
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2003 – 2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, October 9, 2007.

PRESENT

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

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

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc.(Econ.) (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance)

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

Hon. Dame B. A. MILLER, D.A. B.C.H., (Senior Minister, and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Hon. G. W. PAYNE, LL.B. (Hons.)

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

(Hons.) (Lond.), LL.M. (Leic.), J.P. (Minister of Labour and the Civil Service)

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL (Chairman of Committees)

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

Hon. A. P. WOOD, B.Sc., M.Sc., M.Phil. J.P. (Minister

of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

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

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

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

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dr. W. F. DUGUID, B.D.S. (Comm.), F.D.S., FDRCS., J.P.

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

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

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, October 2, 2007.

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND: I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, October 2, 2007, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

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

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

PAPERS

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

1. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (C.O. Williams Construction Limited) Order, 2007.
2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Port St. Charles Development Limited) Order, 2007.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. R.C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the following Standing Orders No. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's Sitting.

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

H146/10:20

Sequence 2

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

ORDER OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 8 – THE NATIONAL ART GALLERY BILL,
2007

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

Rev.J.J.S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have the opportunity to introduce the second reading of the National Art Gallery Bill. It is in the total scheme of things with reference to what Government is intending to do with respect to the cultural sector of Barbados, therefore, it is of some importance, that we officially establish by means of this Statutory Instrument, the National Art Gallery.

Sir, it is said that art reflects society. It is the expression of the culture of a society. It reflects, among other things, the power structure of a society, the priorities and concerns of that society, not only what is expressed, but in what is promoted, in what is preserved, what is encouraged, and indeed, what is ignored. These are thoughts of Nickleson, to which I draw reference. Sir, certainly, I think we would find serious points of agreement with these views, for in fact, art does express the culture of a people. It is, in fact, one of the most primitive ways people express their culture. It is at the same time, if one

understands it fully, one of the most sophisticated ways in which in which a people expresses its culture.

Sir, certainly, the historic traditions, with reference to the development of Barbadian society, would also cause us to agree with Nickleson's view, that a nation's art, a society's art, and a community's art, reflects the power structures obtaining in that society, in that community, and among people, is also very indicative of the social relationships, obtaining among the principals within that community.

Mr. Speaker, it is against this backdrop that we speak with reference to the establishment of a national art gallery and focus on what is happening, with respect to the development of art and culture in Barbados, but specifically visual arts in Barbados.

Sir, the tradition of Barbados, in terms of our own socio-political or historical development, would suggest that art was very much associated, with the interest and focus of the dominant class in society. Sir, the plantation society out of which we came, reflected the art which was in keeping with the character of that society, and those who had principal interest in matters of art would have been numbered among the elite in Barbados, such that the colonial character of Barbados, in fact, still, today very much informs a lot of what is present with us, as represented in Barbadian art. Indeed, though not crafted by, perhaps, Barbadian fingers, the art which adorn this august Chamber speaks in graphic, if obsolete ways, of the importance of this Chamber, but also reflects our past history, in terms of our political and colonial attachments to the British system of Government.

Sir, art was very much the focus of the elite and in a colonial society, in a plantation society, it is to be understood, and I supposed appreciated, that the art of the day very much found its place as a repository, in the plantation houses, in the great houses, in the magnificent temples or churches of the day. Sir, again, that is still very much the case, if we visit many of the long-standing church sites in Barbados, not only do we see the magnificence of history, with respect to structure, but we see the expressions of history with respect to the art that decorates and adorn those structures. Sir, in the great houses, in the plantation houses and in the churches of the day, in that time, were found a places of a repository for much of what was Barbadian art.

Mr. Speaker, casting that, therefore, in a wider frame, one would have to accept that an appreciation for art, if it is to be had, must make reference to its social value, its historical value, its educational value and its economic value. Sir, sometimes we restrict our sense of appreciation of art by limiting that to an appreciation for its aesthetic value, and its decorative value - indeed, those are

significant-Sir, the imagery, the colour, the intricacy of the work of art, the visual representation of a person's perspective, all these things are very important. The end result as an aesthetic, is something to be commended to the human eye, but beyond that, there is a social value that attaches to art, an historic value and an educational value. I believe, perhaps, in our context, in this part of the world, only now are we beginning to find a maturing appreciation of the economic value that attaches to the subject of art.

Sir, the Government believes that a National Art Gallery will bring us to a point where we can better shape and represent our own sense of identity, this is very much part and parcel of Government policy. Sir, if we speak with reference to the National Strategic Vision, which would take us forward for a few decades, we get an understanding Government appreciates the fact, that as we mature as a democracy, we must do so with a growing sense of what it is to be a Barbadian, what is our sense of identity. Sir, now we have a political identity. We have an ethnic identity. We have a cultural identity. Certainly, the matter of art, in terms of how it expresses itself, from varying perspectives, will help us to further develop that sense of identity, especially our cultural identity. Sir, art, at the end of the day, is a visual expression of the heritage of a people.

Sir, Barbados has, as far as Government is concerned, tremendous heritage, a highly valued heritage, and we must come to understand that it is a highly valuable heritage as well. I make the distinction between a heritage which is valued and one to which attaches economic value, and which, therefore, is very valuable. The art of a country is a visual expression of that heritage. Mr. Speaker, Government, therefore, is of the view that this Statutory Instrument is an important step, and, therefore, its place on the agenda of this day's Sitting of this august Chamber.

Sir, an art gallery cannot be seen, only, in restrictive, local or domestic terms. Indeed, it is a regional mechanism.

H146

Sequence 3 10.30 a.m.

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House 146, Sequence 04, 10.30 a.m.

Rev. J.J.S. ATHERLEY: ...Indeed, it is a global mechanism because if properly constructed, managed, supported and policies associated with it are properly executed, it becomes an open window to the world, through which the country can better expose itself, both to the region and to the wider world. Therefore, the art of a nation, especially in the context of a properly functioning national art gallery, will present the opportunity of that open window to the region and to the wider global arena.

The policy of the Government, Mr. Speaker, with respect to arts and wider cultural expression, is to facilitate the greatest possible popularisation of culture and of the arts, and the best possible levels of professionalism. Therefore, we seek to professionalise the culture sector and the expression of arts as an industry in Barbados. Sir, as we seek to popularise and professionalise it, at the end of the day, a full appreciation is had, when one understands the importance also of properly commercialising it. This is a perspective from which Government comes on the issue of cultural industries and on the matter of arts in Barbados.

Sir, as I said, we seek to popularise culture and the arts and, as far as possible increase the levels of professionalism. Therefore, we seek to professionalise the culture sector and to professionalise the arts as we seek to commercialise such. Sir, I say this with reference to the Cultural Industries Bill, which one may anticipate will come to the attention of this Chamber at a soon to follow date.

Mr. Speaker, I am trying to set a context in which we frame this debate today, in which the tradition of the past, where expression through art and an appreciation for that, were much restricted to the elites in a colonial society, much restricted to the dominant classes in a plantation society, that have undergone some change and must undergo further change. This is the perspective from which we come. The arts are not only valued because of their aesthetic appeal but because of an economic value and their place in the historical and the heritage life of Barbados. This is where we come from and that is the context against which we speak with reference to this issue.

The Bill itself, Mr. Speaker, seeks to establish a national art gallery, which will be responsible for the management of the national collection and the national art gallery collection. There is a distinction, a difference to be pointed out and grasped. The National Art Gallery will be responsible for managing the national collection, as well as the national art gallery collection. Sir, that distinction is drawn in the Statutory Instrument.

The national collection refers to those works of art that are owned by Government, its agencies, and its statutory corporations. The National Art Gallery collection means those works of art that are purchased or are otherwise permanently acquired by the National Art Gallery. Sir, that in affect says that the National Art Gallery collection does, in fact, becomes a part of the national collection. Therefore, there is a responsibility being provided in this instrument for the property management of the art within the national collection, and the art which forms or constitutes the National Art Gallery collection.

There is a provision also for a responsible role in the development and execution of prudent policies, with

reference to the functioning of the National Art Gallery. Sir, policies, of course, will relate to a whole raft of various areas of responsibility and importance.

The National Art Gallery will also be given a responsibility to advise Government on matters of importance, relative to the development of the arts in Barbados, the National Art Gallery and the National Art Gallery collection.

Sir, the matters of conservation are very critical. There is at this time in Barbados an insufficiency of skills and expertise with reference to conservation. Sir, the matter of conservation is very important because we are dealing with items of artistic expression, which are intended to have long life, tell the story of the development of a people, and help to perpetuate the culture of a people. Therefore, these things must be conserved for their historic, educational, social and economic values. As I already intimated and so, advise on matters of collection and collection's policy, as we build a national art gallery in Barbados...

Mr. Speaker, powers will be vested in the National Art Gallery to acquire items of art in the building of that collection; the further enhancement of that collection; the capacity and power to do research relative to the sector, industry and activity; the provision of responsibility to document and to promote what, in fact, is a very important part of the heritage of Barbados, as we seek to give a further outlet to those whose creative skills and inclinations lead them in this direction, in the interest of us as a people and a nation, and to further endeavour to find a substantial livelihood for themselves and for their families.

The Statutory Instrument will provide for the appointment of a director for three years, and the further appointment of staff. The important matter of pensions is clearly provided for, and it is stipulated that persons moving across the public sector to become a part of the staff of the National Art Gallery, will also carry with them, the provisions for their pension benefits.

The National Art Gallery is to be funded, naturally, from the public purse with the endorsement and approval of Parliament, by means of revenue generated through sales and commercial activity, but also by recourse to grants coming out of the philanthropic spirit of persons, who would want to see this area of endeavour become very much more so a part of the economic architecture of Barbados, as we seek to go forward in this way.

Mr. Speaker, there are two provisions under sections 18, 19, 20 of Part II of the Bill, to which I would want to draw attention. Sir, sections 18 and 19 provide powers of inspection and acquisition, which are given to the National

Art Gallery, only with respect to the matter of the national collection.

Sir, if a piece or item that is part of the national collection is housed in some repository, power is vested in the National Art Gallery to enter that repository for the purposes of inspecting to ensure that proper care is being taken, issues of conservation are being carried out and monitored very carefully, so that which is part of the national collection is not subject to undue damage or otherwise loss. Therefore, that power to enter those places of repositories to inspect and indeed to acquire, if necessary, for the sake of preserving those items of art, is provided for in this Statutory Instrument.

Section 20 relates to a provision for the National Art Gallery to acquire by proper means, items of art for the national collection that, in the view of the National Art Gallery, ought to belong to the national collection because of their historic importance...

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Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: ... because of some other incidence of value attaching to that item of art which serves in the national interest. Sir, those sections are in there. The provisions are in no way menacing or threatening, they simply provide for a situation where the national collection is preserved and protected and for a situation where works of art considered to be of such value, that they should constitute a part of the national collection, could be acquired by lawful and proper means. Those powers are provided and those mechanisms are inserted in the Statutory Instrument which is before us.

The Bill also provides for the appointment of a National Art Gallery committee made up of between seven and eleven persons to be headed by a Chairperson, a deputy and others. The means of appointment are clearly outlined in the legislative instrument which is our subject of focus here this morning.

Mr. Speaker, it is not conceived that the National Art Gallery be viewed as having an identity which is limited to some singular geographical location. Sir, though there may be a principal centre, it is envisaged that there would be several satellite centres which would constitute the National Art Gallery for Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, it is proposed that the principal centre would be located in the area of the Garrison in buildings with rich architectural history, design and appeal. Mr. Speaker, even though this area would constitute the principal centre, the National Art Gallery is not to be perceived as being restricted to this singular locale as there would be a system of centres.

Mr. Speaker, the objective behind this Bill is to ensure that the art of Barbados is associated with the development of life at the community level in Barbados, reflects very much the character of the community and is very much part of the interest of those in the communities who live the everyday experience which all of us as Barbadians have come to love and enjoy. Sir, it is rooted in the sense of community and therefore is not to be perceived as some singular space isolated, identified and associated only with the interest of a conservative element in Barbados who brings a particular brand of thinking to things.

Mr. Speaker, art springs from the bosom of the community and therefore must always remain the interest of the people who live in the communities across Barbados. This is the perspective of which we come on the issue of the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, the national collection is constituted of works of art which have been acquired through Government funds. They are located in various Government facilities across Barbados: post offices, Government buildings, libraries and schools. The National Art Gallery would constitute of pieces acquired by proper means such that they become a part of the National Art Gallery.

Mr. Speaker, at last check, the information to which I have become privy is that we have around 1 250 works of art in the national collection which are housed at 45 different sites across the country, and indeed in some of the Barbados' Consulates outside of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the national collection is drawn from the works of over 325 different artists, 61 per cent of whom are locals and the other 39 per cent being non-locals.

The National Art Gallery, as distinct from the national collection, draws from the works of 59 artists, 86 per cent of whom are local artist personalities. Both the national collection and the National Art Gallery collection are constituted of works which are 52 per cent early 20th Century, and the national collection exposes works which are 52 per cent late 20th Century.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of the works of art reflect more so on the contemporary life experience of Barbadians in the late 20th Century on to today, early 21st Century,

whereas the national collection is more of one which looks back to the culture and times of the late 20th Century. That is what now constitutes the body of art making up the national collection and the National Art Gallery collection in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, there is certainly a case for building this, such that we can speak of a greater number of works of art than the 1 250 we now have. Mr. Speaker, at this stage of our development, there is both the capacity and the impulse to push on beyond that point once the proper context is set within which art can be made to even better flourish in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, that has to do with the popularisation of art and is a principal part of the policy of Government with respect to the cultural industry sector, specifically, artistic production and expression.

Mr. Speaker, there is a history to the movement of the popularisation of arts in Barbados. As we said, we started off from a point where in the context of the colonial society, artistic expression was a focus and interest of an elite conservative dominant class element.

Mr. Speaker, we have gone a way since then. I am told that the first National Art Exhibition was held in Queen's Park during the 1930s, at a time associated with the annual agricultural exhibition. Mr. Speaker, seemingly, Queen's Park has played the role of that focal point for much of what is contributed to cultural development in Barbados with reference to artistic expression.

Mr. Speaker, that in itself would suggest to you that the matter of artistic expression was very much associated with plantation life and plantation culture. Sir, it cannot simply be a coincidence that the earliest beginnings of exhibitions of art would have been held in Barbados in association with the annual agricultural exhibition of the 1930s, in Queen's Park. Therefore, the association with agriculture is clear.

House 146 Sequence 5

10.50 a.m.

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Rev. the Hon. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: The Barbados Art Council, to which much credit must be given for helping develop artistic expression and arts as an industry or an endeavour in Barbados, had its early beginnings in Queen's Park House, in the 1950s. The former Governor-General, Sir Hugh Springer, I am told, would have been the first President of this council, in the 1950s.

Mr. Speaker, this council persists even today and continues to play a pivotal role in providing an avenue or forum within which artistes in Barbados, of older and

younger vintage, could play their role in terms of exposing their creativity, while embracing the artistic culture and seeking to enhance this aspect of Barbadian life.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that organisation, with the same objective of popularising the art, could have survived up to this day, without much financial support along the way, must be a credit to those whose impulse is given to creativity by means of artistic expressions. It must also be a credit to those whose hearts beat are for artistic expression and for the aspects of heritage life in Barbados. It is also a credit to those who seek the perpetuation of culture, through these means, and the enriching of our history by reference to this activity. Sir, it is entirely a credit to those people who have persisted.

Mr. Speaker, when talking about the popularisation of arts in Barbados, one would have to mention the work of the Yoruba House, in terms of the expression or exposure it gave to arts, through common avenues such as street exhibitions. Sir, that is popularising it at the level of the street, at the level of the community, and at the level of the working class. Sir, that is bringing it out of the great houses of Barbados; that is bringing it out of plantation communities in Barbados; that is bringing it out from amongst the elites and making it a matter of interest for workingclass persons in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, CARIFESTA, in 1981, must also be mentioned as having given significant impetus to the development of artistic expression in Barbados. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George South, has been much maligned, from time to time, for having taken the step of bringing CARIFESTA to Barbados, in 1981, but much of what now passes for cultural expression in Barbados would have had its beginning and would have found some impetus in the hosting of CARIFESTA here, in 1981.

Mr. Speaker, maybe we have reached a stage, in 2007, where we again need to consider hosting CARIFESTA in Barbados. Next year, CARIFESTA is to be hosted in Guyana but in 2010, CARIFESTA should very well be thought of as an activity which should be and could be hosted in Barbados, properly so at this time, to give further impetus as we seek to build a better platform for the cultural industries and for that sector in Barbados. It will give further vent to artistic expression in this country.

Mr. Speaker, one would have to mention the NIFCA programme, which has, in very significant terms, served also to popularise artistic expression in Barbados. It has certainly attracted a lot of amateur and other involvement; it has certainly broadened the base of participation of national arts programmes in Barbados; it has given exposure, at all levels, to many across this country. Those persons have all benefited in terms of the enrichment and the enhancement of their own art skills. The role of

NIFCA, therefore, has to be clearly underscored as having significantly contributed to the development and to the popularisation of the arts in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to see that in terms of the popularisation of the arts, that there is a growing appreciation in academic circles for the importance of this area of activity. At the secondary school level, that has been very much the case for a long time. That has also been the case with the Barbados Community College but in more recent times, the Barbados Community College, being the institution it is, has expanded its scope of offerings across the spectrum of academic interest. The Barbados Community College has also been involved in helping to popularise this, by means of incorporating it into its curriculum.

I am made to understand there is a two-year Associate Degree in Fine Arts at the Barbados Community College, with a focus on imaging, film and video. There is also a three-year Degree Programme, the Bachelor of Fine Arts, with a specialisation in either studio or graphic arts. There are also opportunities for evening classes.

I am told that the persons for the Degree Programme usually number 120 but that only 50 of these persons could be accommodated in the programme because of a lack of space. Therefore, there is a growing interest in the matter or arts and it could only be so by incorporating it into the curricula of the various institutions in Barbados. Sir, I speak especially so at the post-secondary level. It could only be that this would result in further and greater popularisation of the arts in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I have called for it in the past and I will now repeat the call that there must be a greater crystallisation of the convergence of interests between the objectives of the cultural industry sector and the objectives of tertiary level education in Barbados. The establishment of the Errol Barrow Centre for Creative Imagination is a step in the right direction by the University of the West Indies, and it is strongly supported by this Government of Barbados. This could only auger well for the future, as we find greater opportunities to enhance the capacities of our people, who are given to artistic expression and to the various cultural sector endeavours.

Sir, once again I call for that greater crystallisation of those convergence of interests between the objectives of the cultural industry sector and those of tertiary level objectives in Barbados. It is happening with respect to sports at the University of the West Indies, especially with reference to cricket. It has to happen and it has begun to happen but it must take place in a better crystallised fashion, at the tertiary level in Barbados, so that the convergence of interests might serve both the objectives of cultural sector development and the objectives of tertiary level education.

This would redound both to the benefit of this country and to the young people of this country, who see the potential for the earning of a livelihood and for the contribution of this country's development, by means of arts and culture.

As a result of this, there are now a number of galleries and exhibition points which dot the landscape of Barbados. This could only be a good thing, as the process of popularisation takes root.

Mr. Speaker, the legislative infrastructure that we seek to bring, by means of this instrument today, is an attempt to help with that process of further popularising the arts in Barbados.

11.00 a.m.

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(EDITED)

Rev. J.J.S. ATHERLEY: There must be a process of commercialisation as well, Mr. Speaker. Many people have expressed the view that culture and the arts represent an entry point into economic participation by marginalised vulnerable groups, dispossessed persons, who are unempowered, who have no other opportunity to participate economically but by means of reference to involvement with the arts and culture. I believe this is a view which belongs to the past and that culture and the arts cannot simply be seen as an entry point for vulnerable marginalised masses at the working class level, who have no other option but to go that route in pursuit of a livelihood.

It is believed, even in developed countries and it has been proven and there is abundant evidence to suggest that culture and the arts represent, in significant ways, some central impact points for economic development, even in developed countries context, the big United States of America and Canada in many countries in Europe. It is clearly understood by those economies that the culture sector now plays a pivotal role in helping to develop services orientation in their economies, providing a tremendous amount of employment opportunity; providing for further export potential of cultural products and services of those countries so that this represents the decentralisation of culture and culture industries. We speak here today of art specifically in terms of economic development which is something that is being appreciated today in greater and growing terms.

Mr. Speaker, we have to come to an understanding in Barbados as to how much that contributes today to the Barbadian economy and how much potentially, it can contribute economy going forward. Mr. Speaker, the Cultural Industries Bill will reflect that when it gets the

approval of this Honourable Chamber. Sir, that is what Government seeks to do by introduction of that legislative measure, which would be a better platform for true infrastructure; true incentives; true legislation and other provisions in the cultural industry sector in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, we seek to give to arts by this means today a further institutional platform on which it can stand. The work began in earlier historical times so that the work, restricted as it was in former times can become more popularised; more professionalised; more commercialised indeed and, at the end of the day, that is what it is all about. It would be observed by reference to many of those countries, to which the cultural industry sector has become a pivotal point of economic development. Sir, that a lot of the time, there are small and micro enterprises, which are attracted to this sector and, in a country like Barbados, this is absolutely important to us, with a growing number of persons, who are going into self-endeavour employment; who are going into self-endeavour enterprises, who are constituting their own businesses, would have this sector as an avenue of appeal and attractiveness and one, which is viable for their creative instincts, become a prominent means of livelihood for them.

Sir, culture can constitute its own economic sector, generating revenue; generating jobs but and also inspiring innovation, which is something with which we are very much concerned. Sir, a lot of this is about innovation and creativity and here is a sector that inspires innovation. This is not about importing, retailing and selling; this is about innovation and creativity; this is a sector which inspires that.

Mr. Speaker, if countries like Barbados are to survive economically in today terms with all the global constraints and global dynamics, then the capacity to be innovative and creative, to be different and to be first to the base, would become increasingly so more important for us. This, therefore, is a sector and an area of endeavour and activity that can help us in this regard. Sir, more and more countries are ensuring that the culture sector becomes a very inclusive part of their developmental agenda and Barbados is not excluded from that. This Government understands, more and more so, that the economic developmental agenda for Barbados must make reference to the potential existing in the culture sector that revolves around various expression of culture, whether in entertainment; whether in visual art; whether in culinary arts; whatever you have, fashion, film, whatever it is; more and more so, recourse would have to be made to those things in economies such as ours as we move toward that services orientation, which is vital to our survival.

Mr. Speaker, there is tremendous export potential associated with art. It is not my view that today we have reached a stage, for instance, where there is a sufficient

linkage between arts in Barbados and the tourism sector. There is not at all a sufficient linkage between our attracting tourists to Barbados in numbers and the potential, which is there for export through the sale of Barbadian art. Sir, that is something that we need to develop and an area which we need to tap because there is tremendous export potential.

Mr. Speaker, one can be anecdotal but I learnt recently of one young man, who passed his time on the beaches of Barbados, and who saw that as a means of potential livelihood, with some of the activities associated with the beaches of Barbados, who is now doing very well in art in a European country, ably assisted by the Government of that country because those artistic skills, which laid dormant as he traversed the beach of Barbados, in pursuit of certain endeavours, have now been exposed and facilitated and enhanced, such that his artistic pieces are much in demand in a European, domestic jurisdiction. Mr. Speaker, I cite that, being anecdotal, only to say that the tremendous potential for export exists but that it is untapped. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is reminding me of the Rhiannas of this world and what she is able to do internationally now with the products and services, which she is able to provide.

Mr. Speaker, small and medium size enterprises must be encouraged because they become a driving force in this total thing but there are some challenges, one would have to admit, Mr. Speaker. The business of the electronic sales window not being sufficiently open in Barbados is a challenge with which we have to deal. The move towards the fuller opening of the electronic sales window in Barbados in relation to culture is something that we have to find a common view on, both at the level of governing, the level of financial institutions in Barbados and other persons involved in the business of trade because we are talking e-commerce and e-trade. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas mentioned the Rhiannas of this world. I do not know that the Rhiannas of this world, or Rhianna herself could have reached where they have, except there were opportunities afforded them, through the electronic sales window.

H146/11:10

Sequence 7

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Rev.J.J.S. ATHERLEY: A lot of the downloads which have made Rhianna that popular are a result of this type of activity, but to the cultural sector of Barbados, to the arts industry of Barbados, it still remains fairly much enclosed, a window which needs to be further opened on the world. Therefore, the challenge of the electronic sales,

the window which it provides, must be one to be faced and overcome.

Sir, there must be greater level of awareness and comfort with matters of intellectual property in Barbados, still relatively new to us, still the source of much antagonism every year, seasonally, at Crop Over, because we are still not as familiar, as we should be, at either the level of the professionals, who ought to be dealing with these things or the level of performers. We are still not as familiar as we ought to be. We are still not as comfortable as we could be, with matters of intellectual property. Sir, when it comes, therefore, to the business of developing an art industry, we have to, again, get a better hands-on awareness or familiarity with this industry.

Sir, the matter of lack of demand or limited market access, limited production mechanisms, or limited distribution mechanisms, all of these are challenges which a budding sector in Barbados has to face. The arts, no less, must face these challenges as well. Therefore, art should not be seen only as a past-time. If it is seen only as a past-time for the majority of people, then it will not play its sufficient role in preserving the legacy of Barbados. If art is perceived to be, for the majority, only a past-time or only a sideline activity, then it would not sufficiently perform the role, it ought to perform in Barbados, with respect to preserving our cultural legacy.

Sir, it is not unknown in the history of people that a cultural legacy has vanished. It is not unknown in the history of people that a cultural legacy has disappeared. Sir, one of the biggest evils associated with the transatlantic slave trade was substantially, over time, the vanishing of much of the afro-culture, with which we should have instinctively been associated and able to identify.

Sir, the evil of the slave trade, and the evil institution of slavery, helped to see the realisation of much of the Afro-culture, with which we were invested in our bosoms, disappeared over time, to a large extent. I am saying that, simply to re-enforce the view that if art is only a past-time, for the majority of those who are involved, then we run the risk of it not sufficiently performing the function of preserving our heritage and cultural legacy, and perpetuating that down through the years. That is my solemn view.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about the refurbishment of Queen's Park and the facilities at Queen's Park. Sir, earlier I spoke with reference to Queens Park, and the role it played in the early popularisation of the arts in Barbados. The facilities at Queen's Park have been out of use for a few years, therefore, it is now the subject of plans for repair, rebuilding and refurbishment. Sir, the facilities was last renovated in 1981, I am told, to prepare it to house activities associated with CARIFESTA. The

disrepair is now beyond cosmetic refurbishment, therefore, substantial redevelopment is absolutely necessary at this time.

Mr. Speaker, designs and architectural drawings have been provided, which have been approved, both at the level of the Ministry and Town and Country Planning Department. It is intended, therefore, by Government, that substantial renovation will take place at the Queens Park House. Sir, the Queen's Park House, houses the Daphne Joseph Hackett Theatre and the existing Art Gallery. These are to be renovated. The Steel Shed, restaurant and stables, other edifice facilities at Queens Park are to be demolished and rebuilt.

The refurbishment of the Daphne Joseph-Hackett theatre and the Queens Park Gallery, which constitute Queen's Park House, is expected to cost about \$4 million. The rebuilding of the Steel Shed is expected to cost about \$4 million; the Stables \$1.7 million and the restaurant facility, which will not be used as a restaurant, is anticipated to be about \$7 million.

Sir, it is proposed that the theatre will be acoustically enhanced, to provide a better environment for that type of cultural activity theatre. It will also provide a conference facility and meeting areas which would allow for seminars. The Gallery, of course, will continue to be an art gallery, a depository and an exhibition point, central in Bridgetown for art, and will also be used as a training facility.

Sir, the Steel Shed, as has been the custom in the past, will continue to be a centre for community cultural acts and a forum for lecture-type activity. The Stables would be used for small performance events, such as poetry readings et cetera.

Sir, I said that the restaurant is not to be used as a restaurant, but will, in fact, become the home for the Barbados National Youth Orchestra, the Barbados National Youth Choir and the Barbados National Youth Steel Orchestra. It will also become an information and resource centre.

Mr. Speaker, it is proposed that there will also be some traffic flow adjustments to Queen's Park, which would allow for greater use of the Crumpton Street Gate by vehicular traffic as an admission point, providing for a flow of traffic from the Crumpton Street towards the South Gate of Queen's Park. Sir, that is where we are going with that.

Sir, I thought I needed to mention that, having highlighted the role of Queens Park in the formative years of the development of arts and the popularisation of arts in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to the philosophical view that is associated with the importance of arts activity with respect to a people. I have spoken to Government's purpose in terms of popularising, professionalising and commercialising the art, and I have given you a context in which we want to do this. This instrument before us, which now is the focus of our discussion, is just one of those institutional and legislative means, through which we seek to provide the platform from which the cultural industry sector will take off.

Sir, with those remarks, I want to commend this Bill to the House and move that it be read a second time.

H146

Sequence 8 11.20 a.m.

Tuesday, October 09, 2007

House 146, Sequence 09, 11.20 a.m.

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

Mr. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to this matter before us, with respect to the establishment of the National Art Gallery. I would certainly want to say that it is a development, which I think we should laud as a nation. Sir, it is an initiative that has been talked about for some time. I do not think it is one for which there is any serious objection, as far as the official Opposition is concerned or, in fact, as far as any right-thinking Barbadian is concerned, developing the arts, particularly the visual arts in this case and ensuring that we have a proper legal institutional framework for our national art collection.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that since we are looking at a new initiative, as far as an institutional arrangement, that we still have a duty to be properly critical of what is in front of us, in a genuine and well-intentioned way. Sir, I think that is where we should start. However, the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's office should, of course, be lauded for his attempt to look at the context of art in the broader cultural sense, without referring to what has been the traditional cultural debate in Barbados of late.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that whenever we say culture, there is this false equation, culture equals CropOver or culture equals calypso, but we are now looking at culture in a broader sense. Therefore, I think it is good that we are finally getting around to what was promised in the Throne Speech, in which we heard about culture and the creative economy and a series of institutional arrangements. The National Art Gallery was the first one. We heard about the Film and Media Commission, a Festival and Events Bureau, which we

heard from the substantive Minister of Culture, a Cultural Archives and Registry Institute and a Commission for Heritage Research and Preservation, to support the development of this sector.

And so, I would hope that in the same way we are at the top of the list, even if there are only a few months left in the life of this Government, that you could still look at some of these other very worthwhile initiatives. I am not moving off the substantive matter we are debating but I think it is good that we are making a start, even if the preparation period has been very long, and we are getting to this issue of the National Art Gallery.

Art, of course, is something which people appreciate differently and from which they enjoy different experiences. Therefore, I think it is important that we look at the places and locations where we appreciate the art. I heard about all that is planned for Queen's Park. While I appreciate that the collection is maybe too large to put in one place, I still think that we should look towards having a flagship at some stage, where we will have a proper gallery that can be the showcase of the prime pieces in the collection.

Obviously, we will have Government buildings and other such places, missions abroad that would be under the control of the National Art Gallery. Sir, in many cities these galleries are actually the major tourist attraction. Barbados is a tourist country and there is no reason we cannot have a national gallery that becomes a genuine tourist attraction.

The Minister spoke about the many private galleries that are in Barbados. Sir, most of them are commercial galleries, where you go and you can look at something and if you cannot actually acquire the painting, you can acquire a print. In the case of our visitors, they can take back as a memento of some landscape or scene that they want to have etched in their minds, that is a reminder of their vacation, et cetera.

Certainly, if we recognise that there are these many galleries that are small, probably capitalised by minimal sums, operating almost adjacent to houses and restaurants, then we can certainly have a flagship. I would certainly hope that is the direction in which we are going. I am sure there are many Honourable Members here, who would have been to the National Art Gallery in Trafalgar Square; long lines during Summer to go and see these arts and, of course, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and these places that we would have seen.

I have only heard of the Lodève in Paris. I have never been there, but I understand it is the same thing, and maybe one day, I would get to experience that. However, there are national treasures and I do not see any reason that

we cannot move in that direction, given the collection that we have today. Mr. Speaker, I would sincerely hope we are looking in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, let me add very quickly because I know that some listening may think that because you are looking at the economic potential, specifically where tourism is concerned, you are saying that locals should not participate. I am not at all a pupil of that school of thought. I note the Minister's statement about the popularisation of art but that is an area of concern.

I have noticed, on the odd occasion I have been to some exhibits, that it is not always the most inclusive crowd. We need to do some more to popularise art, so that a national art gallery, something sponsored by the State, I think can push to have more initiatives designed at being more inclusive, in terms of persons who can appreciate art.

Sir, very often you find that it may be the artist, relatives of the artists or collectors, relatives of the collectors but you do not get the broad mass participation at many of these events, when they are held in the Grand Salle of the Central Bank, the Queen's Park Gallery, or at one of the privately-owned galleries. Sir, it is good to hear that there is some focus of the Barbados Community College, with respect to developing visual arts and, hopefully, the appreciation of arts, as well, not only developing the young artists but developing all-round human beings.

Therefore, students, even those that may be doing natural sciences and other such subjects, should be exposed to courses on the appreciation of art, because it helps to build a more rounded and cultured being. Sir, that can only redound to our benefit as we look forward to becoming a developed country, where we need to have more developed citizens.

Therefore, I would like to think that we will see the opportunity of our National Art Gallery as one to, not only expose young people by way of school tours-because that is the other thing that we tend to find, we open a museum or an exhibition and we think of school tours or camps, if it is during the Summer-but there should be opportunities for adults as well to come and participate and have programmes for families, for example, where we can look to involve them in appreciating our national art collection. Sir, I would hope that we could go in that direction, recognising that is so important.

Mr. Speaker, the National Art Gallery would give us an opportunity to view our cultural expressions. Therefore, having said that I think it is important we are properly critical here, I have no difficulty, as I said, with giving the Governments credit for finally bringing this piece of legislation to the fore. It probably has taken too long, but

having said that, and having recognised that this gallery is supposed to be a window to our cultural expressions, I have to speak to another window of our cultural expressions that have been closed for some time.

House 146, Sequence 09, 11:30:14

Tuesday, October 09, 2007

Mr. R. L. SEALY: I speak of our public library which has been closed for some time. It speaks volumes. It does not speak very flattering about a country that for so long - given that we have not had a National Art Gallery - has seen its public library close for such an extended period of time. Mr. Speaker, some may even say that is a disgrace or an abomination.

Mr. Speaker, a public library is a serious institution. It is one that I am sure would feature prominently insofar as the conservation and the displaying of aspects of your National Art Gallery is concerned. Mr. Speaker, I do not think that it speaks well of us in that it has been closed for so long. Sir, when people come to visit a country, many of them want to go to the public library to get a view of the cultural exponent of the country, the history of the country and the literature that the nation may have produced, which should be kept in the public library. Sir, it used to be the policy that every local author would have at least two copies of their books at the public library.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for the City, who is wider travelled than I, would tell you that when you go to some of the small towns in Europe and the United States of America, that the most prominent building in the city centre is the library.

Mr. Speaker, we have closed our library that has been there for over 100 years, and of course that is not perceived as any problem for this Government. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that since the Government has found its way with respect to the National Art Gallery, that it would recognise the other aspects of its cultural expression and do something to see that the library is reopened fast. Mr. Speaker, that is not anything that we should be proud about.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke about the false definition that we have of culture. Sir, I do not know if he speaks alone, but I laud the mover of this Bill for not referring to that false definition of culture, recognising that Crop Over and calypsoes are only part of our culture, not the entire thing. We cannot forget the other aspects of our culture, the visual art and the literary art. Sir, we need to look at how we develop the total sense of our works.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West also made reference to how the National Art

Gallery would go about doing its business by way of acquiring work. Mr. Speaker, recognising what he said about the present composition of the national collection, it seems to be slanted in the direction of the more contemporary works. It would seem as though a Director would want to have more balance and may look to probably acquire some of the works from the earlier part of the 20th Century and the late 19th Century where we apparently did not have as much of a representative collection.

Mr. Speaker, while I recognise that a Director should have some power with respect to the acquisition and the protection of our national works of art, I would hope that with the punitive aspects of Clause 20, and I suppose Clauses 18 and 19 which talk about entering premises, et cetera, that the Director, whoever he or she may be, given the powers that they would have, because this is some serious power here, would not find themselves having to get giddy and doing anything untoward or anything with any haste. Mr. Speaker, I agree that we should do all we can to keep our works here that are on the verge of being taken out of the country unless there is some arrangement where they may be going to some part of the region and we have agreed to that. We have to be careful with our works of art going outside of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I remember there was a time when some European collectors who were going around to all the garage sales in Barbados and buying all the mahogany furniture and exporting it. Sir, they were able to make some serious inroads in terms of a lot of...

Asides.

Mr. R. L. SEALY: That is art. Sir, as you would know, a lot of those antiques are irreplaceable. Sir, much of that has left us and so part of our heritage has simply been exported in exchange for a couple of dollars, which, I understand, we would not want to see happen with respect to our national collection.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the Director should have the power to prevent anyone from exporting, in any mass way, a lot of our treasures. However, I would sincerely hope that a lot of what we hear about here in Clause 20 never actually comes into being.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. SEALY: I can only speak for myself. If I have a piece of art that for whatever reason is determined to be of national value and should be part of the collection, you can come... I dare say that in most cases well-intentioned Barbadians would probably donate it to the National Art Gallery if it is to be enjoyed by everyone. I would hope that is the basis by which the Director would

attempt to operate. There are some who would just give it, and there are others who may want to have a little plaque donated by so and so to appeal to their ego. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that it would not come to having a valuation done or in going to court because we cannot agree to the value of the works and so on. Mr. Speaker, in some cases, even when there could be a genuine case of persons having sentimental attachments, I would hope that too could be understood and that we would not have to be using the strong arm of the law to expand the national collection.

That, Mr. Speaker, is just an observation with respect to section 20. I appreciate it is a delicate issue, but this Director has some serious power. My understanding is that power would only be exercised in extreme cases, as I mentioned earlier, if someone is taking a national treasure and exporting it. For example, God forbid, Mr. Speaker, if somebody got their hands on the first flag that was raised at the Garrison in 1966 and decides to sell it to someone from overseas. I am just citing that as an example, it is not quite art, it is an artifact, I guess.

The point I am making is that there are situations where I can appreciate that the Director of a National Art Gallery would need to have some power to prevent situations like that. However, Mr. Speaker, I would not want that power to be misused and therefore it is something that we as Opposition needs to register because we need to be critical in a genuine way if we want to see this effort of a National Art Gallery becomes a reality. Mr. Speaker, while I am on the issue of the legislation, I would also say that Clause 22 that calls for the Minister to give directions of a general nature with respect to the policy to be followed... Sir, while that is understandable, we in the Democratic Labour Party has been saying for some time that we believe that ministers who have overall responsibility to Parliament for statutory bodies should be made to lay the policy directions of that body in Parliament, so that the same directions we are speaking about here in Clause 22 would not merely be sent by way of a Memo from a Minister to the Director.

Mr. Speaker, this is something that we have been saying for some time, and I have no problem with saying it again. I am pretty sure that it was in the last manifesto and it would be in the next one definitely. Sir, ministers should be required to lay policy directions in Parliament of all statutory bodies, including the National Art Gallery, so that we can have a debate, if necessary, on where exactly we want to take them.

House 146 Sequence 10

11.40 a.m.

Tuesday, October 09, 2007

Mr. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I would just mention that because I noted section 22 speaks to the Minister giving the Gallery directions. We believe those directions should be nothing closeted. We could lay them and have a debate on them, if necessary, that the Back Bench and whoever forms the Opposition, could have some input as well on these matters.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the debate today on this National Art Gallery is a good place to register that concern because I can see this is something that is not necessarily partisan. I could see a very useful debate on the direction we should go, with regards to this National Art Gallery. Sir, some of those points we heard today about having more contemporary work done, about having works from previous centuries, about where we should go with the acquisition and the displaying of the works, for example, is there a shortage of sculptures and carvings? Are we forgetting other aspects of it? Sir, I would hope this could be the case.

Mr. Speaker, I have said already that I think it is important we have a correct definition of culture. If it is that this is a genuine effort on the part of the Government to have a broader definition of culture, I have no difficulty in saying it is a good thing. It is a start. There are some areas that need to be tightened up but there is absolutely no reason why we cannot now look at other aspects of our culture.

Mr. Speaker, I remember a number of years ago when I begged the Government to take CropOver away from the National Cultural Foundation, so that the National Cultural Foundation could be truly developmental. The National Cultural Foundation was concentrating only on the visual arts. I think we should be dealing with dramatists, poets, the culinary artists, theatres, playwrights, the dancers, et cetera. If we go in that direction, those persons could now say that we are going in a good and positive direction.

Mr. Speaker, I would only say that presently the vote for the Ministry of Culture is about \$5 million to \$6 million. I do believe if we are serious about developing our cultural industries, if we are serious about recognising the economic potential and the capacity to develop more rounded citizens, that we are going to have to look to expand that vote.

I think we are going in the right direction and that we could look at the necessary improvements of which we are speaking, and we could completely develop a National Art Gallery that could spawn more development of visual arts and other arts. It is something that could be genuinely national, something in which everyone could participate. There is also no doubt that it could help us to become not only better rounded citizens but it could help us to develop

and to become a more rounded country. It could also help us to become more appreciative of our true treasures. Sir, this is a very good thing.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that some of the concerns I raised would be looked into. I hope to see the Public Library opened and functioning again. I hope to see the areas of the legislation being tightened up. I hope to see some of the other things that were promised being looked into. These things were not promised by the Democratic Labour Party but by Government, in its Throne Speech. Maybe we could move into some of the other areas we have spoken about. Maybe we could have an all-inclusive, broad and proper definition of culture, one that really reflects the Barbadian experience; one that could become part of our very being, from now and for our generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation has been a very long time in coming. I welcome it and give it my unreserved support. I would also wish to encourage all Honourable Members to give it their support, not only by lip service but by other ways, some of which I will speak.

Mr. Speaker, I also look forward to the companion piece to this Bill, the Preservation of Antiquities and Relics Bill, which is still in consultation. These matters, I understand quite properly and rightly, take a long time to come to the Honourable House, but I am hoping that the Preservation of Antiquities and Relics Bill would not be too far behind this National Art Gallery legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the Minister responsible for Culture, and the Minister of State, for having made it possible for this matter to be before us today. There was a time when I despaired that it would come to this House while I still sat in it, and I am really delighted that it is here today.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that there is what might quite genuinely and properly be called a renaissance on the way in Barbados. There are some who might say it is true across the region but I would speak, with a certain amount of authority, about what is the reality in Barbados.

Sir, artistes of every kind, not only those in the visual and graphic arts but artists across the whole spectrum, are alive and well and are doing exciting things. There are a number of art galleries, private and otherwise, that have opened up across Barbados, for example, there is George Washington House. In the last number of years, we have seen restorations, openings and reopenings that are all very welcomed.

Another example is that of the West Wing of Parliament, which, I am delighted to say, is the National Heroes Gallery. There is also the Museum of Parliament, which speaks to the history of our Parliament, in the only way that it is spoken of today. It continues to be a terrible slight that no historian has sought to write a history of this Parliament. It does not exist in volumes, which young people in schools and universities such as ours and others, might have access.

Sir, there is no modern history of Barbados; no modern history of this Parliament; no modern history of the Democratic Labour Party, nor any modern history of the Barbados Labour Party. It is a terrible lacuna and therefore the historians of Barbados need to take up their pens or they need to get in front of their computers and do work. Sir, wonderful things have happened in the 20th Century; even more wonderful things are happening in the 21st Century in this first decade.

Mr. Speaker, like I said, there is the George Washington House and the West Wing of Parliament, which now houses the National Heroes Gallery. It is a wonderful thing to behold and I welcome and urge Barbadians to come and view. Sir, primary and secondary school parties are now coming and in the tourist season to come, we know that we are going to see hundreds and thousands of visitors coming to view it. Sir, even before it was opened, there were a number of tourists coming to this Parliament building, to enquire about it. Sir, this Honourable Chamber, in which we do our Business and the Other Place, long ago restored, are part of that history of which I speak.

Mr. Speaker, another beautiful Barbadian house, the St. Nicholas Abby, with its triple Dutch gables, is now a museum in its own right. It is a wonderful place to visit and I recommend it highly to Barbadians. It is so beautiful that people would think they are in another world.

11.50 a.m.

Tuesday, October 2, 2007

(EDITED)

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER: Sir, Mr. Larry Warrens, who has bought it after many generations of ownership by the Cave family has lovingly restored it beyond any return that he could hope to get from it but he is doing it as something that he loves and something, which makes an important historic statement about Barbados. He has restored the old windmill and the syrup factor, molasses is made there. He is making the most wonderful sugar there. He is making the most exquisite rum there, bottled by hand and it is something to behold when you see it. Sir, the bottle is like a decanter and inscribed on it is the

outline of St. Nicholas Abbey. Sir, I do not drink it, but he is an old friend and he has prevailed upon me to have a sip and I have never tasted anything like it. Sir, to me, spirits all taste like rubbing alcohol but there is something very special about this.

Mr. Speaker, the abbey itself and the restoration of the entire sugar plantation in which it sits, is a work of art, in a manner of speaking. The Morgan Lewis Mill is in walking distance away from it, all of these are recently restored parts of the patrimony of Barbados and, of course, there are many private galleries, which have sprung up all over Barbados, Lancaster House is one that comes to mind immediately. Several hotels and restaurants, in particular, now have small galleries, which allow Barbadians artists to show their work.

Mr. Speaker, the National Art Gallery, as I have said, has been long in coming and the National Art Gallery, for many years, has been collecting and acquiring pieces. There was a man from the City of Bridgetown, from the Sobers Lane, Lightfoot Lane area, he is dead now, who you would call a primitive artist, and many years ago, he gave me a painting. Sir, he was so well-recognised outside of Barbados, that it did not take much prevailing for me to offer it as a gift to the National Art Gallery collection and people must do this; Barbadians must be prepared to do this and to be generous.

Mr. Speaker, I expect to see friends of the National Art Gallery come into to being quite separate and distinct from the Committee and this is true everywhere else in the world that you go. There are people who are philanthropic; who are generous; who will raise money and acquire pieces because the Government cannot do all nor the artistic community cannot do all. I hope that very soon and I wish to give my support to it... I am a long-standing member of the Museum and Historical Society of Barbados and there is a great deal of work that society will do in collaboration with the National Art Gallery Committee and with the National Art Gallery itself.

I am delighted to hear from the Minister that the main housing for the National Art Collection of Barbados will be in the Garrison letting, which is now housing the CXC, and as soon as they are relocated to their new premises that it will be restored and that is where it will be housed. We are told there would be satellites and I like that idea as well. Sir, remember that the Barbados Labour Party is the Party of decentralisation and as much as I love the City of Bridgetown, everything cannot be centred there and you need to go out into our rural and suburban community with the satellites, which feed into the National Art Gallery.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to hear the Minister of Culture, the Right Honourable Prime Minister, the

Honourable Member for St. Peter making the point quite recently that the Garrison must officially and formally become an area for historic development. The process has long started because people think of the Main Guard as Central Police Station but, at the Garrison, that wonderful building with the clock tower, on the eastern end of the Garrison Savannah was the old Main Guard, beautifully restored and functions are held there. It is a wonderful place for exhibitions of art of all kind to be mounted as well but the Garrison itself is a major historic area, part of the greater Bridgetown area.

Mr. Speaker, there are trade working groups meeting at Grand Barbados and I was late for the House this morning, a very rare occasion for me, because I had to be there before I came here. Sir, you can hardly notice it now but there, with netting around it and weeds growing all over it, is the old armoury. I do not think the average Barbadian knows there is an armoury there. When the sewerage of that part of Garrison Hill and Bay Street was being done, as you walk along the pavement of the Brown Sugar Restaurant tunnels were discovered. Sir, we have a military historian in the person of Major Hartland, who had long ago told me that there is a whole network of tunnels in and around St. Ann's Fort, which is where the Defence Force headquarters is and, of course, there is Charles Fort, which is where the Hilton Hotel is and you still have the canons, 37 of which, if you look down there are in the water. Sir, those tunnels led to the armoury. I am pleased to hear from the Director of the Barbados Museum that the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated is now going to make funding available for proper restoration of the armoury. Sir, it was clear that the soldiers came down from the forts under the tunnels, they must have bent double, and would appear on the beach. Of course, they had to be an armory but all of history, including George Washington House and St. Ann's Fort as well, will now be home to the National Art Gallery.

Mr. Speaker, I think there is no better location and I hope that as the other lettings over the years become available - because the Barbados Museum has to expand - that the National Art Collection will expand. Even though there are going to be other locations, the home of it, at the Garrison could not be better suited.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to hear that the Garrison will become an area for historic development. I hope that the Barbados Museum, the National Art Gallery and that group will be the driving force behind the development of that area.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Arts Council, going back to the 1950s was really the beginning. Sir, my late father was very much a founder member of that; one of the early pioneers, as was Daphne Joseph-Hackett. The Arts Council, which now has its gallery at Pelican and has had it

for a long time there, continues to do excellent work. Sir, in the City, you have the Pelican Art Gallery; the Queen's Park Gallery; the Museum on the outskirts of the City and we now have the National Art Gallery.

Mr. Speaker, I had a wonderful dream many years ago, when I was trying to make the case for a national art collection and a gallery to house it, I thought that the Town Hall at Jubilee Gardens was a wonderful place to have it...

H146/12:00

Sequence 12

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: ...because you need a Gallery where ordinary people of the public can be in and out of it, just like the library, as the Honourable Member would say.

Sir, I am very pleased, as I said, that this is the location that has been found.

Mr. Speaker, the companion piece of legislation as I describe it, that I am looking forward to, which relates to the preservation of antiquities in Barbados is very important. Sir, when excavations were being done, prior to the building of what is now known as Port St. Charles, a very important Arawak settlement was found. We discovered interesting things, that they knew about the conservation of water, simple primary technology. Sir, you just put a ring made of pottery around a little spring in the sand, and naturally the water would pool, so you could very easily get at it. Sir, those of us who grew up along Brighton and Spring Garden know that Spring Garden, is not called Spring Garden for nothing. That is where the Desalination Plant is, desalinating brackish water.

Sir, let me get back to Port St. Charles. As soon as it was made known - we were innocent in those matters in those days - that this wonderful settlement and those many artefacts of were found, people took plane and flew from all over the world and ransacked it. Sir, what we are left with are virtually the leftovers. That must never happen again. Sir, it is not the first time that sort of thing happened. It happened to the Jewish Synagogue, that too was ransacked. Sir, the Jewish community determined that it would be restored, and that is another beautiful historic building, in another historic area of Barbados, housing the original Carnegie Library, the old original Town Hall, which later became the Supreme Court.

Mr. Speaker, the Town Hall, down by St. Mary's Church is not the Old Town Hall, that is the new Town Hall, in a matter of speaking. Sir, there are those of us who practice our profession in that precinct. I supposed that

over all the years you see the plaque but you do not see it. Sir, you get so accustomed seeing it that nobody reads it, but there is a plaque on the High Court, saying that this was once the site of the Old Town Hall, and that is an historic building. The Montefiore Fountain is another historic building. Mr. Speaker, You have a City of Bridgetown, which is like a little patchwork collection of villages and historic areas. The old Cheapside area, now beautifully restored, that was the original city area, even out here, behind this Chamber, the old Marhill Street, the Old City Bar and the Olympic Theatre, that is another historic area that needs maintenance.

Sir, the National Art Gallery is coming to fruition at a time when a great deal of other work in other areas, which you might label cultural, are being undertaken, restoration work of one kind or another. It is really important that we should preserve our history. I believe that the National Art Collection will speak, as paintings often do, of the history of Barbados.

In this Chamber, where we are, I know that they are some who are offended by at this exquisite stained glass. It is priceless. Nothing like this exists in even the mother of Parliaments at Westminster in London. I am so proud of the fact that it was a Barbadian plumber, sent to be specially trained by the Anglican Church of Barbados, who took these down, when this Chamber was being restored, piece by piece, cleaned and reassembled. It You do not have to like the people who are depicted there, but there are works of art in themselves, and they add to the historic value of this building.

Sir, this building is not a very old building, in the terms in which we speak. This building is just over 130 years old. Sir, when I was child all of this was the Post Office but those days are now behind us, and the Parliament now has reclaimed, so to speak, the precinct, over which you preside.

Sir, we have kept these two old gas lights, that is what they were in the days when you got your light by gas. That is what they were. Of course, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, who is an engineer, would appreciate these things. We have electric lights in them now. Sir it speaks of to what is historic in this building. All of these Barbados mahogany panelling are made by Barbadians. These chairs were made in the prison of Barbados by fine craftsmen. I would not say of their fate, but it is good quality work.

Sir, this speaks to an era that perhaps, in time historians may refer to it, that generations to come will appreciate, I do believe, and thank us. Sir, so much has been lost of our history, of our patrimony, and we are so regretful of that today.

Mr. Speaker, we are putting systems in place, and the people must do that. There are many historic traditions, we have oral traditions. We have what is called our built historic tradition, and now the National Art Gallery will house for our time, and in years to come, so that Barbadians and those who come to Barbados, will get an understanding, of how Barbadian artists interpreted the time and age in which they lived, how they interpreted the history, because many artists now have to look back to the history. We have lost so much from a time that has gone by.

Mr. Speaker, this is almost an historic moment. I am pleased that I am able to speak in this debate and I urge Honourable Members, as I close my contribution, that they would be generous. If you do not have to give, find ways to raise money, and help to give. Of course the Acquisition and Collections Committees will look very carefully, because it is not everything, that will be thought to be suitable and appropriate, for the National Art Gallery.

I am longing for the day when I can take young nieces and nephews, especially those who do not live in Barbados, cousins and so on, who live outside of Barbados to visit the Barbados National Art Gallery, and have them appreciate and understand that this is part of truly great history to which they belong.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this Bill and to say that we as a country have a very proud history. I am glad today that we are recognising this as part of our history.

Sir, if we are to be serious about this Bill, we must be first be prepared to recognise that they are some artists who need our support. It cannot only be those state-of-the-art painting with a hundred year standing, but it must be those young artists who are prepared to venture and spend some money to develop their art. I believe that the National Art Gallery should be used to help those young artists to find a living by looking for those valuable pieces, and ensuring that they put their talents towards further development.

H146

Sequence 13 12.10 p.m.

Tuesday, October 09, 2007

House 146, Sequence 14, 12.10 p.m.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, at times I get very committed to things. I remember some time back when the roundabout at St. Lucy's Church was about to be constructed, I recognised that the complexion of that particular area was going to change, I asked a well-known artist in Barbados to do a painting of that area before the roundabout was put in place. The gentleman quoted a fee of \$500 and I agreed but up today, I have not been able to get the painting from that gentleman. Sir, I appreciated what I wanted but that gentleman for some reason thought it probably was too important for me.

I am saying, Sir, that we have been deprived in this country of golden opportunities. Sir, how many of us have a painting of the old Hometown Police Station? There are people who do not understand there are particular landmarks and before they are destroyed, we should commission persons to do the necessary work to ensure that we have a copy of that history.

Sir, if we are to have a national art gallery, we much have people with the capacity to understand the landmarks of Barbados and to ensure that they commission persons to do the necessary art, so that it could be put in place so that people would appreciate what some place used to look like.

Sir, too many times, we do major developments in this country and we do not stop to commission people to do the work, so that we could at least have something to show to those who come after us, what particular areas used to look like. There are lots of young artists in Barbados whom we can commission and empower to ensure that we keep the history of Barbados, for future generations.

Again, why are we worrying about these things? In Barbados, we get caught up with class, race and so on, but we do not care about historical values. This is why some people in Barbados cannot appreciate having Nelson near Parliament, because they are more interested in what Nelson used to do, than what he is now doing for Barbados. We, as a people, have been able to exploit the values of Nelson but we are not interested in the history. We are only interested in how we can exploit him to use him to develop the economy of Barbados. Sir, I am saying that in every negative there is a positive and we must be able to develop the positive and to demonstrate that we have a capacity to move beyond the negative.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, there are some people who would be offended but that is their view, and I do not have a problem, this is mine. If they want to continue to deprive Barbados of being able to use its history in a positive way, this is up to them. I am saying, Sir, that we must look for the positive in the negative

If we continue to focus on the negative, we will continue to be slaves, and we will not be able to remove ourselves from that position. Sir, we have travelled further and we have come further in the world than anybody else because, at least, our measurement is much greater. Sir, we did not start at the top but we started at the bottom and now we are at the top. Therefore, when we do the measurement, we can appreciate that the measurement is much longer than those who started at the top.

Mr. Speaker, the National Collection cannot be only about what is in the gallery. The personnel within the office must use their capacities to ensure that they are prepared to go throughout Barbados and identify work that can easily be in the gallery. It cannot only be the work in the gallery. It has to be the work that might be found in your house. Sir, people must not believe that because you want to keep a piece of work in your home that it has no value. It must be more holistic than this, the whole of Barbados must be the gallery.

Mr. Speaker, nobody is going to tell me that because I had the foresight to buy a couple of pieces some years ago that my pieces must be in the gallery because Barbados is the gallery. I believe that once we do that and we map out where the locations are, then we can now have a good relationship between culture and tourism. Sir, the National Art Gallery must be used to develop the tourism industry within Barbados, so that we can exploit the collections of Barbadians, and we can make meaningful use of it, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, we have to empower the artists of Barbados and ensure that they now stand to have an opportunity to make a living from art. Sir, too many of them are walking around with their paintings begging people to buy them so that they could make a living. The National Art Gallery must be that place, where they could refer their works and ensure that they have a place that somebody can buy the work from them.

Sir, I too have a problem with the powers of the director because I believe the director should only have power if somebody wants to take the work out of Barbados, or worse, if somebody wants to sell the work to somebody who is going to take the work out of Barbados.

Sir, if a man is moving from Barbados and he is taking his personal painting with him, I cannot see a problem with that but I can see a problem where somebody is not living in Barbados and they want to rape Barbados of their culture. Sir, the National Art Gallery must have the first call. Sir, I do not believe that anyone should fly into the country, and buy up these paintings to rape Barbados of its culture.

Sir, in terms of financing the National Art Gallery, I am a bit confused with a particular clause. I would like the

Minister to explain Clause 10(e), because the way it is worded, is not correct in my opinion. I believe this section needs rewording properly because it could be misconstrued, and we would not want that today.

Mr. Speaker, I am so passionate about this because we are now discussing the National Art Gallery at a time when we are also discussing the EU and what happened to sugar. I do not want what happened to sugar to happen to our art, where people come and pay us little or nothing for it. They take it out of the country, and sell it for large sums of money, exploiting us, then, they take that money and share it with people who were not there at the beginning.

Sir, we have to be very careful when we are dealing with this particular Bill that we do not allow people to come into Barbados, rape us of our resources and later say to us that we have made no contribution, when we would have been the ones to build them up. Sir, this topic of art and sugar have the same history, and we have to ensure that we put up a stand.

House 146, Sequence 14, 12:20:14

Tuesday, October 09, 2007

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, we are not begging anybody for anything, all we are asking for, is a return of some of the resources that we gave previously. Sir, I honestly believe that those persons who took our mahogany furniture out of Barbados should be contributing to the National Art Gallery because they robbed us of our good mahogany wood.

Sir, I have to be very careful how I speak about the good mahogany wood because the last time I used that term in this Parliament I was severely criticised by a Government Minister who told the returning nationals that I said that if our mahogany was good, then the furniture they were bringing in had to be bad. Sir, I hope that because I have said that our local mahogany is good, that would not be misconstrued on this occasion and the wrong impression given to the returning nationals that all other furniture is bad. At the same time, I do not want anybody to get the impression that because I said that our art is good that their art is not good. Sir, I know the Honourable Member for the City would concur with what I am saying on this particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, we have to ask ourselves today if we have really put any money to ensure that the artists of Barbados are able to produce and are able to go out there and speculate. Sir, after we go through all of these clauses and this Bill is passed, I would like to believe that we would not have a situation where we would be talking about funds for buying pieces that were done 100 years ago, but that we would be talking about putting funds

within the National Art Gallery to ensure that we get some young artists coming up and searching for the right pieces so that we could turn this into an industry. Sir, this is not only about the National Art Gallery, this has to be about an industry. We are not speaking about an artist doing one piece for the National Art Gallery alone, the artist has to be able to see this as an industry and be able to produce more than one piece so that the National Art Gallery could get one and the others be sold to others. As it stands right now, Sir, we are only interested in the National Art Gallery and we are limiting the artist to the National Art Gallery. Sir, that cannot be so, this has to go further. This is an industry and we have to see it that way. Sir, that is why we on this side would ensure that we continue to do everything possible to empower the artists.

Sir, we are not about talk. We have demonstrated in many ways that we are serious. Sir, if you want to challenge me on that you could come to the art gallery in Moon Town and you would see how we have demonstrated; artists like Malcolm Cumberbatch, Harry and many others.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is there an art gallery in Moon Town?

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes. It has many pieces, even one about Moon Town. Sir, if you want to find the one about the old complex in Holetown, you have to come to Number 12 to find it. If the Honourable Member for St. Michael East wants to know about his history, the Aborigines and so on, he could come to Number 12 and he would find that one too. Sir, we are not only talking about this, this is a demonstration of faith in the artists of Barbados to ensure that they too would survive. Sir, too many of them are riding around on bicycles with paintings on their backs, and everybody is ignoring them. What I am saying is that we have a commitment to ensure that we not only talk but that we walk with them.

Mr. Speaker, with all of the pretty speeches I heard today, I hope that Honourable Members would push their hands in their pocket and start buying some paintings. They should not only use this debate to speak about it, they should genuinely speak about it and mean it. Sir, the days for hot talk are over. We have to demonstrate that we are serious about what we are speaking.

Mr. Speaker, I did not know about this Bill, but it is here today. Therefore, when I speak about it, there is a commitment to the industry not because of the Bill, but a commitment that was founded many years ago when there were things available to be able to acquire the necessary pieces.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that we are committed to art. Sir, that art must not only be about paintings. We

want to ensure that these nice carvings that we see in here today are also seen throughout Barbados. There are many people who have talent within their hands, but we as a society ignore them. We believe that people who have talent within their hands must be disregarded.

Sir, this Bill presents an opportunity to demonstrate that we are not only about talk, but that we are prepared to put some funds within the National Art Gallery to acquire those pieces. It cannot only be left to poor people to buy from poor people. We must ensure that we use the Treasury of Barbados to continue to develop the art of Barbados. Sir, it cannot only be about the National Art Gallery, it has to be about an industry.

Mr. Speaker, if I have one criticism with this Bill, it is that it is about the National Art Gallery, but it is much bigger than that. Sir, I know the Minister would accept the criticism as genuine and would make the necessary adjustments and would understand that this is a multimillion dollar business that we are speaking about once we tie it to tourism and once we really sensitise the people of Barbados about what we are about, so that we could take this much further.

Sir, I have no intention of saying too much on this particular matter. What I have said should go to the heart of the Minister. Sir, I know that he would respond in kind because I know he has good ears and that he understands genuine criticisms. Sir, I know that there is some sincerity in his heart and he would move in some money to ensure that the artists of Barbados can make some money.

Mr. Speaker, he understands that we are not only about the National Art Gallery, the National Art Gallery is the precursor, but that we are about making it an industry. Mr. Speaker, this is where we stand as a political party. We want to ensure that our brothers and sisters can find somewhere where they could feel that they can make a living from this.

Mr. Speaker, we will ensure that these persons can make a living. Sir, if the other side do not know how to do it, we have clearly demonstrated that we have the capacity, the gut feeling and the willingness to do it and we will do it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 1.30 p.m. today.

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

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 1.30 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

House 146 Sequence 15

12.30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 09, 2007

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East.

Hon. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, this is a fairly hasty exercise but I will try to make contact with it, as it relates to the National Art Gallery. Sir, I must compliment the Honourable Minister for recognising the importance of this formation, which is reflected in the establishment of the National Art Gallery.

Mr. Speaker, apart from having such a structure in place, with all the required guidelines, I want to focus my attention on the rationale for the establishment of such an institution. I want to focus my attention on what fundamental changes that institution ought to bring to the society, in order to give it the kind of legitimacy and credibility, as a new formation, in the development of the people of Barbados.

I have heard a number of perspectives so far, which are not really the embodiment of purity, only opinions. Sir, I hope that after having an institution of this kind, with the intention of changing the values and of helping to shape the national identity, that the institution would not only serve as one to mirror the historic value of artefacts, of literature or of any type of symbolic representation but that it would also aid in changing the Barbadian perspective of his identity. I hope that it would give him a sense of pride to be able to identify symbols that represent the national personality.

Mr. Speaker, I first want to make it very clear, I have never been opposed to the presence of the decorations of the Victorian or whatever era. I have never been opposed to the symbolic representations of Western influence. That is the influence which is not taking into consideration the multi-cultural nature of our people but it is one that still continues to signal European dominance in the mind set of the Barbadian people.

Sir, what I am saying is that even within these Chambers, the symbol which we see in the form of the decorated glass, is a clear example that we have not, as yet, reached the stage where we are not only accepting that

which Europe has contributed to our civilisation but we also need to see the presence of the persona of persons who look like us, in terms of the contributions which they have made to the civilisation of Barbados. Sir, I am not against that because I would probably say that I am a victim of the premise of what people call a multi-cultural society, even though I do not believe in it because the complexity of it is that the majority of people are not the people who set the standards for the society.

1.40 p.m.

Tuesday, October 2, 2007

(EDITED)

Hon. T.A. PRESCOD: Sir, the people who are in the minority set the standard. I am talking about values in a system itself and if we are going to talk about multi-cultural representation, then I would expect to see strands of each different heritage moving parallel to each other. If this society is to reflect the contributions of the Asianic community then I would like not only to know that it existed in the system but that we respect the cultural contributions of the Asianic community; the African community as well as the European community and, Sir, that is where I part with some persons on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, that is what I call the symbolic reflections in terms of the social acceptance of the art forms in many different ways. Sir, how people value the art forms? Which type of art is relegated to the bottom of the strata? Mr. Speaker, I keep saying over and over again that what is a reflection of us has taken the bottom of social acceptance in the system itself. It is unfortunate that what belongs to us is placed in such a situation while we are the majority people in the society. I am not asking for us to be placed above anybody else, I am asking for institutions to emerge or to be constructed that would have a perception of our history; the evolution of that history and understand the construction that occurred among our people that placed us in the position that we are in today, and that an effort would be made in this exercise to reconstruct the society in such a way so as to give ordinary black people an opportunity to be able to look at their contribution throughout history, not a contribution that identifies itself exclusively with slavery and colonialism but a contribution of the heritage of a people.

If you are going to be looking to feature symbols or artefacts, whether it is literature or poetry in any form, I want to bring that which has been classified in not the most credible way but in a very pejorative way, as mass culture, I want that mass culture to take equal status with what the elites accept as the genuine culture of the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about the perspective of persons; the thinking of persons; which have been fashioned by Eurocentric views in our institutions. I hope an effort would be made with that type of understanding to address that kind of social and cultural imbalance within the system itself.

Mr. Speaker, I am very supportive of the idea of having an educational institution like a museum, a national gallery, a temple but I want the provisions to be put in place by the kind of personnel that apply profound thought to what they are doing and not just find things to keep featuring and exposing our youth and unborn generations to greatness of other people but not looking at the greatness of themselves. Sir, sometimes we do not do these things out of contempt, we do things like that in a very subconscious way and we continue to do greater harm to the psyche of our own people in our history.

Mr. Speaker, I had the experience of going to the museum in Edinburgh, Scotland, I saw as well the great admiration that people there have for Adam Smith. If they take you on a tour through Scotland, they take you to see the home of Adam Smith and if you do not tell them to move on with the vehicle, they will keep you there for the entire day because Adam Smith symbolises one of the major contributions they have made to western thought and they believe he is an important personality to feature.

Sir, you could understand why I agonise, having to look at this reflection every Tuesday when I come here and I will continue to criticise it, even if it makes other unhappy, until I can look around me and see that in the last 300 years plus and even before that I can look and point to great thinkers as well and persons who exercise governance in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be able, not to see pictures in the corridors or in the kitchen but I want to be able to see them in the central hall of Parliament just as I see some of these people, who did not play such a noble exercise to the development of mankind. I wish you all really understood the history.

Mr. Speaker, while my brother from St. Lucy says he understands me, what he does not quite understand is my views about Nelson and, Sir, it will not change. If you are going to have a national gallery, you have to be able to give a justification for it. If you are going to be making changes, there must be commonalities in that trajectory of thought. You have to be talking about a sense of national consciousness so, you should see it in the kind of literature being produced; you should see it in the respect for the new statues that we have actually seen at certain strategic points around the island.

Mr. Speaker, I want to explain the contradictions to you in this society. Sir, while I am dealing with this formation, it has to have a justification for its existence. When Nelson Mandela was released, you would understand the tensions in a multi-cultural society, if you look at that experience. Sir, while one group of persons in this country felt that we ought to rename the Farley Hill Park after Nelson Mandela, because you see streets in London and all over the world named after Nelson Mandela, but it was like a comedy to some, especially elitist black in the system. Sir, for those who are not like me and you, they recognise they had a history to protect and they did everything to preserve the name of Farley Hill because they understand what it means to their people.

Mr. Speaker, if you are in a multicultural society, I want people to be able to respect that all of us are from difficult origins and we have had a history before Christopher Columbus came to the Caribbean, Sir, the history is not exclusively about Europe, the history is about countries that we do not even identify with. One of the first countries that we have to identify with in those circumstances is Uganda. Sir, in talking about Africa, we talk exclusively about the south Sahara and exclusively about Africa to the west, but, when we begin to talk seriously about civilisation and the contribution of man, you have to start by the mouth of the Nile in Tinja in Uganda.

H146/13:50

Sequence 17

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Hon. T.A. PRESCOD: Sir, you have to look back at our history, travelling from Jinga to Alexandria, that will take you through Sudan, Ethiopia and into Egypt, between the north and east coast of the African continent, to look at the contributions in science that we have made. Sir, look at the contributions that we have made in architecture, as well. Highlight the contributions of outstanding persons, like Imhotep. Let our people see structures, that are reflections of what I consider to be genuine institutions, or configurations of knowledge, not just entertainment or an institution where fraudulent westerners go to steal the developments that occurred within the temples of Africa, especially in Egypt and the Sudan. Sir, you do not have the Pyramids in Ethiopia or Uganda, but the civilisation travelled, and as man became more and more developed, that civilisation showed itself in the building of the Pyramids, between the Sudan and Egypt. You do not see those things Ethiopia or Uganda.

Mr. Speaker, I think that there was a man called General Specs, who understood the importance of the Nile, but we want to take things of history out of Europe and put

it at the disposal of our people. Although there is history written by us, about us, and reflecting truth, we do not understand the importance of that history. We have not connected to it in such a way, that we accept it as genuine history, and not distortions up to now. Sir, you see it everyday.

Mr. Speaker, I want to support this institution, but I want to see us attacking that deconstruction, that occurred among our people as a result of offering these new symbolic things to our people. I am not only talking about the Gallery itself, but when people see these things. Their thoughts must not be so vulgar in materialism, that they cannot understand the refinements of art itself. The refinements of an institution is not only for the sake of fraternising, or socialising at the Museum a Saturday or Sunday evening, or going there as a source of entertainment, but seeing it as an institution to educate persons and not to invert brains either, because you can also have an education that turns people's heads upside down, and that is what has happened in many of the institutions across Barbados. That is why we have to be fighting in this society day in and day out for acceptability of African history in our schools, and just little bits and pieces are entered on a school's curriculum, in the system.

Mr. Speaker, we speak every day about world history, and the biggest continent with the greatest riches, that Europe loves more than us, because all the war and distortion about uncivilised people, you cannot get them out of South Africa. You have to beat them out of Guinea Bissau. You have to run the Italians from around Ethiopia. You have to run the Persians out of Egypt, and Islamic dominance out of Egypt, but black people in the Caribbean are still struggling with their national identity, and still asking if you are an African. Sir, a man with a big broad nose and barber green skin, asking people if they are Africans. Sir, he speaks about his nationality, but he separates himself from heritage, but he is debating national identity. Mr. Speaker, I am saying to those persons who are responsible for structuring the policy, that we must ensure that we attempt to correct those wrongs in the system.

Sir, it goes deeper than that, and it goes into a very sensitive area. I also want to talk about multicultural, different origins, different experience of governance, and different experience in religion and spirituality, Sir, even the Catholic Church embraces aspects of the Arisha Faith, but the aspects which they embrace when it is applied in a more holistic way, it is given a title of negativity, as obeah. They denounce the Voodoo, the spirituality of Voodoo and Arisha.

Sir, that is why I know we have some work to do. I am still happy that the Government is continuing on this path. There was a time when we would probably be seeing Horatio Nelson all the time, but at least, in the last few

years, we witnessed a statue of Bussa, Grantley Adams and Errol Barrow. We took a long time to sense of consciousness of understanding the importance of these symbols.

Sir, I also want people to ask themselves the question, how is it we have majority blacks in this society, of African origin, and in countries where they are, probably, a clear example of multi-culturalism, like Trinidad and Tobago, African blacks, Indians and Chinese, and in places like Cuba, that emergence and consciousness of respect for African spirituality is among the people. If you go to Cuba, Haiti or Trinidad and Tobago, there is a large percentage of the population, in Trinidad and Tobago, in that mixed cultural environment, that are part and parcel of the Arisha Faith. That is why I am talking about this effort of attempting to reconstruct who we are, and to reclaim the things that belong to us, not only the tangible things, but also the intangible things.

Sir, how did this happen to us, a majority people, even though we talk so much about the retentions of Africa, that only a few of us respect the tenets of the teachings of the Arisha Faith, but we are prepared to go to the Catholic Church, where some of these principles were adopted as part of the practices in the church itself.

Mr. Speaker, I want you to understand the nature of my concerns. As I indicated to you earlier, I am concerned about the importance of this institution, and not to just endorse it and give it my full support, because we have set up another institution. I want to know that it is going to contribute something to the development of people, to the development of Barbadians, to give us a sense of pride. I believe it should stimulate us based on the fact that we can say to ourselves that those are the things we have contributed.

Sir, I have seen things like ceramics exhibited in museums in European countries.

H146

Sequence 18 14.00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 09, 2007

House 146, Sequence 19, 2.00 p.m.

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD: Europeans were able to respect the skills of making tiles, many moons go, by African people. I have seen the trunk of a tree, approximately 30 feet long, going up to the top of a museum in Scotland. Sir, it mystifies you how that tree would have transported but with all the art in the tree itself, they felt that was a treasure to world's civilisation. They were not contemplating promoting themselves in those circumstances because

probably the persons who thought of it then, included everybody into the umbrella of what is called civilised man. If they were thinking about themselves, they would not highlight that but we do not believe that makes any sense or is of importance.

I want us to begin to address some of these issues, not people just boasting about how good Barbadians can cook and that kind of nonsense. They make reference to the culinary arts and believe that they are cooks. I do not belong to that kind of mind set. Those are things that happen in this country. We talk about how good we can cook, that is our contribution to mankind and I suppose that is because a lot of us work and our foreparents worked in the kitchens of other people, imparting good values in the other people's children and cooking good food for them. Sir, that only says something about our civilisation that we ought to talk about as well.

Sir, we are not selfish people or we are not contemptuous because if we were contemptuous lots of people would not be alive. The fact that we love people so much, we have no contempt for people, because even though they ill-treated and dehumanised us, we cooked for them and they ate. Sir, you understand that people cannot speak ill of people from African descent. They are the most civilised persons of the world. The kitchen is the test.

Sir, when somebody inflicts pain on you and you can still provide the best meal for them, when you have to leave your home and all of a sudden transform the normal behaviour sometimes that you have at home to make sure that other people's children are imbued with the best values of decency and morality, then people must be able to respect you. Sir, this is a good test for you to use to demonstrate to the world at large that you are the most civilised human beings in the world, and to dismiss that charge of the lack of persona.

Sir, those false ideologies and teachings that were perpetuated over the last few years, this exercise in a museum in the establishing of a national gallery, ought to be seen as a vehicle to make the fundamental changes to help bring back our people to the position that they were in, prior to the enslavement of the black man from the African continent.

I also want to suggest, Sir, that I have heard discussions about the importance of different houses and buildings and I kept thinking and asking if anyone would think it important - I am not talking about the person who brought this matter before the House - not only to cite those homes, buildings and to preserve the history of those persons but also to take into consideration, the importance of the Nightingale Home; the home of Samuel Jackman Prescod, the National Hero; the home of Sir Frank Worrell and the sociological importance of Frank Worrell to the

consciousness of black persons, not just to cricket but what he meant in terms of demonstrating the capability as a leader.

I also feel that we need to focus our attention on the Richard B. Moore Library, as well. Sir, if we are going to be addressing the areas of the arts, we need to bring a sense of consciousness and expose persons to make contact with the literature. It is a body of literature, to which any black child or any adult ought to have exposure.

Sir, people can only make judgements based on what has been imparted to them over the last few years, what they learn and what they hear. They will only make judgements on Nelson based on the limited knowledge available about Nelson. They will only express their views on Wilberforce based on the knowledge available, and not a very holistic understanding of the man's role.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member could you windup please, your time is up.

Mr. T.A. PRESCOD: Sir, my contribution to this debate is because I want to take the debate in a different direction. I hope that I have been able to not only demonstrate the way in which the contributions of the black man has been stripped and deconstruct but that I have been able to point out some significant things, such as the kinds of institutions and other important symbols of reflection that would help us to reconstruct the minds of Barbadian people and give us a sense of pride and respect for the contributions that new formations like the one that we are speaking about, would make to the development of Barbados.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister, would now windup the debate.

Rev. J.J.S. ATHERLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sir, in winding up, I would like to respond to a couple of comments made by the Honourable Members who would have contributed to this debate today and to express my appreciation to them.

I specifically highlight the contribution of my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East and my Parliamentary Representative, who last spoke. Sir, he zeroed in on the important matter of ideology, I believe, in the total scheme of cultural expression and artistic expression. I can wholly embrace the points of view that he raised in broad terms that it is so important for people in their development, that there are ideologies which help to drive that development and if that development is to mature and be balanced, it must be premised on some kind of ideological platform.

In my earlier submission, I sought to suggest that the matter of artistic expression, indeed cultural expression, is a critical component of our own sense of self and identity. Sir, if that is to be matured, fostered and furthered, then the increasing exposure to the arts and expression, by way of arts as a person's way of life and view of life, it must be appreciated in that context. Therefore, I see his comments in the regard of the socio-historical place of the arts in developing that sense of identity, which has been fully underscored by him.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South made reference to the fact that we needed to have some central focal point for the National Art Gallery. He suggested that it cannot simply be seen as a series of scattered facilities across the landscape. I would want to imagine that he had missed a point I made, which suggested that there would be that configuration of satellite centres across the landscape, like the ones that presently exist. There would be a central focal point, to be housed...

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Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: ...in the area of the Garrison when it is vacated by the Caribbean Examination Council. This is the intention, therefore, I would just want to re-emphasise that and make that clear. In fact, the entire Garrison area is to be developed by the Government as an area totally devoted to the heritage capital of Barbados.

The Right Honourable Prime Minister has spoken to this. This is the policy which Government has embraced and is embarking on to ensure that all of the historic traditions associated with the Garrison area can lend themselves to the further development of that area in such a way as to add to the tourist market appeal of Barbados with respect to heritage sites. Therefore, this area is to be fully developed to become a critical part of the heritage capital asset base of Barbados. In fact, this is very much in keeping with the thrust of Barbados right now to ensure that the greater Bridgetown area, which encompasses that geographical part of Barbados, the Garrison area, is properly recognised as a world historic site.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also suggest that we observe the divergence in terms of views existing between the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. Sir, I hold the view, which is held by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, which he shared, and to which I also earlier spoke, that the Bill before us properly provides for the acquisition of works of art to be added to the national collection in circumstances where those works of art are perceived to be of national import. Mr. Speaker, in circumstances where they are under threat of loss and damage, then the power to

acquire by lawful and proper means is provided for in the legislation.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central does not share that view and therefore departed in essence from his colleague from St. Lucy, but that is not an uncommon occurrence. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is known to stand very strongly upon his own views, independent of whatever views may exist around him, so long as he is solemnly convinced that he is right. Sir, in this instance, he is, and therefore I welcome his support. In other instances of course the expression of his own independent view tends to reflect the confusion which obtains around many a subject which become the matter of interest in this House and when focussed on by the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I would however want to disagree with the Honourable Member for St. Lucy with respect to his reference to Clause 10 (e), a stipulation which provides that the National Art Gallery can receive grants and funds with the approval of the Minister. He believes that this ought not to exist in the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know that there is anything sinister in that. I think that is a fit and proper provision. I am not a lawyer, but my interpretation of that is, it is simply an attempt to ensure that the National Art Gallery does not so compromise its operations and its integrity in that it becomes the recipient of gifts, grants or donations from sources which may be questionable or otherwise not 100 per cent legitimate.

I see this simply as an attempt perhaps, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that the "Sugar Daddy" phenomenon does not repeat itself in terms of the operations of the National Art Gallery. To refresh your memory, Mr. Speaker, you would remember that the "Sugar Daddy" phenomenon arose in the early 1990s when a "Sugar Daddy" from somewhere in St. Joseph made the Government of Barbados, in a time of serious economic stress, the recipient of \$150 000 as an expression of generosity in the interest of Barbadians. Maybe the Honourable Member for St. Lucy had this in mind when he associated art with sugar.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that Barbadians were proud of that occurrence, therefore, I think that Clause 10 (e) should be interpreted as intended to ensure that this type of thing would not occur and so compromise the operations of the National Art Gallery.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, now that the Honourable Member has given clarity to the question asked, surely the Honourable Member would agree with me that this cannot now be treated as revenue and would have to be treated as an asset, therefore, my question on Clause 10 (e) is very much

relevant. Therefore, I will ask the Honourable Member to rethink Clause 10 (e) because having heard the explanation, I am now convinced that what I asked is very much correct, and the Honourable Member should really reflect on it.

Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY: Mr. Speaker, in light of those submissions I have earlier put on the table and in light of the other contributions of support from either side of the House with respect to the provisions of the instrument before us, I now beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

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

On the motion of Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, seconded by Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. R. D. MARSHALL in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 - 4 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 5 to 10 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 11 - 17 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 18 - 20 inclusive were called and passed.

Clauses 21 - 26 inclusive were called and passed.

The First Schedule was called and passed.

The Second Schedule was called and passed.

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On the motion of Rev. the Hon. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, 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 Rev. the Hon. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the National Art Gallery Act, 2007.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government Business for

today's Sitting. I beg to move that this Sitting be now adjourned until Tuesday, 16th October, 2007, at 10.00 a.m.

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

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

2.23 p.m.

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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. 8, debate (three places). The source carries the typist's marker '(EDITED)' as a free-standing line at about 11.00 a.m. in Rev. J. J. S. Atherley's speech, in Hon. Dame Billie Miller's speech and in Hon. T. A. Prescod's speech; it prints as a heading. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Adjournment. Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley addresses 'Mr. Deputy Speaker' when moving the adjournment, but the procedural line records that 'Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House'. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Speech labels, Rev. J. J. S. Atherley. The Minister's speeches are labelled variously 'Rev.J.J.S. ATHERLEY', 'Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY' and 'Rev. the Hon. J. J. S. ATHERLEY'. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 9th October, 2007 at 10.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker in the Chair; prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of 2nd October were confirmed. The Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. O. S. Arthur, laid two Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) Orders, 2007, for C.O. Williams Construction Limited and for Port St. Charles Development Limited, and Standing Orders were suspended for the remainder of the Sitting on the motion of Hon. R. C. Eastmond.

The only item of business was Order No. 8, the National Art Gallery Bill, 2007. Rev. J. J. S. Atherley, Member for St. Michael West and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, moved the second reading.

Quoting the view that a nation's art reflects its power structures and social relationships, he described a properly run gallery as an open window to the region and the world, traced the Barbados Art Council back to Queen's Park House in the 1950s with Sir Hugh Springer as its first President, and called for the commercialisation of the arts and for meeting the challenge of electronic sales.

For the Opposition, Mr. R. L. Sealy, Member for St. Michael South Central, welcomed the Bill as the first of the institutions promised in the Throne Speech, regretted that culture was too often equated with Crop Over and calypso, criticised the long closure of the public library, questioned the provision for acquiring privately held works of national importance, and asked that ministerial directions to the Gallery under section 22 be laid in the House. Hon. Dame Billie Miller gave the Bill her unreserved support, looked forward to the companion Preservation of Antiquities and Relics Bill, and described Mr. Larry Warrens' restoration of a former Cave family plantation with its windmill and rum. Mr. D. St.E. Kellman, Member for St. Lucy, asked that those who had taken Barbados' mahogany furniture abroad contribute to the Gallery and questioned Clause 10(e).

After a suspension until 1.30 p.m., Hon. T. A. Prescod, Member for St. Michael East, took the debate towards ideology and African contributions to science and architecture. Winding up, the Minister said the central gallery would be housed in the Garrison area when it was vacated by the Caribbean Examinations Council, as part of developing the Garrison as a heritage area, and defended Clause 10(e), which requires ministerial approval for grants, by recalling the 'Sugar Daddy' gift of \$150 000 to the Government in the early 1990s. Mr. Kellman, on a point of order, asked him to rethink the clause.

The Bill was read a second time, passed through Committee with Mr. R. D. Marshall in the Chair (clauses 1 to 26 and both Schedules), and was read a third time and passed as the National Art Gallery Act, 2007. On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, seconded by Hon. R. C. Eastmond, the House was adjourned until Tuesday, 16th October, 2007 at 10.00 a.m.