
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 6, 2008

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.13 a.m. on Tuesday, May 6, 2008.

PRESENT

His Honour M. A. CARRINGTON, B.A., LL.B.,
(Speaker)

His Honour K. St.C. BEST, LL.B. (Hons), L.E.C.
(Deputy Speaker) Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.)

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., LL.M. (Leic.) LL.B.
(Hons.) (Lond.), B.A. (Hons.) Dip. Ed.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE, J.P., B.Sc., Dip. Ed. Mr. R.
St.C. TOPPIN, LL.B.(Hons.)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN Hon. Miss M. A.
MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B., (Leader of the Opposition) Miss
C. Y. FORDE, J.P., L.C.P.

Hon. R. D. JONES, J.P., M.A. Ed., B.A., (Hons.),
Minister of Education and Human Resource Development,
(Leader of the House)

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK, M.B.B.S., B.Sc.,
(Minister of Health, National Insurance and Social
Security)

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL, Q.C., LL.B. (Hons.),
L.E.C.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY, LL.B. (Hons.) (Minister of
Housing and Lands)

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

Hon. R. L. SEALY, M.B.A., B.Sc., (Minister of
Tourism)

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, M.Sc. (C. Eng.) (Minister of
Transport, Works and International Transport)

Hon. E. G. HUTSON, F.C.C.A, CA, (Minister of
Trade Industry and Commerce)

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT, (Minister of Community
Development and Culture)

Mr. J. D. PAUL, B.Sc.

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE, Eddy., M.Ed., B.A., Dip.
Theology, (Minister of Social Care, Constituency
Empowerment and Urban Development)

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE, LL.B(Hons.)

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY, B.Sc., LL.B.(Hons.)

L.E.C. (Chairman of Committees),

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS, M.B.A., Dip., B.Sc.,
(Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign
Trade and International Business)

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO, M.B., B.S.,
(Minister of Family, Youth, Sports and the Environment)

*Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan
Harewood.*

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House is now in
session.

MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday,
April 29, 2008, 2005.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that
those Minutes be taken as read.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: I beg to second that.

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

PAPERS

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the

Honourable Minister of Transport and Works and
International Transport, I am commanded to lay the
following:

1. Shipping (Incentives)(Sea SPI istribution
Caribbean Inc.) Order, 2008.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. R. D. JONES: Sir, I beg to move that Standing

Orders Nos. 6,16,18,20,42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: I beg to second that.

The question put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL), ACT, CAP. 225, THE VESTING IN THE BARBADOS TOURISM INVESTMENT INC. OF PARCELS OF LAND, THE PROPERTY OF THE CROWN, SITUATE AT HARRISONS IN THE PARISH OF SAINT LUCY IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Sir, the Resolution before this Honourable Chamber is seeking Parliament's permission to vest approximately 82.80 acres of Crown lands at Harrisons Point, St. Lucy, in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. for the purpose of tourism-related development.

Sir, from the outset, I want to say that the previous Cabinet had made a decision, and if I may be specific, it was a Cabinet decision on September 7, 2006, when that Cabinet agreed that the said lands be vested in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. I do not believe that this Debate should be controversial. The previous Cabinet agreed to vest it in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. So, I will go into the particulars.

Sir, as you are aware, my authority is grounded in the provisions of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap.225, which gives the Minister power, with the approval of Parliament, to sell, lease, exchange, grant, assign or surrender any land vested in the Crown.

Sir, the parcels of land to be vested in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. include 50.409 acres of the former Naval Base site, and 39 acres acquired for the National Youth Service, for the purpose of agricultural training and recreation. Sir, the purpose at that time was for agricultural training and recreation. I must inform this Honourable Chamber that purpose has been exhausted, and it is now proposed to seek parliamentary approval to vest the lands in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., and also for the use of tourism-related development. The Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., which is the development agency of

Government, responsible for tourism development projects facilitating investment in the tourism sector, entered into an agreement with a company called "Fairways Development Limited", to carry out the requisite planning for the proposed tourism-related development of the lands at Harrisons Point, St. Lucy.

Sir, my colleague, the Minister of Tourism, would speak to that relationship, but I must also outline to you that as promised, when we were on the Other Side, attached to this Resolution are the Survey Plans for inspection by this Honourable Chamber, certified on December 14, 2007, by a Mr. Garrick Jenkins and Mr. G. Walcott, Land Surveyors.

Sir, the Honourable Minister of Tourism, in a previous debate, outlined that there is a tourism Master Plan. This provides an opportunity for the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, to put that plan in place to move the tourism sector forward.

Sir, I know that there is to be some private development in Barbados, in relation to tourism. Only recently I had a discussion with some members, who were interested in developing a place called 'The Merricks Resort' in St. Philip. If we are going that route, we must also ensure that the members of the particular community close to the development, should continue to have the access, and there would be continued public access to the beach, or to lands close to the particular development.

10.20 a.m.

In fact, the Prime Minister has clearly stated that there must be some windows to the sea. I would say that it is a custom for the members of the community to go to the particular beach in their area for recreation. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South, will know that they go to the beach, not only for recreation but sometimes they go acting and posing as fishermen, and so, the members of the community have a Constitutional right to their property. I am saying basically, that members of the community should not be isolated. I stated outright to the developers that the members of the particular community and districts should continue to have that right, or that custom.

In fact, I believe what should happen, in the first resort, is that you have some discussion with the proposed developer, to see if you could amicably resolve any tension. Then, if that cannot be reached, I believe that sections of the Land Acquisition Act will have to be invoked, to provide the access for members of the public.

Sir, I want to say, outright, that we would not be tolerating any developer, who would seek to move the members of the community far away from any proposed

development. I believe that we should have it stated expressly that members of the public should have access to any surrounding beach in extension to any development.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South will obviously speak to the fact that any intended project would involve the concept, as normally outlined by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, who speaks to the issue of community tourism.

Sir, if we are seriously looking at advancing community tourism, we must involve members of the community in this project, because it would only redound to the benefit of those members of the particular district or community, since it would involve them in some way, making some money from whatever projects they can have with the permission, obviously, of the Government and some agreement with the developer, so that members of the community could also benefit from the proposed project.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is before this Honourable House and with those few remarks, I respectfully ask, Sir, that this Resolution be now passed.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, this matter is well familiar to This Side, and as the Honourable Member said, we would have approved it as a Cabinet. Indeed, the history of it would have been, that even prior to the locating of the temporary prison at Harrison's Point, and it was the intention of the Government to ensure that the site be utilised for tourism purposes. Therefore, we on This Side can have no objection to the proposed route being taken, and hence, the approval of this Resolution here today. Suffice it to say, however, it is critical that there are appropriate reflections, as was the case with us, as to the land use generally in Barbados and the recognition that parts of St. Lucy have already been designated for special industrial purposes. The reality is, that there are very few locations in Barbados to date, that are appropriate for heavy or medium industrial activity.

Sir, it is therefore critical that any Government undertakes a study, to determine where such future industrial activity will take place, because there was a feeling that this site in St. Lucy could also be appropriately used for industrial activity. We also recognised that there were parts of Christ Church, which have that ability near the coast.

Sir, there are the competing interests: Do you go with tourism which may have an immediate, more attractive return? Do you go with industrial activity, where

the likelihood of the return may not be as immediate, but is critical in the context of a balanced economy that you want to insulate from the vagaries from any particular sector?

Therefore, this debate will continue. As I said, This Side will not block the Resolution. I believe that the former Minister of Tourism, Mr. Noel Lynch would have played a critical role in engaging the attention of the Rosewood Group. I also believe that they have been very patient, because due to unforeseen circumstances, we would have had to utilise that site for 20 months.

Sir, contrary to all that was said, we were able to go in and get out of that site in the shortest possible period, within time and within Budget. Sir, to that extent, the Government now finds itself in the very fortunate position of being able to continue with dispatch early in its term.

We are not, therefore, going to play games with this. Suffice it to say that we are anxious to see the Government bring its own measures and its own projects. We recognise that the nature of our system is such, that they will enviably be continual, in relation to projects which were started and must be continued. Therefore, we look forward to this project, adding value to the domestic economy and to the quality of life of Barbadians, as was contemplated by the last Government.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Resolution that is before the House. Sir, as has been indicated by both of the speakers so far, both parties agree that the most appropriate use for this site is tourism related activity. Therefore, at that level, we do not necessarily disagree.

I think that what I would do is to thank my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, in his capacity of Minister of Housing and Lands, and also in his capacity of acting Attorney-General for doing all to see that this Resolution could be brought here swiftly, in order that we can forge ahead with some much needed tourism development.

10.30 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated, prior to having the land vested within its stock, had advanced, along with a local private sector partner, at trying to realise a resort project for this site. It is a vast site, 82 acres. It is a fundamentally unique site. It has a beach, a cliff edge and some other coastal areas. It is located in one of the genuinely unspoilt sections of Barbados. It is a very attractive site.

Sir, while we agree to its use, I think I need to assure the House, and by extension the country, that Barbados= interest would be kept very much up-front and centre as we go forward with the negotiations, for the type of tourism project that we are doing here.

Mr. Speaker, the last Government signed a Letter of Intent with the Rosewood Hotel Group. Sir, Rosewood is an excellent brand. It is the sort of brand that we would love to have here in Barbados. It would fit in nicely with Four Seasons, Sandy Lane and the other brands that we are looking at, therefore, I do not have any difficulty with Rosewood.

However, Mr. Speaker, there are some aspects of the Letter of Intent that have caused us sufficient concern, that we would be re-negotiating to ensure that we have the right agreement as far as going forward with this project is concerned. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to pre-empt the process. It would be improper for me, since we are at the negotiating table, to go through every single point seriatim that we are going to be negotiating.

Mr. Speaker, there are some areas, as far as I am concerned, that we cannot negotiate. The Minister of Housing and Lands already alluded to it. It is not merely access to the beach, but appropriate access to the beach. Mr. Speaker, this idea of an area where pedestrians have to duck under and through overgrown bushes, is not what we call appropriate access.

We insist that we not only have access, but that we have the necessary beach facilities in the area that the public could enjoy the beach. Access is only part of it, but in order to have full enjoyment, we need to have the appropriate beach facilities, bathroom facilities, changing room facilities and so on.

Mr. Speaker, there is very much a plan with respect to where the lighthouse is, because the site is just south of the lighthouse, to create a public park as part of the overall development plan for the area.

Mr. Speaker, the other area that we need to settle on, because the Letter of Intent was silent, is exactly how much equity Government would have in the entity. A company by the name of Harrisons Point Development Limited, was incorporated and it was the intention that it would be 5050

interest between the Government and a private sector partner.

Mr. Speaker, we now have a situation where beach-front land on the West Coast is going for \$1 000 a square foot. I am not saying that the land at Harrisons Point is worth \$1 000 per square foot, but it is 82.8 acres. I have already spoken to how unique it is. Sir, even if we use conservative formulae, we are talking about a piece of land that is worth at least several hundred million dollars and possibly even more, I am not a valuer.

At the same time, the Government=s interest in the project has to be recognised. I am saying that is an area that we pretty much need to be very clear on. We are not in the business of signing an agreement, that would immediately see a private sector person gain a tremendous amount of equity, just by having a 5050 interest in a company, so we have to clear up that. The Letter of Intent, which dates back to 2007, that the Government signed, did not speak to that issue, so we need to be very clear on that.

Mr. Speaker, the third area that is non-negotiable is public ownership. There must be some opportunity for shares in this entity to be put on the capital market, that ordinary Barbadians, persons who may be employed by the resort that is going to be based there, could come and get a piece of the action. The Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party speaks very clearly to increasing the stakeholders in the tourism sector, and so when we look at this project, that is an area that we also think would form the basis of the negotiations going forward.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I do not want to get into too much of the details, because it is not totally proper. There is a local private sector partner. There is an international chain. Mr. Speaker, if all goes well, in a matter of weeks, we hope to be in a position to sign off on an agreement, and possibly break ground before the end of the year. That is what we are aiming for.

Mr. Speaker, there has been some work on the environmental impact and the social impact. We are very conscious of the need to take care of those issues. It is an area that is very precious and so we have those considerations in mind. Mr. Speaker, it is very much in vogue with eco-tourism and sustainable development, and while it speaks of the environmental side of it, we do not always look at the social impact. Mr. Speaker, we are satisfied that with the appropriate overall development for the area, that this can positively impact on the community of St. Lucy.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of initiatives that we are looking at. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North alluded to the Tourism Investment Master Plan that has an investment component. We are looking at corridors

of the island that are appropriate for tourism development. The Honourable Member alluded to a project in Merricks in the South-east. We think that there is potential for further development in the area of the Crane and Sam Lord's Castle as well as in the North of the island.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the comment of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East with respect to industrial activity and medium size industries and so on. The Arawak Cement Plant is already there. I think that the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited is currently constructing a generating station in that area. Mr. Speaker, given its sheer beauty and so on, I do believe that there are a number of other tourism projects that could take place in the St. Lucy area.

Mr. Speaker, we are determined to push the various segments of the tourism industry. The health and wellness area is one that I think has tremendous potential in St. Lucy, therefore I would not think that this development would be a stand-alone, but that there would be other resort and tourism projects.

There is already sports tourism and community tourism occurring at the North Stars Cricket Ground. When you go into the pavilion and you look on the wall, you would see a series of shields that visiting teams have left there. The North Stars Club would be touring the United Kingdom, something they do every other year, so there is a very real experience of community sports tourism occurring, and we think that this should continue.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated has to look beyond the urban areas if it is talking about investing in our tourism industry. It could look to what could be done in some of these rural communities, genuine initiatives that need a good shot in the arm.

10.40 a.m.

That is why we are looking at the North Stars issue to see how we could work together. Sir, for a number of years, there was an initiative to do work in Half Moon Fort, otherwise called 'Moon Town'.

When I came to the Ministry, I saw that the monies that were allocated in the budget of the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., to do work in 'Moon Town' had mysteriously dropped off. Well, of course, I put it back on, and I think we see there is some potential in that area, as far as community tourism is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I see the Honourable Member for St. George North is making notes. The Honourable Member could make notes, but I have the facts.

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: I am not accusing anyone of anything. The initiative started with the last Government, but it just never actually came into being.

but we do look forward to seeing some improvements in that Half Moon Fort area as well. Of course, there is also a proposal to look at some other communities. I had discussions with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, insofar as some of the initiatives along the cultural areas, that have been occurring in the Pineland areas and at what we could potentially do with respect to community tourism at the cultural level.

We often think of community tourism at the culinary level when you think of food being prepared, but community tourism goes beyond that. It includes home accommodation, cultural tourism, sports tourism, et cetera. These are all part of the whole effort of widening the stakeholders in the industry and involving the community, in a meaningful way, in our main industry. Mr. Speaker, these are some of the things that the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., will be doing with respect to moving our tourism to another level.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., is celebrating its 10th Anniversary this year, and I am prepared to salute much of the work that has been done. We could debate whether or not it should have been done by the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., but the fact is, that they have remained very effective at doing a number of projects, particularly in urban parts of Barbados.

Sir, in some of the projects, persons might say that the Ministry of Transport, Works and International Transport should have done that, or that the Urban Development Commission should have done it, but nonetheless, it is being done by the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., because they have been so effective.

They have developed the George Washington House and the Concorde Museum, the redevelopment of Bridgetown, the West Wing of Parliament, the Brandons and Deacons areas, which are ongoing, the Fairchild Street Bus Terminal, Oistins Bay Gardens, recreational areas in Speightstown, the Roundabout, the Arlington House, which I had the honour of opening recently.

Sir, the list goes on, but what I have indicated to the Board of Directors at the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., is that going forward, the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. has to deal with some of the critical questions that affect tourism and the critical areas where we need investment in tourism. Sir, for example, our room stock in Barbados, where we have lost about 1 000 rooms over the past 10 years to condominiums and villas, Sir, that

is a development, if left unchecked, could start to undermine our tourism industry in a very serious way. We need to rebuild our room stock, but we need branded rooms. Sir, by that, of course, we need to have brands that appeal particularly to the Americans but to the North Europeans also, so that we could see continued growth in our tourism sector.

Mr. Speaker, that is why this initiative for Harrisons Point fits right in with what we are attempting here. Sir, the Carlisle Bay area has been looked at, including the Pierhead, and we are moving ahead apace at trying to come up with the appropriate vehicles that we could have the necessary investment in our tourism sector and rebuild the room stock that has been lost.

Mr. Speaker, I have actually set a target and I will repeat it here. I have said it elsewhere, that I would like to think that, over the next five years, we could at least have one brand per year. Sir, I think we could exceed that, because it is important insofar as marketing tourism, that we have brands on board. We are actually losing some business to some of our competitors because they have been able to attract more brands.

Mr. Speaker, let me say right now, because when you make a point, persons often take the antithesis and run with it. Sir, I am not suggesting that the indigenous hotels should be closed, so do not get up and say that I am saying that we have finished with the indigenous hotels. Not at all, they have served us well and we should continue to support them. In fact, I think we should continue to see the development of them as well, they have a role to play. Sir, there are people who like to stay at indigenous hotels such as the Coral Reef, Treasure Beach and those types of hotels. Therefore, we should not neglect them.

Mr. Speaker, I have an open-door policy with respect to both the Hoteliers' Association and the individual hoteliers, to see how we could work with them, to stop so many of these hoteliers from going the route of becoming real estate speculators and converting their hotels into condominiums. We would like to halt that as much as possible. Sir, of course, the returns are quite handsome when they go that route, so we have to look at the best ways that we could ensure the viability of our tourism industry and the viability of our hotel sector.

Sir, these are some of the challenges we have, with which we are dealing. As I said, the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., the entity in which this investment is being located this morning, has some significant work to do in this regard. They have performed well for 10 years, and I am sure that even the parent company which it was born out of, the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation, has also done remarkably well for this country. Sir, we salute the wonderful work they are doing.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, and I believe the Honourable Member for St. George South, would be very happy to hear that the refurbished Dover Pavilion will be opened this week. That was a Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. project also. That will add not only to the sports tourism initiative, but to sports generally. Sir, Dover is the home of the Paradise Football Club and also a top cricket club as well. It is also an area where young men recreate themselves on the hard court. It is a heavily used public area and again, there is a fine example of sports and community tourism interfacing in a real way that could only redound to the benefit of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the initiatives we are looking at generally. I spoke of some things that are more or less in train, with respect to the sports tourism initiative at North Stars and the improvements in the Half Moon Fort area. Sir, I would also like to see the dream of which the current and former Prime Minister has spoken to, of seeing cruise ships berthed in the North of Barbados, realised.

Sir, the former Prime Minister felt that it should happen in Speightstown, and frankly I like the idea. Speightstown could be given a shot in the arm. The duty-free sector could then, with a more local ownership, respond, and that would be good. Sir, if it is not possible, because of the reasons the mariners would tell us, and we would have to go to another site, maybe in the St. Lucy area, that would be fine too, but I do believe that we should be berthing cruise ships outside of Bridgetown in the North of the island.

Sir, I, therefore, agree with both the Honourable Members for St. John and St. Peter in that respect and look forward to seeing the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. playing a role in that. We are in discussion with a number of consultants, with a view to perhaps engaging one of them, to look at that issue in detail.

10.50 a.m.

The Minister of International Transport would be actively involved in that process also, but we could see a seaport in the North of the island and possibly even an airstrip. I know this is something that has been a joked about by Honourable Members of the last Government, but I hold the view that it is not a laughing matter, and that may be there is a legitimate case for some sort of aviation facility, whether a fixed wing or otherwise as is being suggested by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West but the St. Lucy site for an air strip is something that we cannot rule out for many reasons, a back-up to your main facility if something happens during a disaster, man-made or natural and the fact that we have so many private aircrafts landing in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I remember the former Honourable Member of Parliament for the City, one of the few occasions that she agreed with the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was on this issue of an airport to service the growing community of persons who have smaller privately owned aircraft, may be prepared to land at an airport closer to the West Coast. Sir, that, I think is something that could be looked at and not as pie-in-the-sky as some may think, and should not be laughed out of Tongue without taking a hard look at it. We could look at the economics, the feasibility, the whole environmental aspect of things and may be, it is something I feel could possibly work.

If we are looking at trying to broaden the impact of tourism beyond the two very concentrated areas of the South Coast and West Coast, and we are looking at going a little further North and a little further south, that issue of an airport in the North of the island is something that could fit right in.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the initiatives that the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. is looking at, and will be engaging our attention as we go forward.

Mr. Speaker, as I take my seat, I would just like the House to know that figures for arrival for the first quarter this year was actually up by 10 per cent. I had made a promise that I would not engage in too much of that. I remember when I was sitting on the Other Side, I used to loathe the fact that we would never discuss tourism in this House. We would always be discussing arrivals and airlift. When arrivals were up, chests were being beaten up and when the arrivals were down we were very quiet. I might add that the Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados announced it before I did, but I did not think it was anything for us to make heavy weather of.

Sir, the fact of the matter is that our arrivals have been, generally speaking, going up for the past 25 years. When the last Government came to office in 1994, figures were going up and when they left office, they were still going up but, Sir, rather than get into a useless Debate about whether they are up by 2.8 per cent or whatever, I think we need to look at how we are going to take tourism to the next level.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely look forward to saying that there is an increase in the number of stakeholders in the sector, that there is an increase in the visitor spend and the distribution of that spend, not trickle-down, but direct beneficiaries. That is the increase I would like to see. I would like to see an increase in the sector, foreign investors and domestic investment. I would like to see an increase in the number of products that we are offering, getting into the eco-tourism element and the heritage tourism element. Those are the increases that I would like to see and not

merely an increase in numbers, because that, in itself, says nothing and that, in itself, is nothing new.

Mr. Speaker, I salute everyone who has been working so hard in the sector, because times are quite challenging. We have a lot of competition and competitors out there. It seems that everyone is into tourism now. It is the fastest growing industry in the world and on every continent you can find a tourism destination. I believe that we, in going forward Barbados has a very good name, is a very desirable and aspirational destination and a lot of people want to come here, but we now have to do a few things to ensure that we can sustain ourselves.

Sir, this is why this investment is so important, because the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated has to lead the charge, insofar as seeing more hotel rooms in Barbados directly by its involvement with a private sector partner, as is proposed for the Harrisons Point site, but also in facilitating investment. This is why the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. would be establishing an Investment Facilitation Unit, to encourage more investment in the sector, not to mash anyone's corns from Invest Barbados but because we recognise that tourism investment is a specialty, and we need to have the appropriate vehicles to facilitate greater investment in the sector and that is what can take us to the next level. Sir, it has to be done consciously of what is necessary to involve everyone in the sector.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we need to do, and that is what I have pledged myself to attempt to achieve in the time that I am given responsibility for this portfolio. I also believe that the Barbados Tourism Authority has its role to play in marketing Barbados, but once we can get our range of investments together that could help to differentiate us, and in fact, would make the work of the Barbados Tourism Authority, in its marketing programme, a lot easier to ensure that we have continued growth in the sector. There is a proposed restructuring for the Barbados Tourism Authority. It is very much in our Manifesto and I would say that, because we all hear about restructuring at the Barbados Tourism Authority that we have engaged the union up-front and we have gone through with them what we propose. It is not viewed that we will be cutting down the number of staff. As a matter of fact, when we look at the tremendous work that is planned of this Government, we may even have to increase the number of staff but, as far as any changes that are proposed, it will be done with a view of being conscious of the workers that are actually existing workers at the Barbados Tourism Authority. Sir, no one should have any fear that we are going to go through there with an axe and knife, cutting and chopping heads. We certainly do not think that bringing in any dream team is going to solve all the problems.

10.59 a.m.

Honourable Members of the House will see to it that whatever agreement is finally settled upon, will obviously have to go to Cabinet, but that agreement will be one that will see that Barbados' interests are not at all left out, and that we can embark on a partnership and relationship with whichever brand is proposed, for it can only add to our tourism product mix and see improvement to our industry.

I am also appreciative of the latitude you have given me, so that I could have touched on a few tourism matters.

Sir, I support this Resolution fully.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in this Debate, and to say from the outset that the people of St. Lucy have no problem with what is being proposed, because they have heard most of it for a long time. They fully understand what could occur in that beautiful part of the vineyard.

Sir, when you are fortunate to represent the only female Constituency, that Constituency must be treated in a special way, and I have no apologies to anyone for anything that I might have said over the years in support of that beautiful Constituency known to one and all as Lucy.

Sir, today, after listening to everything that has been said, I sometimes wonder how the owners of Sandy Lane could have considered the offer that was made to the Government of the day, and also to Sandy Lane, that instead of bulldozing the hotel called Sandy Lane, at the time, it might have been better to go to the North to utilise this same location to build a hotel under the brand name Sandy Lane, so that the country, Barbados, would not have lost that golden opportunity of having the upmarket tourists, considering we did not have the Sandy Lane, the Hilton or some other hotels.

Sir, when one recognises the brand name that now shows interest in that location.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me hear the Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Sir, the Honourable Member referred to an offer that was made to the Government of the day, implying that the Government of the day would have been in a position to cause the

developers and owners of Sandy Lane, to build a Sandy Lane Hotel someplace else. It is absurd.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, the Honourable Member was not even in here, so he cannot even discuss what went on in here. The Honourable Member just arrived and wants to contradict me. I have been in here for 14 years and made the offer on behalf of the Constituency.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Do you think I am interested in that? I am interested in ensuring that the people of St. Lucy get what they want, but you had to ensure ...

Aside

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, the point of who am I? I am a person that is the smallest division between myself and any opponent with over 400 votes on every occasion. That is who I am. I am the person that is privileged to represent the constituency of which I spoke. I am the person that will represent the constituency that will ensure Barbados becomes a developed country, by having the necessary infrastructure to market Barbados.

Sir, the point I was making is the lack of foresight sometimes interferes with the development of the country. I made this point before. If the Honourable Member would have taken time out to read Hansard, the Honourable Member would have seen that

this is no new point. It was not said on some street corner. It was said on the Floor of the Honourable House. Do not touch Sandy Lane, leave it. Go to the North, build a new hotel, and after you have built the new hotel, then bulldoze Sandy Lane and do other things. That advice should have been heeded.

Sir, if one looks at the statistics of tourism during those years, one would have recognised that we did not only have a fall-off in the number of tourists, but we also had a fall-off in revenue, which created an economic problem for the country. Sir, most reporters would agree that is what they heard.

Sir, what is more ridiculous, everything I spoke about, they would say that I am the "I man". Well I will be the "I man" because it so happens that at this present time we have what it takes to offer the rest of Barbados in developing this country. I will say that we were never selfish with it. We offered it freely. We offered the location to the previous Government, where we could have a new cruise terminal, instead of our cargo ships berthing outside

of the Port. We offered the Harrisons Point location for tourism. I even went further. I said at that time, if we wanted to develop that location as a tourism site, we should not ignore its history.

Sir, in this country, a lot of people believe that we are now bringing tourism to Harrisons Point. That is not true. Tourism has been there ever since the Naval Base came there. That is where the concept of community tourism came out of. The people who worked at the Naval Base, were able to come into greater St. Lucy and rent houses that were built by the people of St. Lucy, St. Peter, and even the people of St. James, and in Holders Hill, because Carlyle Greaves has some houses in Holders, rented to the personnel from the Naval Base. We destroyed all of that. We did not look to see what occurred when we removed the Naval Base from St. Lucy, how it interfered with the development of the people of St. Lucy, and how development was retarded.

Sir, after 30 years, the Democratic Labour Party is now back and ready to correct that error, and to ensure that St. Lucy gets what it deserves, and what the Right Excellent Errol Barrow spoke of 30 years ago in the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto. Any of you who have read it would know that an airstrip for St. Lucy was not an accident. It was very much there in the Manifesto, 30 years ago. Sir, what we are speaking about is nothing new. It is all part of the 'O'Neale Vision' that is now being repeated.

Sir, as we speak about Abuja, and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North would know exactly to what I refer, Sir, St. Lucy now offers to Barbados what Abuja offered to Nigeria. Once we do it right, we can now have our second city, because of this vesting today. Sir, this vesting in Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. only forms part of the larger development.

Sir, if we were to take it further, we can also go into Hope Road and develop health tourism, because there is a location there.

The previous Government spoke about building another hospital. I have always said in this Honourable House, that if we are serious about building another hospital in Barbados, it cannot be built where the Enmore Health Centre is located. We must build on the North of the island, and you have to build a hospital that would have the capacity to marry tourism and health, together. This is where North Point will come in, because you will use the hotel as the Holding Bay to help service that hospital in the North.

Sir, today we are on new ground and we are battling. I want to say that the tourism statistics might be up by 10 per cent, but if the former Government had listened to the

voices of the people, it would not be 10 per cent, but we would be in here bragging about 30 per cent.

11.10 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, we have developed more rooms, and we would have had more tourists, which means that the output would have been greater, so do not let anybody believe that 10 per cent is any great figure, because it could have been bigger and better. Sir, we are saying today that we are going to ensure that we develop this country Barbados, so that every single soul can be a part of the development of Barbados. Tourism cannot be for a "too few", but tourism would be for all the people of Barbados, under this new Government.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I also want to say something. We have a problem. We have to recognise that we have a golden opportunity also to create an international brand-name for ourselves. Jamaica was able to do it with Sandals.

Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat exactly what I said about the Hilton Hotel. I honestly felt that when the developers of the Hilton Hotel were not prepared to put the money where they should be putting it, they should not have been given the right to put their name on that new plant. I said in this House that Almond Beach should have been given the right to put their name on that hotel plant. Sir, I am saying today, that we again stand a golden opportunity to ensure that we develop a brand-name like how Jamaica was able to develop Sandals, under the brand-name, Almond Beach.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that I have a problem with all-inclusive tourism, but that can be worked out. I honestly believe that in a country like Barbados, you cannot encourage people to develop services and then you give that opportunity to a "too few". The "too few" getting the benefits must understand that those benefits must be shared among the people who had to give up, for them to have a right to get something. This is all I have with the issue of all-inclusive. Sir, I believe that they need to share more with the community. They also need to understand that when the taxpayers of the country give them something, they have a right to give back something to the taxpayers and they cannot hold everything for themselves.

Sir, what is beautiful about it, is that in Barbados as it stands now, we have three branches under the name of Almond Beach Resort. There are also branches in St. Lucia. This means that it is a brand that is developing. Sir, if Sandy Lane did not accept what I offered, then we should go with Almond Beach as a brand-name. Sir, it makes sense.

Mr. Speaker, when you go on the international market looking for a hotel, you need to connect with one that will promote Barbados and will give the maximum benefit to Barbados. Sir, when you go for these international names, what you get is choice, but when you go to Sandals or Almond Beach, you get something that is unique and more Caribbean, so you get more of an opportunity to develop your country.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of people believe in the international brand-name and I am not knocking this, but we have to understand that we have been in tourism for a long time, so by now, we should have developed an international brand-name for Barbados. Sir, not only develop our own international brand-name in Barbados, but that brand-name should now be carried right across the world. Sir, I am saying that in this day and age, we have to ensure that we know what we are developing and what we are retaining.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes. 'Moon Town' is a brand-name. I want you to know that 'Moon Town' is so much a brand-name that there is a gentleman now in St. Lucia, who came to Barbados, saw it, and liked the concept. Sir, he is now doing the same thing in St. Lucia and he invited me to come to St. Lucia and open it for him, some time in August.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I do not live in St. Lucy? I spend more time in St. Lucy than you spend in St. Thomas. I can assure you that sometimes in one day, I spend more than 17 or 18 hours in that particular location.

Mr. Speaker, we need also to ensure that at this point in time, there is a lot of liquidity, because many people who previously had their money invested in shares, through no fault of their own, have now found themselves instead of owning shares, having cash.

Sir, if tourism is now the target point, this Government has to find a way to ensure that those persons who never wanted cash, get an opportunity to be able to buy into tourism and to help them, instead of holding cash that does not appreciate in value, to give them back an asset in hand, which will appreciate in value. Sir, this is a fundamental point that cannot be ignored and should not be ignored.

Mr. Speaker, as you would know, when certain things occur within the market, the value of cash can only go down, and it never goes up. This is why I have always said that I have no interest in cash. I have a problem sometimes with shares. I have always said in this House

that if we as a people have to develop tourism in this country, we also need to change the Companies Act, for the simple reason that directors in this country are too powerful and they are destroying this country Barbados. Sir, I repeat. Directors are too powerful, and they are destroying Barbados. They are not encouraging Barbadians to invest in shares as they should.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: This is too high for you.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is begging you to bring me home, because I have reached a height that he cannot reach.

Mr. Speaker, it is all because the Companies Act tells the directors when not to pay a dividend. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the former Attorney-General who had the power to change it and did not change it, should listen to this one. It tells the directors when not to pay a dividend, but it never tells the directors when to pay a dividend.

Sir, when you look at the history of some companies in Barbados, you see that some shareholders had been frustrated. Some people bought shares believing that once they have purchased those shares, they will get a dividend and they will see an appreciation in the value of the shares. Some of them even going sold their shares below value, just to get out.

Sir, I am saying that the Companies Act - and I do not want to hear that we are following international standards. I am hearing this foolishness in this Parliament every time I speak about it, that because the world is doing this and that, we have to follow them, and this is no reflection on the Chair. Sir, we must have something to ensure that we protect the interest of those persons that we are asking to invest.

Sir, I am saying that the BTII will be involved in many projects. I agree with the Minister that we need to bring the people of Barbados on board, because the BTII has been doing some good work. Do not believe that because I am over here, I am now saying this. I have been saying this for years. I have never criticised any of the BTII projects. I might have criticised the approach by Government to take over certain properties to give to the BTII. Sir, nobody could complain about the work done by the BTII, because they went in there and they have actually single-handedly transformed the country Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, why would I ask for a sea port to be placed in the North of the country? It is a very simple matter.

11.20 a.m.

Sir, when I was in Opposition, I never liked the idea of the port to port, where we allow hundreds of thousands of tourists to be brought from the Grantley Adams International Airport down to the Harbour travelling on the highway and they could only see the highway. Sir, if this is changed, they would have to move from the Grantley Adams International Airport right through Barbados and we would have an important occasion to promote rural Barbados. We would now be opening up the whole of Barbados to these tourists.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Minister of Tourism and the Minister of International Transport to ensure that if this occurs, that they get a proper tour, and it includes the East Coast and Horse Hill, so that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph would be able to gain...

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I have to put in a plug on behalf of the people of St. Joseph, because there are a lot of Kellmans up there and I need to go and speak to them.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I have not spoken to them yet, but when I tell them about you that is a different matter.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: They would change and you know they would change.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Government is fortunate to own this piece of land. It is the right piece of land. I have heard people talking about the location. It has nothing to do with the location. It is the last piece of major open land on the West Coast.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want anybody to mix up this land and to give the impression that this land is not on the West Coast, because when you are to the East, that is the West. This land is on the West Coast. Sir, if the people in Sunset Crest could get their value, we want our too, because what we are offering today is much better than anything that could be offered on the West Coast. It is a very unique piece of land in that everything that you ask for you could get, including a lighthouse. It is unique. It is a special piece of land. Mr. Speaker, because of the value of the land, the Government might even have to consider the proposal offered to it - whether we cannot double or

triple the number of billionaires that could come to this country.

Mr. Speaker, what is also good about it is that it has four slopes to it, which make it unique. It is identical to that piece at the Arawak Cement Plant. Sir, what is beautiful about it is that it has the Arawak Cement Plant that can supply it with cement when it is under construction and we would not have to worry about interfering with the traffic conditions of Barbados, and we would be able to ensure that this Project can come in within cost.

Mr. Speaker, when you go to the North of Barbados, you have what you want and you have to maximise it. That is why I am happy that all Honourable Ministers are here today, especially the Minister of Sports, because the Minister of Sports needs to sit with the Minister of Tourism to come to an understanding, how we could either work out a relationship with Mr. Stanford or how we could compete with Mr. Stanford by using that nice facility at North Stars.

The Minister of Sports would also know that the headache that the Barbados Football Association is suffering can easily be solved if they come to Checker Hall, and look at that ground that is at Checker Hall. Sir, if we are going to marry sports tourism and if we are to develop a second city, then we have to ensure that we utilise everything that we have in the interest of one and all.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Labour Party Government would do well to ensure that they develop a special plan for that Northern corridor. Sir, if they do, I trust that they would not sit back on it, but that they would put it on high speed, because the development of that is the development of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, we are not calling for any second Grantley Adams International Airport. Sir, when you consider that the Minister of Health is looking at health tourism, and the Minister of Tourism and all other Ministers have a relationship and a plan to develop Barbados, to put it to higher heights, then it is obvious that when we attract these number of people in Barbados that the Grantley Adams International Airport would not have the capacity to hold the number of aeroplanes and we would need to have a second one, so that we could look after that capacity.

Mr. Speaker, no developing country can afford to operate with one airport, especially when you are depending on services of which tourism is the major player. You have to have an alternative. Mr. Speaker, any Government that cannot accept that point and allows itself to be in a position where it is compromised would find itself in trouble with the people of the country if the advice given today is not heeded.

Sir, people must stop believing that I am promoting St. Lucy. There is no need for me to promote St. Lucy. If the rest of Barbados does not want the development that St. Lucy offers, we can do it ourselves. If you look at the housing stock of St. Lucy, we did it ourselves. If you look at the development of the people of St. Lucy, we did it ourselves. Sir, all of this development that we are offering Barbados, we are doing it, because we have an interest in seeing Barbados become a developed country.

Sir, on behalf of the nice people in that fair lady called Lucy, I want to commend everything that has been said here today, and to assure the rest of Barbados that the people of St. Lucy stand ready to ensure that Barbados becomes a developed country.

I thank you.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to speak in this debate. I recognise that the Honourable Member for St. Philip North made the point that this particular lease has its origin in the previous Administration, therefore, I would want to support this particular Resolution and to say from the outset that this lease in Fairways Development dates back to 2002 or even before, because as Minister of Housing and Lands, I visited this site on several occasions with the developer.

Mr. Speaker, the more things change, the more they remain the same. This Government came to office a mere 100 days ago. They made the point that they would want to look at every major investment and they would research to see if there were any problems or any corruptions and they would want to see the terms of the lease.

Mr. Speaker, we took a long time for this lease. The Minister of Housing is clear. He said that the Minister of Housing has the power to lease, to sell or even to give land away with the permission of Parliament.

11.30 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, when you lease land to a particular individual, that individual could do the things he wants with that land. Sir, 82.2 acres of land is approximately 800 house spots.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House by trying to give the public of Barbados the impression that this Government has refused to give them 800 house spots, when the Honourable Member, just one second before saying that, accepted that it was the Administration of which he was part, that agreed to lease the land to the private developers.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am saying the Government came to office saying that they would review. Sir, Government had time to review this project. I am not saying that I do not agree with it, but Government said they would review this and that they would put people first. The Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto and Government pronouncements say this.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House by giving the impression that the Democratic Labour Party said they would review Harrison's Point and turn it into house spots for poor people. I want that to be struck from the records, because that is not correct. Sir, I was never party to that.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not hear the Honourable Member saying that.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that you will protect the Opposition. Sir, I am saying that the Government said they would review all major investments, and that they are prepared to put those investments back to the drawing board. Sir, I am saying this piece of investment went through the then Government.

We reviewed it, we took it to the Priority and Planning Committee, and it went to the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Sir, at the time the investors wanted the entire project, and we said to them that it had to be a joint venture programme. It was the then Prime Minister who said that we cannot take prime beachfront land and give to foreigners.

Sir, I am saying when you talk about investments, and we talked about partnership with Government, that is how the clause came in.

Sir, the last Government took the view that a joint venture programme was important, and this dates back to 2001 - 2002. Sir, now short of the 100 days, this Government is talking about getting in bed with millionaires and billionaires. Sir, I am now hearing from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that the returns will be excellent on this project. Sir, I am talking about foreign companies.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, not only is the Honourable Member misleading this House, he is also misquoting me. Sir, I never said anything like that.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is talking about attracting persons like Stanford.

He talked about giving Sandy Lane two pieces of real estate on the coast of Barbados. Sir, the Honourable Member said this is unique land. Sir, what does unique means? It means that this is very special land, and the Government today is vesting 82.2 areas of unique, prime agricultural land on the West Coast.

Sir, only a few days ago the Prime Minister of this country said that land on beachfront properties, from St. Lucy across Barbados, will not be sold.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is again deliberately misleading this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, it is my understanding that an Honourable Member is not allowed to accuse another Honourable Member of deliberately misleading this Honourable House. That is unparliamentary and I am sure the Honourable Member would not do that.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: I take it back. Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House, because the Honourable Member knows that the Prime Minister was speaking about the East of Barbados, and maybe the Honourable Member has a problem with directions.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Government is on record as saying to Barbadians that they will not sell, lease nor give away any of the land on the beach to foreign investors, and I am saying that Fairways Development Limited is a foreign investor, unless it has changed citizenship.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member knows the persons to whom Government is leasing this land are not all foreign investors. The Honourable Member knows that the same persons they agreed to, who they are now criticising less than 100 days, are now reversing themselves in here.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, Government said that they will review all projects.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is mixing up his English. Sir, "review" and "change" is something quite different.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am saying that Government had time to review this project and if Government is pronouncing that it would not give away, lease or sell prime agricultural land, in this Resolution Government is leasing 82.2 acres of land to foreign entities. Sir, it was this Barbados Labour Party that made the point that we want to have a joint venture programme.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, Fairways Development Limited is a local company. The principals of Fairways, the Williams brothers, are extremely well-known to the Honourable Member for St. George North and to Honourable Members on That Side. Sir, I think the Honourable Member is getting a little confused.

Mr. Speaker, the proposal is to bring in an international hotel brand to manage the entity, but the ownership is proposed to be a joint venture programme, between the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., and Fairways Development Limited, which is a local private sector entity.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central must understand that I had a part in this particular development.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I said that from the outset. Sir, I am saying that when Fairways Development Limited -

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this House. Sir, I do not know of any Standing Orders that would allow an Honourable Member to criticise himself.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Government had time to review this project. I am saying when I went to the North of Barbados with this investor, that person was an investor out of England, and that they joined hand-in-hand with a local investor. Therefore, I am saying that the major investor is out of Europe. Sir, the Honourable Member must not come here to mislead this House.

Mr. Speaker, the point this Government needs to understand is that it was their pronouncement. They are telling Barbadians on the one hand that they will not sell, nor give away beachfront land, but this is exactly what they are doing.

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would both Honourable Members take their seats. I recognise the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this

Honourable House again. Sir, there is nothing in here that says that the land is being sold. We are dealing with a vesting, and the Honourable Member was a teacher and knows the difference between “vesting” and “disposal”.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I understand what vesting is all about. Sir, I have said from the opening that when land is vested in an organisation, be it Government or not, that agency could sell it or give it away. Sir, I am saying that a long-term lease is the same thing.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, what is the point of order?

11.40 a.m.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, you are vesting this parcel of land in the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated who will further give it to the developers. It will be taken out of production and it will not be used for 99 years.

If you look at the First Schedule, and the Second Schedule of this Bill speaks about a larger portion, 50 acres situate at Harrisons in the parish of St. Lucy in this island, containing by measurement 20.40 hectares or thereabout, and butting and bounding on other lands now or late of the Barbados Government, on lands now and late of Roy Ward.

I am sure that these developers are in partnership with the wider developers and the wider land owners in that area. Mr. Speaker, by giving these lands to these people we will now have, not only the 82.2 acres, but they will have more than 100 acres of land. The Government has never reviewed this particular development, because since 2001, I am aware that these particular developers have bought other lands.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I have to interrupt the Honourable Member again. We are not giving any land to anyone. I cannot speak about which Englishman was carried up there by the last Government to look at the site. I have in front of me a Letter of Intent and a Draft Agreement with Fairways Development Limited, a local private sector concern. There are some issues that we have a problem with, and we are currently negotiating with those issues. Giving land to a foreigner, who was in bed with Roy Ward, I do not know anything about that.

I can speak to you about the 82.8 acres we are looking at and the proposed development at which the people of Barbados will have a stake in. I have made it

clear, that is the basis by which we are taking forward the negotiation. Sir, this thing about giving land to people, I do not know where the Honourable Member is going with that.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: What the Honourable Member is saying is nothing new. He is talking about having people in partnership, but that is nonsense, because the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated is owned by the Government of Barbados. The Government of Barbados is the only shareholder of Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated, so if Government owns, it makes the point that it is owned by the people and there are now other people involved. This is exactly what the Government of the day was doing. This Government said they were going to review all major investments and you had time to investigate. I am saying to you that you brought to this House so far, two pieces of development. One, to vest land in the Sherbourne Conference Centre and this tourism-related one, which I have no problem with, but I say to you that you should review this, because you said you were not going to give any beach-front land to foreigners, and this is beachfront land, unique land. You could have done something with it because you said you would review it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go on. Sir, the National Housing Corporation could have used this land. The Minister could have said that he would acquire 50 acres of land west of this site, because it is right on the tip of St. Lucy and you have a lot of land all around this development, land that could be used for industrial purposes, land that could be used for housing and land that could be used for other things. Therefore, based on the Government's pronouncements, they could have vested this land in the National Housing Corporation to provide land for poor people, because this is what they said.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is telling the people of Barbados one thing and then doing something else. They talked about the Agricultural Protection Act, but if you look at the First Schedule, this land was bought years ago for agricultural purposes and I thought this Government made the point that, before any land was divested, that you would have the Agricultural Protection Act, but there was nothing of the sort.

The Government rushed and brought this legislation, because it wants investment and, as the Minister of Tourism said, for a company selling it, has excellent returns. The Government went full ahead of itself and decided it is their number one priority. If the priority of the Government is to provide large tracks of land for housing, this is what should be done, but so far I have not seen any programme of the Government to suggest that they are going to be using one of their programmes for housing.

All the things they have done are a lot of programmes that have their origins 10 years or 20 years ago and they are rehashing it here. You make the people believe that you could do so much in 100 days, but we knew it could not be done. The grouse of Barbadians is that you should not have said you could do it in 100 days when we know that development takes time. This development is over five years, so the Government must sit down, devise what is the programme, policy and priority of this Government. The priority of this Government seems to be a rush to attract foreign investment.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is giving the impression that the interest of the people in the North could have been better represented instead of bringing this vesting this morning in the Government dealing with house spots.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, I am not sure that an impression that you received from what the Honourable Member for St. George North is saying is a proper point of order and I will not allow it.

The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I want to thank you for correcting my English. I used the wrong words. The Honourable Member said that instead of this Government looking for house spots in the North of the country, that we are here today vesting for foreigners, but this Honourable Member would know that his Government needs not look for house spots for the people of the North, because this Honourable Member was Minister of Housing when we personally toured St. Lucy, and I showed the Honourable Member over 16 spots in St. Lucy and the only spots that were acted on were what the Democratic Labour Party acted on as far back as 1986.

Sir, to make matters worse, if you see the houses that have been built there, you would be embarrassed to see what they did with a good location, and which the Honourable Member for St. George North agrees that it was a bad decision, because the Honourable Member agreed that there should have been house spots and not houses.

Mr. Speaker, the Castle Plantation, named the Barbados Farms, now Sagicor Limited, has a piece of land at the Cottage that has been, using the Barbados language, thrown out now for over eight years, waiting for house spots and not one piece of work, which has been agreed has been acted upon.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Sir, we have done a lot of development in St. Lucy.

11.50 a.m.

Sir, I recall changing the name from Judge Gap to Kellmans Gap. I remember these things.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. It was not that Minister who changed it from Judge Gap to Kellmans Road. It was the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, that he does not speak to, who did the change. It was not him, Sir.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I just want to make sure you remembered that there were changes in those times. Sir, there was development from Colleton Corner to Sutherland Hill. We recognised that there was need for development in St. Lucy. We recognised this. Sir, we recognised the potential of Half Moon Fort and the Moon Town area for development, but we were thinking about more indigenous developments like Moon Town. Sir, why is it that Moon Town Ltd. is such a brave developer? Why could Moon Town not have asked to vest this land and develop it, based on their track record? Why could 'Moon Town' Limited not shift the focus of Government, as an indigenous developer, because this is what it is, rather than give it to a large-scale...

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

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is giving the impression that the owners of Moon Town could have encouraged Government to go to Harrisons Point to develop it, when the owners of Moon Town could not even get Government to build a car park in Moon Town.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, you are saying that you prefer an indigenous developer. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is on record saying that local investors should be preferred. I am saying that if the Government came to office with one thing in mind, that they want to attract local investors, this is what they could have done. They could have brought in Moon Town Developers, who have a track record, because the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is saying that they are going to St. Lucia to develop St. Lucia, and he is in partnership.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Sir, I know the Standing Orders would not allow me to say that the Honourable Member is deliberately misleading the House, but I will say that the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member was in here when I said that the Moon Town brand name is now being used. As you know, anybody is free to use a brand name outside of Barbados if you did not do the necessary

things outside of Barbados. I never said that the ownership belongs to the local owners. The Honourable Member knows that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well. The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I must say that, here was an opportunity for a government that came to office with so much goodwill, to shift the focus to give the local entity a part of this programme, instead of the Government making a pronouncement a week ago, that they will shift this focus. Now, lo and behold, I am hearing that 82.2 acres will be developed in partnership with a foreign company. Sir, that is why I said, the more things change, the more they remain the same. You must not try to fool people, because we know you could not have done it.

Sir, all I was saying today is, here is a government that said to the people of Barbados, we will change focus, but they have not changed a single thing. They have not changed a single word. All the “poppy cock” that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is saying that he is going to change, the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. is owned by the people of Barbados.

It is a Government entity. Sir, Government is the sole Director of this company, and they have been doing good work in this country. I am glad to hear that they recognised this. Why could they not have told the people of Barbados that the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. is doing good work all across Bridgetown?

Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown say that nothing has been done by the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. Now, today I am hearing about all the wonderful work that was done. I heard the Minister of Tourism, beating his chest about how arrivals are up, and everything is glowing for the Minister of Tourism.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has three minutes in which to conclude.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I am saying these are the things that should have been made. The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown said that nothing has happened in the City. Now today the Minister of Tourism spoke of the number of investments in the City and across urban Barbados.

I am saying, this is where I believe the media has fallen down in this country. The media should have pointed this out. Sir, that is why I enjoy the American Election at this time, because the Press is involved and it is telling the public the truth. I am saying that this country should have

known what was happening in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., and what they are doing.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I am saying that the Government is now back-peddling on all the investment. I am saying, that they would find that the investment we undertook, was undertaken with great scrutiny and vision, and they have to bring many more.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before we continue, although it is not usual for me to hear the asides, we still need to keep the correct atmosphere, so that Honourable Members' contributions can be heard. So let us, please, adhere to that.

I recognise the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to contribute to the Debate on the acquisition of the property for the purpose of the vesting in Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. for the development of the hotel project. I want to begin by saying that a project of this scale must, at least, speak to the economic and social realities of this time.

Sir, if we look at a lot of the massive tourism projects of the past, they have not served Barbados well, in terms of encouraging the involvement of the people through general participation. We use the term “economic enfranchisement” in a very loose manner, when it suits us. If you look at the term, it refers to, trying to ensure that the broad masses of people in a country are able to participate in a very meaningful way, in projects of this size. Sir, we have an opportunity to ensure that a project of this magnitude allows the people of Barbados, whether rich or poor, to participate in a meaningful way.

Sir, in order for them to participate in a meaningful way in a project of this size, first of all it must be one that is eco-friendly. When I say that, I mean that we must ensure that a project of this size does not in itself prove to be detrimental to the environment, in which it is being placed.

Sir, one of the things we need to ensure is, to move away from the practice of the past, when we allowed investors into this country, to engage in grandiose projects that actually decimated the landscape, as has happened in the case of Paradise, Black Rock. I wonder what is going to happen to the residents there, because they have been dealt a disservice by the previous Government, when they allowed the investor to come into this country, to mutilate the landscape in the way in which it has happened. Sir, I

am assured by the Minister of Tourism, that at least, we will bring to bear common sense, in terms of any approval of that project. That is one issue.

Sir, another issue that we also need to look at, when we talk about the whole question of economic enfranchisement, is the fact that projects of this magnitude, as I said before, should allow ordinary people to benefit.

I also want to deal with the fact that St. Lucy is basically an agrarian parish, in which you have a lot of small people involved in agriculture. One of the things that we have not dealt with sufficiently is, when we bring these large projects in this country, the extent to which we ensure that the small business individuals - and I include the small farmers in this country - are able to benefit from these kinds of projects.

12.00 p.m.

Sir, I just want you to go to St. Kitts for a moment and look at the Four Seasons project. This is a large hotel in which ordinary people, such as farmers in the country are able to benefit, from the point of view that they purchase the produce of the farmers who are in close proximity to the hotel.

Sir, we have to ensure, and I think that we must charge the BTII with ensuring that whatever approvals are given to this hotel, they make sure that these people support the national economy by ensuring that they buy produce from these people. Sir, not only farmers, but we must recognise that we have small people in this country, who do numerous things. Sir, because of the pattern of tourism development that we had in the past, they have been prevented from benefitting in any meaningful way from that kind of tourism development. Sir, I am speaking about the handicraft industry which has been decimated.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we need to recognise is that tourism is something that is happening in every country in the world today. What Barbados needs to bring to the fore is a unique tourism product, a unique experience that offers the visitor something that is different, to what he or she would experience in any other destination. Sir, we know many of the visitors that come here today are looking for that kind of genuine experience. Sir, they are looking to at least a sample of the delights of the particular country, of which they are a part.

Mr. Speaker, in that respect, I would want to think that instead of labouring on the fact that where we were yesterday, what we need to do is to look forward to this project and to see the extent to which we can bring this kind of unique experience in any further tourism development in that particular area.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to look at the whole area of community activities. We have in Barbados what we would call our national festival - Crop Over, in which the Government has the responsibility to make a heavy investment on an annual basis. Sir, there is also an opportunity in the future with these kinds of large projects to involve them too, in the whole question of community festivals.

For instance, in St. Lucy and the surrounding communities, you might have a situation where you could, at least, put conditions on investors, that make them support these kinds of festivals. Sir, one of the things we have to be careful of is that we bring in investors who, instead of trying to accommodate the culture of the people that they are a part of, they tend to destroy it. Again, I am saying that we are trying to, at least, provide the visitor with a unique experience that will distinguish Barbados and make it separate from a lot of the other destinations that they actually visit.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again go back to the area of investments. In order for us to get ordinary people investing more in tourism, I think we have to be careful of the mind-set that we have here. We have a mind-set that seems to think that ordinary people are not interested in investment. We seem to think that the only people who are interested in investing in these projects are the foreign investors, and those sections of the Barbadian community, who are well-endowed and who have the ability to get financing from the banks, to permit them to do the things that they need to do.

Sir, I am appealing for us to look and see how we can find a way to change the attitudes on the part of ordinary people, so that they could find it comfortable to feel that they could be part of this thing. Sir, I am going to suggest a few things.

Mr. Speaker, I think that what we need to do is maybe encourage institutions such as credit unions to become involved in these projects. We have a situation in this country where credit unions have large amounts of savings, which they glean from ordinary individuals. They can, at least, be part of investment vehicles, which they could use the resources for these particular kinds of projects.

Sir, I am not saying that in a way to suggest that we compromise the financial viability of credit unions. We all know that as a financial institution, a credit union in itself needs to maintain some form of liquidity and needs to ensure that they balance their liquid from their non-liquid assets.

Sir, what I am saying is that there is an opportunity for us to use credit unions as a means of actually

mobilising the savings of ordinary individuals to participate in these kinds of investments. Again, I hope that the Cabinet would look at this, in terms of the conditions under which we give our approval.

Mr. Speaker, there are other investment vehicles that we could actually provide ordinary people to participate in projects like these. Sir, we must move away from the concept that we seem to be driving to Barbadians that they are not responsible for their own destiny. We seem to be promoting the concept that you do not have to invest. You put your faith in the hands of foreign investors and they will look after you for whatever time.

Mr. Speaker, this is the reason we are seeing the situation on the West Coast of Barbados, where our local people are being deprived of the opportunity in some cases, of free access to those beaches which are there. This is why we are seeing those kinds of developments, because we are putting too much faith in the ability of foreign investors to solve the social and economic problems of this country.

Sir, we want to create a country that is in our own image, and not in the image of a foreign investor. This is why we are seeing the kind of development that we are seeing in Black Rock, on the site of the former Paradise Hotel. Sir, instead of this Government caving into the wishes of foreign investors in a way in which the previous Government did, at least, we will see them trying to uphold the serenity of the sovereignty of this country. In that regard, I am sure the Members of the Opposition Benches would want to support us in our efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also go back to the whole question of handicrafts. We have a situation in this country where a lot of people within the 45 to 50 years old age group in this country cannot find jobs. Sir, we have a situation where unemployment in this country is largely disguised in many cases. Again, we have to use these large investment projects to stimulate unemployment.

Sir, we do not want a situation that is happening today, where we have short-term temporary employment. Sir, when these people brag, it is true, that in the first year of the project, there may be 1 000 people employed, but by the end of the project, it is down from 250 to 100 people. There are these large condominiums coming up, which add little value in terms of the Barbados economy down the road. Up-front they do. In truth and in fact, Sir, let me say this, and many of us would admit, that a lot of the transactions of these projects do not happen in Barbados. They happen overseas, and they have little impact on the national economy.

Sir, going back to the point of our handicraft sector, and involving people who are in that age group which we have to deal with soon, one of the things we need to

encourage is the revitalisation of the handicraft industry, and the creation of small businesses around them.

In that regard, the kind of condition that we need to place on foreign investors, is that we cannot allow foreign investors to come into this country, and think that they must source everything that they bring from abroad. Sir, if they want to get a chair, they need to go to China, they want a bed, they want to go to Taiwan, if they want a stove, they want to go to the Philippines. What therefore is the benefit for our local economy, other than the fact that we get a few pieces of silver up-front, Sir, it must be longer lasting.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we forget is that we are trying to create a Barbadian business- class.

12.10 p.m.

We are trying to create a situation where Barbadians can feel, with a measure of confidence that they can participate in a meaningful way in the world economy.

Sir, that cannot happen when we encourage foreign investors to think that they do not have to ensure that local Barbadians have a chance to engage in business transactions with them, when the business transactions that they are engaged in, are merely outside of Barbados and we push them in that direction. Sir, we must ensure that we have some re-balancing when it comes to this.

Mr. Speaker, the whole question of the handicraft allows a lot of individuals within the 45 to 60 year old age group - which a lot of employers today seem to be shunning, because of the fact that they feel that younger people are more malleable to the things that they want them to do, and therefore, they are easily employable - to form businesses to service those hoteliers. It is not as it exists today, where we have a situation where they would like to service them, but because of the kind of arrangements that we enter into with these foreign investors, they are not allowed to service them. Sir, this is something that we need to pay attention to. Sir, we must not fool ourselves that it cannot happen.

Sir, I also want to look at the whole question of the manufacturing sector. Again, we want to bring uniqueness to our tourism product. Sir, we as Barbadians must feel confident that we could produce the kinds of products that these people could use in their hotels. Sir, there is a fallacy that is being promoted, that when a visitor comes here, all he or she is interested in is eating and using products from the more developed countries.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to talk about Barbados moving towards a developed status, it is a measure of confidence of the things that you actually produce, and a

measure of confidence in the abilities of your people to, at least, produce world class goods. Sir, it is not giving in to these people from abroad who seem to think that they have the best. It is trying to support, promote and export Barbados. We have an opportunity to do it here.

Sir, we could create at least small businesses inside there, supporting whatever happens to come up in that particular facility and doing different things.

Sir, we talk about sea island cotton and we brag about the fact that we have the best quality cotton in the world, and that we could produce the finest fibre, so why is it that when the tourists come here that it is not marketed to those tourists? Why is it that we have not had a game plan in place to ensure that by some date, that we are able to, at least, bring into those hotels that kind of fine quality that Barbados is able to produce? Sir, we like to talk about these things in this country, but we do not like to put the resources behind them.

Sir, when these investors come into this country, we give them a lot of concessions, but what are they giving us in return for the concessions that we have given them? What in terms of the development of the products that our people make are we asking them to give us?

Sir, if the ordinary man on the street cannot see himself being able to, at least, supply the bed sheets that these people lie on in a very fine way. Sir, you want to develop their ability to do that. Sir, we go to the feeling that these people would not want to know that they come to Barbados and sleep on bed linens made out of sea island cotton. Sir, we do not have a game plan in place to assure, maybe in the next 10 or 15 years, that is our objective. Sir, we also need to put the resources in place to do it.

Sir, one of the amazing things in this country is that as soon as you talk about putting money in a local person's hand, you hear: "No, do not do that. He is not good enough for that." But if it was any person coming from overseas, it is, of course, to accommodate them in any way that you can.

Sir, these persons take up our hard-earned taxpayer's dollar. They do foolishness, they get tax holidays and then 10 to 15 years when all of that is dried up, they are gone again, and at the end of the day, we are losers, because we have not taken the opportunity to invest in our people. What we do is to invest in an idea that was born overseas, and at the end of the day, that idea goes back overseas.

Mr. Speaker, with this particular project, we have an opportunity to re-write the circumstances under which investors come into this country, get huge benefits, and at the same time, not delivering the social and economic

goods which this country and ordinary Barbadians are entitled to.

Sir, I want to go back to the whole question of the agro-tourism debate. Sir, we have been hearing a lot of flowery talk in this country about agro-tourism and looking to deal with it. In fact, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy reminds me about Arthur Smith and his project. Sir, we are getting accustomed now to every three or four months seeing a farmer up in arms. He has tomatoes and onions to sell and he cannot get them sold.

Sir, we have a huge foreign exchange bill in this country that says every day we bring in onions and tomatoes. Sir, as was discovered in the Four Seasons project when they started to do the analysis - and that is why the Four Seasons project lashed on to it - they looked at the cost of sourcing these items locally as against foreign, they discovered that they were making cost savings by sourcing them locally. Sir, this is critical, because we have a huge foreign exchange leakage, which is promoted by a concept that Barbadians and their produce are not good enough to go into these so-called world-class institutions. Mr. Speaker, again, this project affords the Government of Barbados an opportunity to address that.

Sir, when you go around that area, you would see that a large amount of agriculture is being undertaken in that area. Sir, agriculture continues to make a contribution to economic activity in this country. It is helping to employ people.

Sir, there are people who seem to think that the agricultural sector does not employ anybody. Sir, what we do not understand about projects like these is that they offer opportunities for forward linkages with the productive sectors.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to focus on agriculture only. I also want to focus on manufacturing. Mr. Speaker, when we bring investors into this country, it should be written in that they are facilitating these forward linkages. We should not give these people a blank cheque to come inside here and feel that every single thing they need, they have to bring from outside. Sir, they contribute less to this country when they source goods and services from outside than when they source them locally. Mr. Speaker, we must face up to these realities when we engage in these kinds of large projects. That is the issue which needs to be brought to this House, not who did it or who did not do it.

12.20 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it comes back to the point where we all started, that we need to encourage an attitude in Barbados that makes them more investment-minded. Sir, they referred to Moon Town, but we have to ask ourselves what

have we done as a people to make our local indigenous businessmen feel comfortable, that they could move forward and could be part of these kinds of initiatives.

Sir, again the mind-set I remind you, has been to say that foreign investment is the answer. That is why institutions, such as the Credit Union Movement in this country, can play a valuable part in terms of changing the mind-set of Barbadians when it comes to the question of investments.

Mr. Speaker, that is why when it comes to the question of this particular investment, this Government has an opportunity to, at least, put provisions there, that would accomplish some of the objectives I have outlined earlier.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate this. One of the things I have a vision for St. Michael West Central for is that, from time to time, we would be engaging in community activities. Sir, one of the things we must remember is that we would be trying to engage in activities that become part of the tourism product. Sir, when we talk about developing tourism, what we are talking about is helping communities in this country to become part of the tourism product. Sir, when we encourage investors to come into this country, we should be speaking to them about things like that.

Sir, I want to say that I believe our Cabinet would do due diligence and ensure that we try to achieve some of those objectives. Sir, I would want to indicate that I give support to this Resolution. Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be now suspended until 1.30 p.m.

Dr. The Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

12.22 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. Prior to the Suspension, we were on Government Business and to that we shall resume.

The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, when the purposes of this Resolution are fully explored, it will be seen that one of the primary reasons for it is the enhancement of tourism, more so in an area unaccustomed to that type of development than anything else, so it is to enhance tourism. It is to bring development to an area that has craved development for a very long time.

No doubt, Mr. Speaker, as action is taken and construction started the overall infrastructural, not just in the 82 acres but all around will have to be built up properly. I toured that area about five weeks ago and realised that between Maycocks and Crab Hill, the road was in a state of disrepair, and the very road itself that leads into the proposed development, has not seen any improvement since the days of the Vestry and that goes far back in time.

We, therefore, have to use this as an opportunity to bring development in a holistic manner, both in the narrow nuclear area that is subject to development, and the areas surrounding it. When one considers too, Mr. Speaker, where we are going with this, this raises the issue of rural development. The concept of rural development is capable of many different meanings. Narrow rural development is about basic infrastructure and basic services, but in a context where people should stand at the centre of development, I would want that when the development occurs, the people of the North are so engaged and embraced in it as to be able to benefit from the investment.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, the current investment climate is still very good, and fortunately too, the idea of a hotel being located in an area like that will fascinate many people. I join with the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, who is not now in his seat, when it comes to the question of the types of industry, however small, that should grow up, sprout and develop in consequence of this particular development. Sir, handicraft should not at all suffer, and indeed, should be encouraged.

One of the things that I take pleasure in when I go to the Animal Flower Cave, is that there are some small craft people, who no doubt, would have produced in their own homes, cottage industries, who used the opportunity of the visitation to the Animal Flower Cave in the same parish of this proposed development, to be able to market what they have.

We also, Mr. Speaker, at this stage, must look at the whole question of the future of the handicraft business. I think one Honourable Member mentioned that persons between age 45 and age 60 are the ones producing the handicraft, and that raises the question as to the extent to which we will encourage younger people to get involved.

1.40 p.m.

I visited the home of a person close to this action recently and that person was taking raw material and making baskets, by hand. We have a commodity in Barbados that grows freely in gullies, which the old people call "whist", from which you can make different types of baskets. Those big baskets in which you can put clothing as well as so-called down "baskets", which you tend to see at Crop Over time. Sir, where we have had things like smocking come, and very much disappear, we must do our utmost to encourage those practitioners of the Handicraft to remain in business.

Sir, we also want to mention the fact, that in a situation where this development is going to occur in the North of Barbados, to raise the question that has already engaged this House today, of the linkages this development should engender. What is the point of having a tourist industry that brings in inflows of foreign exchange, and that very foreign exchange is spent through purchase of stock abroad for importation. Suppose you raised \$2 billion out of tourism, would you take that same \$2 billion in earnings out of tourism? Just supposing. Would you take that same \$2 billion to spend on imports? I therefore, am of the view that where agriculture, in particular, can be stimulated through this particular measure, that we seize the opportunity to do so.

Sir, speaking about agriculture, the way the world is right now, there is no question that a very clear message is coming to Barbados to develop its agriculture, especially its food agriculture, in a way that it has never been developed. If we assume that our farmers are going to respond by producing more foodstuff, we also have to allow them to be able to market that foodstuff in institutions that formerly were importing the very foods that we produce here.

Sir, the whole of trade liberalisation and globalisation must never be used as an excuse to allow foreign competition to oust local production. No argument that is consistent with our attachment to globalisation and trade liberalisation should be advanced in a way to suggest that we are opened now to all, therefore we cannot protect things locally.

As a matter of fact, we on This Side treat agriculture as a particularly sensitive area, in the whole concept of trade liberalisation.

Sir, talking about agriculture, we also have to be very concerned that those countries that have inferior goods, that sell to Barbados, should never be encouraged to do that, especially if we can respond by producing and using what we grow.

Sir, I, therefore, in circumstances where the investment climate is right, in circumstances where the

people of St. Lucy have had to travel to Bridgetown and beyond in search of employment, in circumstances where

development has been lacking in that area, join with those Honourable Members who have spoken in support of this particular measure. I feel too that we have to look at existing institutions in St. Lucy, for example, the Arawak Cement Plant and a nearby clinker, which operates very close to the Arawak Cement Plant. We have to look to see the extent to which these institutions have truly benefitted people in the North.

Sir, we are going to come to a situation in Barbados where we must decentralise our development. We cannot any longer concentrate our development thrust in St. Michael, which is over-crowded in any case, and in Bridgetown. Rural Barbados has to come to a stage where that too must benefit from developments.

Sir, some economists speak of the concept of Economic Dualism. What is Economic Dualism? Let me give you an example. If you explore the South Coast of Barbados, a place with which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is familiar, from Oistins to the Garrison, you cannot help but see a particular level of development. If you leave Prospect and the area where the Four Seasons Hotel is going up, travelling North to Speightstown, you see a particular level of development, but go into St. Joseph, St. Andrew, St. John and parts of St. Philip, you do not see the level of economic development.

Sir, St. Philip has been used primarily for residential development, but in the context of pure economic development, we cannot stand condemned as having permitted economic dualism, that being the concept of one part of the State, in a high degree of development, and elsewhere in the same country, there is either under-development or lack of development. We have to be careful to ensure that those for whom we work are not necessarily institutions. Those, for whom we in here work, tend to be ordinary Barbadians like you and all of us in here. We have to let developments like these speak loudly to the whole question of embracing those in need.

Sir, the point about the farmers having access to selling their produce in hotels is a serious one. Too many hotels are guilty of importing things, rather than exploring the local market. Luckily, sometimes farmers are fortunate where certain local supermarkets deal with the small farmer. I urge all in the hotel sector to be nationalistic enough to be able to take the produce of the small producer, especially the small producer who cannot afford to give up production, for marketing.

Sir, one of the challenges facing the farming community, is that the farmer has to be his own marketeer. If farming is a specialised business, and if marketing is a

separate specialised business, that farmer should not be performing the same functions. We need, therefore, to differentiate between production and marketing, and at the same time, do our utmost through the Barbados Agricultural Development Management Company, to ensure that those who produce do not perish for lack of a market.

Sir, with these few remarks, I am obliged to you.

Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolution before this Honourable House, and to first assure the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, and the Honourable Member for St. James North, that the Democratic Labour Party is cognizant of the need to ensure that local agriculture can benefit from the tourism product in our country.

Sir, I have the Party's Manifesto for the last General Election. On Page 39 it says:

A. The new Democratic Labour Party Administration will therefore link tourism to agriculture.

On Page 38 it says:

A. There are several critical issues which must be addressed urgently...

Sir, point by point we mentioned the perennial problem of linkages in the industry, dominance by expatriate investors, repatriated earnings, failing to benefit fully from the multiplying effect, when earnings from this sector are repatriated, and other areas, for example, an increasing number of more discern tourists who are interested in Cultural Tourism, Sports Tourism, Eco Tourism and other exotic products.

Sir, most people in Barbados do not consider themselves stakeholders in tourism. Again, it promised that the Democratic Labour Party Administration will therefore, develop the concept of Community Tourism by training and motivating local people to provide accommodation and other services to visitors in their communities.

1.50 p.m.

Sir, we would restructure and strengthen the Barbados Tourism Authority to include more local people as stakeholders in tourism.

The Prime Minister always reminds the Cabinet that the Manifesto is our guiding light, in terms of the execution of Government policy. This is what the people of Barbados have voted for, and this is what they will get. I assure the Honourable Member for St. George North that we will review all projects that the last Government may have considered, so have no fear about that.

Sir, let me clarify for his benefit that I never in this Honourable House or elsewhere, suggested that the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., did absolutely nothing positive for our country. I may have been critical of certain aspects, and I will continue to do that, because it is my democratic right.

For example, I remember a number of years ago, as the Democratic Labour Party's candidate for the City, I was invited to the Town Hall Meeting held at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School on Jemmott's Lane. It was part of the Environmental Impact Study, which is mandatory by Law, in relation to a project proposed by the same BTII. I believe this was a joint venture with a leading utility company, and others, to do the following:

1. To redevelop the old eye ward.
2. Rebuild the old hospital jetty and have an elaborate upmarket restaurant at the top of the Jetty.
3. Refurbish the old Child Care Board building on the shore.

Sir, elaborate architectural drawings were done. The Chief Town Planner was present. Sir, years went by. We have assumed office and that project has not gotten off the ground. Therefore, when I say that the BTII has failed us and the Government of Barbados under the Barbados Labour Party in a number of instances, this is one blaring example.

Sir, this is why I congratulate the Minister of Tourism, when he said that the Democratic Labour Party Government will be proceeding with great alacrity, so that by the end of this calendar year, we will see tourism expansion at Harrison's Point in St. Lucy. Therefore, we are not just about talking and letting projects stall for years, like the Pierhead Redevelopment Project.

Sir, a whole Act of Parliament was enacted by the Barbados Labour Party Government and they failed to deliver. They failed to inspire the private sector partners to execute that project, all to the detriment of Barbados and the generation of vital foreign exchange to propel our country.

The Honourable Member for St. George North knows that we have to earn foreign exchange in order to sustain the residents of our country. The Barbados Labour

Party Government should remember that their philosophy was that beachfront property was prime tourism real estate and that it should fetch its highest economic value.

I remember the lengths that the Barbados Labour Party Government took to remove the Public Library at Speightstown, because it was on the beach-front land. Therefore, the Honourable Member for St. George North is quite aware of the need to develop the beach-front property in the tourism aspect, so that we can earn foreign exchange to import the foodstuff and the other items that we need as a country to survive. We cannot pay for these imports in Barbados dollars. We need to earn foreign exchange. Therefore, the Democratic Labour Party Government does not have to apologise to anybody for propelling the tourism product forward. As the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the Minister of Tourism mentioned, the Barbados Labour Party Government failed this country by not increasing the room stock, in terms of the hotel rooms in our country. There has been a net reduction of hotel rooms with the advent of more villas. We are very cognizant of the need to ensure that there is the right mix, in terms of the ratio of hotel rooms to villas.

Indeed, within the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto, we mentioned within page 38 that a new Democratic Labour Party Administration will therefore, draw up a tourism master plan. Sir, this plan is being devised as we speak now, by interfacing with various players in the tourism sector, to ensure that we get the right mix.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that we need to increase the number of hotel rooms available. There is no point in increasing airlift and then you have no way to accommodate those visitors. You know that you had the Sandy Lane, you had the Hilton Redevelopment, but what happened there is that you just replaced existing rooms with other rooms. In fact, you had a net reduction. Therefore, the Barbados Labour Party Government has failed this country in terms of adding new hotel rooms to the tourist plant in our country. This is why the Democratic Labour Party is committed to ensuring that project comes to full fruition.

Sir, we are not just adopting - lock, stock and barrel - any proposals of the Barbados Labour Party Government, so the Honourable Member for St. George North has nothing to fear.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say, for example, that within this whole redevelopment of the Harrison Point area, as Honourable Members have mentioned before, this is a simple Resolution that seeks to vest this Crown land in the hands of the BTIL.

Mr. Speaker, we have not come to Parliament today with any specifics, in terms of what would be the nature of any tourist development at this venue. Therefore, the Honourable Member for St. George North is quite out of place, and sort of presumptive, if I may say so, in terms of trying to suggest, exactly what format the tourism development will take. It is not on the Table. The Cabinet has not addressed it as yet. I think that, as one of his Members mentioned, allow the Government to govern, and when we present the project to Parliament, then to critique it, but do not assume.

Asides.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, let me just say that in terms of my perspectives on this matter, I therefore, would suggest to the Government, if we decide to put a hotel plant up there, to make sure that the number of rooms should be commensurate with the size of the lands being acquired and utilised. Therefore, if we have 80 acres being utilised, I would expect that we really have hundreds of hotel rooms on that property, as opposed to just a few rooms and lots of villas. You could have a combination but the hotel room stock must be substantial because the land space in Barbados of beach-front property is limited. Therefore, it would not be acceptable, in my view, to just put up 100 rooms and call that wally, because we would not have really put a big dent in the demand for hotel rooms within our country.

Mr. Speaker, I remember as a young lad in the 1970s at Lodge School, my Geography Teacher taking our class to an educational tour of the old train line route from Bathsheba to Bath. Sir, we noticed the coastal features in action, where the blow holes, because of the intense energy derived from the wave action, water would actually be pushed through the cliff into the cavities in the land, and blow up several metres inland. I would urge the developers to ensure that this is factored into the plan, so that we do not construct buildings too close to the cliff edge to compromise the structural integrity.

Mr. Speaker, we do not want another Arch Cot scenario. This is something that I am cognizant of and when you look at proposals to increase the stretch of beach there, and one can use the groins and break-waters to increase the build-up of sand at that point, in my view, we must liaise with the Coastal Conservation Unit to make sure that in enhancing a beach there, you do not cause erosion of beaches at other parts of the coastline of Barbados. It is a very technical science and one must be very careful about how you interfere with nature.

While I am at it, I talked about the tremendous wave energy, which is visible to all along that section of our country, going east.

2.00 p.m.

With the increasing cost of fossil fuels - as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central mentioned - we should really encourage investors to put some money into research and development. Therefore, I look forward to some research being done to look at the feasibility of setting up hydro-electric wave action generation plants in that area, so that it could be fed into the electric grid and save the country valuable foreign exchange in terms of reliance on fossil fuels.

Mr. Speaker, I go further to talk about community tourism. Mr. Speaker, I agree 100 per cent with the need to ensure that the local residents in that area, could benefit directly in a tangible way from any development in the tourist plant up there. I do not believe in simple trickle-down economics where you give all the concessions to the rich and hope that a few crumbs fall down years after to the most vulnerable groups in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I support the concept of ensuring that the small farmers in that area would be given first choice in being able to supply those hotels and villas with their produce.

Mr. Speaker, the United Nations Development Programme has just injected thousands of dollars into the local black belly industry through the Barbados Agricultural Society, so as to maintain the genetic integrity of that famous black belly breed of sheep in our country, which is now being presented on the tables of the biggest hotels in a very attractive way. The black belly sheep is very nutritious, low in fat and very fresh. I look forward to such tourism development really propelling agriculture, be it in animal husbandry or vegetable crops.

Mr. Speaker, there is the issue of nature trails. As a young lad, I went along that old train line route. It is a wonderful scenery up there. Therefore, we would be able to organise eco-tourism nature trails, be it with the landrovers, or even pedestrians with donkeys, and so on.

Over the years, we heard people talked about reintroducing such a train system. It does not have to be as elaborate as going into Bridgetown, but certainly along that rugged East Coast if we are going to maintain it as a nature sanctuary. If we retrace the path of the old train line, it could be a very attractive tourist product.

Mr. Speaker, from as far back as the 1970s, we noticed that there was such massive erosion of the land. Part of that old train line is now in the sea, there again showing up the point I made about making sure that the construction of buildings are not too close to the cliff edge.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly would support any feasible look at re-establishing some simple locomotives that would even be an attraction to Barbadians, who could go on a picnic on that old train line and certainly the tourists. It could also help with the transportation problem.

Mr. Speaker, talking about transportation, within our Manifesto, we talked about developing a ferry service linking CARICOM countries.

Sir, I remember learning in History about Speightstown being "Little Bristol". A lot of ships would have docked there. I believe that ships would have taken molasses and sugar from Speightstown down to Bridgetown.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that there is nothing wrong with developing a simple ferry service from the North in St. Lucy via Speightstown down to Bridgetown to bring those tourists down, be it in hover-crafts or pleasure boats, to reduce the congestion on the roads and to increase the tourist product. Sir, the view along that coast in pleasure crafts is really tremendous.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the issues that I think could really propel the tourist product forward. I really look forward to the Democratic Labour Party Government really injecting and attracting massive investments, not at the exclusion of local ownership.

Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure that Barbadian investors are able to participate fully in such investments. Mr. Speaker, I am very convinced that the Democratic Labour Party will indeed ensure that any development in tourism, would not exclude the public in terms of public shareholdings in these companies.

With those few words, I support this Resolution.

I thank you.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend support to this Resolution. I do not need to spend a lot of time on it. A lot of good points have been made, particularly from This Side, that speak volume to the efforts of this Government to redefine the tourism industry in Barbados. I have heard a lot coming from the Other Side that seeks to imply that what we are doing here today is pretty much to implement the proposal that they had for that particular piece of land in St. Lucy, but nothing could be further from the truth.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that in taking this Resolution forward, we are going to recognise that it would certainly reflect, upon implementation, the difference between this Government and the former Government, in respect of tourism development.

To my mind, the last Administration did untold damage to the tourism industry in Barbados. Despite whatever the former Minister of Tourism talked about in terms of arrivals, statistics, etcetera, the harsh reality is that the tourism industry in Barbados was under severe strain and pressure as a result of the failure of the former Administration. It is well-known that we lost almost 1 000 rooms under the former dispensation.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is committed to increasing the number of rooms in the tourism plant in Barbados. It was only four months ago that the former Administration was the Government, so let us remind them of some of the things they did in this country, which reflect the big difference between us.

For example, we have Hotels and Resorts Limited better known as GEMS, which a former Member of Parliament for St. Michael North West had some of the strongest language to use when describing that particular project. He then found comfort in the bosom of the former Government as well. His points on GEMS were very accurate and reflected the kind of mal-Administration you got in the tourism industry on the whole.

Mr. Speaker, we came into office and found that Hotels and Resorts Limited is indebted to the tune of about \$200 million. The Government of Barbados would have to decide what to do about Hotels and Resorts Limited. The Other Side should not behave as though they have been washed in the blood of the lamb. The former Government left a huge debt in respect of Hotels and Resorts Limited, which this Administration would have to deal with. As someone with the basic training in finance would know, there is no way that we would ever be able to recoup that investment that was made by the former Government.

Sir, part and parcel of that was because they had no real tourism master plan. It was all about taking care of a select few. A few of their political friends had owed the Barbados Development Bank money, they wanted to bail them out, and in a quest to take care of them, they created this monster, which this Democratic Labour Party Administration has to deal with. Therefore, I do not believe that the Other Side ought to have the temerity to speak in any level of seriousness about tourism in Barbados today.

Mr. Speaker, it gets worse. There is also Eastry House. Let us not forget these things whatsoever. This is a serious matter. We still have to deal with the issue of Eastry House. We all know that we perhaps would never recover that kind of investment down there.

Mr. Speaker, once again, in a quest to take care of a select few, the Honourable Member for St. Peter - I am very sorry he is not in his seat today - facilitated in the purchase of Eastry House by the Government of Barbados

and then did nothing with it whatsoever. Sir, Eastry House could have been an important part of the tourism plant in Barbados today.

2.10 p.m.

Sir, even going further North to the St. Joseph Hospital, we talked about health tourism and I have said it in this Honourable House before, that in a quest to destroy one man, the Honourable Member for St. Peter and his Administration closed down the St. Joseph Hospital. Sir, that, perhaps today, could be playing an important role in health tourism in Barbados. Therefore, let us not fool ourselves. Do not believe that you all have the answers to tourism in this country.

This Administration is cognisant of what it has inherited. We know what we have to do to drive tourism forward in Barbados, but it will not be done with the willy-nilly personification that was done under the Government of the Barbados Labour Party. We have to take a more holistic approach to development, and that is why I am very happy that we are here debating this Resolution to vest lands in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., for the purpose of tourism in the North of St. Lucy, in particular. Sir, it will certainly reflect on what this Government has to do to increase the plant size in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I heard from the Honourable Member for St. George North about that project, about how they left it, about what will be done, etcetera.

Sir, the reality is that as they had previously proposed, Rosewood would have managed only 72-hotel rooms on an 82-acre site in St. Lucy. Sir, that works out to 1.12 acres per room. If you can tell me that is acceptable, or that is a way in which we could increase the tourism plant in Barbados? Then I would tell you something is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of tourism development and the expansion in the tourism plant, the drive of the former Administration was to build condominiums on the West and South Coasts of Barbados. I remember, a few years ago, I used to be able to take my children and drive down the West Coast, where I could have seen parts of the sea. Sir, today you cannot do that. It has now become a concrete jungle.

Sir, any one of us who travels extensively around the world, even on holiday or business, know only too well the importance of seeing some greenery, ocean and open spaces. Sir, had we continued in the same vein as the former Administration, Barbados today would be moving very well in the direction of being a concrete jungle. Sir, I do not believe that is what tourists want, nor that is what Barbadians deserve.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to tourism development, we have to be very clear in our minds as to the difference between this Administration and the former Government. We are not just about concrete jungles. We have decided as a government that we have to develop a tourism master plan, which I am advised is on the way. Sir, that tourism master plan, I am sure, is one that would be reflective of the skills, the competencies and resources of Barbados and Barbadians. It will certainly reflect what we believe the international clientele is demanding. Therefore, let us be very clear in terms of what the former Administration's focus was on, in terms of the tourism sector.

Mr. Speaker, it goes further than that. I have heard talk from the Other Side about foreign investors and about selling off everything. Sir, they were so accustomed to selling every square foot of land to the highest bidder, who oftentimes came from outside of Barbados, that there was no time to focus on ensuring that Barbadians and future generations of Barbadians could continue to own a piece of the rock and could continue to invest in the important tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker, as a government, while we have not yet decided what exactly would take place in St. Lucy on that piece of land, we know there will be tourism development, and that a sizeable part of ownership in that project will remain in the hands of Barbadians for generations to come.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Sir, when you sell land, you cannot get it back so easily, and after 15 years in the tourism industry, I am appalled at the lack of ownership by Barbadians in the tourism industry. Sir, that has to change and this Government is committed to making a difference, in respect of tourism ownership in this country.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, a month after an election, we are now seeing a developer at Weston, St. James, clearing 2.5 acres of land, and he would have gotten permission since January 15.

Hon. D. O. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that is a point of order, so I can move on. Mr. Speaker, I know very well that piece of land of which the Honourable Member speaks. Sir, that land was not purchased in the time of this Administration. I also know that the application for permission by the Town Planning Department was applied for before then. Secondly, it is owned by Barbadians.

Sir, the point remains that this Government is committed to bringing brand-name hotels to Barbados. Sir, let us not fool ourselves. The marketplace is one which says that we need to attract brand names or internationally-known hotels to Barbados. We also have a fine judicious blend with those brand-names, like Almond Beach, which we are developing in Barbados and in the region. We are committed to making that happen. We have the Barbados Hilton, and I am grateful for that.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that in respect of the Barbados Hilton, because the former Government has continued to masquerade, jumping up and down the length and breadth of this country, behaving as though Barbadians and Barbados got a great deal when they reconstructed and opened the Barbados Hilton. Sir, I believe the moratorium on the Barbados Hilton is soon to be expired and the debt on the Barbados Hilton, as of March 31, 2008, is \$136 351 719.

Sir, the arrangement entered into between Barbados Needhams Point Limited and the Barbados Hilton is not one that has allowed the Government and the people of Barbados to benefit tremendously or financially from that project.

Sir, as a Barbadian, I am utterly embarrassed at what the former Government entered into, in relation to the Barbados Hilton. Sir, this Administration is now faced with that mountain of debt that the previous Government has left behind. There was no plan whatsoever, in terms of tourism development in Barbados. It was all about entering into some physical development contracts, seeing who could get a few million dollars hither and thither. There was no concern about true tourism development and about the future of Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, that is the difference between them and us on This Side. We clearly understand where we want our country to go. We clearly understand the importance of tourism and we understand the importance of leaving a legacy behind and not taking care of a selected few today.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, we would have, as a Government, to deal with the Barbados Hilton. We would have to decide, in the not-too-distant future, whether we would have to sell the real estate or go on the market and find another investor to come and take some of the equity in that project, but it cannot continue as usual.

Mr. Speaker, Barbadians need to be very cognizant of the kind of mess the Honourable Member for St. Peter and his colleagues have left behind for us to clean up, and we cannot clean it up in four months. As a matter of fact, I

think the mess is far worse than any one of us would have anticipated.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Sir, there was no plan. You took tourism and you selected a few individuals and gave them postings overseas and put them in key positions in the tourism sector, not because of any competencies, but purely because there were a few of your friends who supported you politically. There was no regard, whatsoever, as to whether or not they could spell Ada backwards. Those are the kinds of people you all put into positions. As a matter of fact, it permeates the entire Civil Service.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, we are not speaking today on the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, and when the Honourable Member is talking about spelling Ada backwards, he better not be talking about the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation in this matter.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I am totally lost. Sir, no personal offence was intended.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of legacy that has been left behind. Sir, while we are speaking about tourism, we also speak about overall national management. It is the kind of square pegs that have been placed in round holes, over the past 14 years, and this Administration battles day after day with some of the individuals who have been placed in key positions, who continue to laud about the place behaving as though they are masters on That Side with no interest whatsoever in true national development.

2.20 p.m.

I know that it is reflected throughout the entire Public Service, particularly in the tourism sector.

We have decided, as a government, as you have heard from the Honourable Member from St. Michael South Central, that we are working on a tourism master plan and we are going to take a very holistic approach to tourism.

Sir, on the physical development side, we recognise that ownership has to include Barbadians. Financial management must be brought to the fore. Investors must

respect the Laws of Barbados, whether they be domestic or otherwise, and even in terms of the Town and Country Planning, we inherited a Town & Country Planning that was so fearful of a former Minister of Town and Country Planning that it was unbelievable. Sir, so many decisions made by Town and Country Planning were overturned by the Honourable Member for St. Peter. I am sorry he is not in his seat today, because I would have liked him to hear what I am saying and subsequently approved by one-man or one-woman tribunals with no regard whatsoever for serious planning in this country.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is not only misleading the House, but he is doing so in a way that is really prejudicial. The reality is that the Honourable Member cannot say that people were fearful of the Honourable Minister, but secondly, if he wants to talk about the Laws being broken, he perhaps is in the best position to advise this Honourable Chamber how as Minister of international Business, he is the Minister to whom Invest Barbados reports in law, but according to the organisation of that Cabinet, it reports to the Prime Minister and if, therefore, there is a blatant disregard for the Law, it is to be evidenced with his acting as an accomplice.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, there are times when we will deal with international business. I am not going to deal with that now. I will not come in here and

be any perpetrator of time and Laws ineptitude. I stick to my position. We have in this country to ensure that the agencies established to protect, not only this generation, but future generations, are given the autonomy and the respect accorded to them, and can conduct themselves with a level of professionalism that ensures that future generations benefit.

Sir, even in respect of applications for tourism development, plants and facilities, there are instances where the Chief Town Planner's Office would have had some objections or challenges and say "no" and we know that others in other places for whatever reasons best known to themselves, would have said "yes" and, as a result, Barbados and Barbadians will pay a heavy price in the future.

We have to ensure that our tourism development is linked to what the international arena is demanding. If it says that we need brand-name hotels in Barbados to attract people over here, we have decided to go that route and such developments must also respect the environment that we have in Barbados. We only have 166 square miles and we have to ensure that whatever we do, the environment is protected, and this Government will not run willy-nilly, cap in hand, to any investors, whether domestic or

international, to swing a deal and then destroy our environment for future generations to come.

When we talk on This Side about a holistic approach to tourism development, it is one that speaks to ensuring that future generations have a say that we need an environment behind that they can benefit from tremendously.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go a step further because this is about vesting land in the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated for tourism development, and we need to ensure as we go forward, that Barbados as an economy, gets more out of the tourism dollar. We have to ensure when tourists come here and when operators book flights and make arrangements, that more money ends up in Barbados out of that dollar. Estimates indicate that almost \$0.75 out of each dollar goes back out of Barbados and we, therefore, need to identify ways in which we can save.

We have identified a link between tourism and agriculture and I am certain that by doing this project in the Northern part of the island, that we can assure that lands around there are used for agricultural development, and that more people can be fed there.

We also want to link tourism with health, and I am sure that others will have more to say about that going forward, but this is another niche area that others were calling for years ago, but they were blatantly ignored because the players who proposed them were not singing from the same political hymn sheet as those who had to make the decisions in those days. Sir, that is the height of irresponsibility on the part of some politicians in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we have to ensure that other support services for the tourism sector expand. We have the Barbados Community College Hospitality Division. We need to continue to give it support and continue to expand it, because as the physical plant grows, as our market diversifies and expands, we need to make sure we have the human capital to make it work. We also need to ensure that when hotel chains or hoteliers apply for work permits to bring expatriates into Barbados to work that there must be a direct correlation between that individual work permit approval and the training of Barbadians to take over in the not too distant future.

Mr. Speaker, in the former Administration, work permits were treated willy-nilly, friendly-friendly with no regards whatsoever for any serious planning and about future development in Barbados, so as a result, you had individuals come here and take up positions as chefs and part of the criteria is that they must speak four languages. I have never heard of a cook who needed to speak anything

else but Bajan and English, but a chef who spoke German, Scandinavian, this, that and what-not.

Mr. Speaker, we have taken a position as a government, that there are inextricable linkages between the tourism sector and many other facets of our community, and that is why we will ensure that our tourism master plan speaks volumes to these kinds of issue.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I stand in support of this Resolution. To my mind, it begins to clearly exemplify the difference in planning and the difference in tourism development between the former Administration and this one. Let me reiterate that there is a massive amount of debt, a massive amount of mess that has been left behind by the former Administration, which we are busy cleaning up.

One would have never expected that individuals could have been so irresponsible in the management of the affairs of the country, that we could have been left the massive amount of debt, particularly in the tourism plant that the Government had shares in for this Administration, but Sir, we are up to the task. We ask for no excuse. We know what we have inherited. We know where we want Barbados to go and what it takes to get there, but they must never be allowed to feel that they have done so good in Barbados. This Administration in tourism and housing and lands, we know where we need to go and we will get there.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Sir, being an attorney-at-law, you would appreciate that sometimes you read a judgment and after such a good judgment, the fellow judge would say he agrees. After the presentation of the Honourable Member for St. James South, I would like to say that I am in total agreement and just add a few comments.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that concerns me with respect to tourism is that after 60 years or thereabout of saying that tourism is our business, I see on a consistent basis advertisements in the newspapers for personnel, and it is quite clear to me from these advertisements, that there is actually no intention to employ a Barbadian in that position.

Mr. Speaker, before I came into this Chamber, I remember some time in 2007, I wrote to the Chief Immigration Officer and delivered the letter myself. This was an advertisement for a Food and Beverage Manager for the Hilton Hotel and I thought that after 60 years and the little bit I know about food and beverage, that certainly

we could find someone in Barbados who could perform that job without a difficulty. Sir, I did not receive a response from the Chief Immigration Officer nor did I receive a response from the Hilton Hotel but, needless to say, the work permit was issued.

2.30 p.m.

Sir, I believe I copied my letter to the Barbados Workers Union, who I believe represents the workers in the hotel sector.

Sir, I received a response from the Barbados Workers Union which suggested that it was the normal modus operandi of hotels in this country to bring the Barbadian worker to a certain level, and then find every reason not to move him beyond that level.

Sir, I want to begin with that, because it concerns me. I believe that as a government, we must ensure when going forward, that any project we are involved in, we not only look to ensure that Barbadians have substantial ownership, but in fact, I want to challenge the Government to make it a policy that any tourism project we are involved in, we ensure that a certain percentage is left for Barbadian ownership. Sir, there is absolutely nothing wrong with that.

Mr. Speaker, when I say Barbadian ownership, I do not mean the same little group that comes up all the time. I want to see a wider group. I want to see your father, mother, your children and our children, and the children in the Constituency of St. Philip South. I want to see a wide ownership, not just the same few that I would see, for example, whose names are attached to this project. I am sure that the Honourable Member for St. George North, in his sober moment would agree with me.

Asides.

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Sir, this is a very serious point. I am very concerned about the fact that after investing so many millions of dollars in tourism in this country, we are finding reasons not to ensure that Barbadians are unable to further themselves and maximise their potential.

Sir, I remember as a child, we used to believe that if you went to the airport, you needed to see one who looks like the Honourable Member for Christ Church West at the counter. You did not need to see anyone looking like myself at the counter. Sir, there is no reason why Barbadians, regardless of their background, once they can perform the task, should not, in fact, be given the opportunity. I am asking the Government and the Ministry responsible for Immigration, and the Ministry responsible for Labour, to ensure that this foolishness that took place comes to an end.

Sir, when I see the Ads, automatically I label them and say work permit. As my colleague from St. James South pointed out, he may not know anything about cooking, but he certainly knows that you do not need four languages to be a cook, or you do not need four languages to be a chef. Sir, when we see these Ads we must ensure, and I am asking the Government to ensure, that our people are enfranchised, that our people are placed first in terms of our development.

Sir, I do not believe that there is any sector in this country that is given more concessions than the tourism sector. When you look at every Budget, every plea, the tourism sector has been always asking for concessions. I am asking the Government to link any concession to them, ensuring that Barbadians maximise their potential and that Barbadians invest in their plants.

Sir, I am not fool-hardy. I realise that any investor that we bring into Barbados, certainly want to see a certain level of return. There is no problem with that, but if you look in other territories, they have mandated that a pre-requisite for this is to ensure that a certain percentage is left to local ownership, and it has worked. I am saying that we should ensure that it works as this country goes forward.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, I am supporting the vesting of the land, but I am saying to the Government, that we must ensure when we sit down and re-look this project, that there is a wide cross section of ownership. I was happy to hear the Minister of Tourism, who is not in his seat presently, articulate that. I was also happy to hear the Honourable Member for St. Philip North articulate that, because it is a very serious issue for us, and we must ensure that it is looked at.

Sir, there is absolutely no doubt that when you travel, you are attracted to brands. I have travelled to strange places. I have travelled to Dubai, which is a good example. The first thing you do is to look on to a website for brand names that you know, because you want to be comfortable where you stay. There is no doubt that it is important for us as a country, to attract brands. There is absolutely no doubt about that. If there is a single failure of the previous Administration, it has to be their inability. The fact that they did not attract not one brand, Sir, rather than the Minister getting up and beating his chest about lifts and numbers, he should have been working hard to ensure that we can attract brands, because brands bring people and brands bring security.

Sir, Trinidad really does not have a tourism plant. I went to Trinidad recently and noticed that there is a Hyatt and a Marriott. St. Lucia and Jamaica are attracting brands. These are only our neighbours. We must ensure that we are able to attract brands. Any move by this Government to bring brands to this country would be supported, I am sure,

by the Government in totality, because we recognise it is important.

Sir, having said that, Government, in looking at this master plan, must look at it in its totality. They must look at it along with agriculture, for example, and along with the Town and Country Planning Department, because we must work together. I am sure you know, that there is a development planned for Black Bess, for example, and there is one further up from Black Bess, where there is an agricultural component.

The Town and Country Planning Department may not feel that it is right for the country, the Ministry of Agriculture may not feel it is right for the country, but the three Departments need to work together, and with speed, to ensure that whether we say yea or nay, in fact there is absolutely no doubt about our decision and not to procrastinate. We must work together.

Sir, at the end of the day, when investors come to this country they want a few things. They want certainty. They want to ensure that there is certainty of process. If we want to bring integrity to public life back in the country, if we want to bring integrity back to where progress is in this country, we must ensure that there is a certainty of progress, so that when one comes to Barbados to invest, he knows this is the road he needs to travel. They do not need to befriend John Smith, John Brown or otherwise, because the process is clear. Sir, they want speed, in terms of ensuring that a decision is made speedily. Sir, I want that in any development plan, to ensure that there is certainty of process, and to ensure that any decisions that are made with respect to investors, those decisions are made after careful consideration, but with due process. Sir, there is no reason for us to sit down for a year or two, while trying to make a decision.

Sir, I know that I would have made just a small contribution, but I want to say something, in particular, for the Honourable Member for St. George North, and even for the Leader of the Opposition. Sir, it would be foolhardy of the Government to take a decision that they would not bring anything to this Parliament, that was being considered by the previous Administration, fool-hardy.

Sir, last week we had comments about the Nurses Bill, about it not being original, et cetera, and this week we hear, this was our project and you are bringing it. There is no reason for us as Government, if per-chance the previous Administration had a good idea, and we looked at it, certainly, based on their history, any idea that they had - and I want to support the Honourable Member for St. George North, because he said at least on a half a dozen occasions, re-look the project. Sir, the Government should take his word, because the Honourable Member for St. George North said, that he was involved in the project. I

believed him, based on his performance, that there is reason for us to re-look it, and re-look it a dozen times. So I want to support him.

2.40 p.m.

Sir, we should not be afraid to bring anything to this Chamber, where the previous Government was involved. Sir, where there is merit, let us proceed with despatch. Let us proceed with haste, because at the end of the day, we want to bring benefits to Barbados. It is not about benefits to the Front Bench, it is not about glory to the Government. It is about ensuring that we deliver on our Manifesto pledges; it is about ensuring that we employ our young people, it is about ensuring that we move Barbados forward. Sir, this is what it is about, so I am urging the Government not to be deterred by comments like we heard last week and this week, that where there is a project that there is merit, and let us proceed with it.

Mr. Speaker, we will hear all kinds of excuses from the Other Side. We would hear that there was an intervention of two years. In fact, I do not believe that the Leader of the Opposition mentioned a dollar figure, but the dollar figure that should have been mentioned was US\$100 million, because that is why the project is going forward, because of an uprising at Glendairy. Sir, that is what that reference was about, but my point is that we should proceed with dispatch, because we have a responsibility to deliver to the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, my final point is that there is no doubt, and again, I believe that the Honourable Member for St. James North and all Honourable Members generally, agreed that there should be a link between tourism and the development of our agricultural sector, and there should be a link between tourism and our craft sector. This is why my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy for many years, has been speaking about community tourism. There is no doubt that this is what we should be doing. There is no doubt also that one of the mechanisms to ensure that it happens is that we have a captive audience.

Sir, what concerns me now is that we have a situation where a "too few" - to borrow my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy's expression - seem to be taking the tourists in large buses to selected destinations, no doubt organised by them and their friends, so they are bypassing the normal craft village.

Sir, listen to one of the funniest things of Bridgetown. I pass it every morning and I marvel at it. We have the Pelican Craft Centre (Pelican) and the previous Administration developed a beautiful garden on the Other Side of the road. Therefore, all the tourists who walk up to Bridgetown do not walk through Pelican. They walk

through the gardens, rather than cross the road and, meanwhile, the vendors in Pelican are suffering.

Sir, this is the kind of foresight that the previous Administration had. Therefore, when we say that they have no credibility, when we say that they should not get up in this Chamber and make any comments

about tourism, because of their failure, we can bring you many examples.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I support the vesting of this land at Harrison Point in the BTII, and I look forward to the development of St. Lucy, like I do the development of St. Philip.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

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

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the vesting of the land at Harrison Point to the BTII. One of my concerns is that it is all right to vest land in the Crown to various entities, but I would want to see development with haste from This Side, and not the lack of development that existed with the Bay Street project. I was very glad to hear the Minister of Tourism indicating that by year end, the project would progress.

My greatest concern relates to the value of the property around that development. What provisions would be made for the average landowner for Land Tax, when the land value is improved, because the average Barbadians are the persons who would reside around this hotel and this development.

Further, I want to support my colleague in respect of the agricultural sector and I would want to urge the Government to pay special attention to ensure that the Spring Hall Land Lease Project is given greater consideration. At least, we could have a manufacturing plant, so that what we see existing, where a farmer has to come to the nation to market his produce, by way of a threat to throw them away, would not exist, but that we would go back to where Carmeta Fraser started the project in the little galvanised shed at Wildey, or we would develop something more tangible, so that the occupants of that hotel will use the produce produced locally. Sir, I am sure with that in mind, our food import bill will be drastically reduced.

I would urge the Minister of Public Works to ensure that the road network is of such a good quality, so that when the persons who traverse and occupy that hotel,

decide that they are going to travel to the other section of the country on the east side to explore the eco- tourism product, they could travel from St. Lucy up to Turners Hall Woods, without any difficulty. Therefore, we need to look at it in a holistic way to ensure that whatever project is undertaken, will be to the benefit of Barbadians and the country at large, and not just for the persons who bring their foreign exchange and take the majority back out of the country.

Then, I must also support the development of a craft village around, which allows the average Barbadian to sell its produce. We understand that whenever we travel to another country, we look for some sort of souvenir to bring back. We would want to see that existing in this Barbados, where the occupants of the hotel will have some token of appreciation for the local craft people of the area.

I would also like them to look at improving the lot of not only the farmers, but to develop programmes to assist farmers in marketing their produce. They should probably make it mandatory for the developers who come to the country to set up such units, so that any produce produced locally, should be the first produce utilised in the hotels. Sir, I am sure that will go a long way to the development of this country.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, this is my contribution. I support the Resolution.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this debate, which is to consider the vesting of approximately 80 acres of land at Harrison Point in the Barbados Tourism Investment, Incorporated.

2.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this morning we heard the Honourable Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, spoke to the fact that there would be opportunities, as we review our tourism model, for local investors to be facilitated within these projects. Mr. Speaker, this is a significant opportunity, and certainly a major change in the direction of our tourism development models.

Mr. Speaker, we heard several comments during the course of this debate in respect of the need to bring local investors on board. Mr. Speaker, I want to assure Honourable Members on the Other Side that it is just a matter of creating the right financial models that could facilitate that investment.

There were opportunities in recent years for Barbadians to invest in shares in public companies. Provisions have been made in the Income Tax Act to encourage that type of investment. Unfortunately, the opportunities are very few. Each year, there are several Barbadians who are looking for investment opportunities, but they cannot find those opportunities along the lines of that new investment.

Mr. Speaker, opportunities for Barbadians to be involved in the equity of our tourism plant must be explored and encouraged. As other Honourable Members have said, Barbadians from all walks of life need to be able to become stakeholders in what is our principal industry.

Mr. Speaker, the Resolution speaks to the vesting of land in a corporation that is 100 per cent owned by Government. Mr. Speaker, this vesting provides an opportunity for that corporation to enter into whatever joint venture model it needs, with foreign investors, who would be providing a lot of the actual equity funds and development. Sir, once the correct model is determined, we should be able to find opportunities for Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, for too long, developments along our West Coast and other parts of the coastline of Barbados have been transferred into the hands of foreigners. Mr. Speaker, as we go forward, we need to ensure that Barbadians are fully involved with that development, so that there is equity in all the properties that could be retained in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Tourism also spoke in terms of the creation of a national park in the vicinity of the lighthouse. Mr. Speaker, as we continue to develop Barbados, opportunities for recreation, particularly along the West Coast, becomes something that we need to protect and develop. Too many of our old spots are being lost to foreign investors.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, in Barbados once you are going more than a couple of hundred yards from your home, everybody gets into a car and drives. There are very few spots along our coastlines that one could take one's family and enjoy a day at the beach. I could think, Mr. Speaker, of Folkestone. The facility at Batts Rock is under threat and is almost destroyed, unless we could have certain changes made to the development in that area.

Mr. Speaker, St. Lucy is probably the last parish in which new development in any meaningful way can happen, as far as the tourism product is concerned. Therefore, it is critical that we make sure, as we develop that area, that provision is made for proper recreation facilities for the average Barbadian.

Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage the Minister of Tourism and my other colleagues in Cabinet, that we look very seriously at reserving the area by the Police Station in Hometown as an area that we should be able to develop for recreational purposes in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the loss of our windows to the sea is of particular concern to those of us who happen to live along the West Coast. Almost every couple of months we are seeing properties and windows to the sea being lost. Recently, we saw in the newspaper, the loss of Chefette Restaurant, that window to the sea in Hometown. Sir, I understand that there is a proposal - I am not sure whether or not it has been approved - for further condominiums on that site and the adjacent lot.

Mr. Speaker, the developments along the West Coast have been an area for concern. As we vest this property in the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated, we need to consider... Mr. Speaker, in looking at the proposal that the former Government had made for that site, I observed that provisions were made to rehabilitate the beach in that area by the construction of break-waters and so on. Mr. Speaker, we need to be very careful as we tamper with the environment, that we do not create problems along the rest of the West Coast.

Mr. Speaker, the north-south flow of the currents along the West Coast is critical to the maintenance and delivery of the beach. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we need to look seriously at how we could protect that beach against the effects of the tides. The creation of artificial reefs is certainly something that we need to look at right along the coastline. We must take that very seriously in order to protect our coastline.

Mr. Speaker, several of my constituents make a living along the beach. Many of them put the chairs on the beach.

3.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, some of those people who partake in that activity are physically challenged, some are unable to earn a living otherwise, and we need to be able to protect those persons. We need to create the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, as we try to develop this area in St. Lucy, I would like to see that whatever we do there in terms of the development, that provision is made where people who live in the area around the project, would be able to benefit and would be able to ply their craft on the beach on the west of this project.

Mr. Speaker, I would also want to refer to the provision of public facilities on the beaches, because that is another area of concern along our coastline. Sir, there is the

need for public facilities for those persons who use the beach, whether in a recreational manner in terms of enjoying our sun and sand, or earning a living by the activities in which they are engaged, whether they are employees of the National Conservation Commission or vendors.

Mr. Speaker, certainly in St. James, in the area of Payne's Bay, while there is a facility at Payne's Bay, we find that it is generally closed in the early afternoon, so that by 6.00 p.m. that facility is closed. Therefore, anybody who is engaged in activities along the beach outside those hours, and I think here of the vendors who are frying fish, their customers and so on who want to use the facilities along the beach, have a serious problem with the public facilities being closed at 6.00 p.m. Mr. Speaker, we need to be able to encourage and to look for ways and means that we could have those facilities opened, even if it means the keys for those facilities could be kept by one of the neighbours in the area.

Sir, the point is that as we develop our tourism product, there are ordinary Barbadians who would find different ways of developing and finding innovative methods of making a living from that product. Therefore, we must be conscious of this and must be able to facilitate that development.

Mr. Speaker, one other observation, in terms of our tourism development, is the whole absence of the creation of new jobs, both directly involved with the actual hotel plant, as well as indirect jobs in terms of the Honourable Members having made reference to the various linkages between the tourism industry and the agricultural sector, particularly farmers and manufacturers.

Mr. Speaker, many of these enterprises have legitimate concerns. Sir, representation has already been made to me by the manufacturers that a certain component under the Tourism Development Act, where hoteliers are able to bring in duty-free all or substantially all of their furniture and other equipment they might need for outfitting the hotels, that we will need to look in terms of whether there should be certain restrictions or conditions which may need to be put in place, to ensure that the procurement, as well as the importation of these products or equipment, whether regionally or extra-regionally, could be shared between our local manufacturers.

Mr. Speaker, the point must be made, and has been made by several Honourable Members on This Side, that in the development of our tourism plant, Barbadian businesses and enterprises must be able to share in that development.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would want to support the Resolution to vest these 82.2 acres of land in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to this Resolution and to support what is the simple vesting of 82.2 acres of Crown land, in the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. Sir, this is an entity which was developed for the sole purpose of developing our tourism projects in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, this entity works not only directly in the construction of hotels, but in the development and construction of areas of interests. For instance, they are presently consumed with the restoration of the Careenage and beyond, to create an atmosphere and an environment or usefulness and comfort for Barbadians and visitors alike.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to tour the parcel of land in question, and I am sufficiently impressed that with the correct type of emphasis on what detailed development occurs on this site, Barbados in general, and the parish of St. Lucy in particular, will be well served with the developmental impetus which could see this parish going from strength to strength.

Mr. Speaker, it is a parcel of land, though large in relative terms, is actually remote in many other respects. It was deliberately chosen, many years ago, by the American Navy, and as we are all aware, it was used as the site for what was then termed the American Naval Base at St. Lucy.

Since the closure of that base, in 1977, the only use which this parcel of land has been put to, was when we had the unfortunate revolt at Glendairy, where it was the then site of the temporary prison. Sir, of course, one remembers that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North was not keen on this site. She had planned to accommodate the prison at the National Stadium, as was stated in her first press conference, after the unfortunate event.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South may well be intellectually challenged, but that is an unfortunate thing with which we have to bear.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, you cannot say that, you would have to withdraw that remark.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I cannot alter the circumstances, but I will withdraw that remark.

3.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. It is a patent untruth to suggest at any time that the Government of Barbados took

any decision to carry the temporary prison to the National Stadium. Indeed, Sir, when it was discovered that the Commissioner of Police and the Chief of Staff had officers going there, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, the former member for Christ Church East and myself, visited the station and gave instructions that it was not to proceed and, indeed, went to St. Lucy the next morning and also the next night to determine the site for the temporary prison, but I can understand the difficulty of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South in understanding basic facts given to his inherent debilitations.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, you are not permitted to refer to the Honourable Member as having inherent debilitations. Those are potentially offensive words and you have to withdraw them.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw those words.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, the consideration of the National Stadium is merely a quick reference to the thinking of the past Administration. I am happy for the confirmation, because I was beginning to wonder if I could not remember what transpired, but I am glad for the clarification and the acceptance of the reference.

Sir, it is not entirely relevant to this evening=s discussion. This evening=s discussion is about tourism. It is about tourism opportunities and tourism development in Barbados and on this occasion, Sir, in particular in St. Lucy. I am delighted to be associated with this Administration which, once again, will take the lead in this kind of all-encompassing development thrust.

Mr. Speaker, throughout this debate, we have heard references to Barbadian participation in tourism development and I want to remind other Members on the Other Side that in 1994, when the Almond Beach Resort first expanded and was heavily supported in its venture by the Democratic Labour Party Administration they had all kinds of negative things to say about that project at Heywoods. The proper provision was made for public access, both to the north and to the south of that property and to this day, Barbadians and tourists alike enjoy the facilities of the beach at Heywoods and continue to be a public beach with the development of the Almond Beach Village.

Sir, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said, we are actually speaking as that same hotel chain is about to open 112 spanking new rooms on the South Coast of Barbados inside of the old Casuarina Hotel property. Mr. Speaker, it is important that we understand this all-encompassing, humanistic and the Barbadian nature of the

development model for tourism, which the Democratic Labour Party holds on to.

Mr. Speaker, during the four-year tenure of the Barbados Labour Party just past, the character of the tourism development market has been highlighted, as pointed out on numerous occasions by This Side already, by a diminution in actual hotel rooms and an absolute mad scramble for the unwanton construction of condominiums, much to their own criticism.

I have heard Members on That Side, while they were in Government, tearing at each other about whether there was any usefulness, productivity or aptness in the wanton scramble to develop condominiums the way they have. I had to remind them already that they destroyed the only suitable small conference centre in Barbados to make way for a massive condominium project, which up to this day we are still looking to see where it is going to place itself in the overall development of the Barbadian hotel and tourism structure.

Sir, I wish all these projects well because it is important that we do not have wasted properties and we do not have investment which languishes because, at the end of the day, it is going to be the challenge of the Government to take care of any investments that go wrong. We have heard references to the Hotel and Resorts Limited project and, indeed, references to the Hilton Project in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, the point is that at Harrison's Point, we have a proposed plan which is not necessarily cast in concrete. The point the Minister of Tourism was at pains to make was that although this is the plan that is before them now, it is being substantially reviewed so as to offer the kind of balance which better suits the development model which he contemplates for Barbados than the model, which the Barbados Labour Party had clearly accepted, and Sir, that is the point we must make.

Mr. Speaker, even as we visited this site, there were Barbadians enjoying the things which we talked about on This Side, villagers from St. Lucy, who were fishing in the traditional way, throwing nets, etcetera and enjoying the natural beauty and the natural productivity of the environment.

Sir, we are insisting that in any development that will occur in the future, on This Side, this area is made completely and totally accessible for Barbadians. The site to the North of the property is marked by the North Point lighthouse and it has been indicated that that area will be preserved as an access point for the Northern end of the beach that is already there and will be substantially grown, because of the kind of investment and development plan.

Sir, to the southern boundary of the property, a similar access will be made and access to the beach must be available.

Mr. Speaker, we have commented on the fact that the plan of the Barbados Labour Party talked about 72 hotel rooms to be managed by the Rosewood Company and a total of 145 keyed rooms, to be managed by the Rosewood Property, and we have commented on the lack of density of the planned development. Sir, these are the measures which are going to signature measures of the project that the Democratic Labour Party will approve.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas keeps interrupting. She is dressed aptly for the occasion. She is wearing blue of the sea and emerald coral on her shoulders and sea weed...

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Sir, I have not yet spoken in this debate and simply because I believe there should be relevance where this is concerned, the Honourable Member knows full well I have not said a single word in here today and, therefore, what he has said is not relevant to the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, what is the point of order?

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I have not spoken and he cannot refer to what I have said.

3.20 p.m.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member has no point of order. She fumbles, she grumbles and mumbles. That has been established.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: On a point of order. Sir, relevance is what I am referring to. I have not yet said a word in here today, on this particular Debate. Therefore, I would wish the Honourable Member to withdraw, because I have not yet said a word, and you have not guided me or given me the opportunity to speak before.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas, we have established that she comes in and she mumbles, fumbles and grumbles. She does not speak...

Asides.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of privilege. Sir, I believe that the Honourable Member rose on a point of order. I did not hear Your Honour rule. I might have been listening to something else, but I have not yet heard Your Honour rule, whether it is for or against. The rights of the Honourable Members of this Chamber merit a ruling from the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ruled that there was no point of order. Honourable Member for Christ Church South, continue.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My friend, the Honourable Member for St. James North is trying to distract me, but he is all right, Sir. He is very fine.

Sir, the point about the development that we are contemplating, and the tourism development that we should champion in St. Lucy, will be the start of so many other things for that great parish, that unspoiled vineyard, as was referred to earlier in this discussion. We spoke about the ability to feed this hotel programme with the lands at Spring Hall, very nearby, and Friendship.

We spoke to, and want to reiterate, the opportunities for the development of a small compact international cricket facility at North Stars, spending single digit percentages of the kind of money that the Barbados Labour Party frittered away at Kensington Oval, in the guise of constructing a stadium for World Cup Cricket, a colossal waste of money. I am one of those Barbadians who believe we could have got a lot more value for money by being a little more conservative in our approach.

If we look at the examples of stadia around the Caribbean, which were built for the same purpose, you will notice that for less than half, or a third of the kind of money we have purported to have spent on Kensington Oval, we have more compact and useful stadia, and they have lights.

Sir, even now, we have to put the finishing touches on Kensington Oval, after \$150 or \$160 million has been spent by the Barbados Labour Party, by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and her group. We have to look for that money today, not her, so she can afford to say anything, or say nothing, as she claims. She can afford any one of those.

Sir, we have to get serious in this Parliament, and we have to get serious as Ministers of this Government, in terms of development.

Mr. Speaker, I live in and represent a constituency, which largely revolves around tourism, and we are proud of the development that has occurred, but we are mindful of the unfinished nature of the kind of work that the Barbados Labour Party does. Even at the Oistins Bay Garden today, I

have to be working the phones and, working the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc., to try to bring completeness, wholesomeness, and sustainability to this project, because these vendors have been waiting for a long time, and we need to complete the project.

We need to finish the beach side of the project. We need to bring some permanency to the area that is set out for the craft vendors. The Honourable Member is not speaking, but she is out there trying to distract every Honourable Member on This Side with her folly and her fumbling. I will as much as I can essentially, ignore her.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member is going to talk about...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, just a minute. Please, please. I was about to make a statement with respect to the Honourable Member before you intervened. Honourable Member for Christ Church South, please refrain from using those kinds of adjectives which, in my view, are quite unparliamentary in your reference to Honourable Members.

Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, you were on a point of order.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: You have addressed the matter. Thank you.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I will continue my presentation, and I want to indicate very clearly, that what we are grappling with as a government in this country, is a lot of residual stuff that was left by a Barbados Labour Party Administration. They can get over on That Side and say what they like. The reality is a reality which they came full face upon on January 15.

The people of Barbados were fed up with the type of Administration they offered, with the type of non opportunity they offered, with the type of incompleteness of their work. We are charged with a responsibility on This Side, of being complete and thorough, so the Honourable Member for St. George North, can get up and flirt all over the place this morning, about what should be agriculture and what should not be agriculture. They have no record to stand on in that regard.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is using unparliamentary words, that I have flirted in the Honourable Chamber. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South does not know what to say, so he is saying anything. I do not flirt.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, confession is good for the Honourable Member=s soul.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George North, got up and said that he was supporting the Resolution, and he proceeded to destroy the complete position of the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition got up and said, AAs far as I am concerned, I do not have anything to say on this topic.@ She got up and said that she is in total agreement with it, and the Honourable Member left the Chamber.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George North, on the other hand, got up and, as they say, and went against the Whip, literally, as he tried to score political non-points from left, right and center, and it made a nonsense what is, in truth, a statement by the Democratic Labour Party, not so much that we are continuing a project that was started by the Barbados Labour Party, but important, but important, we are coming into contact as we continue our programme of development for Barbados, with projects that have to be continued, adjusted or changed to suit urgent development needs in this country.

Sir, we are not going to be slowed down or diverted by their antics. They had 14 years in which to produce these kinds of projects. They did none. The record has been exposed already today, that the growth in hotel rooms under the Barbados Labour Party Administration, was actually backwards, minus 1000 rooms, and a dismal record.

3.30 p.m.

Sir, day after day, the Honourable Members used to come in this Chamber and thump their chests, and strut all over Barbados, pretending to sign all kinds of protocols and documents. We are not on that programme. Sir, we are doing things to make sure there is effective and meaningful development. Therefore, when I can hear the Honourable Member for St. George North call in on a programme on Sunday, and telling the Ministry of Transport, who should be representing them on a discussion, I find that is almost meddling. Sir, the Honourable Member had an opportunity to bring some measure of the gridlock in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of the things that I am insisting happened, are the things and the suggestions that the Honourable Member came and found and would not touch them, and was afraid to do anything. The result was, that we had no change over the 14 years of the Barbados Labour Party Administration and no results in this regard.

In the case of the Democratic Labour Party and in the case of the vesting of the land at Harrison's Point, we

are going to remain relevant. We are going to see to it that the programme that we developed for St. Lucy, enhances not only the physical development of St. Lucy but it enhances the economic opportunity for persons living in that parish, to work on this property, to work as tradesmen during the construction of the property, and to work as managers at the completion of the property.

Sir, I do not have any actual research evidence, but there is a large population of hotel-trained personnel from the St. Lucy belt. I happen to know that by association. I have no scientific knowledge to go by, but that is a gut feeling, based on association, with persons in the hotel sector. Sir, this is going to be an opportunity for them to explore themselves even further.

Sir, most of all, by offering the opportunity for investment, Barbadians and residents of St. Lucy, who have the wherewithal will also participate in the ownership.

Mr. Speaker, that is the colour of the programme which the Democratic Labour Party is going to put on this property at Harrisons Point, once it is vested in the BTII, and BTII can find the appropriate partners in development. Eventually, we will be considering and hopefully approving an overall project, which will redound to the benefit of, as I said at the beginning, St. Lucy in particular, and Barbados tourism in general.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want to express my gratitude to all those Honourable Members who contributed to this debate, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the Minister of Tourism for his contribution, the Honourable Member for St. James North of the Opposition, and also the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, I would not comment on the contribution made by the Honourable Member for St. George North. I sat and I was glued to the contribution made by the Leader of the Opposition, which obviously reflected the Opposition=s position on the matter. I want to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition for taking a very mature position, in relation to the Resolution. I was surprised when such an excellent speech was destroyed and knocked down in about five minutes by the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North is misleading this Honourable Chamber. I supported the

Resolution. However, I made the point that the Government has taken a position which they have not said in public and that they are doing the opposite. The Government had enough time to change any part of the programme that we had implemented. Sir, that is all I am saying.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised. Again, I must state in this Chamber that some years ago, I think it was in 2002, the Honourable Member criticised his own Government while coming out of St. Augustine Church, saying that “my” Government wasted the taxpayers= money in GEMS.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North is misleading the House. I know him very well. He does not like to tell the truth.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please withdraw that comment.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the remark.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that he is misleading this House. I was never at St. Augustine Church.

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

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Sir, to be more specific, he was at a church in St. George. The only problem was that the Honourable Member did not disagree with the substance of the statement but disagreed with the location.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: The Honourable Member would agree with me that he said that his Government of the day wasted millions of dollars on GEMS, and that the poor people in St. George and all over Barbados were suffering.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I never said that and the Honourable Member must understand that he cannot take things from a newspaper. He must withdraw those remarks because I never said that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not in a position to rule out of order, based on what you said to me.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip North, please continue.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I never mentioned any newspaper. I want to thank him for reminding the Chamber that it was in the newspaper.

Mr. Speaker, I know he said that the money wasted on GENS could have built at least 2 000 houses, and he was so vexed with the Government of the day. Although being a Member of the Cabinet, he sat down, silently. Why he did not get up while he was in Cabinet, or even go out in the public, and speak about this same Resolution and this project that they had planned? Sir, I do not understand.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot make any comment on the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. George North. I can only describe it as empty and baseless. I will move on, Sir.

3.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, all Honourable Members made some very important points in that they want to see the community and the small businessmen integrated into this project.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central spoke about the handicraft persons having the ability to be able to partake in the project. Indeed, that is a very important contribution. The Honourable Member for St. James North spoke about bringing development to the rural areas. Again, that is a very important statement and an excellent contribution from That Side.

Sir, the good contributions from That Side were marred by the contribution by the Honourable Member for St. George North. I hope that in future they would let him speak when Parliament rises, that is after the debate.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is a good Resolution. It is a Resolution basically for developing the tourism sector as outlined by the Honourable Member for St. James South who also made an outstanding contribution to this debate.

With those few words, Sir, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: I beg to second that.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ORDER NO. 2 – QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2008

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, the Bill before the House is to amend the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Act, Cap. 54, to make provision for the change in the

composition of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board and other related matters.

Mr. Speaker, in the evaluation of the changes to the Board, I think that it is important for one to look at Section 2 on page 3 of the Bill, where it states that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Act, which is referred to as the principal Act, is to be amended by deleting subsection (4) and substituting the following within the Schedule.

Mr. Speaker, the First Schedule to the principal Act is to be amended by deleting paragraph 1 and substituting the new construction of the Board.

Sir, before I outline the construction of the Board, it would be important to give an indication of the previous construction of the Board, so that we would appreciate the fundamental changes, and then I would give an explanation as to why.

Mr. Speaker, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Act, 2001 came into being by proclamation and was subsequently amended in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (Amendment) Act 2001, and shown in the supplement of the Official Gazette No. 57 dated July 7, 2007.

Mr. Speaker, in Section 5 of the First Schedule to the Act, the constitution and procedures of the Hospital Board state that the Board - I am speaking to the previous Board with respect to the principal Act - comprises the following persons:

Three persons nominated by the Minister.

One person nominated by the Principal of the CaveHill Campus of the University of the West Indies.

One person nominated by the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners.

One person nominated by the Barbados Nurses Association.

One person nominated by the Congress of TradeUnions and Staff Associations of Barbados

One person nominated by the private sector agency

One person nominated by the Barbados Christian Council; and

One person nominated by the Barbados Association of Retired Persons.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this composition does not at all ensure that the objectives of Section 5(3) of the principal Act are obtained. This Section states that the

Members of the Board shall possess the expertise, the business acumen, professionalism and experiences that would allow for the proper discharge of the function of that Board and be of individuals who have demonstrated competence and outstanding achievements in their field of endeavour, and a commitment to community and public service.

To this end, Mr. Speaker, I have considered that the Hospital Board should be reconfigured, to allow for that representation, which would achieve the stated objectives, serve the Hospital and the people of Barbados in good stead, and fulfil this Government's Manifesto pledge of providing quality health care for all of the citizens of this country.

In this regard, the Cabinet at its meeting of February 2, 2008 agreed to the proposal that the First Schedule to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Act, 2001 should be amended to allow the Board's composition to comprise the following skill sects. Mr. Speaker, the skill sects are as follow:

1. Accounting.
2. Engineering.
3. Finance.
4. Human Resource Management.
5. Industrial Relations.
6. Information Technology.
7. Law.
8. Management Operations.
9. Medicine.
10. Nursing; and
11. Paramedical Services.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that composition allows for the Board to have the broad set of skill sects, that would allow it to effectively direct policy, to give authority and to give the type of approvals that are necessary to restructure the Hospital's general management. Sir, in going along with that general framework, it is proposed that this broad management structure be underpinned by certain adjustments, to be made at the level of the immediate management below the Board.

Sir, those two fundamental changes would be, that the position of Chief Operating Officer is to be placed in relation to that of the Chief Executive Officer. Sir, what we would do in that relationship is to have those persons essentially be operational above the tier of the various directors of the various services in the Hospital. Those directors are the Director of Medical Services, the Director of Nursing Services and the Director of Human Resource Development, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that one of the problems with the present orientation is, that too many elements of day to day operations are funnelled through a central point. Sir, because of that central point, unless that individual brings a tremendous amount of management skills, you would get a bottleneck in the Administration

of the institution. Mr. Speaker, to go along with the structure, I have seriously looked at the hospital's proposal. I think that it is a proposal that would have been discussed probably by the former Administration. Sir, that proposal had to do with the development of the clinical directorate programmes.

3.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity to evaluate such programmes in their operations in several jurisdictions, and I believe that the establishment of clinical directorates, with respect to the changes enunciated, would offer for a fantastic mix for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and would improve the operational management structure of that institution.

Sir, this becomes important, because given the present structure at the Hospital, they do not contribute fundamentally to the overall budget of the institution. In other words, if you are in a particular department, you are not informed as to how many nurses you would need to get the job done, you are not informed as to how many doctors you would need, how many bed pans you might need, or the number of the various materials that might be needed. Sir, the result of not doing that, is that Departments run out of these items, because there was no coordinative evaluation and analysis, so that a particular department could have autonomy where it would be able, not only to create its own budget, but to manage that budget in a structured way.

Sir, various departmental units would therefore, act in aggregate to define out the total overall budget for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That would mean that when one comes to the Estimates, 2009-2010, we would be in a better position to be able to rationalise the services, not only in relation to the human resource components, but with respect to the material resource components.

I do not believe that at this stage, I should get into much debate with respect to the financial components of the Hospital, and the various financial crises that exist there. That Debate would come, but I believe very strongly that this basic overall framework, once we could execute the type of audits required, whether they be financial, material or human resource within the clinical directorate programme, we would be on board to establishing a good management structure.

Mr. Speaker, additionally, this management structure would also include a customer care department, where we could have effective feedback from the public. That is a critical component with respect to a hospital management structure. What we would be looking to do very soon, would be to establish an internal grievance component, which would allow for any internal differences that would occur among staff. Therefore, in relation to policies and decisions, we could look to see how we could resolve those internally, in a kind of arbitrary process, before it could get to the level of union confrontation.

Mr. Speaker, we are looking very seriously at engaging an advisory component, which would be made up of average citizens, to assist the Board.

Sir, one of the errors that has been made in the previous administrative structure, is that the community that is serviced by the hospital is usually not involved in any way, in the management structure, neither does it help to give feedback to the Hospital. We believe that is a fundamental mistake and we will look to deal with that in the very near future.

Mr. Speaker, one of the areas which would have to be brought up in this particular amendment, relates to the fact that the reason we have to try to make changes at this point in time, is essentially because of the present state of affairs at the Hospital with respect to several aspects of its operations. As a result, the previous Administration, after several years being in office, were not able to critically analyse these problems, and were unable to put in place the type of structures that would have been required to resolve those problems.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things I found to be incredible is that, year after year, we go into social partnership arrangements where we negotiate, we evaluate, we sit and talk, but one of the things that seem to happen every year, when I analyse the financials of the Barbados Water Authority, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the National Housing Corporation, the Transport Board, the National Conservation Commission, et cetera, I see that every Department is getting more and more into financial crisis every year.

How could a Social Partnership be sitting down and negotiating, yet every Government Department is losing every year. Sir, something is fundamentally wrong and this is why at some stage, these debates are going to have to get down to some financial nitty-gritty, because what is happening, is that in the broad matrix of what would have plagued the former Administration, would be the development of a worsening fiscal deficit, a worsening national debt to finance the fiscal deficit, and then every Department would go into deficit.

Sir, for example, the Barbados Water Authority goes into deficit, losing \$25 million every year, the Transport Board losing \$25 to \$26 million every year. The National Conservation Commission revenue cannot even cover its salary and wages. The same is happening throughout the various Government Departments, yet we sit and fool ourselves that this arrangement is doing something to advance governance in Barbados.

Sir, the only people who lose in the long run is the average man in the street and the country. This is why I am saying that, at some stage, this debate has to get to the level that it needs to get to, but that day is not today.

Mr. Speaker, I will end by saying that I am convinced these amendments would set an overall framework for the better management of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

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

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

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, as far as my memory goes, I want to say that this is the first piece of real policy that we have seen coming from this new Government, unlike the other Bills we have dealt with, which essentially were continuations of policies or programmes set up by the previous Government.

Sir, this really marks a first for the Democratic Labour Party. It has taken them more than 100 days to bring a first, but I am still happy to see that they have been able to bring a first, which is a new policy on which we could get some serious debate.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. George North is asking me to compliment the Honourable Member for St. Philip West. Sir, I would find that hard to do at this time. It would really be a stretch for me to compliment an Honourable Member who has brought nothing more than a political disaster of a Bill to this Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I must say categorically that I could never support a Bill like this, and let us start with the simple basics.

Sir, I do not know what Boards the Honourable Member for St. Philip West would have served on in the past, or what Boards he might be aware of, but let us take a simple basic.

Sir, a Board sets policies. The officers of that organization then implement those policies. Therefore, under the previous Board, there were people who were ex-

officio Members to the Board, the Chief Medical Officer, the Chief of Medical Staff, the Director of Nursing Services and the Financial Controller. Sir, Cap. 54, Schedule One of the current Act sets out the requirements.

4.00 p.m.

Sir, in that Board, by having those people who are at the operational level of the institution sitting *ex officio* on the Board, it means that as the Board sets policy, or as the Board needs advice on setting policy, they are at the level of the Board meeting to be able to give that advice, or to be able to implement policy.

Mr. Speaker, at no place in this Bill is a position given for the Chief Executive Officer, *ex officio* or otherwise. Sir, that to me is a fundamental error in this Bill. How then can the Financial Controller give any advice about the current status of the hospital or any future endeavours?

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please sit. Only one Honourable Member can rise on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South you are on a point of order.

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this House if he suggests that the Board cannot co-opt expertise at any time.

Mr. SPEAKER: He did not say that though. I did not hear him say that.

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member said that the Act provided for *ex-officio* members and because there is no such provision in the Bill, that expertise cannot be made available to the Board.

Mr. SPEAKER: That was his interpretation.

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Sir, that is misleading the House, because we all know that expertise can be called upon by the Board at any time.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West, please continue.

DR. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker....

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation. Sir, any Board, at any point in time can ask for expert advice to be given on any area under consideration by the Board at that particular time. The

reason why in this present Act we have the Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Health and the Chief Medical Officer, the two fundamental elements that execute Government policy as it pares down from the Minister, and this is why it is important that the Honourable Member understands how these things work, because the important thing is that there is a connectivity between the Chief Medical Officer and medicine at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, as well as the Permanent Secretary as the chief financial person responsible for the Estimates and budgetary process of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, irrespective of whether there is a Chief of Finance.

Sir, all that information does not have to be established within the Bill as a right as part of the statute. I do not understand your level of confusion at this time Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member is entitled to his view, so I can see no merit in his submission.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the huff and puff was about, but it certainly made no sense.

Sir, let me go forward on the matter. When a person, by virtue of his office, means that he would be at all and every Board meeting and not subject to the whim and fancy of the Board, that person has a specific position and a specific requirement to carry out certain fiduciary duty by virtue of his office. It further means that you would then have a Board, who would be setting policy in a vacuum, because it would not have connection to the operational aspect of the Hospital. Sir, this is a fundamental point because, how are you going to have a Board that is sitting and setting policy for an institution for which they are not having any significant contact?

Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member wants to trade issues, let us trade issues. This Act is remarkable by the way in which it has removed the unions from the sitting of Boards at the Hospital. This Act is remarkable only for the fact, that it is an attempt by the Democratic Labour Party to remove unions from the Board of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. If the Honourable Member has anything that would show anything different to that, let him get up and speak now.

Mr. Speaker, I will go forward. Sir, members of the unions, people who represent the unionised workers in the Hospital, the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners (BAMP) is a trade union, and it represents the doctors as a trade union in the Hospital and they are no longer on this new Board.

Sir, the Barbados Registered Nurses Association (BRNA) is a registered trade union and it represents the responsibilities of the nurses from a union perspective on

the Board. Sir, in this new incarnation of the Act, they are no longer on the Board.

CTUSAB, which represents all the other workers, who work in that Hospital, in this new incarnation, they are no longer on the Board, so tell me who on this Board is going to represent the rights and privileges of the doctors. Is it the person with the accounting qualification? Is it the engineer? Is it the person with finance? Is it the human resource management? Is it the industrial relations? Is it the information technology person? Is it the lawyer? Is it the management operations or is it the persons with qualification in medicine or nursing?

Sir, these are not people representing the people as a union representative on the Board, and this shows something to the people of Barbados. This is the first policy that the new Democratic Labour Party has brought to this House as a Bill. The first thing for them to do is to bring a Bill to remove unions from a Board and it really tells a lot.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party had its roots in trade union organisations. The Barbados Workers' Unions was formed by an association of trade unions and being a trade union representative, and this new Administration came, and by the simple swipe of a pen, removed the years of struggle of all the unions throughout the country.

Sir, every Honourable Member on the Other Side, who say they represent the people of this country, could sit and agree that unions should be removed from the Board of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a travesty.

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I really did not want to get up again to interrupt the Honourable Member as he was flowing but, Sir, yes, the Bill does not say the National Union of Public Workers, the Barbados Workers' Union, et cetera, or members of the Board, but it is clear to me that assumes, if you listen to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, that members of the unions do not have the skills set out here in the Bill. For example, we have industrial relations and one would believe that if you are a trade unionist that you would have some knowledge of industrial relations.

Sir, we cannot allow the Honourable Member for Christ Church West to suggest to Barbadians that we are not interested in the people of Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I cannot find the point of order. Honourable Member for Christ Church West, could you please continue?

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Sir, obviously that is not a point of order. That is a point of interruption.

4.10 p.m.

The Honourable Member continues to bring points of interruption. I wish he would refrain from those. This is serious business. We have not come in here to make sport. If the Honourable Member for St. Philip South wants to make sport, he can go and make it on some playing field. This is serious business, dealing with the lives of people. I did not come in here to make sport. If the Honourable Member for St. Philip South came in here to make sport, that is his business and I hope the constituents in that constituency, deal with you appropriately.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Christ Church West, I think that we all make the assumption that when Honourable Members come here, they come here for serious business. Therefore, you are not allowed to impute as his motive for coming here, to make sport, and I wish you to withdraw those remarks. Are the remarks withdrawn?

Dr. W.F. DUGUID: Sir, I am guided by you. With respect to him making sport, Sir, I must tell you that this is serious business. This will affect the lives of, I believe, 2 000 employees at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Sir, once this Bill goes through, they will have in essence no union representation on the Board.

Sir, if the Honourable Member for St. Philip North can show me where in the Bill there is a union representative in this new Schedule...

Asides.

Dr. W.F. DUGUID: Sir, industrial relations is not a union representative. I am surprised at the Acting Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, who was a trade unionist, and he himself could sit down in a Cabinet and agree to taking unions away from representing the people, at the level of the Board. I am surprised and disappointed, Sir, for him to even have brought that matter. It is a surprise.

Mr. Speaker, it shows that the policy of the Democratic Labour Party, going forward, is going to be anti-union, and we understand that. If they want to take a policy that is anti-union and a retrogressive step in this country, we will deal with them appropriately, at the appointed time.

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

Hon. K. St. C. BEST: On a point of order. I would like the Leader of the House to indicate that the policy of the Democratic Labour Party is anti-union. Clearly you can see the level of participation by union members, as part and

parcel of this Government. Everything that affects the workers in this country is done in consultation with the Government and the unions that represent the employees of this country.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not find that a point of order. Continue Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: I do not know what to make of that intervention. I think that the Honourable Member should continue to sleep as he was doing before, rather than getting up on that point of order.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I recognise the Honourable Member for Christ Church South first.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Bill we are considering speaks to representation on the Board of both Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations Skill Set. I think that on both measures it is possible for the Minister to include representation of the union.

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

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, it seems obvious now that they recognise the glaring omission, I would imagine that they would bring some sort of amendment. No person who is an expert in industrial relations is a representative of a trade union. We are here as Members of Parliament, Representatives of the people. We represent Constituencies and we are named for those. Therefore, if the people on the Board are supposed to represent the doctors, as their trade unionists, not by virtue of being an industrial relations person, but by virtue of being a union, representing the interest of the people, an industrial relations person may not necessarily be there to represent the interest of the doctors and the nurses, but might be there to represent the interest of the Board. That is the fundamental difference. That is why I can never support a Bill, which is so retrogressive and anti-union. I am going further.

Sir, I said that this Bill is remarkable for its omissions. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West could have increased the number on the Board. If he wanted to bring political cronies to the Board, he could have increased the number and bring on who he wished. He could have brought on who he wished by increasing the numbers, but instead...

Asides.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear myself.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, are you still addressing the Chair?

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please do.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Sir, rather than increase the number of the Board, which was totally within his remit, but without changing the tenure of the Board, he has now decided to completely change the tenure of the Board, omit the unions, and further, he did not only omit the unions, he is omitting the University. Sir, that is a teaching hospital. On the previous Board the first three persons nominated by the Minister, one person nominated by the Principal of the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies, and also ex-officio, the Dean of the School of Clinical Medicine and Research. Where in this Bill as it is presented to this House is the representative of the University of the West Indies? It must be industrial relations again.

Asides.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: We have shown that this Bill has excluded the unions, and now excluding the University, in a teaching hospital. Does this mean that every time there is a meeting they must invite the Dean, and he cannot come and give his advice to the runnings of the Hospital? Political nonsense. It is the thin edge of the wedge. Sir, this is the thin edge of the wedge. It is the first policy statement of the Democratic Labour Party and it is now proving to be anti-union and anti-University of the West Indies. I am going further.

Sir, not only does it then talk about people of certain qualifications, but it brings no idea or concept of the expertise of these people. Are these people who have just qualified? Are these people with five years training and experience? Are these people with 10 years training and experience, or are they people just straight out of university?

Sir, if you are going to bring expertise or knowledge to the Board, there would be nothing wrong with the Minister increasing the numbers on the Board. He could have increased the numbers from 13 to 20, 15 or 17. He could have increased them and added the expertise he wanted. Instead of doing that, he leaves it open to people with qualifications. No concept of what level of experience or no concept of years of experience after qualification, but instead he brings a remarkable, just remarkable, on its absence of unions and University of the West Indies members. Sir, there is no way that I would be able to support this Bill, no way whatsoever.

Sir, another point is, remarkable only by its omission. In the previous Schedule, Part 1 (H), the Barbados Christian Council and the Barbados Association of Retired Persons - I do not know what the BARP membership has done to the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, or the Christian Council, but I would imagine that those two entities would have brought significant experience to a Board, if nothing else.

4.20 p.m.

Sir, do you know what? In a previous Debate, I congratulated the Honourable Member for bringing lay members to a Council. Nowhere on here is there an independent voice to represent the individual patients, like how the BARP members and Council, the Christian Council would have brought. What do we have? We have a Bill, remarkable in its exclusion of unions, the University of the West Indies and a voice for the patients. Sir, the people of Barbados will judge them harshly on this one.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, before I recognise the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, let me remind all Honourable Members that we still need to hear the contributions of the various Members. I am not hearing all the asides but sometimes it is getting a bit loud. Please, let us try and cooperate so that we can all hear the contributions of the respective Members.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, some years ago, when the QEH was first given a Board, I said in this House that I did not agree with a Board for the QEH. Sir, after hearing the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, he has now confirmed to me that there was no need to change the QEH to a Board, but it so happens that the Honourable Member is now sitting in Opposition and understands, what can occur when you take a place like the QEH and you then give it a Board.

Sir, do you know what is interesting? The Honourable Member has indicted the unions, the representatives from the University...

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. At no time in my speech did I indict the unions of this country. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that those remarks be struck from the record.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you are being a bit previous, as they say. He has not completed the statement.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, by making the point that because there are no union members and no persons from the University on the Board now, that this Government is doing a disservice to those persons.

Mr. Speaker, am I to believe that when you had the union members, the persons from the universities, the persons from BARP, and those nurses were sent home, that those persons were serving as representatives of their organisations? Sir, if that is correct, it is a reflection on the organisation that they were representing.

Sir, what the Honourable Member needs to understand is that most persons, even though they are sent to the Board, when they go to that Board, they are not representing their particular organisation.

Sir, because somebody is working at a union, it does not mean that they could go to a board meeting and take the information from the board meeting to the union. They are not allowed to do that.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. If a person is appointed ex-officio or otherwise to a Board and they are not representing the positions of their particular institution, be it a union in this instant, then they are obviously not carrying out their fiduciary duty to that Board.

Sir, if a person is there representing the union, we would expect that they would be there to represent the people's interest. Sir, for the Honourable Member to suggest that all of those persons who are on Boards, not only the Hospital Board, but every single Board in the past that would have a union representative, are not there representing those people, is tantamount to nothing more than ludicrous.

Mr. SPEAKER: Sir, that is a matter of opinion, not a point of order.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member must understand that even though the persons are nominated by the union and the university, when they are on the Board, they are there to represent the organisation on whose behalf they are sitting, and not the organisation that has sent them. Sir, that is a fact and if the Honourable Member does not understand that point, I am sorry.

Sir, if that was correct, then one could easily accuse the union members who sit on the Board, of creating leakage to the unions. Sir, that cannot occur. When the people sit on the Board, they use their knowledge being members of the particular organisation, in the interest of the particular Board.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber. It really pains me because the Honourable Member clearly does not understand the difference being a fiduciary obligation to the Board on which he is appointed, but equally representing the interest of the persons who appointed him. Therefore, the person sitting on the Board, has a fiduciary obligation to the QEH Board, as a Director, but has to represent the interest of the entity which appointed them.

Mr. Speaker, that is why the matter of appointment is not in the gift of the Minister, but is in the gift of the particular organisation that has sent him. There is a clear difference between fiduciary responsibility to, and representing the interest of, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: It seems to me that Honourable Members have simply stated their opinion as to what role a person appointed to the Board carries out. I cannot see that being a point of order in that case.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member is correct in what the Honourable Member is saying, it means that when the QEH changed, and the union put members on the Board to represent them, those members should have resigned as union members when the nurses were sent home or were not allowed to work. Sir, because they were not representing the union per se, that is why they could not behave in another manner, and that is not the point.

Mr. Speaker, the point is clear that as soon as you change the status quo, anything is possible. Sir, we warned the Other Side that this was not a new organization, that the QEH should not have been changed from the status quo that it was in, because it is clear, Sir, that if we had allowed the Other Side to continue, what could possibly have happened?

Sir, until I see evidence that this change will be a negative, I am forced to support this Resolution, because I do not see anything that will stop me. I will tell you, based on the argument coming from the Other Side, that the unions are now in a better position to represent their workers, and there will be nobody to compromise themselves.

I think the Honourable Member has now freed up the hands of the unions, freed up the hands of the University and that the officials at the QEH now have a free hand to do a professional job, and they will now be freely

monitored by the university and the unions. Sir, nobody would have to protect the members on the Board because they will see it as a reflection on their own members. Therefore, there is no negativity about this, Sir. The University of the West Indies is now free to give their opinion, as they have done for many years on many Boards that they have not sat on. Mr. Speaker, what I will say is that this change will stop the muzzling of professionals.

Sir, what has occurred over the years, is that in order to muzzle people, you draw them onto Boards. You also draw senior members on to Boards, so that you muzzle them. Sir, you would see how we operate in here in Committee. Once you are in a committee, it means that once you are a Committee Member, you are not supposed to criticise the decision of the Committee. Sir, it is the same thing with the Board. Once, you are on the Board, you should not criticise the decision of the Board, because it has said it is your decision. Therefore, having union members and people from the University on Boards, that action was used as a negative and not as a positive.

Sir, do not be fooled by anybody that this change will interfere. I honestly believe it will allow the QEH to be managed more effectively. The professionals

at the university are now free to speak their minds. The unions are now free to do what they like. Nobody has to worry about their hands being tied. The old arrangement was to tie the hands of professionals, but we are now freeing up people in this country. Sir, I will wait and I will see the judgment.

4.30 p.m.

Sir, previously, people were just pushed here and there. That would not happen anymore. We want a functioning Board. Therefore I want to say to the Minister that he has to ignore the critics and ensure that he places people on these Boards that are capable of giving good judgment, because if he does not place people who could give good judgment, whatever was said in here could easily be reversed. Sir, we are not about stifling people. We are about creating...

Asides.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, what we need to see is effectiveness and freedom of opinions. Sir, what is needed in this country is an opportunity for people to enter into discussions. What we also need is the voice of all and not the voice of a few. Sir, that is exactly what is occurring here today. We are now allowing people who are professionals and who have an opinion, to have a right to express that opinion without tying them down to Boards.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I believe that in the interest of seeing a properly run hospital and good governance that there are some fundamental tenets that have been observed, certainly by the Barbados Labour Party Administration over the last 14 years.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members need to understand clearly that while Directors of a Board have a fiduciary responsibility by virtue of being a Director, that the Board as a whole, is entitled to expect from them the full raft of their experience and knowledge.

For example, an individual who is an accountant has a duty to the Board, but the duty to the Board must still be taken in the context of his training. A lawyer who sits on a Board could no more advise the Board to commit an unlawful act under the guise that he has a duty to the Board. The whole point is that the Board expects that individual to give them the benefit of his or her expertise.

Mr. Speaker, when I had the privilege of being the Chairman of several statutory corporations in this country, it was clear that the trade unions served a very important role in the Board Meetings, because decisions are to be made as far as employees' terms and conditions of service are concerned, and decisions are often to be made in relation to matters of discipline. Mr. Speaker, we have always felt as an Administration that the proper thing to do, was to give those bodies a voice on the Board.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the Government could seriously argue, that by virtue of having an individual well versed in human relations, in industrial relations or in human resource management, that could in any way be considered as being the equivalent of having a trade union representative on the Board. I do not think that we should be naive. Individuals are put on a Board with a clear expectation that they have a constituency to represent and to protect. There is no doubt about that. If the Government has some fear, it would surprise me. Then perhaps that might have explained this glaring omission.

Mr. Speaker, an individual on the Board who is trained in accounting has a fiduciary duty to the Board, but must be expected to give to the Board the benefit of his training. An individual skilled in engineering would be expected to do the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, we stand by a proper industrial relations climate in Barbados. The Barbados Labour Party Administration's commitment to involving trade unions on these Boards is a pivotal part of good governance. Sir, I wait anxiously to hear how the Social Partnership would respond to this.

Sir, if on the one hand, the Democratic Labour Party Administration argues that the Social Partnership must be given greater opportunity for involvement in expression, how could they consider that this omission could be consistent, with such an expectation of the Social Partnership? I do not know how they could argue that the Social Partnership, especially the trade union component of it, must have a greater role, yet in an institution that has perhaps an even more significant role to play, than in any other in Barbados, with a total staff of over 2 000 people - it might well be the largest single department of Government - that you could operate in this way and try to offer as a palliative an individual well versed in human resource management.

Mr. Speaker, an individual well versed in human resource management is an individual who is trained in balancing the competing interest between employers and employees. His constituency is not the members whom he represents.

Mr. Speaker, a doctor on the Board, under this amendment, would sit on the Board by virtue of his qualifications as a medical doctor, not by virtue of the fact that he is the nominee of the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners. Sir, I believe that it is grievously wrong to exclude all of these representative agencies.

Mr. Speaker, the Chief Medical Officer is a policy-maker and would sit on this Board by virtue of the office in this case that she holds, but as a policy-maker, she has an obligation to indicate to the Board what the policy of the Government is. That is her role. Not to follow blindly what the Board should choose to do, because it is expedient.

Mr. Speaker, it is for the Government to determine how they want the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to function. Sir, it seems to me that this strikes at the heart of the very thing that the Government said, when they were in Opposition, that they were going to foster a tranquil human relations and employment climate in the Public Service of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, I venture that this amendment is wholly inconsistent with that stated aim of the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, it is not for us to warn them that they would be hoist by their own petard. It is for them to suffer whatever dolorous blow might befall them.

I am grateful to you, Sir.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I join this Debate after the last Speaker in a sense of shock and dismay. To tell the truth, if it were another Political Party on the Other Side speaking with such sensational acclaim as it relates to the unions, the doctors and the nurses, then I

would want to believe them, but certainly not from the mouths of those who represent the Barbados Labour Party.

Sir, it is very clear to me, having looked at the present Act, which this amendment is seeking to address.

Section 5 of the Act, as was eloquently explained by the Minister of Health, National Insurance and Social Security, sets out the important parameters as it relates to the expertise required from Members of the Board.

4.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, that expertise really has nothing to do with any constituency or from whence an individual comes. Sir, it is very simple. A Member of the Board, in accordance with Section V, is required to possess the expertise, business acumen, professionalism and experience that would allow for the proper discharge of their functions, and all that this amendment seeks to do, is to give effect to that overarching objective of the Act.

Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, speaking to the question of the professional duty of the members of the Board. Sir, it is clear, not only as it relates to Boards, but as it relates to the Boards, even in relation to Boards under the Companies Act. There can only be one allegiance that members of the Board have, irrespective of who appointed them or which shareholders they come from.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Sir, if the Honourable Member is going to respond, even on a point of order, he ought to do so with some level of accuracy. Sir, I said that the person has a fiduciary obligation - not more than one - a fiduciary obligation. Sir, as an attorney-at-law, the Honourable Member would know that a fiduciary obligation means that he has that obligation of trust towards the Board to which he is appointed.

I also said that is different from speaking on behalf of and representing the perspective of the organisation which appointed him. Therefore, for the Honourable Member to equate the two would suggest to me that the Honourable Member is a little confused in the Law.

Mr. SPEAKER: My understanding thought was that he had finished the citation and was going on to make another point.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Well, you have an understanding that it is anticipatory.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, there is no confusion on my Side. I believe that what is being done here is essentially in relation to the fiduciary duty owed by the Board, and I am saying there can only be one fiduciary

duty owed. Sir, the argument which is being put that a person appointed by a union represents the union on the Board is basically fallacious, and that is probably the very reason the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board has not been able to affect the mandate it has over the years.

Sir, when you look at the disciplines that are incorporated in the amendment: accounting, engineering, finance, human resource management, industrial relations, information technology, law, management operations, medicine, nursing and paramedical services, there is nothing at all preventing persons from whoever they may come, from being on the Board, but the important thing is that the duty, the only duty of a member of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board, as far as I am concerned, is a duty to the overall improvement and development of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, that is very simple, and that is what this amendment is doing. Sir, the Other Side has spent an inordinate length of time trying to find solutions to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and that is why I get a bit peeved when I heard them clamouring and talking in here as though they are so depressed. They may be depressed in other areas, but when I look back at their 1999 Manifesto, it really pains my heart.

Sir, in that 1999 Manifesto, they were talking about all the things they would do to ensure the development of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Sir, even although they have gone to the length of creating a Board, under the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Act, we have seen no improvement in relation to the management direction of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The functionalities that are relevant to the creation of a modern hospital, continue to evade the public of Barbados. Sir, what it has simply taken this Government to do, is to recognise that fact and to recognise the failure of the Barbados Labour Party, in getting to where we are today.

Sir, I agree with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, and the most important thing that he has said, out of everything that he has said - I was trying to decipher where he was going, but at the end of his discourse, it is obvious that he himself is engulfed in elements of confusion, in relation to where health care must go in Barbados. The Honourable Member is correct, this amendment to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Act, signals a new direction on the part of this Government, as it relates to how this institution needs to function. It is as simple as that, and what we have at the very apex of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, in the Boardroom, is a new sense of purpose and a new direction, which is being taken and led by the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, I looked through the amendment, and if one were to follow the argument being put by the Other Side, one would not believe that in this Bill we still have represented, ex-officio on the Board, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health and the Chief Medical Officer. Sir, the Chief Medical Officer is on the Board of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and you would not believe that this functionary, the most important doctor in Barbados, as it relates to the management of health care, is on this Board.

Asides.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, all you have is this Government seeking to end the confusion that has existed, in relation to the management of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We have a signalled effort to end the confusion and to ensure that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board can function in a manner which is conducive to dealing with the real pressing problems, which afflict that institution.

Mr. Speaker, I need to commend the Minister of Health for having the courage, in very rapid fashion, and the foresight, to ensure that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board is so constituted that it removes any doubt as to the real purpose of the Board. Sir, when you listen to the contributions of the Other Side, you could understand that they themselves were confused in relation to how this Board should be constituted.

Mr. Speaker, we are not talking about representing BAMP, we are not talking about representing the NUPW. We are not talking about representing the nurses' organisation, we are talking about representing the people of Barbados. We are talking about putting in place a Board that will have the functionalities, to ensure that the mandate, which has been given to this Government, can be achieved and will be achieved.

Mr. Speaker, all we have had over the past 14-odd years as it relates to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital from the Other Side, was basically >hot air= remedies, which have failed to deliver.

Mr. Speaker, in this amendment, one of the areas that has not been identified by the Other Side, where we have had in the past, persons who have absented themselves from the Board, we have in this Act a provision to tighten up the area where persons, who may be absent from the Board, the Minister may now have the power to appoint temporary persons, but only in relation to persons who are absent on two consecutive occasions. Now, we are bringing some direction to it.

Mr. Speaker, we are bringing some direction in relation to the most important organ, as it relates to

management, because there are other functions in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital that are important as well. But the signalled, most important function within the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, as it relates to management, direction and control of that institution, which is the Board, there must be no doubt at all as to what and how that Board should function.

Mr. Speaker, we know as lawyers, and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East recognised that, there is nothing at all preventing any Board from inviting the CEO to attend meetings. I think it is standard practice in Barbados that Chief Executive Officers, many of whom are not members of a Board, but by practice and convention are expected to attend Board meetings. Chief Financial officers and other persons, based on what is being discussed, from time to time, on the Board are required, and in fact...

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. I believe that as an Officer of this Honourable Chamber, he ought to know that he has a higher duty to this Honourable Chamber, other than to blatantly mislead it. Cap. 54...

Mr. SPEAKER: Blatantly mislead it?

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Blatantly mislead it, and I am going to prove it. I am allowed to prove it as an Honourable Member. He said that we did not provide for any member to be terminated, if he had a series of absences. He said so, Mr. Speaker.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Call for Hansard, call for it. That is the only reason I went for the legislation. And the legislation specifically, in the Schedule at Rule 5(16) in the First Schedule of Cap. 54 said:

that the Minister shall...

- not discretionary -

A... terminate the appointment of a member of the Board where

(a) the member fails without reasonable excuse to attend three consecutive meetings of the Board.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I could understand a Member wanting to take a partisan position, but you cannot so misrepresent the Law of this land.

Mr. SPEAKER: With respect to the ruling, if that is, in fact, what is written, then to that extent it is wrong, but I

would like Honourable Members to refrain from saying that Members are blatantly misleading this Honourable House.

The effect of what an Honourable Member say may, in fact, have that effect, but it suggests that the Honourable Member either intentionally or blatantly misleads the Honourable House and, to my mind, it has the same meaning.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Well, if that is the meaning that is taken, well, that is a matter for other people, but that is not what I meant. I am saying that it was a blatant misleading of this Honourable House. It really is. It is very evident. It is blatant and it is patent and it is not by reference to anything other than the output of this Honourable Chamber. This is a Law of the land, passed by this Honourable Chamber, so you cannot misrepresent what is in the law here, and that, therefore, must be blatant and patent.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: But an Honourable Member may mislead the Honourable House in error, but to suggest that it is blatant, suggests that there is some motive other than a Parliamentary motive, and that is the objection to the use of the word "blatant".

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Honourable Member...

Mr. SPEAKER: No. The ruling which I thought that was clear was made before, was that to the extent it is now seen that the statement was wrong, then those comments should be withdrawn.

Asides.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I never said, as the Honourable Member is claiming, that the Government of the day never made provision in the Act for termination of the Board Members. I never said that. I said we had an untenable situation, as it relates to persons who were allowed to miss meetings of the Board, and I was speaking in relation to temporary replacement of persons, where that person could be temporarily replaced, without any kind of restriction as to the number of times of that temporary absence. And if we look at...

Mr. SPEAKER: That is what you are saying now.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: That is what I have said before. If we look at Section 3 of the Regulations, Section 3 said:

AA Minister may in respect of appointments ... may appoint, nominate, any person to act temporarily in place of any member who is absent in Barbados...@

Mr. Speaker, what the new provision is seeking to do is saying that where a member is unable to serve or has been absent for two consecutive meetings, it puts a cap on the number of meetings for which that person could be absent, so the Honourable Member, in my view, has been misleading herself.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is now further compounding the issue. Sir, to suggest that the new Bill only now puts a cap by referring to two meetings, is to reinforce my view that he has not read the original Act, which, in fact, has a cap of three consecutive meetings.

Secondly, if the matter is so contentious, then I would like to suggest that we ask for Hansard. sir, Hansard will determine what the Honourable Member has said.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I have said, if the Honourable Member...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just a minute, I fail to see the contention in the statement to which you referred. As I ruled before, to the extent that he has said that no provision had, in fact, been made to control the extended absences... That is what I heard, and I said to that extent then the statement essentially should be withdrawn. I thought that was accepted and we were moving on.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I will move on. I sought to clarify the point I was making. The Honourable Member said that I said that no provision was made in relation to controlling the removal of persons who were absent. Sir, I never went down that road at all. I dealt with the question of an issue pertaining to a practice where persons were allowed to absent themselves from the Board with no cap placed on the number of meetings, where they will be temporarily replaced, and that is what this new provision is seeking to do. That is the difference between this provision and the other provision there. I am not dealing with the provision that deals with the removal of persons who have absented themselves for three consecutive meetings. I am dealing with a completely different provision altogether.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us move on.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe ...

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I do not intend for a request legitimately made by Honourable Members on This Side to be ignored. The Honourable Member is entitled to say that he did not

say, in spite of your ruling. That denial, given your ruling, in my view, requires us to ask for a copy of Hansard to be provided to us. Sir, if the House wants to take a break, we are free to do so, but I do not believe....If the Hansard says I am wrong, then I would abide. Equally, if Hansard says he is wrong, he must abide.

Mr. SPEAKER: So that the Honourable Member feels strong enough about this point that we should break at this point to have a look at Hansard. Very well, let us take a break to get Hansard.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be now suspended for 10 minutes.

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the Sitting be suspended for 10 minutes was put and resolved in the affirmative, without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

5.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. Honourable Members when the Suspension was taken, we had been awaiting certain information from Hansard. That is not yet available. We can resume and continue with the matter at hand, until that information is made available.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

5.20 p.m.

Thank you Mr. Speaker. As I was saying before, certainly, my position in this Debate is essentially that the Other Side, based on their record, really has no moral basis on which to make the assertions, in relation to the purpose and the objects of this amendment.

Sir, some of the allegations that have been made, certainly do not in any way relate to what is being attempted.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West also alluded to the fact, as a matter of fact, he charged that the Board, because of these changes will now be forced to operate in a vacuum. Basically, that could be one of the points that show the difference in division between This Side and That Side.

I believe that these amendments are in line with the kind of focus of a modern Board. I certainly believe that the changes to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Act, will allow the Board to free itself from some of the strictures of the past. Certainly, it encapsulates the major philosophy that underpins the promises made by the Democratic Labour Party in its Manifesto, as we relate to rescuing the QEH from what existed in the past.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has three minutes in which to conclude.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: I am much obliged, Mr. Speaker.

It is just one of those developments where I believe that we have to look at the record of the Barbados Labour Party, because from their 1999 Manifesto, up until now, they promised to embark on the first major physical expansion of the QEH in 40 years, and that promise was made in 1999.

Asides.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: In their 1999 Manifesto, they promised to embark on the first major expansion of the QEH in 40 years. To date, we have seen none of that. Therefore, we have inherited a situation at the QEH, where we have been forced to provide the structure, by which the Board of the QEH can function. I believe that this is where we are today. I believe that the next stage in the development on the QEH, must obviously be infrastructure, but before we get to that, I think the Minister of Health is correct, in terms of fixing some issues at the management level of the QEH Board, and ensuring that the Board members who sit on that Board, have first and foremost the fiduciary duty to the QEH and not to any constituency that, hitherto, Board Members may represent.

I do not believe it precludes the Honourable Minister from appointing representatives from the union, from the nurses, from the Church, from wherever in his informed judgment, that he believes that this will contribute to the overall objective of the QEH, as set out in the Act itself. The Act has always been focussed on the question of ensuring the prudent management of the institution.

I believe that these amendments will go a long way. I believe that the unions, unlike what the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is saying, will be on board in relation to this prudent futuristic step on the part of this Government. I commend the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, that is my contribution in this debate. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Bill before us. We have recognised over the years the importance of the QEH, and this Bill certainly seeks to bring the kind of management skills that this Government has determined, is a prerequisite for an improved health care system in Barbados.

I heard quite a bit of talk this afternoon from the Other Side, about the Trade Union Movement and the absence of the trade union on the Board. I am amazed at the Government, which over the past 14 years, led an economy that had an unprecedented level of industrial unrest. I do not believe that they have the moral right to get in here and talk about the trade unions.

I believe it is all, perhaps, more an exercise, to grab the front page in the newspapers tomorrow, to say that the Barbados Labour Party is making a case for the unions in Barbados. I think we all know better than that. Sir, their history of relationship with the Trade Union Movement in Barbados, and with workers, generally speaking, in Barbados is nothing of which any one of us can be proud.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph who represents a Constituency that was once represented by one of our National Heroes and who was involved in the Trade Union Movement, ought to have known better to some extent. Certainly, I believe that they lost their way at least 15 years ago, in respect of relations with the Trade Union Movement.

Sir, it is a myth to believe that the only way workers can be represented in an institution, is if they have membership on the Trade Union Movement on the said Board. If that is the case, why is it that under the former Administration, there were no trade union members represented on the majority of Boards throughout Barbados? Therefore, let us dismiss that for what it is worth.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. It is untrue to say that there were no representatives of the Trade Union Movement on the majority of Boards.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, those were the words he used. He said that there was no trade union representation on the majority of Boards.

Sir, let us start with the Barbados Tourism Authority and come right down. The Barbados Labour Party Government in 1994, took a principal position where we

felt that the governance of Boards requires that we broaden the basis of the composition of the Boards, and that rather than the Government of Barbados or the Minister hand-pick a person, we would give the right to the Trade Union Movement to determine who they would want to represent them. It was in the fulfillment of our belief in the strengthening of the social partnership.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you going to point out to us the number of Boards, because you are saying to me that it is not true. You have stated the policy. How am I expected to make a ruling, if you do not indicate the number of Boards, which they represented?

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, since you are now a part of the debate, I can facilitate you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James South, please continue.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I would not engage in that. We were getting into Debate, as you quite rightly pointed out, in terms of a number.

Sir, if that was the case, it obviously failed because never before in the history of Barbados was there so much industrial unrest, than there was under the Barbados Labour Party=s last 14 years in office. Obviously, your relationship with the Trade Union Movement was nothing but a facade, just as your relationship with the workers in Barbados, generally speaking, was nothing, but a facade.

Sir, if they felt so strongly about the trade unions being represented on the Board, why is it that the workers of the QEH were treated the way they were treated when the Boards came into office? Let us get straight about these things. Do not say one thing.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: As a matter of fact, you said not over your dead body, and that was at a time when the only Department at the QEH that functioned effectively was the morgue, so I know why I said it. Therefore, do not come into Parliament and make these kinds of statements and allegations, just to seek to get coverage in the newspapers. This is a serious institution where you have the business of the public to deal with and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which under the former Administration was literally brought to its knees.

Sir, we have decided, as a responsible Government, that the health of a nation is a wealth of a nation. We recognise that the QEH is the premier health care institution in Barbados. We recognise that Barbadians,

regardless of race, class, colour, creed or religion, have a right to decent and affordable health care in this country. These are the principles upon which the Democratic Labour Party stands, when it comes to health care.

We will not treat the citizens of Barbados with respect to health care in a way the former Government treated them. Therefore, let us look at what we inherited and why we have to do what we have to do now, in respect of this Bill.

5.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, we came into office on January 15 recognising, from the electorate of Barbados, that health care was among the top three concerns that they had. We recognised that we needed to have both a physical redevelopment plan, as well as one that speaks to human resources and medical issues, et cetera, for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, we inherited a Queen Elizabeth Hospital where there was a shortage of basic supplies, gloves, cotton swabs, toilet paper and other basic things. We inherited a Queen Elizabeth Hospital where patients were getting hot juice and cold tea, instead of the other way around. We inherited a Queen Elizabeth Hospital where the elevators did not work.

I am told that the Honourable Member for St. Peter went in there one day on a family matter and got stuck in the elevator. We inherited a Queen Elizabeth Hospital where there is a great shortage of equipment. As a matter of fact, the doctors in private practice have far superior equipment than the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in which we were pumping \$110 million. That is the kind of institution we inherited on January 15, thanks to the Barbados Labour Party Government.

Mr. Speaker, we inherited an institution where morale was at an all time low. We inherited a situation where good quality Barbadian nurses were at home, and nurses were in here, that sometimes could not even speak the language, or were not familiar with the culture of this society. Mr. Speaker, do you understand why we need to do the things we have to do as this Bill is so reflecting here today?

Mr. Speaker, we inherited a Queen Elizabeth Hospital where the wait at the Accident and Emergency was so long, that if you had to go there you had to take your breakfast, lunch and dinner with you, as you would not know when you would see a physician. People were dying in the Accident and Emergency Department. There were scenes at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital that sometimes you only saw in movies, or in some other countries that perhaps are much lower down the line than

Barbados, and were certainly not in keeping with a 21st Century economy.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Peter got up in the international forum and grandstand about Barbados being No. 1 among developing nations, about the economic growth of Barbados and unemployment. The Honourable Member for St. Peter used to pompasette about all of the economic jargons, but the things that mattered most to the average Barbadian were not being attended to, and health care was one of them. What use is it going up to the United Nations and people clapping about you being the No. 1 or the No. 25 most developed country in the world, when your own citizens could not get basic medication at your lone health care institution? To me that is a crying shame. It exemplifies the difference between the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed to ensuring that all Barbadians get decent and affordable health care. We inherited a health care situation in Barbados where unless you had money you could not get decent health care. I have many poor people in my Constituency of St. James South who had to choose between going to the doctor and sending their children to school. That is not the kind of Barbados that the Democratic Labour Party wishes to have. The people of Barbados decided on January 15, that there was time for a change, and the change is what they are getting here today.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners, led by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, who subsequently was silenced by being placed in the Cabinet as the Minister of Health, criticised the Government. Every Head of the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners under the former Administration had nothing good to say about the state of health care. They are professional men and women.

Mr. Speaker, what we are seeking to do today with this Bill, is to recognise that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, as a public health institution, is a very complex institution. I often hear people say that running a hospital is tantamount to running a five-star hotel. You have your maintenance department, your housekeeping department, which includes the kitchen and the laundry. You have your beds, and of course, you have the medical facility.

Mr. Speaker, recognising the complexities of the institution, we have decided that it is time to bring the skills that are needed to run the institution in the manner in which it needs to be run.

Mr. Speaker, we want proper management throughout the Public Service. We need proper management in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We need to bring the skills. Under the former Administration, the only

criterion for sitting on any Board was either membership in the Barbados Labour Party, or by giving financial contributions to the institution. No other criterion was necessary.

Mr. Speaker, we decided that we needed an institution that would be managed, that would have an accountant, an attorney-at-law, a human resource person, an industrial relations person, and a medical person. All of the necessary important facets are represented.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is imputing improper motives to the Honourable Members on This Side when they were in Government. Sir, if he has evidence to the fact that the only criterion for sitting on a board was membership to the Barbados Labour Party. He needs to bring that evidence. The Honourable Member cannot come and impute improper motives to Honourable Members on This Side and not bring the requisite evidence. Mr. Speaker, if he has not brought the requisite evidence, he should withdraw those statements. The Honourable Member has no evidence to back up his claim that you only needed to be a member of the Barbados Labour Party to be on a Board.

Mr. Speaker, I refute that accusation. It is untrue. It is false and it is totally misleading to this House. If the Honourable Member has any evidence to the contrary, he needs to bring it or withdraw the statement.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, I believe that I gave more than one criterion.

Mr. SPEAKER: He did not refer to the size specifically. That is my ruling.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member said that the only requirement was to be a member of the Barbados Labour Party.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I find that as no point of order.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, we recognise that there is the need to have a diverse group of skills brought to bear on the management of the institution. Everyone cannot be accommodated. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West could make a call for a dentist to be on the Board. There are others who would make a call for a podiatrist or a nutritionist to be on the Board. Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that we have recognised that this is a complex institution. It cannot be business as usual. We need more prudent management at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and therefore you need these skills.

Mr. Speaker, this is an institution that is this year going to get about \$150 million of taxpayers' money.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: I do not think that Honourable Members on This Side clearly understand the mess that the Barbados Labour Party left in this economy. Every facet of this economy was left in a financial mess thanks to the Honourable Member for St. Peter. I am sorry that he is not in here. I notice that he is only in here at lunch time.

Asides.

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is too important an institution for us to play games with. The former Minister of Finance capped the budget of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, set up a Board and basically said this is all I am giving you, go and borrow money, go and do all sorts of things.

Mr. Speaker, another thing I must chide the former Administration for is this propensity to go and establish private companies, boards and other kinds of funny entities to run away from their responsibility as a Government.

5.40 p.m.

The former Board of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, I am sure they tried their best, under the circumstances but the Cabinet of the day must accept responsibility.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter was in here a few weeks ago and he said that all roads led to him, to blame him for everything and he has to accept the blame for health care in this country.

Sir, we as the new Government, have to accept responsibility for what happens in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital going forward and we have determined that that institution is so important, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, who is doing an excellent job as Minister of Health, has decided that these are the skills needed, not just because he is a physician because as a medical practitioner, he could have loaded the Board with his colleagues but he recognises that it cannot be business as usual.

We have to bring these skills to bear upon the management of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, because this Government cares about the people. We no longer want to see long waiting lines at the Accident and Emergency Department. We want to ensure that when Barbadians go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and they leave, they can leave with the medications their doctors prescribed, that are on the Drug Formulary.

We want to know that when Barbadians go to Hospital to visit their families, that they should not have to carry bed linen for them and that they should not have to bring meals for them. Sir, we even want to know that when you go into the Morgue that you are safe in there. This Government is committed to making the wrongs at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital right.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, I stand in full support of this Bill. I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate in this debate and it is really unfortunate that the last person who spoke continues to bring a level of generality in every speech that he contributes in this House, such that it confirms my opinion that he really has no opinion on anything and is simply seeking to be a standard bearer for a political party.

It is an unfortunate thing that in this day and age, that an Honourable Member who has the ability to hold ministerial office, should believe that his sole purpose in here is to be able to excite laughter among the Benches on both the Government and the Opposition Side. Sir, that said, it is to me clear that this debate is fundamentally a debate about governance. It so happens that the governance we are talking about relates to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board.

Sir, the Government is free to determine, as its right, that it no longer wishes to support the existing status quo as reflected in the Schedule to Cap. 54, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board Act, and that it would want now to bring a Bill which allows the Minister to appoint 11 persons in his sole discretion according to the skills set out in the particular Bill. Sir, other than those 11 appointments, the Bill makes provision for the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Medical Officer to sit as ex officio members.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central tried equally to be partisan and to confuse himself and the Chamber by suggesting that ex officio members in one respect, because you had the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Medical Officer ex officio that it, therefore, made it okay for you to remove the Director of Nursing Services, the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief of Medical Staff, the Financial Controller and the Dean of the School of Clinical Medicine and Research.

Mr. Speaker, if you are saying that it is required to have representatives of the Ministry, because, remember that the Chief Medical Officer and the Permanent Secretary are from the Ministry and you recognise the importance of having them there ex officio, and not being subject to the

invitation of the Board which could or could not come, might or might not come, then all the more reason you would expect that the persons outlined in the current Act, the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Nursing Services, the Chief of Medical Staff, the Financial Controller and the Dean of the School of Clinical Medicine and Research, would be there ex officio.

The nonsense in the argument put forward by the Other Side is to be found in the fact that the current legislation does not give an ex officio member a right to vote, so that their presence at the Board does not add injury or harm to the conduct of the Board=s proceedings, but add value and to the extent that the Board wishes them or even a substantive Member of the Board excused from any discussion, the Board retains that right as an inherent right of the Board.

Mr. Speaker, the difficulty is this, that when you have in a statute a standard which allows you to be an ex officio member, and you remove it to the whim and fancy of the Chairman of the Board, then there is a reduction in my view in the quality of governance in which the Board now adheres.

Sir, I can understand the Minister of Health perhaps feeling that he wanted a little more latitude in choosing additional members to the Board. Indeed, during the Estimates Debate when this matter was discussed, I fully anticipated that we would have seen a Bill that might have carried the Minister=s right to choose members from three to five or six, without prejudice to the current composition of the Board.

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order earlier, I would have referred to the fact that it was a fundamental premise of the Barbados Labour Party, to do two things in relation to Statutory Boards when we came to office in 1994. One was to include the voice of the Trade Union Movement not by our choosing a particular union member ourselves, that is the fundamental difference here, but by giving the union the right to choose whom they would wish to appoint to represent the perspective of the union on a particular Board.

Secondly, Sir, we also believed at the time and offered the Opposition, in those days, the right to appoint a member to each Board. Sir, that was our case. Mr. Speaker, the Opposition then said no, and declined, and this is before any of the Members who are sitting in this Chamber are here. Sir, the current Prime Minister, as Leader of the Opposition said he did not want to participate, as was his right.

Mr. Speaker, I am making the point that, like other countries in the world, there was a recognition that if Government is to be effective and management is to be

effective, then it must be consultative. There must be a commitment to build consensus as far as possible, and there must be a participatory approach as far as possible.

Mr. Speaker, the old people would tell you that a little learning is a dangerous thing. What we have had in this debate are elements of a little learning, trying to intrude into matters of fundamental governance, such that we end up with a confused state, and Sir, only the country and the people of the country.

I can understand the desire to want to support your political Party, but I am now convinced, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that this Bill represents the health equivalent of the diesel pump increase that we had last month. Sir, it is the health equivalent, because the rise in diesel of 77 percent, and removing the subsidy that has for decades been across the Barbados Labour Party Governments and the Democratic Labour Party Governments, shielded those who needed to be shielded. Because of the nature of the productive sector and the interlocking reality of transactions in this country, has now managed to lead us to the inescapable conclusion to one of two things.

5.50 p.m.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am not even going to engage the Honourable Member for St. Lucy in this debate, because the Honourable Member for St. Lucy knows that the origin of the Reversed Tax Credit was on This Side, but that is irrelevant. What is relevant is that the Democratic Labour Party Government in its new modern incarnation, has now presented itself to the country as either being free market ideology, anti-people, placing burdens on the backs of people who can least afford to carry them in circumstances where it has distanced itself from its previous position when it was in Government or if it is that their desire is to protect the people, then they are reflecting a level of incompetence.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member knows that the greatest imposition that ever occurred on the public of Barbados as it relates to oil prices and incidences of high prices on the people of Barbados, is when the oil company was built and not built with money coming from outside sources but was built using increased prices that should have been passed on to the consumers but it was kept to finance the oil company. The Honourable Member needs to tell this House how the oil company was financed without outside finances.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am too senior a Member to ignore the Rules of this House. I understand that reference to a point as an example does not - and I will continue to refer to the example that this Democratic Labour Party, in relation to this matter has continued its anti-people stance that was reflected in the diesel hike which was just foisted on the people of this country.

It is now in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, now being proposed to take a retrograde step that puts and takes off this Board, the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners, the Barbados Registered Nurses' Association and (CTUSAB), the Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Association of Barbados.

Sir, it was just be a point of comment on my part if it were not so funny, and if it were not a breach deliberately of the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto on which they went to the people. Sir, I have now to come to the conclusion that this is either an act of total incompetence and omission on their part, or it is a repudiation of the good governance section in their Manifesto. Sir, lest there be any mistake, may I read from that Manifesto into the record. Sir, I am reading from page 46:

A Good governance has eight major characteristics

Mr. Speaker, the first two principles, participatory and consensus oriented, the first Bill brought by a Democratic Labour Party to this Parliament after this Manifesto, has as its sole act, to remove CTUSAB, The Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners, The Barbados Registered Nurses' Association, The Barbados Association of Retired Persons, The University of the West Indies, not to mention removing all the other persons that I referred to earlier from the ex officio capacity. Sir, that is the opposite of participatory and consensus making if ever there was.

Mr. Speaker, let me finish reading:

A Good governance assures that corruption is minimised. The view of the people are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable members of the society are heard in decision-making. @

Mr. Speaker, we the Barbados Christian Council and the Barbados Association of Retired Persons on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board, as responsible umbrella bodies to speak on behalf of the most vulnerable and the patients, but it does not end there, Mr. Speaker.

A The Democratic Labour Party envisages a Barbados in which democracy is given a life beyond the partisan electoral structure. It sees a Barbados where

people take a larger responsibility for the management of their own communities and can be empowered with the requisite resources from Central Government to produce real solutions to real problems.

It envisages..... from top, but results from the full involvement of a wider society.

Mr. Speaker, what do we have as the first act, the first Bill to come as a genuine Act as a Democratic Labour Party Cabinet before us? An Act that takes the Minister and gives the Minister increased power instead of appointing three persons, now appoints 11 persons, almost a 400 per cent increase in the number of persons that the Minister can appoint. Sir, this is the Manifesto that talks about giving more power.

Hon. D. O. INNISS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. We could spend the whole evening reading the Democratic Labour Party Manifesto from cover to cover. I do not know that it adds to the debate.

What is important here, as I listen to the Honourable Member for St. Michael North, because the Honourable Member is misleading the House. As far as I am concerned, this Bill seeks to bring the Queen Elizabeth Hospital back to its fundamental role which is to deliver high quality health care at affordable price to Barbadians. Therefore, to come and spend the time talking about all these organisations who should be on the Board does not help the situation. At the end of the day, what is important is that Barbadians can once again get free health care in an institution that they feel safe and secure in.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot see any merit in the point raised.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have become accustomed to it. As I have said, the Honourable Member for St. James South believes that his role is to bring laughter to us on a daily basis, and I accept that he has accepted that is his role.

Sir, I say to you in all seriousness, that the Government is free to choose the Board it wants, but I am equally free to point out that the composition of the Board, and the manner of appointments that now vest in the Minister the right to appoint 11 members, as opposed to the three under a Barbados Labour Party, runs contrary to all the premises of good governance that were put out in the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto.

6.00 p.m.

Sir, I go further. We just had May Day, and we had a lot of a hullabaloo, from the Democratic Labour Party,

about their support for the Social Partnership, but their first act was not taking them off the Queen Elizabeth Hospital's Board. Their first act was carrying up the price of diesel by 77 per cent, without letting the Social Partnership know and consulting, as we have traditionally done.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member knows that the increases occurred before May Day, and the Honourable Member cannot use May Day as a veil. I will not allow the Honourable Member to slip through the cracks with that one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Proceed, Honourable Member.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Once again, it does not alter the fact that there was no consultation.

Mr. Speaker, it does not alter the fact, that there was no consultation by the Government, on what became the largest single price increase in this country, from a Government who promised to bring down the cost of living.

Sir, I say to you that these are matters of governance. These are fundamental ...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: These are matters of fundamental governance. The reality is, and I will not be distracted from it - No amount of getting up, and reciting what you believe to be the ills of the past. There were ills, but there were also significant accomplishments. I am not going to participate in a political charade that seeks to create for the public of Barbados, the impression that we are not prepared to be serious about the business, but we come in here to make sport. The Honourable Member for St. James South, in particular, needs to remember that.

Sir, I say to you that there are fundamental issues affecting our health care system. The fact that I disagree with the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, at least he has brought something here. At least he has brought it, and I salute him for bringing it, because he is trying to govern. Sir, I say to you that I hope and I implore him, that the most fundamental issue facing the health care system with respect to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, has really to do with taking out of his holding pattern in relating to the physical infrastructure.

Sir, when the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, quoted the 1999 Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party, about the commitment to build a new hospital, he forgot to tell the public that, there was a group of persons commissioned to do the study, to determine whether the actual physical site could be appropriately renovated, or would have to be abandoned, what were the

needs for a modern hospital in Barbados, and that process, as we would learn, and I will have the honour to remind in a few years, in two years' time, that the process of governance and decision-making in this country, particularly when it comes to a hospital, or particularly when it comes to a large department, is not a matter that can be done over-night, as if it were a private sector entity, or if you were trying to mount a website, as a matter of business.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, I say to you that while you may have persons, who may have the luxury of making those comments outside, they will now learn as a government, just as the Prime Minister admitted in the newspaper this week, as he was reported to have said, dealing with the cost of living, is a far more herculean task than he anticipated. Let us get away from the bravado, that comes from the mouth of persons like the Honourable Member for St. James South, and let us get real.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, I do not agree with his approach. I do not agree with it. I think it is a fundamental breach of his own Manifesto, but he has, at least, brought a position here. I say to you that he would be doing the country a disservice, if he does not indicate to the country, in the absolute near future, what this Government's position is, on the construction of a new hospital.

Mr. Speaker, all of you know that you are in a holding pattern. You cannot run the Hospital with the current number of beds in the Surgical Intensive Care. You cannot run the Hospital with the Accident and Emergency Department as is. That is why the last Minister of Health, would have instructed the Board to proceed with the expansion of the Accident and Emergency Department, and even while proceeding with the Accident and Emergency Department, continue the steps to build a new Hospital.

We fundamentally will support the construction of a new hospital, but we cannot have the Government, in our view, remaining in a holding pattern for much longer, because the longer you take to decide, the longer it will take to be remedied and for the people to benefit. Sir, we feel that those are some of the things.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me no delight, that in the last six weeks, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has allegations against it, to which I am aware, of two wrongful deaths. So when the others come in and try to suggest that...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is on a point of order.

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House, by giving the impression that that particular charge is now being made for the first time. Everybody knows that charge had been made for many years. I am very glad that the Honourable Member has now reached the point of admitting that action has to be taken about that hospital.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member for St. Lucy used to listen and wait to listen, he would have understood that the point that I was making, is that you will continue to have allegations about the quality of service. You will continue to have allegation about wrongful deaths, and that simply to cause the public to believe that a change of Government will of necessity change these things, will be an action of political sophistry, on the part of a political Party.

Sir, I am saying to you that is what breeds cynicism. That is what breeds apathy in this country. If we want to talk, let us talk to the people seriously and honestly. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a complex structure. Any hospital that has over 2 000 people under its jurisdiction, in terms of employment, its activities range across the entire raft of medical, physical, management and supplies, it will continue to be. Sir, what we have had is the excitement of an expectation, that a change of Government would of necessity lead to a sudden change in circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, let us be true. The reality is, more Barbadians are aware of options in relation to medical treatment today than before. The Internet provides a first point of access for people to do their own research. We are also aware that because quality of life, as a nation, has improved substantively, people expect all to be done to help them. That is a legitimate expectation, but very often the cost of so doing, may not necessarily be entirely within the capacity of developing countries or developed countries, as we are seeing in the debate in the United States of America, where health care continues to be one of the major issues, to which there is discussion.

Sir, we as a country, have done reasonably well. Can we do better in relation to health care? Yes, we must, but until we start to address the issue of the dedicated funding of an expanded health system, we would be in catch-up mode. Until we start to address the issue of the issue, as to whether and how we continue to provide the expanded services, from a new infrastructure rather than one that is 50 years old, we would be in a catch-up mode. I am saying to you, that we have a difficulty with the debate today, proceeding along the lines that the Honourable Member for St. James South and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, would have suggested.

6.10 p.m.

I do not have a difficulty as I say, with the Minister=s right to put forward his position. I do not agree with him. I feel, like they tried to suggest in their Manifesto that participatory democracy, consensus building is the way to go. When you take a Minister and give him the power to appoint 11 people, instead of three people, then you are running counter to all that you went to the public and said.

Again, you said that against the background of that, I will not lie, I will not steal, and I will not cheat. We heard the words: accountability, trustworthiness, good governance and I say to you Sir, that clearly, they are not prepared to walk the walk, but they talk the talk.

Mr. Speaker, that is not a matter for me, that is not a matter for even you so much. It would ultimately be a matter for the people. Sir, to the extent that you get snapshots of the people=s perspective, I can understand the agitation in here today Tuesday, on the part of the Honourable Members, especially the ones whose names I have referred to already today.

Sir, if I picked up the “Sunday Sun” and immediately after 100 days, I read that a government of which I was a part, has received only 61 per cent of the public saying that their performance is poor, 30 per cent only said “good”, not even one-third, because one-third would be 33 per cent - as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central would remind me as a good teacher - I would say to you, that I would pause and I would reflect and I would leave the bravado at home. I would understand that I need to listen, because it means that there is a disconnect between why I am here, what I am doing, and what are the expectations of the people.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you need to conclude at this time.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, you are free to continue to rein your allegations and accusations on This Side. The reality is that as you do so, you are not putting one grain of rice more on anybody=s table. As you do so, you are not helping one more person who is ill in this country to get better. As you do so, you are not putting 10 cents in anybody=s pocket.

Mr. Speaker, if you believe that the reason you were on That Side of the Benches, is because you are here to abuse the Barbados Labour Party, feel free and go ahead, because we can take care of ourselves. I know that the one thing you will do is to ensure that 61 per cent goes to 75 per cent on the next occasion, and that the poor go to extremely poor. Therefore, I can understand the agitation, because any new Government in four months usually has a very high approval rating.

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to thank the Honourable Member for her contribution.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, I will wind up.

I say fundamentally, Sir, that this is a governance debate set against a health background. Fundamentally, we believe that the Government is wrong to have removed the Trade Union Movement, BARP and the Christian Council from the Board. Most important, we believe that the Government is wrong to take the University from the Board, because first and foremost, this is also a teaching hospital and the University must have an input, in my view, as to not only the nominee of the Principal of the University, but also the Dean of the School of Medical Sciences. Sir, they must have a perspective on how the University is managed.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member=s time has expired.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: With those words, I therefore thank you for the opportunity to share the Opposition=s perspective on this debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Honourable Members, now is a good time to take a short Suspension to look at the matter which was raised earlier and I would ask for a motion to that effect.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended for 10 minutes to resume at 6.25 p.m. today.

Hon. D. O’N. INNIS: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the Sitting be now suspended until 6.25 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

6.15 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

When the Suspension was taken, there was an issue to be decided upon, and we would need a further 15 minutes to deal with the relevant matter.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended for 15 minutes.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I beg to second that.

The question that the Sitting do now suspend for 15 minutes was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

6.31 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. Honourable Members, you may recall that prior to the Suspension, we were looking at a point of order made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East. Of course, the Honourable Member requested that I should have recourse to Hansard before I make the particular ruling.

I have had the opportunity to look at part of Hansard and what I will do is to wait - I believe the other pages should be ready by the time we finish the debate on this particular Bill, before I make my final ruling. What I will do, in fact, is to proceed with the matter and return to this before the end of today's Sitting.

The Honourable Member for St. James North.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, if I heard correctly, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has suggested that he personally has had no difficulty with the old management arrangement that affected the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The Honourable Member appeared to suggest that he was happy when the Queen Elizabeth Hospital functioned as an ordinary Government Department.

Mr. Speaker, the rationale behind setting up a Board to manage the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was not only to give the Queen Elizabeth Hospital a measure of autonomy, but in a fairly inflexible situation where, according to how the Estimates work, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital might have, from time to time, certain financial emergencies. Therefore, we took a conscious decision to take it from out of the structure as a government department and allowed it to be managed by a corporate entity in the form of a Board. Sir, that was the main rationale.

7.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, there were instances when supplies were necessary in the short-term, and because of the constraining effect of having to function as an ordinary

Government Department, these emergency supplies could not be procured and that was another reason why a Board was established.

Sir, insofar as the current Board is concerned, whenever a Minister comes to his Ministry and checks to see what powers he has, it galls all Ministers who realise that some Boards, and there are several, are more or less self-appointed.

There are a number of Boards in Barbados that are self-appointed meaning that somebody ex officio must sit on the Board and the result is a diminution of ministerial authority and power. In fact, there is a Minister of State who sits in the Other Place who has about three Boards and those three Boards are absolutely self-appointing, where persons functionaries, operating in certain fields, automatically, either by themselves or through the organisations they work for, go on particular Boards.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip West will realise when he comes to look at the National Insurance Board, that it has power to appoint two people only and that the vast majority of persons on the National Insurance Board, about seventh-ninth are self-appointing and these things concern Ministers. I, therefore, believe that the Honourable Minister and Honourable Member for St. Philip West may have thought that the time had come for him as Minister to assert his ministerial authority in a way, where he thinks that it is important to let the status quo continue.

However, as I make my contribution, I want to make this particular remark. We have since the early 1990s through the Democratic Labour Party, and in that I have to be honest, observed in Barbados a tendency towards tripartisan and this tri-partisan, which a former Member for St. Michael South in the form of Sir Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, this tripartism, which Sir Lloyd called the Social Partnership, has now become so entrenched that because of its potential to lead to good governance, almost in many cases, the tripartite philosophy is pervasive and, therefore, a lot of us in Barbados are persuaded that if we are going to have a social partnership that is meaningful and if we are going to go the route of tripartism, then so let it be.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know the extent to which, outside of Cabinet, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West was able to consult interested parties, but he has brought here before us, some serious amendments which effectively shut out certain people by name. I am going to be fair. Certain functionaries are excluded by name. However, we still feel that the contribution made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West should be taken into account, and if it happens that the Trade Union Movement as a movement is excluded, if BAMP as a movement is excluded to the detriment of the smooth

functioning of the Board, then clearly the Minister would have erred. However, we on This Side want to see the very best for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. There is no question that there are elements of its operation that attract fair comment. The Medical Services in particular at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital are excellent, but in terms of the overall Administration, it is not impolitic or premature to review the day-to-day operations with the aim towards making the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the premier health provider in the Region.

Mr. Speaker, already there are Caribbean people who do not take a chance in their own domicile, and who come as private patients to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and this suggests to us that there are those who feel that our medical services are superior to what they have in their own locality.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill should also clarify particular roles. I have heard some mention made of human resource development and human resource management, but at the end of the day, the Minister must realise that even though these amendments would free his hand that he should, out of a sense of prudence, ensure that particular stakeholders who can make a meaningful contribution to health management in Barbados, are not left out.

Mr. Speaker, I will not say much more on this. On the overall question of whether or not we need a new Hospital, it could very well be that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is stressed, that sometimes its capacity is put under pressure and, as a Northerner myself, I am coming around to the view that perhaps a hospital suitably located in the North of Barbados may very well be justified.

Mr. Speaker, one Honourable Member said that the Enmore site is not ideal. I am no expert in traffic management and related matters but one of the things about any new hospital in this new era, is that it should be readily accessible by road. We do not want the type of problem to occur where in an emergency situation an ambulance cannot get through traffic when that ambulance is carrying somebody in urgent need of attention.

Mr. Speaker, there is a minor matter to which I want to refer and it has to do with the Accident and Emergency Department. Sir, some people abuse the Accident and Emergency Department. Some people who suffer from self-inflicted illnesses are always in the Accident and Emergency Department. I mean fellows who are made the worse from things like drink and drugs show up at the Accident and Emergency Department repeatedly, stay for as long as they want to, leave and come back within 24 hours.

Asides.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, it is a fact. There are fellows from St. Michael in particular, who are not really sick in the true sense of sickness, but who see the Hospital as a public facility for them. They go, drink, get drunk, get a hang-over and go to the Accident and Emergency Department for treatment for that sort of condition, and Honourable Members would realise these things.

Sir, on a more serious note. I am concerned that there are times when routine, simple, surgical matters have had to be deferred, because of equipment that was not functioning and this is one of the things that should engage the attention of the Board. I am talking about equipment.

I hope that this Board would be able to have such oversight that equipment at the Hospital does not go missing. It has transpired through history that a lot of the equipment that has come to the Hospital has simply gone missing. I do not know who is responsible. I cannot hazard a guess but I have heard medical people say that very important pieces of medical technology that could help the Hospital function better, have gone missing and, Sir, that is not good enough.

Mr. Speaker, since the Minister has existing power to give the Board general directions without necessarily ousting the power and authority of the Board, since the Minister can offer general directions and these general directions have to be policy-oriented, I would hope that the Honourable Minister, who is already showing signs of

7.10 p.m.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: being a hardworking Minister, would be able to deal with these matters.

Sir, I expect the Minister to reflect on the composition of the National Insurance Board, where his hands are tied to appointing a Chairman and a Deputy, and all the other members are appointed through what office they hold in their normal jobs.

Sir, it was raised here today, that if a given person in his day to day function is perhaps, the member of a profession and also a member of the Board, that some necessary conflict of interest arises, that need not be so.

A person can be a functionary, let us say in manufacturing, and be appointed either to the TVET Board or the Barbados Vocational Training Board, and wear the two hats without any conflict of interest. I would not buy the argument, that if a fellow is a notable trade unionist and then becomes a member of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board, that raises a necessary conflict, because he ought to be in a fiduciary relationship with the Board, and that fiduciary relationship would be in conflict with an equal

fiduciary relationship when he wears his other hat. I do not necessarily buy that argument.

Sir, what I want to see is exactly what each and every Honourable Member on This Side would want to see. Sir, a hospital that is proactive. A hospital that is truly a centre of excellence. A hospital that is caring. A hospital that is populated by persons, who are keen to see it work well. A hospital that evolve into being the best, and the premier health institution in this Region.

Mr. Speaker, with these few remarks, I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just permit me, at this time, to deal with the outstanding matter of the submission of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East. This would have been with respect to certain statements made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, and as you know we would have asked to have recourse to the record as presented by Hansard. As I understand it, the objection comes largely with respect to the following passage, and I quote:

“We have had even in this amendment one of the areas that have not been identified by the Other Side, where we have had in the past persons who have absented themselves from the Board. We have had in this Act a provision to tighten up the area where persons who may absent themselves from the Board, that the Minister may now have the power to appoint temporary persons, but only in relation to persons who are absent on two consecutive occasions.

Sir, that is a major change, because under the old Act, which this is seeking to amend, you could be absent for as long as you want. You could have Board Members who absent themselves for as long as they want. There was no order, no structure, no direction to that and now we are bringing some direction to it, Mr. Speaker. We are bringing some direction in relation to how the most important organ as it relates to management....@, and it continues.

Now, having had a look at that, I am satisfied that statement must be taken and must be read in light of the statement which went before, with respect to the appointment of temporary persons. I am also satisfied, having listened to the submission of the Member for St. Michael North East, and having had recourse to the various sections of the Schedule, Rule 5.16 in the First Schedule, which gives the Minister certain powers to deal with absences and so on, I am satisfied that if allowed to stand, although to my mind given the context in which it is made, it was not the intention, but I am satisfied that if it is allowed to stand, it basically would have the effect of sending out a basic inaccuracy, in light of the statements and the provisions referred to by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.

(Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER.)

To that extent, I uphold the submission of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.

I would go further however, just to clarify the ruling although I do not believe it is quite necessary, but the Chair will still not accept the use of words like Ablatant@, although in one case it has various meanings in the dictionary, and one of them is conspicuous. It also has connotations of willfully and purposely misleading the House and it will not be tolerated by this Chair.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Withdrawn as the Chair rules.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged to you.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that further consideration of this Bill be postponed until Tuesday, May 13, 2008, at 10.00 a.m.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, May 13, 2008, at 10.00 a.m.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: I beg to second that.

The question that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, May 13, 2008 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

7.20 p.m.

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CLARKE, Mr. G. A. (St. George North)
DUGUID, Dr. W. F. (Christ Church West)
EASTMOND, Mr. R. C. (St. James North)
ESTWICK, Dr. the Hon. D. C. (St. Philip West)
FORDE, Miss. C. Y. (St. Thomas)
HUTSON, Hon. E. G. (St. James Central)
INNISS, Hon. D. O’N. (St. James South)
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KELLMAN, Mr. D. St.E. (St. Lucy)
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SEALY, Hon. R. L. (St. Michael South Central)
THOMPSON, Hon. D. J. H. (St. John)
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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. Minutes. The Minutes are announced as ‘The Minutes of Tuesday, April 29, 2008, 2005.’ The stray ‘2005’ is printed as in the source.

Q2. Opening and Minutes. The sitting is opened by ‘Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER’, who also announces the Minutes, but the confirmation of the Minutes immediately afterwards is given by ‘Mr. SPEAKER’. The motion to suspend for 10 minutes later in the day is addressed to ‘Mr. Deputy Speaker’. The labels are printed as in the source.

Q3. Papers, item 1. The only paper laid reads ‘Shipping (Incentives)(Sea SPI istribution Caribbean Inc.) Order, > 2008.’, which appears garbled in the source. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 3, Harrisons Point Resolution. The area of land is given variously as ‘approximately 82.80 acres’ and ‘82.8 acres’ (Hon. M. A. Lashley, Hon. R. L. Sealy), ‘82.2 acres’ (Mr. G. A. Clarke, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce) and ‘approximately 80 acres’ (Hon. E. G. Hutson); the mover also describes the parcels as 50.409 acres and 39 acres. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 3 and Order No. 2, speaker labels. The Member for St. James South appears both as ‘Hon. D. O’N. INNIS’ and ‘Hon. D. O. INNIS’, and the Deputy Speaker as ‘His Honour K. St.C. BEST’ and ‘Hon. K. St. C. BEST’; Miss C. Y. Forde is labelled ‘Miss. C. Y. FORDE’ in two places. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 6th May, 2008 at 10.13 a.m., with the Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, presiding after the Deputy Speaker had opened the sitting; prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of the previous sitting were confirmed, and the Leader of the House, Hon. R. D. Jones, laid the Shipping (Incentives) Order, 2008. Standing Orders were suspended for the remainder of the day’s sitting.

Order No. 3 was the Resolution to approve, under section 5 of the Crown Lands (Vesting and Disposal) Act, Cap. 225, the vesting in the Barbados Tourism Investment

Inc. of parcels of Crown land at Harrisons, St. Lucy for tourism development. The Minister of Housing and Lands, Hon. M. A. Lashley, explained that some 82.80 acres were involved, that the previous Cabinet had agreed to the vesting on September 7, 2006,. The Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, said her side would not block the Resolution. The Minister of Tourism, Hon. R. L. Sealy, said the Letter of Intent signed with the Rosewood Hotel Group would be re-negotiated, naming as non-negotiable proper beach access and facilities, the Government’s equity in Harrisons Point Development Limited, and a share offer to ordinary Barbadians, and noted that first-quarter arrivals were up 10 per cent.

Mr. D. St.E. Kellman spoke for the people of St. Lucy, calling for a seaport, an alternative airport and a plan for the Northern corridor. Mr. G. A. Clarke supported the Resolution but argued that the Government, having promised to review major investments and not to give away beachfront land, was proceeding with the former Administration’s project; his speech drew repeated points of order from Mr. Kellman and from Hon. R. L. Sealy, who stated that Fairways Development Limited was a local company. Mr. J. D. Paul urged linkages with farmers and craftsmen and a role for credit unions, and Mr. R. C. Eastmond, Hon. P. M. T. Todd, Hon. D. O’N. Inniss, who said Hotels and Resorts Limited owed about \$200 million, Mr. A. D. Brathwaite, His Honour K. St.C. Best, Hon. E. G. Hutson and Hon. J. D. E. Boyce also spoke. Miss Mottley was required by the Speaker to withdraw remarks about Mr. Boyce. After Mr. Lashley replied, the Resolution was passed without division.

Order No. 2, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (Amendment) Bill, 2008, was moved by the Minister of Health, Dr. the Hon. D. C. Estwick. He explained that the Board, then made up of nominees of the Minister, the Cave Hill Campus, the medical and nursing associations, the Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations and other bodies, would instead be drawn from eleven skill sets, among them accounting, finance, human resource management, industrial relations, law, medicine and nursing and described plans for clinical directorates and a customer care department.

Dr. W. F. Duguid argued that the Bill removed the unions and the University from the Board of a teaching hospital affecting some 2 000 employees; Mr. A. D. Brathwaite and Hon. J. D. E. Boyce replied on points of order that expertise could be co-opted and that industrial relations was among the skill sets. Mr. D. D. Marshall argued that leaving out the unions was inconsistent with the Government’s support for the Social Partnership, and Miss Mottley contended that the Bill increased the Minister’s

powers; Mr. Kellman, Mr. S. A. Lashley and Mr. Inniss supported it, and Mr. R. C. Eastmond also spoke. Miss Mottley objected that Mr. S. A. Lashley had misstated the provisions on absent Board members and asked for Hansard; after suspensions the Speaker upheld her submission, ordered certain remarks expunged, and ruled

that the word 'blatant' would not be tolerated, and Mr. Lashley withdrew.

Further consideration of the Bill was postponed, and on the motion of Hon. R. D. Jones the House was adjourned until Tuesday, May 13, 2008 at 10.00 a.m.