As a matter of fact, I think this is something that is needed throughout Barbados. I am hoping that something is done to the roads in Silver Hill and to some extent in the Silver Hill Landing Scheme, whereby we could get the traffic being slowed down to accommodate the people and to safeguard the lives of people who use these roads.

All in all, I would like to commend the Honourable Member for St. George North for doing an excellent job over the past few years. I know many roads have been fixed. There are many roads which are about to be completed and this will redound to the benefit of Barbadians generally. I hope that the Honourable Member for St. George North would continue to do a good job. I also hope that he takes note of what I said and within the next financial year, work would be done on the three particular roads that I mentioned in my speech.

On that note, I would like to thank you so much.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. George North will now wind up the debate.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and all Honourable Members who have spoken in this debate on behalf of their respective constituencies. I would only want to say that the Ministry of Public Works is carrying out the Government's programme for the people of Barbados. We are trying our very best, under trying situations.

As you are aware, Mr. Chairman, many of these things are occurring at a time, when the various utilities are undergoing a massive road improvement programme. Therefore, the Ministry of Public Works alongside the utility companies, whether it is the Barbados Water Authority, Barbados Light and Power Company Limited and Natural Gas or BARTEL, is also having improved programmes, so that the delay we now see on our roads may very well be because of the massive programmes that are being undertaken by the utility companies. Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, we will press on to do the best we can.

I must first of all state to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that, even though we are widening the ABC Highway at a cost, which according to him might be too high, we believe that it is necessary for us at this time to widen the ABC Highway. In fact, I would want to say that a third lane will be ready before the end of the year, just north of Warrens, running right through to Norman Niles Roundabout. It will be paved. The only difficulty is that the street lights on the ABC Highway will not be ready by the end of the year, because lots of work still has to be done in that area.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central spoke about Sargeant's Village and the area beside the gas station. We toured the site several months ago and it was the understanding then, that we would provide roads for that small area in Sargeant's Village. We will definitely complete that in the next couple of months. I am not sure if it would be started before Christmas, but we have funds in this year's Estimates for this road.

Members must be aware that this Supplementary really is for the road we have mentioned. It does not mean that the Ministry does not have money for other projects. If you look in this year's Estimates, there are many projects we are doing, but it is necessary for us to complete these projects. Basically, we are supplementing the vote of these particular projects. This does not mean that we are not doing work in the areas of St. Joseph, St. John or St. Andrew because the depots in those areas are working on other projects.

Therefore, Members should be aware that there are other projects being done across Barbados, for which we are not seeking funds at this time. It may be necessary in the new year to seek other funds for other projects, but it is only because we are out of funds for these particular projects that we are now seeking these funds.

It is important, therefore, to look at another area that was mentioned, the weeders. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy spoke about the fact that there are only six weeders in his constituency. It is something that we are aware of and we will be meeting with the Ministry of the Civil Service and the Ministry of Finance, to look at how we could increase our numbers of weeders across the country.

It is quite hard for six or seven people to weed an entire constituency. In some areas, there may be more but I believe that there should be a limit of 12 weeders per constituency. This does not mean our heavy duty weeders and, I believe that only when resources are made available, we would be able to increase the numbers of weeders.

We will continue to improve drainage across the country, especially in those areas that were identified. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central made the point that in some of the areas, persons are now using side roads as escape routes, they will have to be upgraded.
4.30 p.m.

Many persons are detouring in the Pine/Collymore Rock area and we believe that we have to do a number of these side roads and improve the drainage in the area. Mr. Chairman, speed humps are calming devices. People have been asking for speed humps as a means of slowing

down the traffic. Some time ago we had an opinion from the Attorney General Chambers that we have to be very careful putting speed humps in some residential areas or on highways because sometimes they can cause damage to vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, more and more people, especially young people, are driving vehicles at an alarming high speed and we have to be careful. Sir, calming measures will be used in certain residential areas and we will use No Entry signs in certain areas at certain times in order to prevent persons from having access to these roads. Sir, we have to continue doing these things. We had some of them in the Warrens area but we took them out because of complaints from the residents. Mr. Chairman, we believe that it is necessary at times to have these calming measures in order to protect the residents of those areas.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North spoke about the walkover at Reservoir Road. I had given him the assurance long ago that we have to provide a walkover for the residents of Reservoir Road. I am very sorry that it has taken this long, but I will give him the assurance that I will discuss the matter with the Chief Technical Officer, whom I know had the technical drawings for the walkover in that area. That walkover was supposed to be undertaken by a private entity on behalf of the Ministry.

For those persons living in the St. Philip area, I give the assurance that the Government will continue to push forward in our road programme. We are looking at refurbishing from Oldbury to Four Roads very soon, as well as completing some work by the St. Philip Parish Church. We are hoping that this road by the St. Philip Parish Church could be completed before the end of the year and that work on the Oldbury Road would soon start.

Another important road that leads to St. Philip is Highway 5, which leads from Six Roads to the Bussa Roundabout. This road is in need of upgrading and widening in some areas. We are aware that vehicles on that highway sometimes drive at excessive speed. Mr. Chairman, the Government has also agreed to put a roundabout at the Boarded Hall area in order to help protect those persons who use that highway.

Mr. Chairman, Government will continue to provide the solution as long as the resources are made available. Therefore, I beg to move that Head 37 stand part.

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

The question that Head 37 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 38 – MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS – $118 355

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 38 stand part.

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

The question that Head 38 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 – RESOLUTION THAT THE HONOURABLE HOUSE CONGRATULATE THE PEOPLE OF BARBADOS ON THE COURAGE, CHARACTER AND RESILIENCE WHICH THEY HAVE SHOWN DURING FORTY YEARS OF NATIONHOOD

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this Parliament seldom takes the time out either through Private Members' Resolutions or even often as part of Government's Business to reflect on national achievements outside of Government's programme.

Sir, this particular Private Members' Resolution has been brought by the Opposition to highlight the very important milestone that would be upon us in a couple of days, which is our 40th year of Independence.

Mr. Speaker, the Resolution which has been brought by the Opposition particularly points out that the Democratic Labour Party determined that dismantling Barbados' colonial status and enhancing its constitutional position was a matter of urgent political priority. Sir, it is on this basis that the Resolution seeks to congratulate the people of Barbados for their courage, character and resilience during the 40 years of nationhood, and singles out the Democratic Labour Party for its courage in pursuing Independence 40 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, there are those persons who would feel that a Resolution of that type, because it focuses on a political party, is inappropriate because it has a partisan element to it. However, if one remembers the context in which the Resolution was moved in the House in

January 1966, by the then Premier Errol Barrow, one needs to appreciate that the decision to take Barbados into independence was a political decision made by the Democratic Labour Party and published in its manifesto.
2.40 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, it formed a Pledge, and according to him, in that particular debate, the Resolution was:

> "**WHEREAS** the pre-election of this Government, issued in November 1961, stated, *inter alia*, the road to destiny is the road to Independence. Towards this goal, the country must press on. As the island has never been grant-aided territory, there is no reason why within or without a Federation, Barbados should not attain the full stature of Independence now within the British Commonwealth."

Mr. Chairman, that was what the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto pledged, and Errol Barrow said in that debate, and I quote:

> "You will remember, Sir, I said earlier about this statement that it is the first time in the history of the Caribbean that any political party has made such a statement in its programme and published it to the people in booklet form, printed and paid for by the Members of the Party and not by the merchants."

Mr. Chairman, he then goes on to state the other elements of the Resolution, in which basically he said:

> "**WHEREAS**, a Federation of 10 British Caribbean territories then existed and continued to exist, until its dissolution on May 31, 1962;
>
> **AND WHEREAS** this Government has, from January, 1962 to April, 1965, engaged in discussions with the Governments of the Windward and Leeward Islands on the establishment of a new Federation;
>
> **AND WHEREAS** these discussions were carried on without hindrance to the Constitution and economical development of Barbados, which attained full internal Self-Government in May, 1964.
>
> **AND WHEREAS** these discussions have proved fruitless for several reasons..."

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, those reasons are set out in that particular debate. Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the Resolution, has of necessity – and I am not justifying it, I am merely amplifying the importance of it and the uniqueness of it to Barbados. Sir, the Pledge to take Barbados into Independence was a sensible, wise, courageous and prudent Pledge, made by a political party, prior to gaining office in 1961, which formed part of its programme.

Mr. Speaker, it is true to say that not everybody was in favour of it. The then Leader of the minority, the Barbados Labour Party Opposition, led a debate in which the then Opposition said it sought Independence within a Federation, but that there was no Federation at that time, in which Barbados could have become independent. Sir, there was no Federation to become independent. I thought one of the curious arguments by the then Barbados Labour Party, even though we hear in this modern era that there was no policy divide, but there was a fundamental policy divide...

It was not just Independence alone, or Independence within a Federation. The Barbados Labour Party minority Opposition felt fundamentally opposed to Independence because it did not believe that Barbados had the resources to become an Independent State. The then Leader of the Opposition said that the population of Barbados, within another 37 years, would have doubled from 250 000 to 500 000, which has not happened, and that because of that potential doubling of the Barbados population, we would not be able to support a population. He then asked the question, how much land would have to be taken out of production. Bearing in mind the debate we had today. For example, he said:

> "To make provision for roads, schools, houses, shops, and recreational centres. Think of what you have now for the accommodation of 250 000 people and what you would require, if and when you have twice that population. What I am saying is accepted by economists all over the world."

Mr. Speaker, I am saying at that time, it had to be a courageous decision because the persons who were on the Other Side, fundamentally felt that Barbados was not capable of entering into Independence and being able to sustain itself. Therefore, full credit must be given to the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, the Members of that initial team, as well as the Democratic Labour Party, as a political institution, for having the foresight to put that on the national agenda and for bringing independence to our country.

Mr. Speaker, that was the context to which the Independence debate took place in the House of Assembly. That was the political context in which the Democratic Labour Party started the process, which led to our becoming independent on November 30, 1966. I believe, at that time, there were fundamental obstacles, locally and within the region, to Barbados becoming an independent nation.

Sir, this was sought, even though there are those historians who argued that by then the British Colonial Office was ready to permit countries like Barbados to go the

route of Independence, outside a Federation. Therefore, as the late Sir F. A. Hoyos argues, there was not much excitement and jubilation in Barbados because by then the Colonial Office had accepted that countries like ours could go into Independence outside of a Federation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that is, in fact, the opposite. I believe that is only his outlook or his view of the context in which Independence took place but I think the opposite is the case. Therefore, if you were to work backwards from today and look at the outstanding achievements of this country in those 40 years, those achievements could not have been wrought without some kind of political excitement, ingenuity and courage, by our own people.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, excitement does not mean brandishing balloons, throwing confetti, having 'jams', 'brams', pageants or galas. That is not what political excitement is about. People can be transformed in very simple ways. They can be transformed in a state of bondage, such that when they are released from that bondage, one can then sense the way in which that excitement shows itself. People go to prison and prepare themselves for a period of release, transforming themselves in such a way that they can come out and achieve greatness.

Mr. Speaker, that was the context in which Barbados went into Independence in 1966, and we have to remember that only three nations in the Caribbean, up to that time, had themselves become independent. Sir, first it involved Jamaica, on 6th August, 1962; Trinidad and Tobago 31st August, 1962; and Guyana, on 26th May, 1966, so that for a small country like Barbados, which at that time, economically was way behind the larger and more developed Caribbean nations. Barbados' place on the Human Development Index, Barbados' economy at that time and all of the factors which one would look at, to determine whether it could succeed as an independent nation, by comparison to the other countries in the Caribbean that had sought Independence and had achieved it, was way behind.

Sir, it is a credit to the people of Barbados, its first Government and successive Governments, that today in the year 2006, we are in the top 30, out of more than 100 nations in the world and one of the top developing countries in the world. This is a credit to the courage, character and resilience during the 40 years of nationhood of the people of Barbados. 2.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I also think it is important in this particular Resolution, to point out what some of the very important perspectives that the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, National Hero and the first Prime Minister of Barbados and the then President of the Democratic Labour Party said in relation to Independence. In his address to the Barbados Constitutional Conference in London in July 1966, an address, which may not have been read into the records of this Parliament but, which I think that part of which is appropriate to be read into the record here. He said and I quote:

> "In our view, there can be no question whether Barbados is ripe and ready for Independence, three centuries of history answer that question in the affirmative.
>
> You have never had to shore up our finances, you have never had to maintain or preserve public order among us and even now, without the help of thousands of our best citizens, your own hospitals and transport system would be in jeopardy.
>
> In two World Wars, hundreds of our people have responded to your summons and some have never returned. The people of Barbados have never given you any cause for worry and no British Government has ever been forced, on our account, to vindicate its policy at the bar of international opinion.
>
> In assuming the burden of Independence, the people of Barbados have no illusions about their task. They are well aware that, in this country, it is commonly believed, although not a fact, that people of African origin, cannot for long maintain democratic forms of Government after Independence. These people conveniently forget that the colonial system was designed, not to promote free institutions but to safeguard imperial interest. They also forget that if, in the act of surrendering power, the imperial authority promotes and leave behind it a divided community then some time must necessarily elapse before democratic institutions can take root in countries emerging from colonialism."

Mr. Speaker, that was July 1966, at the Constitutional Conference. Those are very powerful and prophetic words, often repeated in Barbados today and acknowledged by persons of intelligence and ability as forming the very basis and bedrock of the society, which we have developed.

Mr. Speaker, he went on to say:

> "By some fortunate turn of history, the people of Barbados have managed to establish, before their Independence, the solid framework of a free society. Their training and apprenticeship are now complete, they have three centuries of steady maturity to draw on and self-confidence, sprung from the management of their own affairs.
>
> Neither the smallness of their territory nor the slenderness of their physical resources deters them in the path to nationhood.

> They have a modest part to play in the affairs of their region, the Commonwealth and the world and all they require from you is that you should speed them to their rendezvous with destiny some time in 1966."

Sir, that encapsulates the mood, feeling and disposition of our greatest political leader, who at that time was leading our country, not as if the world had started in 1961, when he came to office but the presentation that he made to that Constitutional Conference and to the Secretary of State, acknowledged the three centuries of governance, the three centuries of history of this country, the signing of the Charter at the Mermaid Inn in Oistins, the disturbances in the 1930s, the rebellion in 1816, all of these were acknowledged as pivotal and important developments, towards the full Independence of this country. Sir, the process did not start in 1961 but it was a political Party of foresight and a leader of great vision that was able to pull all those strands of our history together at the appropriate moment and to lead this country into Independence and into success.

Therefore, when he went to the United Nations after Barbados became a nation and delivered that very famous speech, which for all time, has become the standard by which Barbadians judge their own country in relation to their international relations, he said then:

> "We have no quarrels to pursue and we particularly insist that we do not regard any member State as our natural opponent. We shall not involve ourselves in sterile ideological wrangles because we are exponents, not of the diplomacy of power, but of the diplomacy of peace and prosperity.
>
> We will not regard any great power as necessarily right, in a given dispute, unless we are convinced of this. Yet, at the same time, we will not view the great powers with perennial suspicion, merely on account of their size, their wealth or their nuclear potential. We shall be friends of all, satellites of none."

Sir, again, it is the background in which the new nation of Barbados entered upon the world and the presentation of its political leader to the United Nations, which set the tone for our future foreign policy and the way in which, as a nation, we have proceeded in our relations with other countries, the way in which we are viewed in the world.

Mr. Speaker, if it is true that our foreign policy is merely an extension of our domestic policy; our domestic arrangements; our domestic viewpoint; I would say in every sense of the word, that what Errol Barrow said then, encapsulated the full feeling and aspirations of the people of Barbados.

Sir, every time I speak to returning nationals I have to reflect on this. There are Barbadians who left Barbados in the 1950s for economic reasons. My parents and the parents of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North and many others in here, went away for economic reasons to improve themselves but, they always had a desire to return. I have sat on airplanes with Americans, citizens of the United States of America and, unlike us as a people, after about the first 20 minutes of the flight, they will tell you that their parents were immigrants from Ireland, Poland or some other part of the world, who never returned and that they never returned because they were never interested in returning.

The reason why, to my mind, Barbadians always want to return home is as much to do with our character, as a people, as it is to do with the fact that those who remain behind in Barbados when they go away, have kept the ship of State sailing effectively, efficiently and have maintained such high standards that people can leave any other part of the world and return here.

Mr. Speaker, not everything is right in Barbados, not everything is satisfactory and, we should always thrive for improvement but they can come back to Barbados and enjoy a good standard of living. They can go away again and come back, confident that because of that standard set by Errol Barrow and the Democratic Labour Party in the 1960s, following on a long tradition of history, that this country, through its political leadership and through the course and pattern that we have chosen, would continue to aspire to those high achievements. ...What propels that, is not the men in smoke-filled rooms in Barbados; it is not only the people of wealth or people who have political power. What propels that is the standards of the ordinary Barbadian, what is acceptable to them and what is not acceptable, because we have never had a Government in Barbados that has been changed by the bullet. It has been changed by the ballot box. There is no greater restraining influence on political power, even though it needs to be asserted more now than ever before, than the power of the ordinary Barbadian, to be able to say this is or is not acceptable to us, and in a **welstet** of discontent, that we can stand up and say how we feel.
3.00 p.m.

Sir, there are many people in this room, who know it but do not want to say, that at the time of one of its greatest economic challenges, this entire country, in the early 1990s, was able to focus its attention on a single important goal and challenged international financial institutions, challenged international economic orthodoxy, to be able to defend its currency and ensure the maintenance of the parity of the Barbados dollar to the US dollar.

Sir, there were Barbadian companies that brought home foreign exchange, they were holding out of the country, deposits and pension funds. There were Barbadians that did all kinds of other courageous acts. There were civil servants in Barbados who were willing to forego a portion of their wages. There were other people who bore great pain and

sacrifice, but the entire nation as a whole was adamant in its view, that the Barbados dollar should not be devalued.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I think we set our face to the wind. I remember meeting with a Prime Minister of one Caribbean economy, which had to have a devaluation, a formidable Caribbean economy, and he said to me in a meeting just before the 1994 election, that the first thing that the new Government needs to do, is to address the issue of the exchange rate, and that is Barbados' fundamental problem. Even our own neighbours felt that Barbadians, setting their face to the wind on such an important issue and seeking to defend their dollar, was a hopeless exercise, and eventually it would not succeed. I gave that as one example, because it took place in my lifetime.

There had been other significant challenges to the culture and psyche of Barbadians as a whole, in which as a nation we have been able to band together, to say this is not acceptable to us. These, to my mind, have been important and it is for the historians to trace them and understand that these are important periods of leadership. It may be fascinating that those important periods were when the Democratic Labour Party was at the height of its political power on both occasions but the leadership that was required and was necessary, that brought people together, saved Barbados since our Independence.

Sir, how did people view us at the time of our Independence? There is a Jamaican writer, by the name of John Hearn, who wrote about Barbadians at that time, and I always find what he said about us quite fascinating. It was republished in the *New World Journal* as well as, and I think, *Caribbean Voices*. Sir, he was talking about Barbadians, and what he said at that time is as follows:

> " For me, as a Jamaican, he has always been the most enigmatic, complex and challenging member of the Caribbean community. The Barbadian is a problem. Every other West Indian who knows him at all has searched hard for words, at some point, that will pin him down. I do not think that it is entirely accidental that our greatest cricket captains, Worrell and Sobers, two of the most subtle strategists the game had yet seen, both came out of Barbados.
>
> There is a wholeness to the Barbadian that I have not found in any other English-speaking Caribbean territory, an awareness of himself as a person that is remarkable, enviable and in every sense of the word, good. There are no children in West Indian fiction like George Lamming's "Growing Boys" and "In The Castle of My Skin". Whatever problems of poverty, race, prejudice, lack of social structure they face, they operate out of a powerful individuality. They have a cultural reference point that is truly original.
>
> The virtues of industry, thrift, honesty, the care of inheritance, cooperation, a strict regard for orderly debate, a compelling sense of your neighbour's rights and integrity, had to be acquired by the Barbadian. These were not simply pious actions inspired by sermons, they were the only possible instincts for survival in such a territory. People in Barbados could not remove themselves from one another as they could say in Jamaica, until very recently. Many of the Barbadian virtues I have tried to analyse above, have been and continue to be harshly criticised, by other West Indians, as virtues that have become decadent. The habits of thrift, good husbandry and industriousness are often called meanness, unimaginative materialism or ruthless self-centered ambition."

Mr. Speaker, he goes on to say:

> "It is better for a country to have an ordered abundance of qualities that can spoil or go sour, than to have none at all."

Sir, that is what he said in 1966. That is really the statement from which springs this Resolution, by the Democratic Labour Party, which congratulates the people of this country, those who worked in the cane fields, on the fishing boats, in the sugar factories, in Government, in the church, in communities giving volunteer service or otherwise, in our health institutions, in our schools as teachers, all of the people who worked to build up this country in the past forty years; those who worked in Government, who gave us leadership, those who contributed with the widow's mite**,** and on whose courage, character and resilience, we have been able to build a modern nation, which other people look on with envy, which other people look on with admiration and which other people say is one of the leading countries in the world.

Sir, it is for that reason, we have brought this Resolution to congratulate the Democratic Labour Party, and to congratulate the people of Barbados on this outstanding achievement of Independence, and I hope that this Parliament joins with us, in calling for God's blessings on this nation, as we move towards even more and greater achievements on behalf of the people of this country.

I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.
3.10 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I would like to say that on This Side, there are elements of the Resolution with which we are entirely in agreement, but we will seek to move some minor amendments, because we do not believe that the discussion of Independence is a partisan issue.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it is fair to say that if I have to disagree with just one element of what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, is to perhaps appropriately elucidate and contextualise what was the position of the Barbados Labour Party, in relation to the move towards Independence.

It is significant that there was, yes, a divide on the face of it but the divide came not as a result – as the Honourable Member for St. John said – of the Barbados Labour Party not feeling that there was an issue of Barbados not being capable of going on its own.

Indeed, the confidence that we could go on our own, was already exhibited more than a decade earlier, when there was the move towards universal adult suffrage, such that all Barbadians over the age of 21 – I believe it was initially – would have the right to vote and to determine their representatives. This confidence was further exhibited by the commitment to the move to Cabinet Government, which is still the form of Government that underpins our Government structure in this country. Therefore, we saw Independence as a part of the process.

At that time, because of the history of the West Indian Federation and its demise, the Barbados Labour Party was of the view that there should be a commitment towards regional unity and integration, in the context of the "Little Eight". It was on that issue, and that issue alone that there was a divide, not that we did not believe what the country was capable of doing.

Sir, it is significant that today, the Constitution of the Barbados Labour Party still speaks to the Party's commitment, to the need for regional integration, as one of the objectives to which we will continue to work, as a political party in this country.

Mr. Speaker, none of that ought to take away from the very excellent achievement of the then Premier of Barbados, the first Prime Minister thereafter, the late Rt. Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, a National Hero. He was a man whom, I think, irrespective of partisan commitment, all of us in this country can safely say, exhibited the best that this country had to offer and was capable of leading this country and this Parliament to a decision that would redound to all of our benefit, by reason of the fact that the prosperity which has come to us as a Nation, since then, has been one of which all of us can be proud.

It would be remiss of us, however, Mr. Speaker, if we sought, in congratulating the people of Barbados, not to single out the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. Indeed, the Honourable Member for St. John spoke of no other member of the Democratic Labour Party, other than Mr. Barrow, whom he quoted extensively.

Equally, it would be remiss of us not to mention the contribution of successive Governments. We have not jumped, by way of leapfrogging from 1966 to 2006. One of the hallmarks of Barbados' good governance, has been the commitment of political parties to adhere to the same philosophical framework, which has therefore led to a level of continuity across Governments, in relation to aspects of our development.

The commitment to the rule of law, Mr. Speaker, has been a commitment which has been subscribed to by all political parties, and all right-thinking members of the Barbadian society. Mr. Speaker, the commitment to free education and to the provision of education as a means of social and economic empowerment has been a commitment to which all Barbadians have subscribed.

Indeed, while there is public recognition of the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow's contribution, in the provision of free education, we neglect sometimes to remember that the building of the capacity was undertaken by the late Rt. Excellent Sir Grantley Adams and, thereby, allowing late Rt. Excellent Errol Walton Barrow to take that decision.

The commitment to free health care at point of source for primary health care and, indeed, the network of polyclinics is a commitment to which both political parties have subscribed. We believe it is an inherent right of a person within this Nation to have access to health care, irrespective of their means and circumstances.

The commitment to the provision of persons when they are most vulnerable, either in retirement or as a result of an injury, or as a result of unemployment, led to the joint commitment on all Sides of this House and across all sectors of the society, in relation to a social security system, that remains solvent, unlike ones in larger developed countries like the United States of America that are facing serious issues today.

Mr. Speaker, the commitment to subsidise transportation, the commitment to subsidise water rates, the commitment of a Government to play a role as an intermediary to be able to change the quality of people's lives from what it was, has been something that this country has been blessed to have of both political parties and, indeed, all major institutions in this country speak to. Even, Sir, other than the divide on the "Little Eight", or otherwise, the commitment to regional unity. For let us not forget that

it was the former Prime Minister, Sir Lloyd Sandiford, who would have signed the Grand Anse Declaration in 1989, committing this country to the participation in a CARICOM Single Market and Single Economy.

Mr. Speaker, we have been blessed. When others in the region, and I commend the Other Side for this, have had divisive issues as to whether or not we should go for a Caribbean Court, this House stood as one. It is to those things, Mr. Speaker, that we should speak in this debate because it has redounded to our benefit. Indeed, the quotation, which the Honourable Member for St. John referred to by John Hearn in the *New World Journal*, a Journal which I believe should be made available to all schools in Barbados, was published in 1966 on our Independence.

The article which John Hearn wrote speaks at the end of it to the fact that Barbados will provide the most interesting example of creative tension, in a post-Independence framework in the Caribbean. Sir, it is significant that those other countries in the region, which have always been heralded as the most revolutionary and progressive, have been the ones which have taken the longest time to come forward, or who have been hesitant, in relation to their commitment to the Caribbean Court of Justice and to other aspects of regional sovereignty, as well as international independence.

The fight which this Government has had to take on, in relation to the battle with the OECD, when it was a direct assault on the independence of this Parliament, by asking us to commit to compromise the right of this Parliament, in relation to its right to taxation, a precept that was guaranteed in the Charter of Barbados in 1651, shows the extent to which there has been a continued commitment on the part of the Barbadians, irrespective of political parties, irrespective of race, irrespective of gender, irrespective of class.

Mr. Speaker, it makes for the most interesting reading, when you understand that the essence of what it is to be Barbadian, has come out in successive Governments both before and since Independence. I believe that this spirit of cooperation in relation to the common philosophical basis and the common ideals as a nation, must be a hallmark that we pass on to successive generations. There is no right, Sir, to political and economic stability.

In 1970 Jamaica was the leading developing country in the world. In the mid-sixties, Guyana was regarded as having a future brighter than Singapore. I speak in this way because I truly believe that to cause Barbadians to believe that the actions of Government alone or the private sector alone, or the union movement alone, could guarantee the continued political and economic stability, would be to fool them. I truly believe that the governance structure of this country must continue to embrace the participation of all persons and that the commitment to the fundamental ideals that have guided us safely thus far must be a continued hallmark of those of us who come to public life.

3.20 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, we have before us some interesting times. We live in a world where we are guaranteed that the environment within which we function will be significantly different within a ten-year period because of the pace of technological change and the pace of movement across borders, be it people, capital or ideas. In those circumstances, I believe that the very same courage and resilience which we have exhibited thus far must carry us forward into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the concept of having a Barbados that is limited to 270 000 people is a thing of the past. I believe that we must seek to build this country, its economy and its society by calling upon all Barbadians, irrespective of whether they are geographically located on this island or whether they are elsewhere in this world but choose to be Barbadians or are Barbadians by birth or by descent...

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the advantages through the liberalisation of the various rules of trade agreements allowing for taxation and cross-border investments have to be worked in our favour while at the same time holding a position that Mr. Barrow best expressed, when he addressed the United Nations on that first occasion as a sovereign State, that we should be friends of all, satellites of none.

Mr. Speaker, that this reflected an enduring quality that has been evinced by Barbadians across generations is something that we must ensure that we continue to keep as a hallmark of this country. Mr. Speaker, the difficulty is that more information is generated outside than is used within our boundaries. The difficulty, Mr. Speaker, is that four times our population visit us on an annual basis and the essence of understanding who the Barbadian is beyond the expression of the cultural industries and beyond the expression of partisan political postures has to be one of the key aspects of ensuring that political and economic stability of which I spoke.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of identity will continue to be one of the key issues that would confront us as a nation in terms of maintaining the independence of this country and the independence of its people. Mr. Speaker, it is not by accident that this country refused to be drawn into a form of Crown colony status in the late 19th Century and that it insisted on its right to have a Parliament determined for itself and its people. It is that same enduring quality, as I said, that has come across all generations, all classes and all gender, which we have as a duty to hold in trust for the next generation.

Mr. Speaker, I have a fear that is born out of the fact that the excessive commitment to individualism in this country will mean that less and less people who have valid contributions to make will come to public life because people are concerned about their own individual development. I say to us that we have a duty to cause people to work in the cause of Barbados, whether it is from their individual positions in the private sector, in the communities, in the union movement, and I hope, in this Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do it because too many countries in the developing world with great promise have gone by the wayside because people of ability have chosen to stay away from participation in public life and in some instances have chosen to go into exile rather than to stay and build their own country.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that those of us who have the honour of being in Parliament today, have a duty to bring along others and to disabuse them of the belief that public service is simply a means by which to get power because the only power that you should be getting is the power to empower other people in this country. Public service is a commitment and it is a sacrifice. Mr. Speaker, it is just like if you build a house where if you do nothing to maintain the house, it would eventually fall, so if you do nothing to attract people of integrity and ability to public life, then all of the legacy we have inherited will be placed at risk.

Mr. Speaker, because of understanding that there is no inherent right to political and economic stability, This Side has determined that it would be inappropriate for us to simply recall the year 1966, without also taking note and wishing to commend the contributions of successive Governments that have kept this ship safe and afloat. Indeed, if you look at the international indices, the language that is used most often, best expressed by the United Nations Secretary-General is that Barbados continues to punch above its weight.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at the indices. The United Nations Human Development Index consistently lists Barbados, for more than 10 years, among the leading developing countries in terms of quality of life, transparency international, not just this year but the last few years, and minimal corruption in the context of the rest of the hemisphere.

Mr. Speaker, for the first time this year, the World Economic Forums Competitiveness Index, placed us only behind the United States of America, Canada and Chile in this hemisphere, countries with far greater resources and far longer history in terms of aspects of entrepreneurial culture and enterprise. Mr. Speaker, that this small State of 166 square miles with a small population could reach to that point is a matter for which all of us should be proud.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the future. We look forward to helping Barbados and Barbadians attain global excellence, but buttressed in the best of Barbadian traditions. We look forward to being able to continue the commitment to a philosophy that has kept us safe and that has improved the quality of life of tens of thousands of Barbadians, without an ounce of bloodshed in circumstances where other nations have not been able to make the same idle boast.

Mr. Speaker, it for those reasons that sometimes I feel that the level of partisan behaviour in this Parliament sometimes does not do us justice, particularly given the legacy which has been passed down to us. I wish and hope that we could continue to assure the public of Barbados that there are some issues which belong to the people of Barbados and on which they ought to be no partisan divide.

Mr. Speaker, there are other issues on which we would continue to have different political perspectives. However, in all we do on Both Sides, before even Party must come the country and people of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, if that is the commitment that could be exhibited on Both Sides of this House, I believe that our future will be bright.

Mr. Speaker, it is significant that the Leader of the Opposition used the quotation from John Hearn in speaking in this debate today, for it was that same quotation I used, not the same excerpt but the same article, when I launched the town hall meetings on the National Strategic Plan.
3.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if we are honest to ourselves, we would recognise that it has been that common commitment to a vision and a philosophy, across the Parties, across the classes and across the races, that has kept us safe thus far.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to other Honourable Members publicly stating that commitment in this debate, so that the people of Barbados, on this 40th Anniversary of Independence, could have the confidence that the people in whom they have put their trust today, have the same commitment as was exhibited in 1966, 1976, 1986 and in 1996, and that we will do our utmost to put this country first, before ourselves, before Party and before any other partisan or selfish agenda.

Mr. Speaker, with those words, I beg to amend the Resolution in the following way, and I read the Resolution accordingly, as a finished Resolution and will work with the Clerk for the insertions and deletions.

> "**WHEREAS** Barbados was settled in the year 1627 and remained a colony of Great Britain from that year until November 30, 1966:

AND WHEREAS the colonial status of Barbados during that period did not operate to the advantage of the broad mass of the people of this Island:

AND WHEREAS the Parliament of Barbados determined that dismantling Barbados' colonial status and enhancing its constitutional position was a matter of urgent political priority:

AND WHEREAS the Parliament of Barbados, in the year 1966, supported the move to Independence for Barbados, whereby this Island would assume sovereign nationhood within the Commonwealth of Nations:

AND WHEREAS the people of Barbados have, over the last 40 years, by their pride and industry, fully justified the decision to move to sovereign nationhood within the Commonwealth, in 1966:

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House congratulates the people of Barbados on the courage, character and resilience, which they have shown during 40 years of nationhood:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Honourable House commends the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barron, on his vision and initiative in leading the pursuit of the Independence of Barbados, 40 years ago:

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Honourable House congratulates successive Governments for taking Barbados' development forward, since 1966, in the context of stability, prosperity and social justice for its people.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this amendment do now pass, in relation to the substantive Resolution moved by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. R. St. C. TOPPIN: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve the right to speak.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am informed by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that it would be appropriate for us to consider this at a later stage. Therefore, I beg to move that further consideration of this Resolution be taken.

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

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

RECOMMITAL

PAPERS

On the motion of Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, seconded by Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS, the House recommitted to Papers and Government Notices in the Order of Business.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter and Minister of Finance, I am commanded to lay the following:

The Value Added Tax (Refund) (Mervin Watson Electrical Contractor Limited) Order, 2006.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

Resolution to approve the grant of the sum of $27 180 183 from the Consolidated Fund, and to place it at the disposal of Government to supplement the Estimates 2006/2007, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates No. 5 2006/2007, which form the Schedule to the Resolution, and that the Explanatory Notes to Heads 13, 14, 23, 28, 30 and 32, be amended as set out in Schedule II to the Resolution.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of Government's Business for today's Sitting. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 5th December, at 10.00 a.m.

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

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, at the start of today's Session, I was not on the precincts of Parliament. I would, therefore, want to inform this Honourable House that it was not intentionally done, neither was meant to be disrespectful to the Chair.

Mr. Speaker, I would want to say that I came to this Parliament and that I know my role as Chairman of Committees. I would also like to say that it is not always possible for me to be here at all times. I also mentioned to you that I will be travelling on business next week and therefore will not be here on Tuesday.

Mr. Speaker, in the past, I have been absent from Parliament but for most of those times, I would have made an arrangement with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, who usually takes the Chair in my absence.

Sir, I want to say that I felt 'a way', when I heard certain remarks on the radio about my not being here and about the fact that it did not spell well with Parliament. Sir, I do not think it was fair for those kinds of words to be said about me, when other Members at times do things themselves and when I ask to raise it, I have been told by others, including your Honour, not to do so.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I meant no disrespect to the Chair for my absence. As I have already said, I will be travelling next week and therefore, would hope that things would be put in place to have someone to deputise for me, in my absence.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

3.40 p.m.

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Resolution to approve the grant of the sum of $27 180 183 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of Government to supplement the Estimates 2006/2007, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates No. 5, 2006/2007, which form the Schedule to the Resolution, and that the Explanatory Notes to Heads 13, 14, 23, 28, 30 and 32, be amended as set out in Schedule II to the Resolution.

SUSPENSION 18

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Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, 34; Mr. R. D. Marshall, 34.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

CLARKE, Hon. G. A. (St. George North)
EASTMOND, Hon. R. C. (St. James North)
EDGHILL, His Honour J. M. (Christ Church West Central)
FORDE, Miss C. Y (St. Thomas)
JONES, Mr. R. D. (Christ Church East Central)
KELLMAN, Mr. D. St. E. (St. Lucy)
LASHLEY, Mr. M. A. (St. Philip North)
MARSHALL, Hon. D. D. (St. Joseph)
MOTTLEY, Hon. Miss M. A. (St. Michael North East)
SEALY, Mr. R. L. (St. Michael South Central)
THOMPSON, Mr. D. J. H. (St. John)
TOPPIN, Mr. R. St. C. (St. Michael North)
WOOD, Hon. A. P. (St. Philip South)