
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2003 – 2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 22, 2007.

PRESENT

His Honour I.A. ROETT, G.C.M., B.A., Dip.Ed. (Speaker)

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J.P. (Deputy Speaker)

Sir Louis R. TULL, K.A., Q.C., M.A. (Oxon.)

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND, B.A.(Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B.(Hons.), L.E.C., 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. R.D. MARSHALL (Chairman of Committees)

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

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)

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

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

Hon. N.A. LYNCH, B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Tourism and International Transport)

Hon. A.P. Wood, B.Sc, M.Sc., M.Phil., J.P. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

Hon. R.R. FARLEY, B.Sc., J.P. (Minister of Housing and Lands)

Hon. Miss C.Y. FORDE, L.C.P., J.P. (Minister of State,

Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

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

(Minister of Health)

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

Dr. D.C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B., B.S.

Mr. C.A. MASCOLL, B.Sc.(Econ.)(Hons.), M.A. (Public

Finance) (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 led by Rev. Cannon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, May 15, 2007.

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

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM YOUR HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to report to this Honourable House that I am in receipt from the Accountant General, the Accounts and Statements for the Month of December, 2006.

PAPERS

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

1. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Barbados Tourism Investment Inc.) (Order), 2007.

Hon. T.A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Annual Report of the National Assistance Board for the year April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005.

House 134, sequence 02, 10:19:54

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2007.

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

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. Farley the following Bills were read a first time.

1. Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2007;
2. Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2007;
3. Institute of Chartered Accountants of Barbados (Incorporation) (Amendment) Bill, 2007.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER No. 11

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2007

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Bill, which stands before this Honourable Chamber today, is a very simple Bill. It seeks to bring those respective sections of the Representation of the People Act in line with the Constitution of Barbados, which indicates at section 41, dealing with the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, that no one can give a member of the Commission directions.

Mr. Speaker, in the last election and in elections before, when members of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission sought to enter polling stations, even though there was a notice which would have indicated to polling agents who they were, because they may not have been known by face to a number of them, and even though they had received an ID card, there were still some difficulties in terms of their access as they are entitled to, since under the Constitution of Barbados they are empowered with all things relating to the administration of elections in this country.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Electoral and Boundaries Commission is comprised of five members who are nominated by both the Government and the Opposition, therefore, irrespective of the source of the nomination, the difficulties would have been the same.

This amendment, Mr. Speaker, simply makes it clear, in relation to access to polling stations, that members of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission shall be allowed by the Presiding Officer to be able to have access. The current Rule 24 of the Second Schedule of the Representation of the People Act, allows the candidate and the election agent; the polling agents appointed to the polling station; the clerk appointed to attend at the polling station; the constable on duty; the companions of blind or incapacitated voters; the Supervisor of Election; the Deputy Supervisor of Election; the Returning Officer and the Election Clerk; provided of course all of them have signed their declaration of secrecy, which Honourable Members are well familiar with...

In the circumstances, it is therefore necessary for tidiness and for the avoidance of doubt for us to make this simple amendment to allow the members of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, the same access to the aforementioned groups that I have just mentioned.

Equally, for the counting of votes, Regulation 36 (2) provides for a similar group of persons, namely the

Supervisor of Election and the Deputy Supervisor of Election; the Returning Officer and his clerks; the candidates and their wives or husbands; the election agents; and the counting agents; to be present at the counting of the votes.

For the avoidance of doubt, equally, we now amend, to make members of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, capable of being present at the vote.

These, Mr. Speaker, are very simple amendments, and I therefore beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that as it stands right now the Opposition do not have a problem with the amendment. However, I wish to make the point that if a group of people are charged to look after the affairs, that one would have thought that it would have been a regular simple interpretation, and that these members would have been given the privilege of entering the various polling stations.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of elucidation. Mr. Speaker, I indicated that they have been given access in the past, but that there have been instances where one or two of the presiding officers did not know them. Therefore, from the point of view of legal tidiness and for the avoidance of doubt, we want to make sure that we bring these provisions under the Representation of the People Act, at the same level as the Constitution of Barbados.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for the clarity, but it has confused the situation because surely after this amendment, it would not make the members operating within the polling stations know the members of the Commission. Mr. Speaker, clearly, if that is the argument being used, then what we need to do is to ensure that the persons in charge of the various polling stations are au fait with the members of the Commission.

Mr. Speaker, we do not have any problem with the amendment. If the amendment is to make the officers known and we could be given the assurance that it would make them known, then there is no problem.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of elucidation again, Mr. Speaker. I indicated that the members of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission now have ID cards with their photographs.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, we are very grateful that they now have ID cards and that the ID cards now have photographs on them because one would have thought... I think the Honourable Member needs to clarify this particular point, because I think what the Honourable Member means is that they have ID cards demonstrating that they are now members of the Commission.

Sir, we accept this, we agree with the Honourable Member. We appreciate that persons would know the persons of the highest body that will now be looking after the elections and that there would be no more confusion within the polling booths when these senior officials, who should be known to all, enter and demonstrate that they are the ones truly in charge.

Mr. Speaker, we support the motion, do not worry.

House 134 Sequence 3

10.30 a.m.

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I have said, being the persons who are in control, we should not now be seeking to make these amendments. Sir, these five most important persons, when it comes to the administration of running elections, should have been known and should have been free before, to enter the number of polling booths in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has spoken and nothing the Honourable Member has said, has changed what I said. Therefore, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put and agreed to in the affirmative, without division.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the House resolved itself into Committee on the Bill.

COMMITTEE

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

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2007.

ORDER NO. 8 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT
ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION
(REVIEW OF BOUNDARIES) ORDER,
2006.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution which is before this Honourable House is one that is triggered by a constitutional process, which requires members of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission to do a review of the state of the Register in Barbados, of the districts and constituencies and accordingly to recommend changes, if there is a disparity in relation to the distribution of voters, in accordance with constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, in the last Session of Parliament, this Parliament would have approved an amendment to the Constitution, which would have varied the numbers by which there can be a variance in the actual list. That variance can be 10 per cent more or 10 per cent less. In other words, between a range of 90 to 110 per cent to 15 per cent; between 85 per cent and 115 per cent.

It is those sets of parameters that the Electoral and Boundaries Commission use, in being able to determine whether there is need for modification of the constituency boundaries. In the circumstances, they are required to review, periodically, on a five-year basis. They would have completed their work last year and their work would have shown, very clearly, that as at January 31, 2006, the Electoral Register stood at 228 013 persons. This is an increase from the situation on January 1, 2002, of some 13 143. Sir, on January 1, 2002, the Electoral Register stood at 214 870.

Mr. Speaker, in the circumstances, in spite of the increase in the overall list of voters, there would have then determined, according to the constituencies, whether the individual constituency numbers falls within the parameters required by the Constitution, as the guide that would trigger changes in boundaries.

The minimum number of electors per constituency allowed, would have been 6 460, the average number is

7 600, and the maximum number is 8 740. Their review, in 2006, would have indicated that 29 of the 30 constituencies actually fall within those parameters of 6 460 and 8 740, and that there is one constituency that exceeds those parameters by 21 voters. That constituency is St. Philip South, which has 8 761 voters registered. The constituency of St. Lucy, in 2006, would have had

8 210. These numbers are available from the Electoral Office. The Electoral Office has, therefore, completed their assignment as required by the Constitution and have determined that there should be no alteration to the constituency boundaries in Barbados, from the 2006 Review.

Mr. Speaker, in the circumstances, while there is no requirement for alteration, there is still a requirement for both Houses of Parliament to approve and to accept the Report. Sir, Honourable Members who have only come here recently, may not remember that there have been instances back in the early 1990s, where reports from the Electoral and Boundaries Commission have not been accepted by the Prime Minister, and there have been a number of variations. Sir, that is a moot point here today.

Mr. Speaker, prior to the last election, there would have been alternations, as Honourable Members would recall, which carried the number of seats from 28 to that of 30, and since 1971, when we had gone to Single Member Constituencies, there has been occasion to periodically review and alter. Sir, on this occasion, the report clearly demonstrates that there is no need for the alteration to the boundaries of constituencies.

10.40 a.m.

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Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: There is a third Bill before this Chamber today, which will speak to the matter of polling districts within constituencies in order bring that in line too. I will not refer to that Bill at this stage but only speak to its existence as a matter of completeness before this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, may I say that while the register shows 228 013, the reality is that there are persons who may be on the register but who may not be resident in Barbados at the particular point. Sir, my understanding of the system is that there is a periodic review which is done by the Electoral and Boundaries Commission ever so often to make sure that they clean the list. The details of the new registration show that in 2003, there were 6 164 new registrants on the list; that in 2004, there were 2 293; that in 2005, there were 6 482 so that you would see a consistent pattern in relation to registration and that has more to do with the consistency, I believe, of our population growth than anything else.

Equally, that there has been other things, amendments to adult registration are also handled by the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, amendments to minor registration and replacement of lost and defaced cards.

Mr. Speaker, this House would have approved a fee for the replacement of lost ID cards within recent times but what is clear is that the numbers have, more or less, remained fairly regular over the last three years, in relation to the activities of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. Mr. Speaker, obviously, we are in a world, with greater emphasis on technology and, therefore, there are a number of improvements, which the Electoral and Boundaries Commission have been working on in relation to the management of their portfolio. The Government is equally seized that the officers in that department have been working under difficult conditions and, indeed, the Head of the Civil Service has advised me that she has been in discussion with the Ministry of Public Works in order to improve the conditions within that department, physically, because of the difficulties in the building.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that this Report is eminently suitable for our acceptance and, therefore, wish to give strong support to this Resolution such that we can comply with our constitutional obligations under the Constitution of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that we therefore, take note of this Resolution and that it does now pass.

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

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, here again, based on the information presented to us, we do not have too many problems with this particular matter. Sir, based on the information presented, there is only one constituency as it stands that is outside of the limit.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, based on the information, I have said already, during the last elections that the evidence has shown that the constituency of St. Lucy was very much out. I have already said in this House during that debate that I do not have a fundamental problem with how many people I have to represent, that the important thing is to ensure that we have the capacity and the equipment to represent the interest of people.

Mr. Speaker, we have to be careful how we continue to decrease the numbers because, if every five years we continue to change the electoral boundaries, very soon nobody would know which...

Mr. SPEAKER: Sir, nothing like that was said.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I am not saying that, Sir. I am giving the reason why I am supporting it.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are now bringing something completely new into the debate.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I am giving reasons why I will support the no-change. Sir, as you know there is a Rule against anticipation and I will not anticipate what the other Member is bringing.

Mr. Speaker, based on that evidence, it is clear that we have no problem with this because it is going to be difficult each time a constituency or two finds themselves out of line, that we come to Parliament to change boundaries. I believe if there is an amendment, that they should be given a margin of error and it should be written in, so that when one or two constituencies are out, nobody would say that you are in breach of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission's laws.

Sir, a strict lawyer would argue that we are in breach but, when we really think about it, it does not make sense every time one or two constituencies are over, that we come here to change the electoral boundaries just to make it right. This is why we do not have a particular problem but we need to put a situation where the error factor is known because today we might have a situation with one constituency and another situation where you might have 12 constituencies and somebody may say that it does not matter. Sir, I am saying that we need to have something in writing on which we could focus our arguments and ensure that it cannot be manipulated.

Mr. Speaker, that is all I am saying. There is no need for anybody to panic about what I have to say. Sir, we also have to review this and also ask ourselves if constituencies can only be measured based on numbers or whether they could be measured based on the area factor. Sir, there are some constituencies that some politicians can easily canvass within a week if they really decide to canvass but there are others, that may not have the same numbers, the numbers might be smaller but because of the area factor and the spread, it makes it very difficult. I can understand why the Honourable Member for St. Philip South might feel this way because, not only might the Honourable Member have the numbers but he might also have the area factor and the spread because St. Philip happens to be one of those constituency in which you could have the numbers, the area factor and also the spread.

Mr. Speaker, we have to be careful that we do not come to the House based on numbers because there are constituencies where you may find as many as 20 people living in one house, especially those areas that have certain

developments, where in one small area you can find large numbers of persons living but in other places, the houses are spread so wide, that the time it takes that person to do that small area, somebody else where could have done almost one-tenth of their constituency. Sir, these are factors that should be taken into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, as it stands right now, we do not any problem with this particular one but just want to highlight that it is not a simple matter because, as I have said before, we might deal with one now but in a few years it might be five or ten and somebody might argue that it was done for one so you should be able to do it for ten or five.

Sir, I thank you.

H134/10:50

Sequence 5

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

A.P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, I think it would be very remiss of me, if I did not make a very short intervention in this debate. I want to start at the outset by saying, notwithstanding the numbers distribution in these thirty constituencies and with the resulting effect that St. Philip South has approximately 500 constituents more than the next largest, which is St. Thomas, that I am in support of the efforts of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission. Let me start with that, because I do not want the message to go out of this Honourable Chamber, notwithstanding the fact that my constituency is large, in every reasonable dimension, not only the numbers count, but as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said, in terms of geography, it is also very large, and I do not have any difficulty with it.

Mr. Speaker, when I left that honourable place, the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, I made a commitment to the people in St. Philip South that irrespective of what I am called upon to do, it will be done, irrespective of what the numbers are. Sir, I am comfortable with this.

Sir, in any event, the Third Schedule to the Constitution provides that:

“No constituency should, and the operative words are, as far as practicable, not exceed 115 per cent nor be less than 85 per cent of the total electorate, divided by the number of constituencies.”

Sir, there may be the established lower bound and upper bound, based on the application of a simple formula. The Electoral and Boundaries Commission, I am not holding any beef for them, but they obviously would have

tried their best to ensure that every constituency fitted into the legal upper bound and lower bound. Sir, that is not the case, but the operative words, as I said, in the Third Schedule to the Constitution would:...”so far as practicable.”

Sir, that is not to say that we should not take due recognition of the fact that the neighbouring constituency to St. Philip South, is 1 000 votes less than what the constituency of St. Philip South had, as at January 31, 2007. Sir, that could suggest another action be taken by the Electoral and Boundaries Commission in anticipation of this fact. As the Honourable Member of St. Lucy said, we should not come here and seek to make the alterations, even though in some cases it may appear fairly obvious, but we should not come in here and make the alterations when just one constituency is above or below the established lower and upper bounds.

Mr. Speaker, we have been very fortunate in the constituency of St. Philip South, to be benefiting from the inward migration that takes place in this country. I am happy to receive them all. Sir, if you look back at how persons have moved in Barbados, certainly since the last election, you would see that there has not only been infilling of the constituency of St. Philip South, but also new developments in the constituency of St. Philip South.

Sir, I am saying that to say this, and may be to guide the work of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission in the future. In the same way that I could have anticipated that the Emerald Park Project would come onstream, I could have anticipated that Coral Haven, Crane, would come onstream. I could have anticipated, with the information coming from the Town and Country Planning Department, of course, that the Rice Development would come onstream. Sir, I could anticipate that soon, the Work Hall Development would come onstream, then other persons who are expected to make strategic use of this information should have done so in a timely manner.

Sir, having said all of that, let me state for the records, that I welcome all those persons who have come into the lovely constituency of St. Philip South. Let me also state that before the last adjustment was made, when I was a candidate for the first time, the count in St. Philip South was approximately 9 475, so, dealing with large numbers is not a difficulty for me. Sir, when the revision was made, I shed approximate 2 800 votes in favour of the St. Philip West constituency. I am familiar with large numbers, 8 761 and climbing.

Sir, I met with the residence in a particular area on Saturday, the houses there are fully subscribed, so you will have to be applied to 8 761. I can assure you that whenever that day comes, there will be an additional three or four hundred votes. I can tell you that, based on the numbers I

saw in that particular development, where I spent some time. Sir, elsewhere, where houses continue to be built and where infilling continues to take place in the constituency. I do not have a difficulty with it, because I started as a candidate with 9 474. Sir, I had to journey into areas, which are now part of St. Philip West, namely parts of St. George, Marchfield, Brereton, Woodbourne, Four Square, parts of Rock Hall, Oldbury Terrace, Mangrove Park, et cetera, so this is nothing new to me.

Sir, I am going to close by saying, just as I started, that I do not wish the message to be conveyed, that because the constituency of St. Philip South appears to be extremely large, that this very competent and hardworking Member of Parliament for St. Philip South, has any difficulty with it. I do not have any difficulty with it. I started at 9 474, if it has to get back there, and I have the responsibility of making such large numbers of persons happy, I am prepared to do so in the manner that I do every day.

I thank you.

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

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Order before us. This Order speaks to the duties of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, in accordance with Section 41(d)(1) of the Constitution of Barbados, where it is required to review the number and boundaries of constituencies in Barbados and divide them based on a formula. Their recommendation is, at this time, that we do not need to adjust the number or boundaries of our constituencies. I want to say that this work, in support of our Constitution and our long tradition of democracy, could not occur without the expertise and dedication of the staff of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, in her introduction, made reference to work they are doing, notwithstanding some of the challenges they face. I want to salute them on another score. This exercise, as referenced by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and St. Philip South, is really about how we distribute the numbers. In fact, when we look at the comparison of the Register of Electors, which is at the heart of all of these decisions that are being made, that Register of Electors has grown from approximately 214 000 in 2002, just before the last election, to over 228 000 today, just under 14 000 more persons registered.

Sir, I am ignoring the sotto voce from the other side. I want to say, for the benefit of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, that I would have had a personal experience in terms of how those numbers have grown.

Sir, before coming to this Honourable House this morning, I went to the Electoral and Boundaries Commission Office, with my son, to assist him in making that transition from the yellow, junior ID Card, to the blue, adult ID Card.

11.00 a.m.

Sequence 6

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

House 134, Sequence 07, 11.00 a.m.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Asides.

Hon. R.R. FARLEY: Sir, he believes in democracy and he is following in his father's tradition of public involvement and service.

Mr. Speaker, while I was there, the Register of Electors, which was at the heart of this Order, in terms of how we take that more than 228 000 persons and divide them in boundaries and constituencies, was being swelled by Barbadians going in, from all walks of life. Persons of my son's age were there and older persons were there. Sir, one of the concerns I have, and I will be very brief on this, is that when I looked at the work of the department, in terms of that particular responsibility under the legislation to maintain this electoral list, which is based on a National Register and National ID Cards, that last year there were some 6 482 new registrations.

There were, Sir, however, 14 247 claims for replaced and defaced ID Cards. This means that much of the work of the Commission, is taken up with our fellow Barbadians not exercising enough care on this important foundation of our democracy.

Let me say, Sir, as I salute the work of the department, that last week in Jamaica, I was attending a meeting of the InterAmerican Development Bank, and one of the challenges for development in the Latin American and Caribbean region, is this matter of registration.

In fact, today in 2007, there are countries in our hemisphere, where there is an under-registration of persons in the double digit proportions, and for Barbados not to have that challenge, and for us in that Parliament to be able in a sober and sensible manner, to consider and accept the recommendation of an Electoral and Boundaries Commission, based on a national list of electors that is beyond reproach, is to the credit of this country and to the credit of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission.

In relation, as I conclude, Sir, to the Constituency of Christ Church East, let me say that my constituency was

one of those subject to adjustment in the last election and we understand that these things happen. It was not the first and it would not be the last adjustment. Most constituencies in Barbados do not today carry the size or geographic description of two or three previous elections.

I want to congratulate, once again, the Members of the Commission and their staff for allowing us to conduct this in this mature democracy of our country, in the highest traditions which are befitting. Sir, I fully support this Order which is before us. Sir, I trust that all Honourable Members in this House would do likewise.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the contributions of all who spoke. Sir, to pick up on the theme of the last speaker, the reality is that Barbados continues to be respected globally, for the manner in which it manages its electoral functions in its democracy.

It is to the credit of all of us in this country, indeed, to all the institutions involved in the management of electoral matters, be it the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, the political parties or the candidates and those working and supporting them, that we can have a system in this country that is credible and worthy of respect. Equally, we must be one of the few countries, certainly, in this hemisphere that does not require finger printing because of fraudulent activity in the conduct of elections.

The fact that we, after 40 years as an independent State, have been able to maintain those very high standards, is testimony, I think, to the character of our people and the things which we hold dearly, as a people and as a nation.

May I also say, that our electoral officials for decades now and certainly the last two decades, have rendered technical assistance and support throughout the entire Commonwealth, not just in the Caribbean, and in countries, where the system of elections is indeed under threat and the stability of their democracy is under a cloud. The fact that we have been called on time and time again is nothing to make us complacent but it is a matter of which we are very proud as a nation.

It is also true that there are Honourable Members on both sides of this Chamber who have been involved in electoral observation missions, not just for the Commonwealth but for the Organisation of American States. Once again, that reflects the high regard within which our system of elections and our electoral matters are regarded by those internationally.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we have a system that is functioning well that requires the periodic review and,

indeed, this work this morning is testimony to the fact that we respect how that system functions.

In the circumstances, Sir, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 18 – THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL, 2007.

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

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in respect of this matter, when I would have given notice and read it a first time, we would have referred to it as the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2007. I would now like to have the Bill referred to as Representation of the People (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2007, having completed the first one this morning.

Sir, this is a very simple Bill. It seeks to delete the words, “1000”, and to put in the word, “1500” to reflect the fact that, the indicative number to be used as a guide for polling districts will now be 1500.

I say the word, indicative, because if you look at section 29 of the Representation of People Act, Sir, you would say that the Commission is not under an obligation to change the size of polling districts but that it may do so. All the Commission has recommended to us, is that there are currently some 63 polling districts in Barbados of more than a thousand voters.

They therefore would wish to be able make changes to that and to bring to majority of them under 1500, hence the deletion of 1000 and the placing of the 1500 in this particular amendment. It would therefore mean, to the best of their knowledge, there will only be four districts in Barbados, and after their realignment, more than 1500. Three of them would be between 1500 and 2000, and one would be more than 2000.

I do not have those exact districts but I do know that there are 13 constituencies that will be affected, in relation to their proposals to realign the polling districts. May I say again for the avoidance of doubt that it does not change the constituency boundaries. It just changes the internal arrangements of the polling districts to make them more manageable.

I believe the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central is one of those who suffers, and who has 4 400

odd in one electoral polling district. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North in Eden Lodge has, I believe, well over 2 000 in one polling district. Therefore, the constituencies which are likely to be affected - and St. Andrew in particular - have a situation where the majority of their polling districts will have to be redrawn, in order to make sense.

The Constituencies are St. Andrew, Christ Church South, Christ Church East Central, St. Michael South East, St. Philip South, St. James North, St. Thomas, Christ Church West Central, Christ Church East, St. Michael North, St. Michael South Central, St. Philip West and St. James South. Therefore, there will be a realignment of polling districts, but not the constituency.

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Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I recall that in 1999, when they were doing the road at Lears, and there, therefore, was a need for a realignment of part of the KA5 box that would normally have voted on Canewood Road, they took out that community in Lears, and for that one election, I had a polling district called KA6. Sir, in the last election, it was subsumed back into KA5.

Mr. Speaker, it is just an internal administrative arrangement that does not in any way affect the responsibilities of candidates and does not in any way affect the functioning of candidates other than the fact that if you are obviously going to have more polling districts, you may be required to hire more polling agents to deploy because you are likely to have more polling stations in order to support that.

Mr. Speaker, that makes sense because 4 400 persons voting in one place, as opposed to 1 000 persons voting in one place, is a completely different set of pressure, not just on our persons who are in the polling stations but more important on the persons managing the electoral process in the polling stations, in order to be able to maintain that kind of alert presence with that kind of volume of persons coming in a single polling station.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment simply changes 1 000 and replaces it with 1 500. Section 29 of the Act tells us that this is just an indicative number, so the Commission would try to change polling districts where it is convenient so to do, to avoid congestion.

Sir, I have supplemented that by indicating that I have been instructed that the Electoral and Boundaries Commission has in fact been reviewing polling districts in 13 constituencies. I do not know if they have completed their task, but suffice it to say that they anticipate that

instead of 63 polling districts being above the 1 000 and some way above, as in the case of Christ Church East Central and St. Michael North, for sure to my knowledge, that there would now be only four polling districts that would be above that indicative level of 1 500.

With those few words, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, once this amendment does not create confusion or frustrations for the voters, we do not have a problem with it. We are well-aware that when persons get accustomed to a particular location, then to find out that there is a change, that it creates frustrations.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things we do not want to do in a democracy is to create frustration for the voters of Barbados. Sir, once we could be assured that no frustrations would be created on this particular matter, we would not have a problem with it. However, what we would ask is that when this Bill is passed that the necessary information be put out there in the public domain so that the voters would know that there is a change so that they could make that adjustment early.

Sir, we do not want to have a situation where we make this adjustment and then on election day, people are not aware that there is this particular change and then confusion arise. Mr. Speaker, those of us who been around for a long time know that there are people who have voted in areas for many years, but when election day came, they found their names elsewhere within the constituency. Mr. Speaker, I am saying that under normal circumstances these problems can occur, and now that we are making these changes there is a possibility that we can have some problems.

Mr. Speaker, what I am asking is that these new polling districts be given time so that you can deal with them, that people can identify with them and that you do not have a rush into this particular area where you frustrate voters because you believe that there might be a situation where some voters would react differently than others, so you make the changes to create frustration.

Sir, all I am asking is that the democracy of the country is respected, that the democracy of the voters be respected and that these changes are well-advertised so that the voters of Barbados would understand that there have been fundamental changes as it relates to the Representation of People Act and that the reason for the change be given. Sir, we have to understand that we have to please the voters, we have to tell them why we are making these fundamental changes. Sir, if we see them as

important to ourselves, we also have to demonstrate to them that they are also important.

I thank you very much, Sir.

Mr. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, one would generally agree with the matter before us, but since the constituency of Christ Church East Central has been mentioned as one of those constituency with quite a large number of voters particularly in one of the polling districts...

Sir, I know one has to always deal with issues of management as the person working within the particular location. Mr. Speaker, YB1 is normally located at the Christ Church Girls' School. I know that the Electoral and Boundaries Commission and all of the workers there are doing their work to find a replacement location because that school is under redress, it is under the hammer of the contractors for major work. That work has not yet commenced, and therefore 18 months or two years would be outside the time when an election is constitutionally due in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I would suspect that those persons are busy looking for a replacement venue for the YB1 polling district. This polling district has 4 419 or so registered voters, which is extremely large. Sir, one would believe, if there are venues within the locale, that number could be broken down a bit more. That polling district, of some 4 419 voters, comprised Kingsland, and we use Kingsland as a generic term, because you are talking about Kingsland Crescent; Kingsland Park; Kingsland Stage, 1, 2, and 3; Kingsland Terrace North; and Kingsland Garden; the western side of Lodge Road and Plumgrove Development.

Mr. Speaker, yes, you can say that it covers a relatively small space if one looks at it and the movement around it. However, at the same time I think for purposes of management, that polling district should be looked at. The other areas are not at all in any way problematic, but YB1 really should be looked at. Sir, one would hope that enough time, as has been stated by the representative for St. Lucy, would be given, if this is to be looked at, to effect what are the necessary changes within that polling district, and persons would have a knowledge of where they would go in the future if that is to be dealt with.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I take note of the comments which have been made. Suffice it to say that clearly the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has a diverging perspective from his leader who is urging elections, as he is saying that we must give enough time once the polling districts are redrawn so that people could get accustomed. Sir, he perhaps is a little more balanced in these things than his leader. He said sotto voce that he

looks after the masses, clearly indicating that he does not believe that his leader does, but we all know that too, so we leave that where it is.

Suffice it to say, that the Electoral Office sends communication to every registered voter indicating where they must attend to vote. Sir, any of us only need to think back and realise that we do not only get circulars from candidates but that we get an official notification from the Electoral Office that this is the place where you are registered and required to exercise your franchise.

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Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: In the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I am, therefore, confident that the normal systems will operate and that people will recognise that this is what is required of them, without it causing any confusion. It happens at every election and, therefore, all we are doing is giving them a little more elbow room, in terms of how they can realign the polling districts.

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

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

The question was put and agreed to in the affirmative, without division.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the House resolved itself into Committee on the Bill.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by R. R. FARLEY, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Representation of the People (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2007.

ORDER NO. 12

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225, THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF A PARCEL OF LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN, SITUATE AT 1ST AVENUE LONG GAP IN THE PARISH OF SAINT MICHAEL, IN THIS ISLAND, FOR DISPOSAL BY WAY OF SALE FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES.

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

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, this matter before us relates to an earlier acquisition. There was a property, formerly known as "Woodstock", Spooners Hill, which was acquired in 1978 for location of what is now known as the Lawrence T. Gay Memorial School. That school has been in operation for many years, and has been successfully so. The boundaries are well-defined and the school is fenced in. There is, however, some 496.9 square metres or 5 349 square feet of land, which is additional to that which is needed by the school.

It transpired that, in 1989, an application was made by someone, who previously resided on that land. That person resided as a tenant of the former owner, prior to the acquisition, in 1978. That application was for the occupation by way of rent or purchase of the land. Investigations were carried out and, in fact, they did show that the person was, indeed, a tenant. Checks were also made with the Ministry of Education to confirm that there was no need by that agency, of this 5 000 square feet of land and in 2003/2004. A decision was made that the land would, indeed, be sold to the person listed in the Resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the necessary Town Planning Department approval were sought and approved for the subdivision. What is being done here now is under Section 5 of the relevant legislation, to vest the land in the National Housing Corporation for onward sale to the former occupant, by way of tenancy of the land. Parliament is being asked to grant approval for this simple transaction, which would be to vest in the National Housing Corporation for residential purposes.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

The question was put and agreed to in the affirmative, without division.

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

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the piece of land we are seeking to have vested in the National Housing Corporation, lies in part of the constituency which I do have the honour to represent, that being St. Michael West Central. As the Honourable Member has said, this piece of land adjoins the Lawrence T. Gay Memorial School, also situated in St. Michael West Central.

Mr. Speaker I am glad to hear that the person applying to buy that piece of land, could now be in a position to have a piece of the rock. This is an area that has been well-developed in the immediate vicinity of Woodstock Road. We were able to have a number of roads in the area paved. Sir, as I speak, adjoining this piece of land to the back of Lawrence T. Gay Memorial School, there is a piece of land that was never developed or paved. I know that the Urban Development Commission has recently put out tender that would see this new road being paved, as the other roads adjoining are already paved.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Honourable Member for going after this area. He mentioned that it was coming very soon and it has been speedily done. I must therefore, compliment the Honourable Member for the work done in that regard, as well as for the amount of work he continues to do in his Ministry.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, based on the information given to this Honourable House, we do not have a problem but based on certain actions, we still have to forewarn this Government. Sir, the school of which we speak is an expanding one and therefore we have to be assured by the Honourable Member and by the Parliamentary representative, that the school would not come back later to have this land, in circumstances where this Parliament would be asked to have the land compulsorily acquired, which would cause the Government substantial sums of money. Sir, as it presently stands, this land belongs to Government but if it is now sold to a private person, it means that if the Government needs to have it, the cost would be higher.

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Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I need an assurance from the parliamentary representative and also from the former Ministry of Education, who would have had the opportunity to look at the files and, who would have convinced himself that there is no need for this land to be needed for the school even though the school is expanding and even though the school has the reputation where people love to go to this particular school, that we need not worry about this particular matter, that it is above-board and that there is no need for it.

Mr. Speaker, I would have love to hear the present Minister of Education giving the assurance that there is no need for this land by Lawrence T. Gay School because, as you know, that particular area, because of the exams results, the density of the area and things like that and the limited playing field, that we also have to take into consideration all these factors and that we are not just looking at satisfying the wants of a person, based on the number of roads that can go into that particular area and to make the Member of Parliament looks good, that we are now doing this particular matter, that we are putting the national interest first and that we are not putting the constituency matter first.

Mr. Speaker, once I have that assurance, I have no problem with this. I always welcome Members of Parliament getting something for their constituency, even though some Members of Parliament, when they were Ministers would say to me that they would not do roads in my constituency but that they would do it for other people.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

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

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is in a mischievous mood. Sir, he is in a Moontown mood because he would have heard me say quite clearly that the Ministry of Education has confirmed in writing several years ago that they have no need for, or interest in this land. In fact, in terms of the size and shape of the parcel in question, this is a piece of land, not on the main road or the entrance to the school but is going way back into the community on the other side, there is a change in the level of the land, it is almost in an L-shape corner in the farthest, remotest end of the property and the Ministry of Education, principals, Permanent Secretary and other officials would have considered the matter fully and properly before they advise us several years ago that they had no interest in the property.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the interest of the school is best protected by having that piece of land in the far corner well and properly maintained and secured rather than being left idle to be overrun by bush, to become a

dumping ground, to become a hiding area or any such possible misuse of land, which can occur where land is not in proper husbandry.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the House the impression that the Government of Barbados would have a piece of land and they would allow it to be kept in this state. This House cannot believe that having the Minister of Health with a debushing programme and the National Conservation Commission with that beautiful programme that you would not find a piece of land belong to Government in this state and that they would now be forced to sell it for this reason. Sir, I cannot accept this particular reason.

Mr. SPEAKER: Maybe that is why they are selling it.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Honourable Member is now admitting that the Government maintains its lands in better condition than he maintains his property in St. Lucy. I thank him for his congratulations of the Government in that regard. Sir, every check was made concerning the interest of the school, the maps are here and Honourable Members can see where the land is located.

Sir, it is not a natural part of the school, otherwise the school would have made use of it and it would have been incorporated into the school. In fact, I can tell you that in terms of other schools around the country where they are other lands, whether Crown lands or land not belonging to the Crown but where they form a natural part of the school, we work with the Ministry of Education to either grant them use of the land where it is Crown land like at West Terrace, for example, where the lands next to the school is a natural part of the school. It is all on the same level, it is naturally used as car park but the section there is officially vested in the NCF, was part of the area used for CARIFESTA. Sir, we have taken the steps to transfer that use officially to the West Terrace School so that they would be in full control of the premises around. Sir, on the other hand, the area around the school which provides steps into the community is under the control of the National Conservation Commission, which they maintain as a park but it does not form a natural part of the property of the school because of the change in level. This area is subject not only to remoteness in terms of its being in the far corner but because of change in the level, it does not form part of what the school would naturally use.

I thank the Honourable Member for his concern on behalf of the people of the constituency of St. Michael West Central. I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central is touched by that concern.

Mr. R.D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation. Sir, I just want to say that I do not like people confusing the issue of things. As the Minister rightly said, it is a piece of land that the school will never have use for. They cannot use it for anything, Sir. There are a number of chattel dwellings on this stretch of land, they are all occupied and this little piece behind the school is between other chattels houses. The school will never have use for it, they will not use it for parking because all the parking for the school is in done at front of the school. Sir, it is just a piece of land that once had a chattel house on it, the house eventually fell apart and the person who owned the chattel house wants to put up a newer structure and is just asking that the piece of land be sold to him. Sir, I thank you.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORDER NO. 15 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT, CAP. 228, THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY THE CROWN OF PARCEL OF LANDS SITUATE AT ARCH HALL IN THE PARISH OF ST. THOMAS IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF PROVIDING UNINHIBITED ACCESS TO THE FIRE STATION AND THE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

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

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution before us speaks to the compulsory acquisition of land at Arch Hall in St. Thomas. Sir, you would recall that some years ago, the Government of Barbados would have constructed a new highway 2A, which straightened and widened the road access into the north of the island and resulted in some changes in this area. In this area, the Government would have also acquired lands, which were at that time owned by Barbados Farms Limited for the purpose of constructing the Arch Hall Fire Station. Sir, that acquisition was in 1998, in terms of placing our fire service facilities on the upper part of the island rather than putting it on the western side alone which, as we have seen in what is now known as the “Carew Flood”, would be vulnerable to that kind of disaster, and Arch Hall Fire Station was built.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, Government acquired land for the purpose of housing development and 48 lots have been developed at Arch Hall to be sold at around \$10.00 per square foot, it is land bordering Sandy Lane to provide for residents in that area.

Mr. Speaker, we have some tidying up to be done by way of ensuring uninhibited access, clear legal passage over some small strips of land. Sir, there are two issues, one is that between the new Highway 2A and the old Highway 2A, there lies a parcel of land in the shape of a new moon, which is of no use to the present owners, Sandy Lane Hotel.

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Hon. R.R. FARLEY: They have bought the land from Barbados Farms. That land has been donated to the Crown. It is just there lying between the old road and the new road.

However, between the old Highway 2A, which is still in use as a local road within Arch Hall, and the lands of the fire station, other lands of the Crown, to the north of the fire station - which are proposed to be leased to a church in the area - and also the entrance to the forty-eight housing lots, there are small strips of lands which need to be acquired. Sir, at the time, it was determined that the land would be obtained by private treaty, by way of discussions between the owners, Sandy Lane and the Government, and a purchase price being agreed. Those discussions, however, were not brought to conclusion. There were differences of opinion on several issues in relation to the matter.

The bottom line is, the public purpose needs to be advanced, where the strip of land between the old Highway 2A, which I said is an internal local road in Arch Hall, having clear uninhibited legal access to the lands already owned by the Government, a long strip going in front of the fire station and the lands to the north going towards the old Arch Hall Gap, as well as, most fundamentally, along what was an old cartroad in Bennetts Plantation. Sir, it is along that cart road, the entrance to the Arch Hall Fire Station and the entrance to the forty-eight housing lots of the National Housing Corporation has been developed.

Sir, it is clear, that in order for us to provide uninhibited and unimpeded, not only practical but legal access to the fire station, and similarly to the housing development, we need to obtain clear title to the land. As the lawyers in the Chamber would be aware, we would not be in a position to give the good people of Arch Hall, as we allocate those lots, clear meaningful conveyances to their lots, without incorporating into those conveyances clear and uninhibited access, by way of a right of way, over lands owned by the Crown.

Sir, this Resolution, therefore, speaks to the part of this tidying up, which relates to a position of approximately

1 993 square metres of land, which is the cart road portion of it, about 2 053 square metres of land, which is the strip running from the cartroad, past the front of the fire station going north, and sandwiched between the old Highway 2A and the Crown lands, a road verge in that same area.

Sir, I remember that, not part of this Resolution but that has already been sorted out by way of donation, has been the grant to the Crown of the lands between the old Highway 2A and the new Highway 2A. This will bring this matter of the Arch Hall Development to a conclusion.

Sir, I beg to move, that this Resolution to acquire these lands, to provide uninhibited access and clear legal title and right of way, to the fire station, the other lands of the Crown, to be leased to the church in the area and the forty-eight lots, which have been allocated, and for which we are in the process of completing the legal title transfer to the forty-eight proud owners, at \$10 a square foot, on lands adjoining Sandy Lane Estates, in this good island of Barbados, do now pass.

Hon. K.D. SYMMONDS: I beg to second that, and reserve my right to speak.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, this Opposition is close saying that they are happy to see the Government has finally accepted the advice on this particular piece of land. The records will show, in 1988 or 1989, that when the Government came to Parliament to acquire land from Barbados Farms, it was told by the Opposition, of the day, that not only should they acquire enough land to the west, but they should have acquired enough to the east, considering that the landfill on the top of the hill is Government owned. If you are acquiring land to the west of the road, clearly, you would have sought to acquire the land to the east, which would have given you the land to the west, and to the east and it would have been bordering on the land of the landfill. The view of the landfill, even though people see the area as a negative as it stands, when it is closed, it would have substantial value.

Sir, it is clear that this matter could not be dealt with through private treaty. It is also clear that there has to be contention, Sandy Lane on one hand and the Government of Barbados on the other. That is why that the Opposition sought, at the time, to ensure that the Government had enough land, because we knew that Sandy Lane would have been able to appreciate the value in that particular area. Sir we are not now surprised that they are playing 'hardball' with the Government, because they understand the importance and value of their property in that particular area. It is also clear that the forty-eight lots do not fit into what they have planned for the area.

Sir, the Government was warned that the owners of Sandy Lane would come after those forty-eight lots in the area, and that they needed not only the forty-eight lots and the present Arch Hall as it stands, but a bigger development to the east, so, if they chose to come after the Government, they would not be able to operate on a piecemeal basis, as we thought would occur, because we believed that after the properties have been sold, that people with money would stop buying off the individuals. Sir, this Honourable House was forewarned, and you would remember that, because you were here since 1994, and you would have been alerted to what was said. Sir, I know that you understood and appreciated the argument.

Sir, nine years after, we are now seeing the same circumstances that the Government refused to accept, they are now confronted with. If the Government had owned the land to the east, Sandy Lane would have no choice. They would have to enter an arrangement with the Government, because they need the land to the east, and it is clear that sooner, rather than later, they will also need the land, where the landfill is at the moment, because of its view.

Sir, Government would have been in a better position to negotiate, because they would have been able to say to Sandy Lane we want this land, but we also know that you might need some of ours, therefore let us swap. Sir, we have a situation where Government will now have to pay substantial amounts for land, that they could have brought at a cheaper price.

Sir, do you know what is disgusting about this issue? It is not only when Barbados Farms wanted to sell the land, Government also had another opportunity. When the highway was being built, Government also had an opportunity to cling to that. On two occasions we have failed. The important point is, the Opposition cannot be accused of not informing the Government and having foresight, because we had the foresight on this issue and we gave the Government the information. If anybody wants to challenge the Opposition on this particular issue, they need to check Hansard. As you are aware, the records of Hansard are there for every one to read.

Sir, I am saying that too many times information is given to this House in good faith and it is not accepted. I am also saying that we cannot continue as a country, if we are to develop, to ignore these things. We saw it recently at Kensington Oval, and I will not go there. I will stick to this particular one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, there is no need to go there, because that was well ventilated. It is appreciated that foresight should have been taken.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you cannot go there.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: That is why we will deal with the foresight on this particular one, and you have no need tell me not to deal with Kensington Oval, because that is too hot a potato to deal with today.

Sir, I am saying that the issue of Arch Hall is not only about land, it is about protecting the interest of the people who live there.

11.50 a.m.

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House 134, Sequence 12, 11.50 p.m.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: The Opposition was in the forefront, and we were not interested in the millions of dollars that will now come into the Government coffers. What we sought to do was to protect the interest of those persons living in Arch Hall, and those persons who are about to live in Arch Hall, because we understand how the land market operates.

I am saying, Sir, that because the Government did not act, Arch Hall, Bennetts and this new development, are now very much vulnerable. Sir, if the Government is vulnerable to Sandy Lane, then it means that Arch Hall, the new development, and even the fire station might be vulnerable.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Proceed, please.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: We have a situation today, Sir, that we will have to accept this as another error. We have to ensure that we cannot continue allowing these things to occur. We cannot believe that because we negotiate with persons, they will not behave in a particular way.

It is clear, Sir, that in these major developments, especially a development where you have a golf course, that the behaviour should be predicted and protected. Mr. Speaker, as we now see, the developers were so selfish, they ensured that previously when you were traveling on Highway 2A, you had a view of Highway 1, in some areas. They ensured they blocked that view because they felt that the beauty of Barbados should be marketed for themselves.

I am saying that is wrong. Barbados is too beautiful for anyone to keep that beauty for themselves. When you

are traversing Barbados, Sir, you should be able to appreciate Barbados for its beauty and you should not have to pay a fee to go to a particular place, just to appreciate that beauty.

Sir, we have to ensure that we, in negotiating with Sandy Lane, start talking about the area where there is the landfill, because they need it, and if we need that land and they are putting pressure on us, we have to start 'hardballing' them by telling them if they 'hardball' us now, on the land where the poor people are living, we will 'hardball' them when we close the landfill. We know that they have their eyes on the landfill because of the view and the height. We will have to tell them now, let us get back to the table.

I am telling the Minister of Housing that there is no need for this land acquisition to use the landfill as his weapon. You have a good weapon, use it.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member has the landfill as his weapon, not the way the Honourable Member would like to use it, because I am now appreciating why the covering material might not have been working as well as it previously worked. I am now asking the Minister to use that as his leverage. I am saying that everybody who understands development, would know that what looks like a negative today would be a positive tomorrow, when the landfill is closed.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. K.D. SYMMONDS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy may well have been better advised to have paused for thought, before engaging this House in the very misleading and meandering dialogue that he just offered.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that if this matter is to be politicised...It would have been perhaps wiser for us not to have had to go that route, but if that is where the Honourable Member for St. Lucy wants to go, then I would be quite happy to go there with them.

I recall, Sir, in 1994, when Mangrove was burning. No Barbadian who understood the plight, and passed by Mangrove, would have failed to have understood the impact that the constant burning of that dump had on the residents of Arch Hall and Bennetts in particular.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the House the impression that we were not at one on that particular issue, at that particular time.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order, please.

Hon. K.D. SYMMONDS: The reality is, Mr. Speaker, that this Government set a precedent in Barbados by ensuring that the households, which were close and directly affected, in particular, the households in Arch Hall and Bennetts, were compensated for the difficulty that their members had to endure. I believe, Sir, to the tune of at least \$5 000, for every household in Arch Hall and Bennetts, as a result of the burning that took place at Mangrove, and the consequential damage to people's health and the environment.

Sir, if you wanted to be political, we have to understand that as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central said in his presentation of this matter, there are 48 lots available in Arch Hall only.

Mr. Speaker vacated the Chair and Mr. Deputy Speaker assumed the Chair.

Hon. K.D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I was saying to the Chamber, we in Arch Hall had the responsibility of allocating 48 lots. The circumstances are such that the National Housing Corporation would have attracted over 3 000 applications for those 48 lots.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy may wish to be aware that part of the reason there was this heavy demand for lots at Arch Hall is largely because of the fact, Sir, that as is the case with most of the St. Thomas and the central St. James area, there is a view that area of Barbados is very safe, very close to the idyllic west coast and there is the absence of crime. There was a heavy demand, 3 000 applications for 48 lots. The reality is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that all of the allocations which have been made so far, have been made to residents of Arch Hall and Bennett and their families, without exception.

Sir, if you want to become political about this matter, there has been a very clear commitment on the part of the Barbados Labour Party Government to have offered and indeed to have set a legal precedent in this country by offering, out of court, a settlement to compensate people whose health was affected by the nuisance that the dump was back in 1994. In monetary terms, that compensation has been paid and there has been a further commitment.

Sir, again, I believe it is almost unprecedented. I cannot think of any instance before, where in a new

housing development, the first refusal was given to people from the neighbouring village to the exclusion of the rest of Barbados.

House 134, Sequence 12, 12:00:14

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Speaker, all of the allocations of the land at Arch Hall have gone to the residents and their families of Arch Hall and Bennetts.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter remains that it is not just a first choice thing. There is also a lot about which the National Housing Corporation needs to be commended in this process. Sir, we have seen across Barbados from time immemorial, the painful impact of social dislocation which is born out of a situation, in which you have a long existing closely-knit community of just over 100 houses, where everybody grows up in the village; they know each other; they know their families; but then you bring in persons from all across the island with their own way of life, their own practices and quite frankly sometimes their own values and the inflict that on the existing community.

Mr. Speaker, that was avoided in this exercise and the National Housing Corporation is being commended by me, the Member of Parliament for the area, here on the Floor of Parliament now for having broken the back of that potential social dislocation which is often caused when you have a situation...

Asides.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is trying to tell me sotto voce that I cannot say that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am saying that it is a bad thing when people...

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the House the impression that the National Housing Corporation has a policy where they only allocate lots to persons living in the particular area. Sir, I was trying to give the Member of Parliament the cue that if he had fought to ensure that all the lots in that particular area have gone to the people of that area, that he should take the credit instead of passing it on to the National Housing Corporation, because we know that in areas that are much more in demand, that particular policy did not follow through.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is clearly not interested

in listening. What I said was that on this particular occasion, the National Housing Corporation broke the back of a practice that has caused social dislocation in Barbados.

Sir, I am speaking to what has happened in the past when people from all around the island go into an existing village, which is a closely-knit community, and brought with them strange practices that are not followed in that village necessarily.

Asides.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: A cultural tradition.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there have been painful situations of the social fallout that can come about as a result of that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not speaking to any new policy enunciated. I am not the Minister of Housing, but I am going to commend the Minister of Housing and Lands, because unlike what takes place on that side, it would not have been possible for it to happen in Arch Hall, if we did not have the cooperation of the Minister of Housing and Lands and the staff at the National Housing Corporation. Sir, that is a fact.

Sir, it is not about coming in here and taking credit for anything, it is about saying that we worked as a team to deliver to the people of Arch Hall a commitment made by the Government of Barbados under the administration led by the Right Honourable gentleman from St. Peter. Mr. Speaker, that is what I am saying and I would continue to say it until it galls the Honourable Member.

Asides.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not tell the Honourable Member to get political in here. The Honourable Member comes in here to get political about something. The fact of the matter, Sir, is that it is just simply...

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by making the point that because I made reference to a speech that I made in 1998 or 1999, that I am being political. Sir, I am not aware that stating facts could be political.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Thank you very much, Sir.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is another point I want to touch on. Again, the National Housing Corporation deserves another bit of credit in this matter because they have accepted, I think, that there is much value in treating

to the building out of a new housing project in a holistic way.

Sir, the old Arch Hall Village will lie right next door to this new project. The entire Arch Hall and Bennetts community, old and new, will now have access to the neighbouring hard court which has been put, in good sensible forward planning, at the back of the fire station. Sir, it is a community that would now have a recreational facility whereas in the old days, it had none.

Sir, in addition to that, as I said before, the area will see an expansion of an already existing village, so that the poor black people, on whose behalf so much crocodile tears are being shed by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, will now be property owners. Sir, he does not want me to say that the people of Arch Hall and Bennetts are now property owners in the district in which they live and that by virtue of the proximity to the Sandy Lane Golf Course the values of the properties, even though sold to the residents at a subsidised rate, will continue to increase and so there will be great return on their investment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what has to be said is that the poor black people will have a property sold to them at a subsidised rate and that by virtue of the proximity of the Sandy Lane Golf Course, there would be a substantial increase in the value of their properties so that their investment is now an opportunity for them to further develop their financial portfolio as an individual. That is what has to be said. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not surprised that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would get quiet. That perhaps pains him too much.

Sir, I will go further. I am also pleased to say that in this new development, we are seeing provision made for the existing church, the Evening Life Pentecostal Church, to be brought into a better area of land in the community. Sir, the church, which in the past has been the community institution, not only for religious purposes but for social functions as well, has made its limited facilities available.

Sir, last Christmas we were able to have a Christmas festival of carols and so on out there by the church. Mr. Speaker, the people from the Democratic Labour Party did not condescend to attend, but that is a different thing. The reality is that the church was there facilitating the community and the church is now being given an opportunity to have access to a bigger piece of land so that they can build themselves out and the capacity that they have.

Sir, there were one or two areas of concern. Sir, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East pointed out, this is a matter which has been long in coming, it is obviously a cumulative effort because a lot of effort was being put into this for a number of times. Mr. Deputy

Speaker, I am not the only Member of Parliament who has represented the area. In fact, I sit next to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas from whom I inherited Arch Hall.

The reality, Sir, is that there needs to be a greater degree of care taken by the National Housing Corporation and its agents on some fundamentals. Sir, for you to have conveyed that land without originally making sure that there was an access has caused a long and undue delay. Sir, it is not a delay born out of any fight with Sandy Lane, I want to reject that completely out of hand. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy must stop bringing into Barbadian life and into the discourse on politics this us and them divide, it did not exist in this instance.

Sir, what happened is that a conveyance took place and there was no appropriate provision made for access. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you cannot give a man a piece of land if he does not have an opportunity to get to the land, so we then had to go back to square one and get that right, it was a mistake. Sir, as a professional in the field of law, I would say that it was a tragic mistake. Sir, these are things that should be avoided. The reality, Sir, is that it has been corrected and that is what has allowed us to come back here today.

Sir, we must always be mindful of the implications when these types of things happened because out of that negligence comes about an increase cost. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and myself would have discussed with persons the prospect of getting the benefit of a housing allocation in Arch Hall - small persons financially - they would have made a provision towards a mortgage and so on, but now have to make the adjustment financially because the construction cost in the country has gone up over the period of four or five years.

House 134 Sequence 13

12.10 p.m.

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a hardship which, perhaps, otherwise could have been avoided. It causes frustration to them and, indeed, it creates uncertainty in the business practices of the people in the surrounding districts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a small Arch Hall man, who has a little apartment block. He has it set up, purely to attract non-nationals, to spend short terms at his place. It is quite an attractive place but the reality is that there is a difficulty for him, financially, in terms of his planning, because he does not know when the conveyance would actually come to pass, which is going to affect him, in some way, because the access is also an access to his place.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are things which I think we have to be very careful to avoid because in the very best wishes of the world, there are going to be implications every time the National Housing Corporation fails to get its act together, in the most professional way possible. Sir, I just want to send that signal of concern.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to say that this thing about Sandy Lane having its eye on the landfill, is nothing that this Government has been approached about, neither is it something that this Member of Parliament knows anything about. Sir, I am on record in this Honourable House, as recently as the Estimates Debates, in saying that far from this 'mumbo-jumbo' about Sandy Lane having anything to do with Mangrove, when it is closed, that as the Member of Parliament for the area, I would like to see Mangrove, when it is closed, being transformed into a park facility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, during the Estimates Debate, I went to great lengths to draw to this Honourable House other parts of the world, where landfills were closed. These closed landfills were then utilised as parks, for the people who live in those areas. Sir, I take some degree of umbrage at this attitude that is creeping into politics because it is easy to say that Sandy Lane has an interest in that, when no such thing has been expressed. Sir, quite to the contrary.

I am also on record in this Honourable House during the Estimate Debates, as having pointed out that when the landfill is closed, the gases, which are already there and which continue to be generated, as the garbage disintegrates, could be utilised in such a way that they could then be sold into the national grid, to provide energy for the people next door in Arch Hall, Bennetts and Seaview.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I find it breathtaking that after going to the trouble of saying these things to this Honourable House, that somebody is going to get up and willy-nilly make an unfounded statement to the effect that there is some arrangement being put in place for Sandy Lane to benefit from the landfill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I even went further and pointed out that in St. James Central, both landfills that this country uses are operational and exist in my constituency. There is another landfill at Bagatelle, Hoytes Village, the so-called metal dump, where the same principle applies. Sir, admittedly, we would not get any gas from there because it is a different type of waste disposal but it can be closed. It is reaching the stage where it is soon going to have to be closed. We would then have to put together a plan so that the people in the area, who have been inconvenienced by having a dump outside their backyards, could now have the benefit of having a park facility, with appropriate recreation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have said it repeatedly. In fact, I even pulled the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto, which indicates that the Government has committed itself, in 2003, that we would then invite members of the public, who are affected by these types of issues in their neighbourhood, to be part of the team, which would help to shape and to form the strategy and to take ownership of it, as it goes forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is and has always been my position. That is a position grounded with a view to developing the districts in the constituencies of which I have the privilege of representing. Therefore, I will not stand here and hear foolishness about any dump being given to Sandy Lane, when that dump is closed, without it vexing me and attracting my vigorous response in rebuttal. I do not know that this Government is in the business of giving away land, especially to big businesses. Sir, to say that is to be unnecessarily provocative and to create an election issue, out of election season. I really want to dispel that notion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Honourable Member for St. Lucy wants to join me in debating this matter in the rafters, because that is where I am going, if the Honourable Member wants to debate me intellectually and to tell me that my idea about how we could sell the gas into Seaview, Bennetts and Arch Hall, is wrong or that it cannot work, then I would hear that and would debate it.

If the Honourable Member wishes to tell me that the people out there do not deserve a park and a recreational facility, when the dump is closed, I will debate that, but do not come and tell me, something that is born out of imagination and anxiety for conflict in the country, that there is some plan to give away any land, to anybody, because it is on a hill.

Sir, I take umbrage with that. I feel that if it is on a hill, the children up there, who need more recreational facility than the hard court that is now there, should be the ones who benefit from that. Sir, that is my position and I say so in the records on the Floor of this Honourable House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said before, I think there is deep satisfaction to be expressed, that this long-standing project has come to fruition. Originally, we were talking about 48 spots; about 44 of them for immediate allocation and another four for transfers in the event of emergency - people losing their properties in a fire, notice to quit situations, et cetera.

Sir, the process of keeping closely-knit societies, as best as possible, has to come about in Barbados. It was also a good thing that when people in Rock Hall would have been dislocated because we were creating the Freedom

Village there, that there was supposed to be a provision made that those folk could find a home in Arch Hall, which is only a couple hundred of metres away. That was the coordinated thinking of the Government and again I want to commend the National Housing Corporation and its Minister, for understanding the need for there to be equity and that there needs to be an avoidance of the social dislocation, which can be born out of breaking up communities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will make no apology. The fact that the folk in Arch Hall and Bennetts have gotten the bulk of the allocation is because they have suffered the bulk of the discomfort, the bulk of the dislocation, when the dump was at its worst. People around Barbados just had to drive by and say: "O Lawd, the dump smell bad enough." Sir, they would call Father Hatch on the call-in programmes and asked: "Father Hatch, what are they going to do about the dump?" But it was the people, who had to live there, who had to deal with it. Therefore, it is fair compensation.

Sir, it is all too easy to stand here and simply talk, but the reality is that this Government has the happy record now of being able to demonstrate that they came through on the behalf of the people of Arch Hall, Bennetts and Seaview, and have fulfilled its promise. It may not be the most perfect place but an effort has been made and that cannot be denied.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

The question was put and agreed to in the affirmative, without division.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be now adjourned until Tuesday, May 29, at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that the Sitting be adjourned until Tuesday, May 29, 2007, at 10.00 a.m., was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the Sitting accordingly.

12.20 p.m.

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MOTTLEY, Hon. Miss M. A.
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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

Prepared with the transcript; for checking against the recording and the Minutes.

EDITORIAL QUERIES

Points noted while preparing this report from the edited transcript. The text has not been altered except where stated.

Q1. Masthead. The session is not stated in the source, so no session line is printed.

Q2. Order No. 18, third reading. The procedural note records that the Bill was read a third time ‘and cited as the Representation of the People (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2007’, where an Act would be expected (the earlier Bill is cited as an Act). Printed as in the source.

Q3. Order No. 8, speech of Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley. The percentages are typed with the letter ‘l’ for the numeral 1 (‘10 per cent’, ‘110’, ‘15 per cent’, ‘115 per cent’). Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 8, speech of Hon. A. P. Wood. The speech label reads ‘A.P. WOOD’, without the ‘Hon.’ used for the member elsewhere. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 18, Committee. On going into Committee the Chairman calls ‘The Honourable Member for St. Michael South’, although the Bill was in the charge of Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, called elsewhere in the sitting as the Member for St. Michael North East. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Prayers. The opening note reads ‘Prayers were led by Rev. Cannon Ivan Harewood’ (‘Cannon’ for ‘Canon’). Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 22nd May, 2007 at 10.10 a.m., with the Speaker, His Honour I. A. Roett, presiding; prayers were led by Rev. Canon Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of 15th May were confirmed and the Speaker reported receipt of the Accountant General’s Accounts and Statements for December, 2006. Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley laid the Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Barbados Tourism Investment Inc.) (Order), 2007, and Hon. T. A. Prescod laid the Annual Report of the National Assistance Board for 2004–2005. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2007, the Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2007 and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Barbados (Incorporation) (Amendment) Bill, 2007 were read a first time, and Standing Orders were suspended.

Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley moved the second reading of the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2007, which gives the five members of the Electoral and Boundaries Commission the right of access to polling stations under Rule 24 of the Second Schedule and to the count under Regulation 36(2), in line with section 41 of the Constitution; members had had difficulty getting in even with ID cards. Mr. D. St. E. Kellman said the Opposition had no problem with it but felt the Commissioners should always have had that access, and the Bill passed as the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2007.

On Order No. 8, the Resolution to approve the Draft Electoral and Boundaries Commission (Review of Boundaries) Order, 2006, Miss Mottley explained that the five-yearly review had found the Register at 228 013 persons on 31st January, 2006, and that no change to the number or boundaries of constituencies was recommended. Mr. Kellman supported the no-change, warning against altering boundaries every five years, and was checked by the Speaker for bringing new matter into the debate. Hon. A. P. Wood said St. Philip South had some 500 more electors than St. Thomas, the next largest, but supported the Commission; Hon. R. R. Farley also supported it. Miss Mottley said Barbados was respected for managing its elections without needing finger printing, and the Resolution was agreed to.

On Order No. 18, Miss Mottley asked that the Bill be called the Representation of the People (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2007; it raised the guide number of electors for a polling district from 1000 to 1500. Mr. Kellman asked that voters not be confused by changes of location, and Mr. R. D. Jones spoke of the large polling district in Christ Church East Central. The Bill passed all stages.

Hon. R. R. Farley moved Order No. 12, vesting in the National Housing Corporation some 496.9 square metres at 1st Avenue Long Gap, St. Michael, beside the Lawrence T. Gay Memorial School, for sale to a former tenant. Mr. R. D. Marshall, the Member for St. Michael West Central, supported it; Mr. Kellman sought an assurance that the expanding school would not need the land, and Mr. Farley said the Ministry of Education had confirmed in writing that it had no interest in it. The Resolution passed.

Order No. 15 approved the compulsory acquisition of land at Arch Hall, St. Thomas, to give uninhibited access to the fire station and the housing development, where 48 lots were to be sold at about \$10.00 a square foot. Mr. Kellman said the Opposition had advised in 1988 or 1989 that more land should be acquired. Hon. K. D. Symmonds replied that households in Arch Hall and Bennetts had been

compensated with at least \$5 000 each and that the National Housing Corporation had received over 3 000 applications for the 48 lots; Mr. Kellman raised several points of order, which were not upheld. The Resolution

was agreed to, and on the motion of Hon. R. R. Farley, with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair, the House was adjourned until Tuesday, 29th May, 2007 at 10.00 a.m.