
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, October 14, 2008

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, October 14, 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)

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

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE, J.P., B.Sc., Dip. Ed.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

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

His Excellency 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)
(Acting Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs)

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

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

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. F. J. STUART, Q.C., B.A., LL.M. (Acting
Prime Minister)

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

Hon. E. G. HUTSON, F.C.C.A., C.A. (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, M. Ed., B.A., Ed.D., 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. P. M. T. TODD, B.Sc., (Minister of State,
Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and
Urban Development)

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, B.A., M.Sc. (Minister of
Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business)

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

*Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan
Harewood.*

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session. Good
morning gentlemen, I hope you are okay because of the
showers of blessings.

House A18 Sequence 2

10.20 a.m.

Tuesday, October 14, 2008

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, October
07, 2008.

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

PAPERS

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Financial Statements of World Cup, (Barbados) Inc., for the years ending December 31, 2006, and December 31, 2007.

NOTICES TO QUESTIONS

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask of the Minister of Transport, Works and International Transport:

1. Is the Minister aware that the confluence of roads at Lancaster, Orange Hill and Highway 2A presents a serious danger to motorists and other road users?

(a) If the Minister is aware, will the Minister state what steps, if any, are being taken to address this danger?

2. Is the Minister aware that the intersection at Westmoreland, near to Gamble Hill, linking these areas to Highway 2A, presents a serious danger to motorists and to other road users?

A. If the Minister is aware, will the Minister state what measures, if any, he proposes to address this danger?

3. Is the Minister aware that at Lower Rock Dundo and Gibbs, St. Peter, the road is extremely narrow, thus posing a threat to motorists and other road users?

A. If the Minister is aware, will the Minister indicate what plans, if any, are there to widen the road and to eliminate this threat, and how soon these plans will be implemented?

4. Is the said Minister aware that even in light rains there is severe flooding at Trents Tenantry in the parish of St. James?

A. If the Minister is aware, will the Minister state what plans, if any, he has to remedy this problem?

5. Is the Minister aware that the road near Eastry House, St. Peter, is too narrow and consequently very dangerous?

A. If the Minister is aware, will the Minister indicate what plans, if any, he has to address this problem?

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Barbados International Business Promotion Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2008, be read a first time.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second that.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO MOVE THAT THE HOUSE RESOLVES ITSELF INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY TO CONSIDER THE GRANT OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE SERVICE OF THIS ISLAND.

On the motion of Hon. R. D. JONES, seconded by Dr. the Hon. F. J. STUART, the House resolved itself into Committee Of Supply, Mr. S. A. LASHLEY, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee Of Supply.

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$10 MILLION FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 2008/2009, AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 7, 2008/2009, WHICH FORM THE SCHEDULE TO THIS RESOLUTION.

HEAD 19 TREASURY \$7 438 920

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Chairman, the Resolution before this Committee calls for the grant of the total sum of \$10 million, to be placed at the disposal of the Government for the service of this island.

Mr. Chairman, for many years, successive Governments have looked at the idea of constructing facilities to house the Magistrate's Courts, the Registration Department, among other Government departments of Barbados.

When the Democratic Labour Party left office in 1994, a firm decision had been taken to construct a new Supreme Court at Country Road. The incoming Government, as it was entitled to do, had other ideas where that Court should be located, and a subsequent decision was taken to construct the Court at White Park Road. Mr. Chairman, this Resolution has to do with the outfitting of that facility at White Park, which is in an advanced state of completion.

Mr. Chairman, the story, briefly told, was that some time in 2002, the then Cabinet took a decision to build a new Judicial Centre at White Park, and started negotiations with the Caribbean Commercial Bank and a company, Fairways Development Limited, to achieve that objective.

Mr. Chairman, according to the record, negotiations were going smoothly, but then suddenly Caribbean Commercial Bank changed hands. It was purchased by the Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago. Sir, that stalled negotiations for a while, until those negotiations were resumed with the Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago and a company called White Park Developments Limited, which was the special purposes vehicle intended to be used by the Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Chairman, negotiations were completed eventually and the construction of the facility started some time in 2006. As I indicated earlier, the facility is now well-nigh completed, but it was always contemplated that the furnishing of the facility should be treated separately from the main contract.

10.30 a.m.

The cost of the furnishings, as indicated to the Government, is in the realm of \$10 million and the Government had to decide whether it should borrow this sum of money and has, in fact, contemplated borrowing it through the National Insurance Fund but had a change of heart and decided that it was more feasible, that it was wiser to come by way of Supplementary to this Committee to seek that sum of \$10 million. The Addendum to the

Resolution sets out the items intended to be covered by the sum being sought in this Committee.

Mr. Chairman, the new facility is a specially designed and purpose-built facility that will house the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the Registration Department, the Community Legal Services Department and the Court Process Office. Sir, especially the Registration Department, the Court of Appeal and the High Court, the facilities occupied by these entities have been, for some considerable time, in a state of disrepair and Judges, both of the High Court, the Court of Appeal and certainly, workers in the Registration Department, are to be applauded for their sense of sacrifice and long-suffering in the interest of the nation for continuing to work under very difficult environmental conditions while they waited for new facilities to be constructed to house them. I could say similarly for the workers at the Court Process Office, who have for years complained about the physical conditions under which they have had to function. I am sure that they too look forward to the new facilities which, on present indications, should be handed over to the Government certainly by the end of March 2009.

Mr. Chairman, the next issue which Government will have to address is what, if any, effective and creative use can be made of the buildings that would be vacated by the Registry, the High Court and the Court of Appeal. Sir, in contemplation of that issue, Cabinet has established a Subcommittee to look at how those facilities can possibly be used. The Sub-committee is under my chairmanship and has been looking at that question.

Mr. Chairman, the issue has been floated that the vacation of those facilities present a very good opportunity for the transfer of certain of certain Magistrates' Courts to Bridgetown with a view of further centralisation of the Magistracy. I just want to make it clear that no Cabinet decision has been taken on that issue and, I certainly am not readily a disciple of that school of thought. I believe that District Courts still have a serious social role to play in terms of the impact they have on local communities across Barbados and my preference would still be for our Magistrates' Courts to be located in outer districts rather than being centralised in Bridgetown.

I know that it would be more convenient, perhaps, for members of the legal profession, but that does not necessarily mean that it would be more convenient for the litigants, who have to use and be serviced by these Courts. Sir, that is an issue that is engaging the attention of the Committee and the Committee will be making recommendations to the Cabinet in the fullness of time on that issue.

Mr. Chairman, so far as the furnishing of the new facility is concerned. The facility is a modern state-of-the-

art, purpose-built facility. A legitimate question, so far as this Resolution is concerned, is whether having regard to the fact that this Resolution has to do with the furnishing of the new Judicial Centre, to what extent, furniture manufacturers will benefit from this effort.

Mr. Chairman, I have fully investigated this matter and I have confirmed that sustained discussion did take place on this issue, the issue of prisoners building a lot of the furniture was looked at, the issue of other furniture manufacturers in Barbados doing some of the furniture was looked at but, having regard to the highly specialised nature of the furniture, and having regard to the fact that certain deadlines have to be met, and the fact that the facility is purpose-built and requires a particular kind of furniture, a decision was taken to limit, as far as possible, the farming-out of that kind of work, because there was no guarantee that the time lines would have been met and, of course, delays could only operate to the disadvantage of the Government and, ultimately, to the taxpayers.

Mr. Chairman, once the House approves this Resolution, the contractors are rearing to go to get this furniture ready for the Centre and to meet the deadline of having the Centre in the hands of Government at the end of March, 2009.

Mr. Chairman, as is generally known, the arrangement, on the basis of which this new Judicial Centre was constructed, was the familiar old arrangement where private investors have sourced the land, have sourced the finances, have built the facility, will own it, will lease it to the Government, and after 25 years will transfer it to the Government.

Sir, every present indication is that we will have a facility to last us for a very long time. It is a very impressive structure that will have modern technology, modern communication in information technology installed, sophisticated electrification and, of course, sophisticated furnishings as well as very expansive facilities for the use of the judicial system.

Sir, this, of course, should improve and speed up the ways in which justice is dispensed to the people of Barbados because the utilisation of this facility will coincide with the introduction of new Rules of the Supreme Court new Civil Procedure Rules, which are intended to speed up the processes by which civil justice is dispensed in Barbados.

10.40 a.m.

One of the criticisms of the existing Rules of the Supreme Court is that to the extent that they have been lawyer- driven, and in many cases litigant driven,

interminable delays have befallen from time to time the dispensation of justice in Barbados.

Sir, under the new Rules, cases will be Judge driven and attorneys-at-law and litigants will have to keep pace with the speed at which the Judges and the Master of the Supreme Court intend to have civil litigation brought to an end. Of course, there is built into the system a component for the amicable resolution of civil disputes, so that it is hoped and intended that overall we can have speedier justice, and that popular complaint can be minimised in all of those circumstances.

Sir, I do not think that there is any controversy to attend a Resolution of this kind. I therefore recommend it to this Committee, and take this opportunity to move that the Resolution stand part.

I am obliged to you.

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

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

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak in support of this Resolution and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, is quite right in suggesting that there is no dispute or controversy that has been or is now attendant, with the construction of this new Court. I have no doubt that his many years practising at the Bar, in the difficult conditions that Coleridge Street would have presented, would encourage him, and certainly have encouraged him to speak of this particular Barbados Labour Party initiative in such laudatory terms.

Sir, Coleridge Street had a great history. We see her sometimes lovingly as the Grand Dame of the legal profession. Certainly our finest jurist and our keenest legal intellects have been burnished in the crucible that is Coleridge Street, such that we have been able to establish Barbados as one of the shining lights across the Region, and perhaps the world, when it comes to the practice of Law, and to the soundness of our legal decisions.

Sir, my Administration certainly recognised that we have reached the point of diminishing returns. We have reached the point of diminishing return simply because in a facility where staff had constantly to be off work, in a facility where judges cannot be properly attended to by the staff, simply because there was no space for the staff, in a facility where judges could not research and write judgments in the best of conditions, then the diminishing returns would have set in. While we often think, those of us who come from very humble backgrounds, that our physical conditions do not really determine the intellectual output, I believe that we would have seen that the entire

practice of law and the judicial system in Barbados would have been compromised. Therefore, we are pleased to see that the current Administration is pressing ahead with this most noble of projects.

I am also delighted that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South would have found favour with the particular method of procurement that was used, and he is right. There is no controversy. There is no bellowing about cost overruns. None of those things we have heard a lot commented about in the past. I do not suppose that it has to do with the fact that there is judicial oversight, but more to do with the fact that the Government has to recognise that a BOLT arrangement, when properly managed, is able to deliver the goods, as this has been.

Sir, the matter of the procurement of the furnishings, I have no doubt that some Barbadians would wonder why it is going to cost nearly \$10 million to outfit this Court, and perhaps rightly so. The Honourable Member has indicated that it is a purpose-built facility and must ensure we get the maximum return out of it, that it is properly outfitted as a court and Registry Office.

I will say though, that having had the opportunity to sit in the same position in Cabinet that he now occupies, I did have a very frank discussion with my staff, now his staff, on whether there was any opportunity to use some of the furnishings, already existing at the Registry. The fact of the matter is, while furnishings will depreciate over a relatively short period of time, and I will discuss later on, there is no doubt in my mind and based on my investigations when I sat in that position, there was some opportunity for cost savings, by encouraging the staff at the Registry and the Parliamentary Secretary, to do such an inventory to see what items could be used in the new facility.

Sir, the idea was met with some resistance, because I think there is a natural inclination when you are moving into a new property you want everything new. I am sure that Barbadians move into new homes, and they carry a few things from the old home with them. These are certainly days when we have to exercise as much fiscal restraint in certain areas, as possible. I do not know if that particular discussion has been carried on by the current Minister, but it is one that I would commend.

Sir, I commend it too because the process of boarding is one that would have seen, if any, of the things at Coleridge Street. If we are going to wholesale abandon those furnishings at Coleridge Street, you would have to go through a process of boarding the items. The items would have to be warehoused and all kinds of things. Boarding sometimes can take years and we will end up losing chairs, desks and so on that could actually find a second life in the new facility.

Sir, the other important element of cost-savings would have been how we procure these. I certainly recollect that there was discussion from the particular joint venture partner of the possibility of lending the Government the money. I took the view, and my staff will recollect that I was particularly strident on it, that it made no fiscal sense to borrow money on a 25-year term to pay for six-year furniture, because we will have replaced the furniture three or four times and still be paying the loan for the first set of furnishings that were purchased.

I understand that these days we depreciate furnishings and so on, over a six or seven year period, but I believe that the principle is the same. I therefore indicated to my staff that they should open discussion with the Ministry of Finance for the acquisition of the machinery, equipment and fittings on a cash basis, or certainly on the basis of the shortest possible loan period. Therefore, I believe that the procedure in this case, coming to Parliament for a Supplementary to fund furnishings, and I remind Honourable Members that they depreciate far quicker than the building itself would, is certainly a prudent way of dealing with it. So, we support this approach as well. Sir, the matter of the buildings at Coleridge Street is very important. I believe I want to say a few points on this.

There is a great risk of the buildings at Coleridge Street, falling into a state of dereliction, if Government does not move to find alternative usage for the facility.

10.50 a.m.

Certainly my Administration took the view that it was important, wherever possible, to bring vacated Government

buildings back into use. I know the Minister was in Tamarind Hall and had I known, Sir, I would have stood up at the entry of my Constituency and given him a fond St. Joseph welcome.

I have certainly canvassed in this House and in other places - I only mention this as a point of principle, Mr. Chairman, I do not want to deviate from the Supplementary - that when the Horse Hill Police Station is vacated, it should be brought back to useful life. A Day Care Centre and a Centre for the Elderly should be put in that facility, all in keeping with the principle of not allowing the Government's buildings to fall into a state of dereliction. Sir, if that is important for a rural area like St. Joseph, which some people would want to ignore, how much more important would it be, Mr. Chairman, for majestic buildings standing in our capital Centre?

Mr. Chairman, we cannot afford to have those buildings vacated by the Registry and the Court and then be allowed to sit there, while boards fall off, roofs fall in, birds

and vermin infest, and more birds and vermin infest. And so, if the Honourable Attorney-General would permit me, I could share with him some of the thoughts that I had commended to Cabinet.

Mr. Chairman, we did not make a decision on it, but I believe the records will show that one of the proposals is that the existing St. Matthias Magistrate Court installation could usefully be brought down to Bridgetown. It was moved from Bridgetown, simply because the requirements of the Civil Court and our Domestic Court outgrew the space in Coleridge Street and so, some years ago, the move was taken to establish this outside of Bridgetown.

The brutal fact is that while St. Matthias is not absolutely inconvenient for many of the people who are served by it, that extra mile and a half out of the City of Bridgetown, is a great inconvenience for those mothers who have to go to the domestic court, and have to find transportation to get there. It is an area that is not well serviced by other facilities. Therefore, I think there is a very good case, Sir, as part of the renovation of the Coleridge Street facility, that the Courts at St. Matthias can usefully be relocated back into Bridgetown and occupy those spaces.

There was also a discussion and a recommendation made to Cabinet that was approved - I recall, in principle - that we could actually relocate the Hastings Police Station to the St. Matthias facility. I would commend that as well, because there is good sense in moving the Hastings Police Station from where it is, into a more commodious facility, which would then free up that Hastings facility for tourism. Therefore, there are tremendous knock-on advantages to the completion of the Judicial Centre.

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

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, some discussion was also had in relation to using part of the facility for the Police. The Honourable Attorney General had, no doubt, toured the facility at Central Police Station and, I believe, that he would have been briefed immediately on the many challenges that beset the high command of the police functioning from their location on James Street.

Mr. Chairman, I am able to say that I had in-depth discussions with the Commissioner of Police and his staff who are responsible for housing and I suggested to them that as soon as the facility was vacated that it would be appropriate, if we looked to refurbish what is the Registry component, because there is a lot of floor space on those two floors. Sir, we suggested that the high command and the Administration offices of the Royal Barbados Police

Force could be moved from James Street to the facility at the Registry.

I am aware, Sir, that there have been issues with ventilation and things of that sort at the Registration Department at Coleridge Street. I was advised that those issues had been licked - pardon the colloquialism - but if they have not, certainly, this would present a fine opportunity to fully refurbish those facilities and allow the Police High Command to function from an area that immediately adjoins the Central Police Station.

Sir, I will stop there and if the need arises, I will come again.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am happy to see that Both Sides of the House have agreed, and it is quite clear that the Honourable Member who just spoke is very comfortable now speaking on this Resolution. Sir, the Honourable Member can now appreciate the management that is being offered to the country, Sir, when he said that he offered these suggestions previously to his Administration.

Sir, it is also interesting that the Honourable Member was quite clear to point out to this House that this project, being a BOLT arrangement, was properly managed. I would like to say to the House that I hope it had something to do with this stewardship. It is clear that the Honourable Member is saying that if he had been given the other BOLT arrangements, he would not have to come today and say that this one is different but the others were not properly managed.

I wonder, Sir, what the Honourable Member for St. George North and the others would have said, if they had been in this House to hear this wonderful speech from the former Attorney-General, who has now admitted that proper management is in place, and the country's finances are now properly managed.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph also admitted that so bad was it, Sir, that assets which had a life of six years, you had loans being sought for between 10 and 25 years. Sir, the Honourable Member was able to lecture this House today on that type of management, and advise the country not to go back to those days. Sir, I can now see why he feels so comfortable in his new position, because he is actually telling the House on these Estimates that if given a chance, he would do a better job than what had occurred 14 years ago.

It is clear, Sir, that when we listen now to the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition,

we can expect them to support the new policies of this new Government, because they are clearly demonstrating that they were never in support of the previous leadership of which they were a part and they can now confirm with the policies of this Government.

Sir, the Honourable Member spoke about the Hastings Police Station and said that it should be relocated. I am not going to ask for any relocation. All I would ask the Attorney-General to do is to ensure that some money is voted, so that the Crab Hill Police Station can be opened. We know, Sir, that previously the advice given on the Crab Hill Police Station was not adhered to and the Government of Barbados had to turn around and build one police station at the cost of two.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: My advice also to the new Attorney-General is that before he opens that police station, to ensure that all of the cart roads that lead to that police station are properly repaired, because if you are going to that police station, you have to travel on Husbands Roads, Fosters Road and the Nesfield to Crab Hill Road and they are not even suitable for donkey carts to travel on, Sir.

Sir, when one realises that we are dealing with a Resolution that deals with money, and the Honourable Member spoke about proper management, Sir, it is clear that the arrangement for dealing with roads in this country, as it relates to the Barbados Water Authority and the Ministry of Public Works, that there must be a serious discussion.

Sir, I cannot understand how the Barbados Water Authority can be responsible for repairing roads. I believe that the Barbados Water Authority should be responsible for finding the money to repair roads, but not to give out contracts for repairing roads. This is the mandate of the Ministry of Public Works

11.00 a.m.

Sir, once you get that problem, you would always have problems, because instead of the depots repairing the roads, you would have to wait at least 16 months on a private contractor for him to accumulate enough work to go into that Constituency.

Sir, I hope that when the Honourable Member spoke about Hastings Police Station and the St. Matthias Court that he meant he wants to see a general approach to all of the Police Stations and so on. Sir, that is why I added that particular point.

Sir, we need to ensure that we live up to our Manifesto pledge as it relates to small contractors so that we could fit them in somewhere in here.

Mr. Chairman, when one looks at the world's economy, one would see that it is not revenue we need to worry about. I have been saying to this House all the time that our biggest problem in this country is not revenue, but foreign exchange. Sir, the foreign reserves might look good, but we have to be very careful how we dish out these foreign reserves. Sir, this Government has to ensure that its foreign reserves are saved and they are not spent because we have them in the Treasury.

I thank you.

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

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make my contribution to this debate. Mr. Chairman, months ago I was practising in the Courts of this land.

Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate the acting Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, for moving swiftly to ensure that the new Judicial Centre is properly furnished.

Mr. Chairman, when I first came to the Bar, I journeyed to the Magistrate's Courts at Boarded Hall and District "F" and I was appalled at the conditions under which the Magistrates, Police Prosecutors and the Police Officers had to operate.

Mr. Chairman, when I was practising at the Criminal Bar, I went to the Black Rock Police Station and saw a sign there saying that this area is unsafe. In fact, there was an area cordoned off in the station that was a danger zone.

Mr. Chairman, I did a tour of the Black Rock Police Station with Police Officers and I recognised the conditions they were working under. I also went to the Hastings Police Station and saw the Police Officers there working under extremely bad conditions. Quite recently, the Prosecutors at Central Police Station were also working under similar conditions.

Mr. Chairman, we moved in a very swift manner and temporarily moved them over to the Criminal Investigation Department at Central Police Station, so that they can work under better conditions until we get a proper and more spacious space for them to work in.

Mr. Chairman, we must support any process that seeks to enhance the Administration of justice. In that new Judicial Centre will be the Community Legal Aid Department and the Court Process Office.

Mr. Chairman, we know that the Marshals who work in the Court Process Office have complained of some extremely poor working conditions, so the fact that we are moving them now into this new Centre speaks well for this Administration and to the fact that this Administration believes that we should provide a healthy and safe environment for those officers.

Mr. Chairman, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Joseph speaking about the St. Matthias Court. Mr. Chairman, St. Matthias Court now houses District "C" Magistrate's Court, but this has proven to be inconvenient for persons travelling from the St. Philip area to do their business at the St. Matthias Court. I know that the District "C" Station and the Court were under renovation for some time.

Mr. Chairman, I was made to understand that there would be a move to house the District "C" Court in the Six Roads area which would be more central to those residents in St. John and St. Philip who fall within the jurisdiction of the District "C" Police Station. I welcome that.

Mr. Chairman, the fact that we would also be housing the staff from the Registration Department in the Judicial Centre is a complement, because we know of the complaints that the staff of the Registration Department had. In fact, they sometimes would strike because of the bad working conditions. We know that some of the staff of the Registration Department fell ill because of poor ventilation and poor working conditions. Mr. Chairman, we are moving them to this Centre, so we are enhancing the working environment of the staff of the Registration Department.

Mr. Chairman, we looked at Tamarind Hall. We are also improving the working conditions of the Magistrates too. Mr. Chairman, the Magistracy plays an important part in the Administration of justice. It is there where the matters that go before the High Court start. The Magistrates sit and do a number of matters throughout the day. The High Court is dependent on the Magistrates for the production of criminal matters. They do Preliminary Inquiries, Summary Trials and new charges. Therefore, the fact that we are now engaging them in this matter is also important. We will also put the Community Legal Aids Office and the Court Process Office in that building.

Mr. Chairman, I know of situations where we would be sitting in the High Court and accused persons would come to Court unrepresented, but then to get the message over to the Community Legal Aid Department would cause some delays, so the fact that we would have that Office in that building would bring some greater efficiency to justice.

Of course, I believe that building would also have some sort of facility for Probation Officers so that they can be readily accessed because matters are delayed when we have to wait for a Probation Officer or a Legal Aid Officer to come over to process the application.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say a few words about the Community Legal Aid because it was mentioned.

11.10 a.m.

Mr. Chairman, personally I would like to see the day come when we have Legal Aid assistance in terms of wrongful dismissals, that we extend the Community Legal Aid Act to cover matters of wrongful dismissal.

Sir, we are speaking about justice and as we all know, there are many workers who are dismissed, who sometimes do not have the money to employ the services of an attorney-at-law, especially if that person is taking action against a company, one that could obviously afford a Queen's Counsel or a senior attorney of some repute. Therefore, to give that indigent person representation through the Community Legal Aid Act would be the way forward.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, I support this Resolution. It covers most of the components in relation to the Administration of justice and therefore, I have no difficulty in supporting it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a very short intervention into this very important debate.

Sir, first of all, I rise to support the measure before this Honourable Chamber. Sir, if you would notice, two-thirds of the speakers so far have been legal practitioners. Sir, I do not want this Honourable Chamber to believe that this Bill before us is in the domain only of legal practitioners, because standing here is a community practitioner also. Sir, I want to applaud the Government for completing and bringing the measure before this Honourable Chamber.

Sir, the building at White Park Road is a wonderful building, the architectural design is magnificent. Sir, while listening to Honourable Members who spoke, it would seem that the outfitting and other ancillary services that have to go with it would be completed and therefore I support the measure before this Parliament.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I was reminded that while I was in Cabinet, I supported the measure. Sir, so far, I have not said anything that is not in support of the measure before this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member focusses on the Chair, then, of course, you would not be distracted.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, we have a quality building at White Park Road, and a quality building does not necessarily mean that we are going to have quality justice being dispensed from it. That is the point I want to drive home. Sir, I want to show a correlation between having a quality building and dispensing quality justice.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Attorney-General has basically described a system of decentralisation of the District Police Stations across Barbados, a measure I would want to support, because in Barbados we seem to have a fixation on the decentralisation of services in Bridgetown.

Sir, since Coleridge Street has become the headquarters of justice in Barbados, people believe that justice could only be dispensed from Coleridge Street. Sir, I am talking about community justice. I am talking about the system and practice of decentralisation of the Magistrate's Courts across Barbados into the community.

Mr. Chairman, the late Right Excellent Sir Errol Walton Barrow once said this about poor people. He said that if poor people needed justice, that they should stay away from Coleridge Street. Sir, I am talking about the quality of justice being dispensed in this island, particularly as it affects poor people, who, in my view, in the majority of cases get a bad deal.

Mr. Chairman, in reading the newspapers and reflecting on a number of cases that have been brought before the judicial system in Barbados, many of the accused persons, in their defence, clearly said that they were beaten into submission by the police and that the police forced them to make the statement. Sir, when the final verdict is reached, it seems that level of oppression on the person is never taken into consideration.

Mr. Chairman, how many persons have been convicted? Sir, I am talking about the quality of justice. The police in Barbados still report people by writing in pencil, which means when they go to their stations, they could change those reports. If we are talking about the quality of justice, there are basic things that need to be changed, because a building cannot reflect the quality of justice that is to be dispensed.

Mr. Chairman, when that building at White Park Road is finished and all the legal luminaries traverse its corridors, how could I guarantee that the poor people in Barbados would get justice?

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, how would I be assured that ordinary persons with "dread locks", who walk Broad Street or secluded areas late at nights, would not be stopped by the police or would not be profiled as "Rastas". How could I be assured that these persons would get justice?

Sir, in Barbados, once you are wearing "locks", you are presumed guilty until proven innocent, while the system should be that you are innocent until proven guilty. Mr. Chairman, this is a serious case in Barbados. This is a serious breach of natural justice in relation to "Rasta" profiling in Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have visited Glendairy Prison on a number of occasions. Sir, I understand the harsh measures that had to be taken, in light of the fact that the prisoners were cunning enough to burn down the former prison. Sir, what is amazing is that practicing attorneys and other professionals who go to visit their clients, also have to wait with the normal relatives.

I am hoping that when the building at White Park Road is completed, that the authorities could differentiate between attorneys and professionals and family relatives, because the attorneys and other professionals go on behalf of their clients, while the relatives go to pay informal and emotional visits.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that Attorneys should not be left in the corridors while visiting the inmates at Dodds. I believe that with this new facility, inmates should be brought down on special occasions to meet and discuss their cases of relevance with their Attorneys and other professionals, instead of having those persons coming to Dodds, having to wait just as long as anybody else before seeing their clients.

Mr. Chairman, as I said, the dispensation of justice is not only in the purview of legal luminaries and others outside of this Honourable Chamber. It cannot be. Therefore, I believe the objective is to stop persons from appearing in the Law Courts in the first place.

Mr. Chairman, I am making a call for more effective policing across Barbados. Sir, let us imagine, particularly in the Housing Areas across Barbados, we have community outposts established in those communities. Therefore, I am

making a call for building that relationship between those communities and the police. Sir, it is a serious thing. I think the whole objective is to stop the brutality and the broken-down relation between those communities and the Royal Barbados Police Force, hence a system of effective community policing is the answer.

Mr. Chairman, there was a time when community policing was so effective that the crime rate in Barbados had dropped substantially. Furthermore, those community policemen who became community practitioners were welcomed into ordinary Barbadian homes. Sir, I am calling for building that community public relations aspect of policing within the Royal Barbados Police Force.

Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that in an independent Barbados, we should still be referring to our Police Force as the Royal Barbados Police Force, neither should we be referring to the prison as Her Majesty's Prison. I believe we should have our own identity.

11.20 a.m.

The late great Errol Walton Barrow said we are friends of all and satellites of none, so we have to practice what we preach. We have to become so radical and innovative in our thinking, that we have to shake off the shackles of colonialism and become a more independent and forward-looking nation as it reflects who we are as independent persons in this country.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, I thank you. Mr. Chairman, I am glad to see that Government has moved with haste to try to deal with the issue of vending in Barbados. Sir, Barbados is the only country in the world that seeks to enclose vendors. If you check the Metropolis, or go to London, New York, wherever, you find that vending is a outdoor exercise, but we have a fixation on walls and pretty buildings and that everything has to happen within a confined space, therefore, it creates problems and challenges.

Mr. Chairman, I am only saying that we have to make a strong appeal and be a unified Parliament when we are talking about the decriminalisation of vending in this country.

Sir, any person, who is making an honest dollar for his living should never be persecuted and then, secondly prosecuted. Sir, this is where we get to rasta profiling, particularly the Rastafari Movement in Barbados.

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

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this Resolution at the same time with some reservation. I think that we need to laud the construction of this building. I understand from the current Attorney-General that the building is what one would consider to be a high-tech building with facilities for contemporary information technology systems in place. I want to support the work being done at this new facility.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to think that this would redound to the benefit of persons in Barbados in terms of the speed at which it could have the various cases before the Courts. The fact is that over the years, things like traffic offences and cases generally have taken several years to come before the Courts and persons are going back out and committing the same offences because of the system. I am certainly looking forward to the day when we can have a ticketing system in respect of traffic offences. I think the whole fact that this system of high-tech would certainly add the speed at which cases would be processed.

Mr. Chairman, I note that this Resolution is about the acquisition of some \$2.8 million for the purchase of furniture, fixtures and drapery. I think as Minister responsible for industry that it is important that I point out that the whole arrangement under which this building was constructed is certainly a demonstration of a lack of vision on the part of the previous Government.

I do not understand how the previous Government, certainly in terms of the strategy of the manufacturing process and the manufacturers in this country and the other small businesses, could enter into these types of arrangements without making satisfactory provisions for small manufacturers to benefit. We have spent, as a country, substantial time and money in trying to develop the local manufacturing industry.

Sir, several of the manufacturers have been taken on tours overseas to increase their knowledge and competencies and, it is a shame, in my view, that after that sort of investigation that we are still finding ourselves in a situation where our manufacturers cannot be included up-front in the whole construction and provision for this building.

Mr. Chairman, I think the former Government must certainly be criticised severely on that lack of vision and, certainly, in terms of several other major construction projects that we have.

We have a situation where manufacturers need to be approach in the early part of the construction to get on board. A lot of the small businesses in Barbados have capacity problems, problems in terms of building their own production capacity, so certainly, with projects of the magnitude of this court building and with the magnitude of

some of the other projects we have in train, I am thinking of the Four Seasons Hotel. We need to be able to bring our furniture manufacturers on board in this initial stage so that they could be working with the designers, architects and whoever is responsible for the decor and have them on board in the early stage, so that the production process could be started in terms of whatever kind of design and furnishing that we require for that facility.

Mr. Chairman, I can see no reason why that process could not have been started in respect of this judicial building so that our local manufacturers would be able to benefit in some way.

Mr. Chairman, the time has come when we need, as a country, to start thinking in terms of how we are moving forward, what role we expect the small people in our country, so to speak, to play. We cannot continue to have a situation where the benefits of the development of this country accrue only to a few big players and to those people that are importing products. We need, particularly in this time of economy challenges, to be able to have our local manufacturers and our local producers of food, in general, participate in the development of our country and have advantage with these projects.

Sir, I thank you.

11.30 a.m.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, I do not intend to be contentious at all this morning, but suffice it to say that I am now satisfied that the Honourable Member for St. James Central clearly has a disposition to speak for the sake of speaking, because to hear him seek to criticise the former Government for not supporting the local furniture industry, really boggles the mind since in June 2008, at a Reception at the American Ambassador's residence, when I asked him what was the follow-up for the Barbados Marketing Study, that had been done by the Barbados Labour Party Government and whether the Design Industrial Engineer had been procured, his response to me was, "Is the Furniture Industry in Barbados not dead". The Minister in charge of manufacturing, having been in the job for four or five months can say to me in the dining room of the American Ambassador's residence, "Is the Furniture Industry in Barbados not dead?"

Sir, I say that...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: He cannot get up on a point of order because he cannot change the truth.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have order, please. I am still trying to hear the Honourable Member. Honourable Members, please.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the simple point is this. If people are going to criticise, let it be substantive. The Honourable Attorney-General this morning and, in my view, gave a fair presentation in relation to the reason why the Government was asking for this Supplementary in order to procure furniture.

Sir, it was under my term as Honourable Attorney-General, when the decision was first made to leave the furniture out. Therefore, when it came to the Honourable Member for St. Joseph to execute, we had already agreed that it made no sense putting furniture in a public/private sector package, because the financial charges that would accrue, as well as the time for replacement would have meant that the Government, perhaps, would have had to pay more for the furniture than if the Government did exactly as this Government is doing now and pay for it out of the Consolidated Fund and recognising that in five, seven or 10 year's time, depending on the life-span of the particular furniture, you would replace it again. So, you would deal with the cost of the furniture, but you would not then be dealing with the tremendous financial charges that would be associated, because as a public/private sector partnership, you pay a premium for a transfer of risk being accepted to the private sector. In our view, there was no need for a transfer of risk in relation to the acquisition of furniture.

Sir, I trust and hope - and I am going to monitor every Government project, that the Honourable Member for St. James Central will ensure that nothing but Barbados furniture is in every Government project, every tourism project, which is the recipient of fiscal incentives. If the Honourable Member goes back, he would note that the records and the minutes show that when we met with Four Seasons Hotel, one of the conditions I put on the table, fully, was that there had to be acquisition of furniture out of Barbados for the Four Seasons Hotel.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: It is for you all to determine whether you are holding them to that or not.

Secondly, they had to be an infusion of support to be able to modify designs. Just because you want to buy local, does not mean that it should not be suitable to the purpose for which it is being bought. To that extent, the infusion and the contracting of a Design Industrial Engineer was to help bring efficiencies to the industry which are not necessary there. There are only two furniture manufacturers in Barbados that are technologically advanced in equipment that they use.

The Honourable Member for St. James South, clearly, is suffering from some form of contagion that has spread from St. James Central, and the virus obviously is affecting not just the motor skills, but the oral skills of the Honourable Member for St. James South. Suffice it to say, the Honourable Member for St. James South would do well to talk to the person who previously represented St. Michael West and ask him what was done in 1996 when the Barbados Furniture Industry was exporting tens of millions of dollars and the initiative caved in. Any furniture manufacturer or anybody who was related to the IDC would be able to tell him.

Sir, I forgive the Honourable Member for St. James Central. The IDC is just but one of the three productive sectors that does not have leadership in place now, therefore, it is like a rudderless ship.

In relation to the matter of the Halls of Justice, when I went into the Ministry, the Honourable Attorney General's Office, I found that the discussions and plans for a Hall of Justice in Barbados had been going on for almost 40 years. I therefore would say that the work which was done by the previous Attorney-General to me, the Honourable Attorney-General, who is now Chief Justice, the work which was done by the Honourable Attorney-General one subsequent to me, and even the work which is being done by the current one, along with what I would have done to get it off the ground, would have at least brought to an end 40 years of despair among the legal fraternity, that they should have somewhere decent in order for matters to be resolved in this country according to the laws of this country. Sir, it is to our credit that this investment is now being made.

Sir Roy Marshall made an interesting observation in 2005, when he was Chairman of the National Commission of Law and Order. He said then, "That by far, Caribbean Governments made a determination to put justice on the second tier of development in the post-independence movement. That we concentrated on education and we concentrated on other aspects of social developments, but justice was never seen as one of those sectors that required significant investment."

Sir, we took a position that investment in the justice sector was critical, because Barbados' greatest attribute, apart from its stability and quality of life, is its commitment to the Rule of Law. Small countries will only survive if the Rule of Law prevails. To that extent, it would have been something of great concern to all associated with the profession, as you would have been aware, other countries in the Region, in the last 10 to 15 years, would have been able to put their systems in place and it took us a little longer.

I am happy that the Halls of Justice are nearing completion. As I said, it spans the work of four Honourable Attorneys-General. Indeed, I believe it would add tremendous value to the sector and bring certain efficiency. There are aspects of modernisation that we would have wanted to do for the last 6, 7 or 8 years, in terms of software development, the greater use of IT that we really could not appropriately do, because of the location of the Courts at Coleridge Street, and indeed, the state of the buildings affecting our ability to do substantial renovation and refurbishing.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to those judges, who would have worked in some of the most difficult conditions, in offices without appropriate ventilation, without windows. We know what it is like. The truth is, the construction of a Justice Centre is not something that just happens willy-nilly. Between the planning and financing, and I believe the Honourable Attorney-General said it this morning, there was a significant delay of almost a year when RBTT, Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, bought the Caribbean Commercial Bank.

Sir, when we were in Government we had to call them to account and send in for the head people from RBTT and said that we could no longer take this. I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph can confirm that, because he was then there. We refused to accept any interest charges that would have accrued as a result of the almost twelve-month delay. Sir, that, in and of itself, was the subject of major discussions and negotiations with the Bank. Of course they wanted to be able to claim all of that.

Sir, let us not fool ourselves, or let us not fool the public. That is why when the Honourable Member for St. James Central spoke, it so upset me. If it was an Honourable Member who was championing the furniture industry who knew about the existence of a furniture industry three months ago, and who, perhaps, instead of telling me in here, should have been bending the ears of his Cabinet week after week, asking which projects can I get Barbadians in.

11.40 a.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, he thought that the furniture industry was dead and he saw himself as an undertaker but, Mr. Chairman, that is not for me to dispute.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I think people are trying to direct the Honourable Member, but the direction should come from the Chair.

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East

continues to mislead the House in respect of a conversation of which I have no recollection.

Asides.

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: The fact of the matter is that a substantial investment continues to be made to the furniture manufacturers in Barbados, by the BIDC.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I take it that your point of order is that the statement made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is incorrect. I have taken your point of order but I am not going to let you continue to make a speech.

Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I take comfort in the fact that he says he cannot recollect, but I leave it at that because, Mr. Chairman, I do not mislead the Chamber.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, the only reason I would have brought it up is because of the almost unbelievable temerity...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: No. It is not spiteful. It is to ensure that the Honourable Member for St. James Central understands that this Opposition will not allow him to come in here and talk for the sake of talking, in a way that if I were not in here, would cause me to feel he says one thing and does another thing. There are words for that beginning with "h", but I would not use them, Sir.

Sir, I want to make one other simple point in relation to the justice sector, and I want to do it in relation to District "E". I spoke to the Honourable Member for St. Philip North when he was the acting Attorney-General a couple of weeks ago, I have spoken to the Chief Justice and I raise it in here for what it is worth.

Sir, magisterial jurisdictions were settled in the 1950s in Barbados. One of the things that we wanted to be able to do before leaving Government was to restructure as well as to strengthen the number of Magistrates, but in the context of making sure that you do not centralise magisterial jurisdictions in Barbados only in Bridgetown.

I believe, and I have said it in here before that there is a benefit for district Magistrates in a community, especially when those Magistrates are strong, who people

come to respect, and come to fear in some instances, and that I will support the District "C" Court being located in St. Philip and that is why we were building the Civic Centre at Six Roads in order to relocate it and to move the Police Station from on the hill, down in Six Roads, which made sense in terms of the movement of people in and around St. Philip.

The wider point is that there are some magisterial jurisdictions that are in need of a separation of the civil and criminal jurisdictions, simply because the work load is too much. We are already at that point with District "E", Hometown. It is not fair although, with respect, the Magistrate who is there is doing an excellent job.

He is easily one of the best Magistrates in Barbados. He is polite, organised and he is a distinguished Barbadian, who brings honour to the profession. I think it is not fair to him, and I make this point in all seriousness, to have to handle the workload in the criminal jurisdiction, the civil jurisdiction and then, of course, the maintenance matters. Therefore, I would simply bring to the Attorney-General's attention that while we had not finished the restructuring of the magisterial jurisdictions, I do believe that the time is appropriate for there to be, even if you do not add more, a separation of civil and criminal jurisdictions in some other districts besides District "A", in order to be able to ensure that there is not an onerous workload on the Magistrates and that there is, by extension, not a backlog of cases, both in the civil and criminal jurisdictions.

I also believe, Sir, as I have said, that this country will always be strongest, when there is a decentralised system of magisterial jurisdictions. Therefore, to the extent that we can get the Civic Centre at Six Roads built in a hurry, such that District "C" can return to St. Philip, I think that we will improve our capacity to be able to ensure the compliance with the Law, and the maintenance of order in that parish, even though they, perhaps, sometimes, may be unruly led by the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, but the presence of a Magistrate there might help to keep him in tow, too.

Sir, those are things that we will willingly support and I believe to the extent that we will have a major debate on the justice system, then there are other issues that I would like to raise at a future date, particularly since, I think, the reform efforts that have started ought not to be put on a pause.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Supplementary Resolution that is before this

Honourable Chamber and to state at the onset that I am a little confused by the position of the Opposition Benches this morning, because in introducing this Resolution the Honourable Attorney-General, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, indicated his position in support of decentralising the Magistrates Court, which is not in support of those sectors of the community, which argue that the Supreme Court area that would be located at the new Halls of Justice, could be used as a venue to bring the Magistrates Courts back into Bridgetown.

Yet, what was the response of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph? He was arguing strongly to move the St. Matthias Magistrates Court to Bridgetown and his leader, the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is distancing herself from his position, so there seems to be confusion on the Opposition Benches.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. It is clear that the Honourable Member is intentionally misleading the House. Sir, I believe it comes from the fact that he does not understand that the St. Matthias Courts, with respect to District "C" are District "A" Courts, and so, the Courts in Bridgetown are District "A" Courts, too.

Sir, that is the issue here, so there is no distancing, but you need to understand why that Court is in St. Matthias, and what we are suggesting is that it is best suited for being back in Coleridge Street. The Mathias Court is only the civil jurisdiction of a District "A" Court, which had to be moved because Coleridge Street was overcrowded. Sir, it did not represent any effort at decentralising justice.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, while the Honourable Member for St. Joseph tries to clarify his position, let me just say that I stand firm in saying that I do not support the St. Matthias Court having to be relocated to Coleridge Street. Sir, in the first place, I remember that a lot of money was spent in establishing that Court at the St. Matthias Court.

Secondly, I have serious concerns, Mr. Chairman, about the use of these buildings that will be vacated at Coleridge Street to the new Halls of Justice, because this is next door to the cramped Central Police Station.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying frankly that we must send a signal as a Parliament and as a Government that Government is responsible for the decisions in terms of the utilisation of Government buildings.

11.50 a.m.

Sir, we must have separation of powers. The Judiciary would deal with judicial matters, and the utilisation of Government buildings would be the purview of the Government. Therefore, I am happy to hear from the Honourable Attorney-General that there is a Subcommittee of Cabinet which would deal with this issue.

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to present my position in terms of the possible usage of these Court buildings at Coleridge Street. As I mentioned, Mr. Chairman, you have a situation where Central Police Station is cramped. I am very familiar with those precincts because, as a bachelor, I have ventured to the police cafeteria there on many occasions to purchase food.

Mr. Chairman, while visiting that location, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip North mentioned, I noticed that the Court Prosecutors Office, under the Barbados Labour Party regime, was falling to pieces with wood rotting and falling down the stairs precariously to the extent that the safety of passers-by and police officers at Central Police Station was in question.

Mr. Chairman, that building right in the middle of the precincts of Central Police Station where you would get the Police Certificate of Character and be fingerprinted is rotting to pieces and the ink from the fingerprints are all over the walls. That was under a Barbados Labour Party Government.

Mr. Chairman, under protest from the Police Officers there, they had to rush them over to a building in Probyn Street, which had faulty plumbing, and then they had to rent offices at Spry Street.

Mr. Chairman, the vacating of these Courts' building provides an opportunity for Central Police Station to be expanded. I look forward to the Government liaising with the Royal Barbados Police Force to see their view.

Mr. Chairman, when you look at the fact that the high command of the Royal Barbados Police Force was put in James Street for years under the Barbados Labour Party, the Commissioner of Police and the Senior Officers of the Royal Barbados Police Force had to suffer for years under the Barbados Labour Party Government in a building that had serious structural issues. This Government is now seeking to move them over to a nearby location in rental offices. Mr. Chairman, we could have the high command within the same precincts of the Royal Barbados Police Force, which would help in the security.

Mr. Chairman, I remember visiting Jamaica and their high command offices were well fortified with heavily armed policemen with battle gear including hard hats and M-16s, because that is the nerve centre of the police security system. To have the high command hundreds of

metres away from the central police force, in my view, compromises national security.

Mr. Chairman, for example, if you had a natural disaster, high winds in a hurricane or heavy flooding, then the high command could be cut off from the main Central Police Station. Therefore, to have the high command within the Courts Complex at Coleridge Street would solve the security issues.

Moreover, Mr. Chairman, we in the Region only took security to the level where, for example, when Parliament meets you have Police barricades outside and cars cannot park. Sir, when we had the Jamaat al Musilimeen coup d'état in Trinidad and Tobago, where you had the Central Police Station being attacked and the Prime Minister and other Members of Parliament being trapped in Parliament, you realised that the national security issues that we read in the international media are of importance to us down here. Again, I am saying that you cannot have the high command of the Royal Barbados Police Force trapped in an area that is cut off from the main forces at Central Police Station because they could be held hostage.

Mr. Chairman, these are issues that in this new millennium we in the Caribbean have to take seriously. Mr. Chairman, when you compare that to moving the St. Matthias Court to Bridgetown, I believe that it is better to leave it where it is.

Mr. Chairman, there is the issue of the rental of Government property. I mentioned about the high command of the Royal Barbados Police Force being housed in rental offices. I look forward to the day when all Government offices would be housed in property owned and operated by the Government on behalf of the people of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, millions of dollars are spent annually by Government in terms of the rental of private offices. I congratulate the Prime Minister and this new Government for seizing the initiative. We are publicly committed, within this term of office, to constructing a big office complex to house Government offices to deal with the cramped conditions of many Government offices and to therefore improve the comfort of thousands of dedicated civil servants, including members of the Royal Barbados Police Force, whom we remember the Honourable Member for St. Peter said were not any special people.

Mr. Chairman, we in this Government sees the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force as indeed very special to the national security of our country.

Mr. Chairman, I am very happy that this new Halls of Justice building is being constructed right in the heart of the City of Bridgetown. I believe that this is a golden

opportunity for us as a country to make sure that the surrounding residential districts in that area, Mahogany Lane, Light Foot Lane, Sobers Lane, Green Park Lane, Chapman Street, Hunte Street and Passage Road, are upgraded.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the Government is committed to the Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrade Programme which sees Cat's Castle and neighbouring Greenfield being updated to the extent that more water-borne toilets and bath facilities would be provided to those with pit toilets, homes would be improved, lighting improved and roads widened so as to improve access to ambulances and other emergency service vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, I am looking forward to this Democratic Labour Party expanding programmes such as the Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrade Programme to the areas I just mentioned, which are within sight of this new Halls of Justice Building.

Mr. Chairman, when you look from those high elevations, you have a panoramic view of wider Bridgetown. Therefore we would not really want to have situations where, when you look down you see squalor, people bathing in the yard or their houses falling down. That would not be satisfactory. Therefore, I look forward to this Government making sure that the infrastructure in this area of Bridgetown is improved as a matter of priority.

Mr. Chairman, I am confident that this would be done because this Government could have scrapped that programme, but through the leadership of the Honourable Prime Minister and the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands, we signed the Inter-American Development Bank loan earlier this year which will provide millions of dollars through the Housing and Neighborhood Upgrading Programme to upgrade areas such as Allenview in St. Thomas, Garden Land in the Constituency of St. Michael West, and the other areas that are also being considered. This would help to transform the working-class districts within our country.

Mr. Chairman, the Democratic Labour Party Government is definitely committed to improving the standards of living of the vulnerable groups within our community who have been neglected for years by the Barbados Labour Party regime.

Mr. Chairman, from a tourism point of view, Coleridge Street is a very historic area. It is there that we have the historic Carnegie Library Building. The Carnegie Foundation is very historical. There are a limited number of Carnegie libraries around the world. I think there is one in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. I do not rule out, Mr. Chairman, the possibility of rehabilitating that Carnegie Building at Coleridge Street, which was sadly neglected by

the Barbados Labour Party Government to the extent that the workers had to go on a go-slow and threatened to strike before they finally got the reluctant attention of the Barbados Labour Party Government of the day, which took years to address the matter.

Mr. Chairman, by the time they left office, they could not open a temporary library facility to accommodate the people, university and high school students, who have to do important research.

12:00 noon

Mr. Chairman, I have spent a lot of time studying in the library, as many of you have, and it is a crying shame that the Barbados Labour Party had no interest whatsoever in the education of our nation's people by keeping the Carnegie Library closed for this many years. Many students, therefore, would have suffered academically due to the negligence of the last Barbados Labour Party Government.

Mr. Chairman, I am confident that the Honourable Minister of Development and Culture, the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, is very much on top of the reopening of the temporary facility and we look forward to that opening very shortly.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, in closing, I was talking about the historic nature of that Coleridge Street facility, Again, I am saying that with the moving of the Courts from that location, it would provide the room and the opportunity to expand that complex, to deal with the use of the Internet and other technology. It would return the headquarters of the Public Library eventually to Coleridge Street, so that we could have that Carnegie legacy there for generations to come, and also for tourism.

Sir, within that area the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. has recently done work on the Jewish Synagogue and next door is a spanking new Jewish museum. There is also the monument next to the Carnegie building. Sir, that whole area is a historic one and therefore, I look forward to the preservation of the architecture of that area, because Sir Henry Fraser, in his public programmes, has criticised previous Governments who just expanded that Supreme Court complex in a very awkward and ugly architectural manner. Therefore, we have to preserve that architecture in a manner that would bring tourists to the area.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, I look forward to the Ministry of Transport, Works and International Transport making a priority to improve lighting in that area. Sir, the

last Government left the Magazine Lane/Sobers Lane without lights, and so I look forward to that area being lit.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Resolution and to support it. Sir, with respect to the Judicial Centre, I think it is an excellent idea and that it is now being put to full use.

I am glad that very soon practitioners of the judicial system in this country would be partially decentralised. I am glad to see that happening, because as one traverses this country, one sees that the Magistrates's Courts are in dire need of repairs, and that Magistrates work in cramped and uncomfortable conditions, a situation which was left by the Barbados Labour Party.

Sir, the District "A" Magistrates's Court is almost under flood watch. The air-conditioning malfunctions on a regular basis. Sir, this has been going on, for many years, under the watch of the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Chairman, in relation to the new Judicial Centre, I am glad to see there was consultation among all the players, so that the Magistrates could work in more humane and comfortable situations. Mr. Chairman, it is very important that one's workplace should be comfortable and that one should be able to work and perform at a maximum level, if working conditions are adequate and rooms well-ventilated. Sir, that is something that was sadly lacking over the past 14 years, under the Barbados Labour Party. If one goes to District "F" Magistrates's Court, one would see that it is also cramped and that there is no room in which the Magistrates can operate.

Mr. Chairman, I would also want to urge this Administration to let those Courts remain within the respective districts, because persons would have almost a personal touch with the respective District Magistrates, persons look forward to meeting him or her, whether to perform justice or where that District Magistrates comes, at some point, to lecture community groups as to the best way forward. Sir, it must not only be in circumstances where that Magistrates simply sits there, only to administer justice to persons who breach the Law. Instead he or she should be there as someone to assist everybody, both young and old, and to make sure that we have a better Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I am appalled when we look at the state of the police stations across Barbados. I have been hearing constantly, under the Barbados Labour Party Administration, that a number of new police stations would be built. We heard one would be built at Wildey, which I have not seen as yet.

Asides.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph should be ashamed to tell anybody about going to a police station. Sir, as Parliamentary Representative for St. Joseph, the condition of District "F" Magistrates's Court is appalling.

Asides.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, if the Honourable Member were to even consider the facts, the Honourable Member would know that the facility at Tamarind Hall, which is to replace the appalling conditions that exist at District "F", was started two years ago. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. John just visited it and spoke in glowing terms about it. The Honourable Member felt that it was a wonderful gift for the district of St. Joseph and therefore I have no idea what the Honourable Member is talking about. Sir, that project is also on time, on budget, and it is very lovely, just like the Prison.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph supposedly rose on a point of order, but I want the Honourable Member to know that the facility at Tamarind Hall was not conceptualised by him. The Honourable Member has no input into it.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member was former Attorney-General of this country and he cannot show this country anything positive that he has done for the Royal Barbados Police Force, or for the judicial system.

Asides.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, if you were to go to Central Police Station, where there used to be a canteen, there is now a sign which says: "Out of order." Sir, that sign was placed there under his watch.

Asides.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, the Criminal Investigation Department, formerly located at Central Police Station, is now located at District "A" Police Station, in another make-shift building.

12:10 p.m.

His Honour K. St. C. BEST: Sir, I know and I have the confidence that the present Attorney-General would do all in his power to ensure that the police officers of this country, their health, welfare and safety would be well taken care. Sir, in that regard, the people of this country would know that they have an Attorney-General and a Government, who look after their welfare.

Sir, I am sure that would be done, because I have noticed that the Attorney-General is moving with haste and very soon, probably in the next month, the people of St. Lucy will be relieved of the double expense by the Barbados Labour Party of the Crab Hill Police Station that was built twice.

Asides.

His Honour K. St. C. BEST: Sir, it is a shame and it is appalling that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph pretends that he is this technological person, but you can see that the police stations, under his watch, deteriorated day after day and that the health of the police officers deteriorated day after day. When you go to police stations and the video station, a section of the Evidence Act, which provides for that, cannot be implemented, all because of the neglect of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and his boss.

Sir, if you talk about the Glebe, which is ready, under his watch, the amount of police officers working there, the number has decreased.

Sir, under his watch, the Police Force has been depleted, all because the Honourable Member for St. Peter indicated publicly that the police officers were not special. Sir, they want to come here to jump and holler on their laurels about the building. The building is a fantastic idea. It will cause justice in this country to go smoothly, to be enhanced in a centralised place. I hope that the Attorney-General would look at increasing the staff at that Centre because it is critical.

Mr. Chairman, I want to support the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, who proffered the idea that there should be an area, when an attorney-at-law wants to see a client, instead of going to St. Philip, that they would have a conference room for attorneys-at-law so that they could take proper instruction in privacy instead of waiting in a long line at Dodds and having to go through all the forms relative to security but now, to be able to sit among family members.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that under the watch of the present Attorney-General that it would soon go away and that, at the new Halls of Justice, we would have a room that is designed for attorneys, where they could set a timetable where X amount of prisoners could come down on a particular day.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I support this Resolution wholeheartedly. I want to say again that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph promised faithfully the people of this country, that there would be I.D. parade rooms for rape victims, but it has not appeared under his watch. I am sure that the present Attorney-General would

ensure that would come to light. Sir, then he is thumping his chest about “this policy” and “my policy”, but the Honourable Member knows very well that he is good with his broad smile and empty words.

Mr. Chairman, I want to close at this stage by saying that I fully support the Resolution.

Sir, I thank you.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this particular matter before the House. Sir, it falls on this Government to carry on a number of projects that were left by the Barbados Labour Party Government and it also falls on this Government at this point in time to carry on the idea and the conceptualisation of the Halls of Justice that were opened by the Barbados Labour Party almost two years ago.

Sir, I am hearing a lot of hullabaloo and one would think that it is the Democratic Labour Party's programme. Sir, all they are doing is carrying out a programme that was started by the Barbados Labour Party, so what is the big hullabaloo?

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the House the impression that it was This Side that criticised the project. It is This Side that brought but it was the Honourable Member for St. Joseph who said that the only BOLT arrangement that was properly managed was this one and that others were not managed in the same way, including the highway.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I want to say that funding was provided for this project and that we left funding.

Sir, as Minister of Housing and Lands, almost 10 years ago, I visited the site and we bought the land. I want to make the point that this Government has to get on and do something, so that the people of this country can see what they are doing. Sir, so far, they have done nothing. They have not done anything. All they are doing is carrying out programmes ...

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the House the impression that once a Government is changed, that you should stop the projects that were there before and not to carry them on. I think the Honourable Member, being a former Minister and a senior member, should apologise to the House for making such reckless statements.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, Tamarind Hall is a project. I heard the Member for St. Michael East got up and said nothing was happening in St. Joseph. Sir, a brand new civic centre that the ground breaking ceremony took place by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, almost two years ago, a brand new centre for the police, the court and the library. Sir, a new Town Centre is being built in St. Joseph for the people of St. Joseph by the Barbados Labour Party and funding was provided.

Sir, it was not like the health centre in St. John, where nothing was provided. Sir, funds were provided. All our projects were funded. Sir, that is the point, so Honourable Members should not get up in here and make believe that they are doing something new.

12.20 p.m.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, in St. Lucy, the Crab Hill Police Station was started under the Barbados Labour Party Administration. The only thing that was left to be done was a big tall long wall that was supposed to be completed by them. Do you mean that you cannot complete a wall? Do you mean that the present Government cannot complete a wall in nine months?

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member should apologise to the House. The Honourable Member is misleading the Honourable House. The Honourable Member did not tell you that the reason why the Police Station could not be opened on December 31, 2007, as promised by the last Honourable Attorney-General, was because he left every road leading to that Police Station like a cart road.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House deliberately. He knew that we had programmes in place for fixing the roads. In fact, the argument that a Police Station cannot be opened because of a road is a bad argument.

Sir, I am saying that this Government must carry on the work of the previous Government. We did so when we came to office as well. They must carry on the programme. Sir, making a small matter like this appear to be a big matter, boggles the mind.

Sir, I am also of the view, that there is a lot of work still to be done in the Police Stations. The Honourable Attorney-General was clear to point out that he is trying his best, to ensure that public officers whether they are policemen, employees of the Immigration Department or Customs Department, that there are better surroundings. In our time we did just that.

We opened a new building at Warrens. We did the acquisition of land at Wildey for a new police station, and we did a lot of work for the upgrading of civil servants in this country. Sir, the records will show that a lot of work has been done and we will have to continue doing it.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central has not spoken in this debate yet, but I heard him say some time ago that we now have flooding in this country. Sir, nine months the Democratic Labour Party Government has been in power and we now have more flooding than ever. It is an ongoing situation. Regardless of which Government is in power you have to do cleaning. You have to do work.

Sir, they are complaining that more rain is now falling. What kind of foolishness is this, that you have more rain falling now than ever? No more rain is falling now than it did 10 years ago. It is an ongoing situation that the Government has to deal with. Sir, the Government asked the people of this country to give them the Government. I want to see something new.

Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown praised the Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme as though it is their programme. The Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme is an IADB Programme which I started in 1997, but these things take a long time. I would like to hear the Government put forward some of their programmes to alleviate, not only the conditions of the civil servants, but conditions in general.

For example, this Parliament - if you had seen this Parliament in 1994 - we had to upgrade this Parliament. We had to upgrade not only the conditions for ourselves but conditions throughout the City. I heard the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown speak about Coleridge Street and the upgrading of the Police Station and the Court. He also said that he bought lunch at the Police Station. I have never heard him stand up in here and say what he is going to do for the people of the City. The only thing that he spoke about is poor drainage at Thomas Gap. I have not heard him speak about anything for the City.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is grossly misleading this Chamber. He said that I spoke about drainage in Thomas Gap. Thomas Gap is not even in the City of Bridgetown. The Honourable Member is grossly misleading the Honourable House. I never talked about drainage in Thomas Gap.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, that is precisely the point. The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown stood up in here a few months ago, and talked extensively about

helping the people in Thomas Gap, but has not mentioned anything at all about the City. That is all I am saying.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Sir, at no time in the life of this Parliament that I got up in this Honourable Chamber and talked about Thomas Gap. I am asking the Honourable Member to stop misleading the Honourable House.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, the people of the City will judge the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown. At the end of five years he would still be in his chair warming a seat for the people of the City, but nothing would emanate from his Government.

Sir, we tried our very best to upgrade conditions for the justice system in this country. At the Glebe a new Civic Centre was built. No doubt, Honourable Members talk about the Glebe. We would like to see additional facilities there.

I hope that the present Honourable Attorney-General would implement a Barbados Labour Party programme of bringing District "B" into central St. George. I hope that the work that has been started would continue to upgrade the Glebe Police Station, and to ensure that the accommodation for the police as well as other officers of the law could be done in good time.

Sir, Honourable Members spoke about a ticketing system between the Magistrates system and the Licencing Authority. These things were done by the previous Government. When the Traffic Act was amended in 2007, I repeatedly asked the Minister to bring the Regulations to this Honourable House, the Traffic Act Regulations, 2007. Sir, all the Minister has to do, and I am referring to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, is to bring the Regulations. The Regulations are only subject to negative resolutions. They do not have to be debated. We can pass the Regulations setting out the demerit point system.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Honourable House, by giving the impression that these regulations are now only to be presented. The Honourable Member is not telling the House that the Honourable Member sat on them and never brought them and is now behaving as if it is something new coming to this Honourable House.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, I am saying that you have the amended Traffic Act, 2007, first and then the Regulations. The Regulations come 60 days after the Act. I am saying that the Act was done last year, and the Minister must bring the Regulations, so that the Trafficking Ticket System can be implemented.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the Honourable Member still speaking on the Resolution before the House?

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Yes Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I want to guide you back to the substantive Resolution that is before the House.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, the Ticketing System is part of the justice system, because we want to ensure ... Sir, Honourable Members spoke about the Magistrate's Court being blocked up. You cannot have a full system where justice cannot be dispensed.

Sir, the Government must ensure that the system works for the Magistrate's Court and the Licencing Authority together, so that justice can be given in this country. I am also saying that once this is done, the Honourable Attorney-General must ensure the technology that the police have been asking for, the new plastic licenses that can now detect whether persons are bona fide holders is in place. That is all I am saying. The Government must bring those regulations at this time.

Sir, this Government has a lot of work to do and they must get on with what they are elected to do, rather than complaining all the time that they have too much work. The Government is complaining that they have too much work. All I am hearing is, there is too much work to be done. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael East...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has risen on a point of order.

12.30 p.m.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. George South is misleading this House. Sir, no Honourable Member on This Side has complained that they have too much work.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, it is just like Red Plastic Bag's song, all I hear in my ears all the time is this thing is too much work for the Government.

Sir, too much work for the Government? The Ministers go to work for a half of day and leave, and no work at all is being done, but they complain that they cannot get things done. I hear this complaint all the time from the Front Bench.

Sir, I am saying that the Government must get on with the work. Of course, I have been promised a lot.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, please, I would not want to encourage Honourable Members to shout across the Chamber in the way that I am hearing. I would like to encourage Honourable Members to conduct themselves with the decorum that this Chamber insists on, please.

Honourable Member, you have exactly two more minutes to wind up your speech.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

The Government cannot ask the people of this country to give them a mandate.

Sir, having given the mandate, the Government has to get on with the work and bring new programmes to this House. I must say that the present Attorney-General is trying his best to carry on a programme. I want to see other Honourable Members do likewise - carry on a programme - and bring projects that we can support, and we will support them.

Sir, I heard that the Government is saying, "aided by the Back Bench of the Government, that there is too much work to be done; that after nine months, people talking about something "Out of Order." Can you believe after nine months, I am hearing that there is a sign in the police station marked, "Out of order?" Sir, if the Government cannot move a sign after nine months, something is wrong with this Government.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

Asides.

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Supplementary.

Sir, as we have heard the discussion this morning, it has become clear that there are some opportunities for change and relocation within the justice system. We have heard about possible relocations of activities from the St. Matthias Court and so on and as we discuss these, Mr. Chairman, I feel at this point I need to make just a brief intervention.

Sir, the St. Matthias Court is where we also have the Family Court, and the Ministry of Family still receives many complaints every day from persons, usually mothers, who work and have to go to this Magistrates' Court, in order to get assistance for their families.

One of the concerns that is expressed, of course, is that it is in an inconvenient location for many parents, except for those persons who are coming from the Christ Church area. Sir, for persons who are coming from Central and rural areas in Barbados, it requires taking two buses. For example, if you come from St. George into Bridgetown to go back out, and that often means a long wait, first of all for buses - although we know that this Administration is moving to address the condition of our bus system - then, when they get to the Magistrates Court, very often there is a long wait.

Sir, their concern is not only the distance and the wait they have when they are there, but the fact that they make all that effort to go there and the conditions are bad where they wait. It is not convenient and it is not comfortable. Sometimes the manner in which they are treated is not ideal. In fact, sometimes many of them are made to feel as if they themselves are criminals in just going there to collect money that is owed to them, and is rightfully for their children.

Then, too often they walk away disappointed and empty-handed, because no money is there, and there is no way to be able to call and check to find out if that money is there. Of course, we know this has to be so, because people have abused the system. We know there are people who have called, mischievously, to find out if fathers had put money for children, and abuse that information, and so we know that has had to be in place.

Mr. Chairman, it is sad when they tell you their stories that they have to go down there and spend a whole day, be treated badly sometimes and only to walk away, empty-handed. And so, while we are having this discussion here about where we can better position certain aspects of the justice system, I feel at this point that it is necessary to make a plea for the Family Law Court.

We have done research into Family Courts in other parts of the world and some of them are very well appointed and family oriented, with comfortable surroundings and places for children to play while they wait. The ambiance is nice, so that people do not feel as if they are criminals in just coming to settle family issues and coming to collect their money, so this has made a better experience for them. Therefore, we believe that there should be a Family Court that is like that in Barbados, with a better ambiance and more welcoming and, of course, we believe that it should be central.

Another thing that we are looking at and we would like to bring to this House and I am mentioning here today, is that it is time for better systems for disbursement. There has been a trial using a cheque system, but we need to find better ways of disbursing money because, again, the present system is inconvenient for persons.

We believe that in this day of technology, it should be possible that a parent could make arrangements to have said monies lodged to an account, with all the necessary security measures put in place to make sure that the system is done properly. We believe it is time that we can move to that and, certainly, this Government is going to look into that, because we want to make this a better system for families, and those parents who are accessing the system.

I think too, that what we need to look at and, indeed, what I am looking at, is a provision for those parents who come long distances and have to go back, empty-handed. I think it is time that we look to provide something for those parents because, very often, that is the only money that they would have for the period, a week, two weeks or whatever, and to come there to get this little money and not have anything, is heart-breaking.

I think that the Government could consider now, how it is possible to be able to provide something for those parents who go away, empty-handed. Of course, it would mean that the parent who had failed to put money there, now owes the State.

Now that we are talking about refurbishing and rebuilding, I hope too that we are looking to put better technology and infrastructure in place, so that tracking these parents should be easier and, of course, recouping any money that would then be owed to the State could be easier as well. We know that if we attempt to use the current systems we have in place, we probably would never be able to recoup that money.

Sir, I think that the entire justice system and, certainly, the Family Law system needs better staffing, such as Cashiers and Marshals. I have been hearing that from both within the system and those private citizens who are using the system.

Very often, cases are held up because summonses were not served because there were not enough Marshals, or the people who were handling the cases are on holiday, and as long as those people are on holiday, those cases just stay on their desks, because there are not enough people.

The other members of staff are already overburdened and they cannot pick up the slack when somebody goes on holiday, so that cases may have to wait for the duration that the person dealing with them is back from holiday. Therefore, it is obvious that we need more staff to be able to deal with these crucial matters.

Sometimes these matters may not seem so crucial to us because we are not in that position. When you talk to these persons and parents who are heart-broken, they would tell you that the delay, and being turned around all the time and constantly being turned back, is like pulling

the rug out from under them. It is the last thing they have, and they look to the justice system to be able to support them and when the justice system fails them, what next? That is why as long as I am the Minister of Family, the Government will not fail them.

Asides.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Sir, we have to do something in support of them and that was not a project of the Barbados Labour Party. That Ministry of Family was definitely and definitely is of the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides.

12.40 p.m.

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Chairman, we also need to look at staffing, because we need fewer delays in the system. I am not only talking in terms of the weeks and months that it takes to get a case resolved. I am talking about the long hours you spend just waiting to hear that there is no money. That is something that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Chairman, even as we talk now about putting a Family Court, perhaps more centrally, I think that many of the Magistrates's Courts need to be positioned in places that are more central.

The District "B" Magistrates Court at Boarded Hall, St. George, is an inconvenient location for many persons in St. George. For many persons in St. George, it requires taking a bus from St. George into Bridgetown, then to take a bus back to Boarded Hall.

Mr. Chairman, though I may not agree with anything else that the Honourable Member for St. George North said, I do believe that we need to bring the District "B" Police Station and the Magistrates's Court and so on more centrally, perhaps into the area of the Glebe which was recently provided. That is something that certainly could assist the plight of many persons in St. George. Mr. Chairman, when we look to provide a comprehensive Family Court, we need also to be able to handle issues of access and maintenance in a better manner. We get many complaints that the issue of access is not being handled. In fact, persons who use the Court at St. Matthias complain that they do not feel that there is equity in the system, that cases of divorce and other cases that go through the High Court seem to be handled a lot better than their cases when it comes to access.

Mr. Chairman, those are issues that need to be addressed, because those children in those families have a right to better care from both parents. Mr. Chairman, somebody has to take that up. Certainly our Justice System

needs to address that. Our Government also needs to address that, and we certainly will move in a timely manner to make sure that happens.

Essentially, what I am saying, Mr. Chairman, as I support this Resolution, is that as we relocate, re-adjust and move everything around, that consideration is given to having a proper Family Court that is central, that is amendable for people to use, that is in a pleasant surrounding and one that makes the whole system a more pleasant one for persons who have to use that system.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that as Government builds more buildings throughout Barbados, that more attention is paid to the ambience and making them more user-friendly. We also need to ensure that we are not just looking after the buildings, but to ensure that our staff is better equipped, because we certainly do not want a situation where people are now moving into spanking new premises and still have to face the same attitudes. We certainly need to improve attitudes in all areas of Government. Mr. Chairman, I would also like to make an appeal that Government buildings be built with consideration for providing child care facilities where possible. We know that there is a shortage of child care facilities. There are about 3 000 children still on the waiting list for nursery schools and day nurseries.

Mr. Chairman, when Government is building buildings, I believe they should be able to provide nursery and child care facilities in those buildings.

Mr. Chairman, I am also reminding Government that all of these buildings, I am not sure what has happened with the new Judicial Centre, that would be built under this Administration, should take into consideration the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficient practices. I think that also is a commitment of this Administration. Mr. Chairman, it may be more challenging to retrofit older buildings, but certainly as we move to build new buildings, these considerations should be a factor.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Resolution and to say that it really was a very visionary approach by the then Barbados Labour Party Government to start this Judicial Centre. Therefore, I want to lend my support to the Resolution not because it is a Barbados Labour Party project, but because I think it is necessary if we are to bring services to the people of Barbados and to make them feel comfortable and for the environment to be productive enough so that everybody sees that justice is being done or being served.

Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate the Government, I do not do this very often unless I have to, for continuing this project, which I believe should come to fruition, because at the end of the day, it is the taxpayers' money that is being used to bring proper services not only to the clients but indeed to the members of staff and others who have to be engaged in that location.

Mr. Chairman, another project that I heard mentioned this morning, both the Honourable Member for St. George North and the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown spoke about it, is the Housing Neighbourhood Upgrade Project. That is also a project of the Barbados Labour Party that I am happy that this Government, in its wisdom, is continuing. There are also many others. I believe that continuity must take place, because at the end of the day there is only one Barbados and one set of people we are serving first. Our visitors would be looked after thereafter.

Mr. Chairman, the Tamarind Hall Project, the Crab Hill upgrades and indeed, the repairs that are to be effected at the Belleplaine Police Station are projects of this Barbados Labour Party Administration.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to be side-tracked because the Honourable Member for St. George South spoke about the inconvenience of the Police Station at Boarded Hall. Mr. Chairman, since they are so visionary with transport and freeness, I believe that the people of St. George should have a bus that would take them across Carmichael to get to that police station rather than they thinking about relocating the police station, because I believe that the people who live over in Lower Greys and so on also use that facility.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: The Honourable Member telling me about free bus fare does not bother me. I supported it, but I am still seeing buses breaking down every day with children in them. Children got off the bus at the Lester Vaughan School at minutes to ten on Friday morning, so I am not even going to go there. I am not going to be side-tracked in that way.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Whether I work or not, of all the years I have worked, for 40 years, I have worked honestly and I never used the Internet to do anything that is immoral. I shall continue to carry out my duties with prudence and to hold my character intact as long as I live, therefore I rest that point.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I am going to comply with the instructions of the Chair who manages this Chamber. Mr. Chairman, I will conform to your ruling.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, once the Chair has ruled on a matter, there ought not to be any further reflection on the matter. I just want to be very clear, because once the Chair has ruled, the Honourable Member speaking should proceed with their speech and there should be no reflection on the ruling of the Chair. I want to encourage the Honourable Member to proceed with the speech in relation to the matter before the House.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I withdraw the comments. I will have an opportunity to say what I want to say elsewhere and I would not defame anybody's character.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, again, I am going to ask you to withdraw those latter remarks. Again, you are reflecting on the ruling of the Chair. I wish you to proceed with the speech. I have ruled and therefore I want you, without more, to proceed with your speech, please.

12.50 p.m.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I have said already that I will withdraw the remarks and I have done so, and I would wish to continue. Mr. Chairman, we in here say things loudly across the Floor and when responses are given, as was the case with another Honourable Member for St. James North years ago, it was repeated everywhere in Barbados. I heard the aside. You are not to hear it and therefore I accept your ruling. Sir, I will deal with that comment made by the Honourable Member for St. James South at another time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, I did not want to get back into the matter. I have said I have ruled on the matter and I wish you to continue with your speech, rather than to spend time reflecting on my ruling.

Honourable Member, the Chair does not hear asides. I did ruled before and cautioned Honourable Members to desist from shouting across this Honourable Chamber. Honourable Members must remember these debates are carried live on the air and therefore my rulings have got to be even more constrained in relation to the Rules, because of the fact that they are carried live on the air. Please proceed, Honourable Member.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the last Government, the Barbados Labour Party, for the efforts made to upgrade the District “D” Magistrates’ Court at Rock Hall, St. Thomas. That facility was once a Community Centre, which holds a wonderful history for the people of my parish, including me because that was the only location we had where we could engage in community life.

Mr. Chairman, the then Democratic Labour Party closed that community centre and turned it into a Magistrates’ Court, which I believe is necessary. Sir, there has since been no community centre in the parish, but the renovations of the last two years have put those officers and other persons who use the District “D” Magistrates’ Court at Rock Hall in good stead.

Mr. Chairman, the case I want to put here is for the Police Officers and others who use the facility at Holder’s Hill, which is now the District “D” Police Station.

Sir, District “D” belongs to St. Thomas, and the Holder’s Hill location was a primary school for many years. The facility was renovated to accommodate the Police Station because of the conditions that existed at the then District “D” Police Station, St. Thomas, where for the last 20 years, the conditions have been deplorable for the officers stationed there.

Mr. Chairman, I know the situation is such that it is terrible for persons who live in St. Thomas, especially those who live in the eastern and central locations, to get to District “D” Magistrates’ Court for matters that are pertinent to their existence.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make a call here today for the construction of a project by the Barbados Labour Party Government. Sir, I believe that the present Honourable Attorney-General would have seen those files, because I see him as being a very meticulous person.

Mr. Chairman, in relation to that project at Cane Garden, where the Planning and Priority Committee had approved for a new Police Station, including a civic centre, library, technology location and Magistrates’ Court, I believe the time is ripe for me to sound the call for that project to be started.

I know it had reached the stage where negotiations were undergone for agencies to fund the project. I believe we have waited patiently and for very long for that new police station to be constructed, especially when we look at the demographics of the parish, where there are now no less than 10 new communities of more than 100 houses, and the difficulty there is in order for people to reach the District “D” Police Station, which is now positioned at Holder’s Hill, St. James, and not at Rock Hall, St. Thomas.

Therefore, I share the concerns of individuals and Members of Parliament who know of the difficulty that people in the eastern and western areas experience, in order to travel to that location at Holder’s Hill.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to speak in relation to the Halls of Justice project. I believe it is a timely one. I believe the completion of this project would bring a measure of satisfaction to those people housed in the Coleridge Street location and in the other areas which Government has sought to acquire, in order for those persons to carry out their employment in the best environment possible. I know it would add to working in a good healthy environment because I know of the challenges where persons complain about hazardous experiences. I know it would upgrade productivity and enhance the lives and services of persons working there, as well as the public.

Sir, occupational health and safety is an integral part of our existence in order for us to be able to live a quality life and to be able to serve our people and the general public with distinction.

I believe too that this cost to Government is small, compared to what Government has to pay on an annual basis to landlords. I am aware that last year Government paid almost \$40 million in rent for Government offices. Therefore, the vision of the Barbados Labour Party to have the complex at Warrens constructed, to have the facility at Country Road for the Ministry of Housing and Lands, and to have the completion of the building for the Ministry of Education.... Sir, I believe more facilities must be constructed to accommodate civil servants and others and to minimise the heavy cost that taxpayers of Barbados are contributing towards the rental of those facilities.

Mr. Chairman, I want to encourage that these new structures would always include facilities for senior citizens and the disabled, and I believe this is still part of the project, because the Barbados Labour Party had a policy that these new structures would always include facilities for senior citizens and the disabled.

Mr. Chairman, I know that projects are sometimes changed mid-stream, because of a number of reasons, but the fact that we now have grandparents who supervise children, the fact that we have persons who run afoul of the Law, or who have been wrongfully accused, or those in the justice system who use wheelchairs and walkers, walking sticks, et cetera, I trust that facility would be constructed in a manner to accommodate the needs of those persons as well.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I believe the provision for privacy is very integral for persons involved in rape cases, maintenance hearings, juvenile hearings, certificates of character, legal hearings and other services that will be provided at that facility. I trust that would be looked after, not only in the interest of the people of Barbados but also in the interest of workers and other clients who are expected to use that facility.

Mr. Chairman, with those comments, I support this Resolution, because at the end of the day, it has to do with the people of Barbados. It is about looking after their needs. It is about ensuring that the people are given quality service.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we have exactly 25 minutes in which to wrap up this debate. I see there are two Honourable Members who would wish to contribute, but Honourable Members, please bear in mind that we have to have the wrap up by the mover of the Resolution, so please be guided accordingly. I may also curtail speeches as we come to the end.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Resolution and to indicate that I am in support of it. Mr. Chairman, however, there are aspects I would like to draw to the attention of this Committee. One of the issues I would like to see in terms of future projects of this nature is the fact that we incorporate a social agenda as far as these programmes are concerned.

Mr. Chairman, one of the points raised earlier, which I think was glossed over very lightly, was in respect of the need to ensure that the community as a whole benefits, as much as possible, from these large projects of this nature. Sir, we should not gloss over that objective and allow it to be side-tracked by statements that the facility has to meet certain objectives, such as being technology-friendly and that we are moving into a different age.

1.00 p.m.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: It is the duty of a Government to try to ensure, that as we move along, in terms of history, that we carry our people along with us. Sir, I think it is a poor excuse being offered by Members of the previous Administration, when they say that the manufacturing sector, in terms of furniture, could not have been involved in the provision of furniture for this particular facility. Mr. Chairman, it demonstrates very clearly that the previous Government not only had a lack of planning but a lack of vision.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot understand how, in a project, when you had the opportunity to make a significant impact, and a significant contribution to those furniture manufacturers in Barbados, who need business that you did not take the opportunity to do so. Sir, not only that, but if we expect our businesses in this country to compete on the world stage and to get practice, how will they do it, when the very contracts that they should have the opportunity to practise on, you deny them.

Mr. Chairman, I just want you to look around at the furniture in this House, and at the Speaker's Chair. Sir, that was crafted by an individual, who is the same as any individual you would find in a Constituency. Sir, the problem we have with the last Government is that when they think about these projects, they do not think about utilising the skills of ordinary Barbadians. Sir, even where there is a deficiency, we have the obligation, as a Government, to try to ensure that we train our people to do these things.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that it is a poor excuse on the part of the previous Government to say that the reason they could not incorporate them, is because of some nonsense about looking at the future. Sir, if they were looking at the future, they would have planned, strategically, to ensure that our craftsmen in this country were involved in the process.

Therefore, we have a situation in this country where in the past, our craftsmen's skills were disrespected and I am sure that the Democratic Labour Party, in terms of our future projects, will commit ourselves to ensure that we utilise the skills of our local craftsmen in projects like these.

Mr. Chairman, one of the things I want to know relates to the question of the process in dealing with persons in our community, who have committed infractions of the Law previously.

Sir, years ago, persons may have done petty crimes, but I find that the process of wiping some of these crimes off the record in order to provide them with a new start in life, that the process takes too long. Sir, in some cases, these things have happened to individuals more than 30 years ago, when they were teenagers and they might have had mild infractions of the Law.

Sir, this \$10 million is only a portion of it, when you look at the sizeable investment we are making in this new facility. Sir, the investment in this facility will seek to address these issues, which ordinary people face. If it does not address those issues, I think that the investment we are making in this facility would not be justified. Sir, unless we meet the ordinary needs of our people, we cannot say that the investment is worth it. Mr. Chairman, I am hoping that

we can see that type of attempt made to try to ensure that we address these issues.

Mr. Chairman, we note that in respect of the whole question of evidence, that one of the complaints we have from a certain section of our community is the whole question of video evidence in Court. Sir, in cases of theft, there are instances where people have been actually caught on camera engaging in theft, but one of the points that has been noted is that it seems as if the evidence, where you caught the person on camera, cannot be used in Court. Again, I am hoping that the investment we are making in this facility, that we can see a change, when it comes to things like these.

Mr. Chairman, I must remind you that we need to address those issues, which currently affect ordinary people in our community, which at least would make people feel more comfortable about themselves in terms of the Criminal Justice System in this country.

Mr. Chairman, with those brief interventions, I would like to say that I support the Resolution. Also I am hoping that we could see meaningful change in terms of the administration of justice by this large investment that we are making in this country.

Sir, I thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I am sorry. We are going to have to wind up because of time. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Chairman, just a few closing remarks on the Resolution. When it was introduced, I had no way of knowing it would have lasted so long or that it would have ranged so widely. A number of issues have been raised and, I am indebted to Honourable Members on Both Sides of the House for the contributions, which they have made to the debate.

Mr. Chairman, just to respond quickly to a few points that were made. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy expressed the hope that in the very near future the new Police Station at Crab Hill would be opened and, I am in a position to say that it is intended, to formally open that Police Station - it is already in the hands of the Government - in the month of November 2008. Sir, it has an interesting history, which has been hinted at in this debate and the story around Crab Hill would be told at the appropriate time.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph raised the point about the Court at St. Matthias. He suggested that it had originally been moved from Central Police Station and carried to St. Matthias, and now that the Court buildings at Central Police Station were going to be vacated, that the

District "A" Court at St. Matthias could be returned to Central Police Station. Sir, that matter has been discussed and I certainly have no objection to it. I think it makes sense, and of that, this House will hear more later.

The issue of the Police High Command and where they should be located, having regard to the very poor physical and environmental conditions under which they operate, at present, a decision has been taken, and I think in a few week's time, the Police High Command will be moving to a facility at Roebuck Street, which was formerly occupied by Barclays Bank, at the corner of Roebuck and Palmetto Streets. Sir, that decision has been taken. The facility has been worked on and the Police High Command will be located there in the very near future.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East raised the issue of the relationship between the police and the community and adverted to the issue relating to the unnatural death of I' Akobi Maloney. I know that this issue has pre-occupied public attention for some time, but I just want to make it clear that I, as Attorney General, with responsibility for the police and also for the justice system, as a matter of speaking, do not intend to be coerced, or dragooned or intimidated into getting the public of this country to lose confidence in the rectitude

1.10 p.m.

Hon. F. J. STUART: of the Royal Barbados Police Force, or in the independence of the Office of the Coroner of Barbados.

Sir, if I am responsible for these departments, it would make no sense if I lent any effort to undermine any public confidence in them. Therefore, I perceive it my responsibility to ensure that the public of this country, has as much confidence as possible in the Police Force of this country and in the Courts of this country.

This is not another way of saying that the police can do what they like or how they like, but it is important that we try to maintain public confidence in these institutions, set standards that they are forced to meet, set standards to which they are forced to subscribe, but not run around the place trying to ensure that the public has no confidence in them.

Sir, I am not saying this because this is any interpretation. I am placing on the speech of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. He did not say that at all. I am referring to the fact that under the Laws of Barbados, under the Coroners Act, where an unnatural death occurs, it is the responsibility of the Coroner to investigate that unnatural death and to make a finding. I have never, in my entire life, following these matters, heard any Barbadian express dissatisfaction with the way in

which any Coroner, including the present Coroner, discharged his or her duties.

Sir, I have faith in the office of the Coroner and I believe that when the death of I'Akobi Maloney is investigated by the Coroner as intended. I believe, starting on November 10, 2008, that the same high standards that the Coroner of this country has brought to bear on other inquests will characterise the inquest of this hapless young man's death.

I am indebted to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East for his contribution to this debate, and for the emphasis he placed on the importance of a smooth relationship between the police and the community.

Sir, the Honourable Member of the Opposition also spoke in the debate, and I was heartened to discover that, certainly, on matters relating to Police Stations, Magistrate Courts and so on, that the Honourable Member has been stricken with a strong dose of solicitude and good conscience, because the Honourable Member was part of a Government that ruled Barbados for the last 14 years, and all of the problems to which that Honourable Member referred existed over the last 14 years. I am glad that if that Honourable Member did not see those problems then that she can see them now, and she has my assurance that where the issues are relevant and worthwhile, they will receive my unstinted attention.

Sir, so far as the Magistracy is concerned, and the Honourable Member for St. Philip North raised the point as well, I am on record as saying that I think that the Magistrates are the Cinderellas in the justice system. I hold strongly to that view. The Magistrates of this country work very hard and produce a high quality of work. They are well-trained lawyers and when appeals go to the Court of Appeal from the Magistrates Courts, the Magistrates have to write legal opinions for the guidance of the Court of Appeal, and invariably the Court of Appeal ends up agreeing with them, so it is not that they do not know what they are doing. These are well-trained lawyers, who render inestimable to the people of Barbados and to the justice system.

I am at present examining a new career path for Magistrates in Barbados, because I believe that there should be some way in which Magistrates can make it from the Magistracy to the Benches of the High Court. That is my firmly held view. You cannot tell me that you can be a Magistrate for 20 years, adjudicating for 20 years on civil and criminal matters, but you are not qualified to sit on the High Court bench and to do what you were doing for the last 20 years, including writing highly intelligent and well-informed opinions for the Court of Appeal judges for their guidance.

I think that they have been the Cinderellas of the system, as I say. I don't know if it has anything to do with the nomenclature Magistrate. Perhaps the time has come, I am looking at this too, of changing that name from Magistrates to District Judges. That is precisely what they are and perhaps the accolade judges may lead to them being treated in a slightly different way. Sir, even in salutations members of the Magistracy are not treated in the same way as members of the Judiciary. A distinction is drawn between them, but these are members of the Judiciary as well. I am giving that issue my attention of which this Honourable House will hear more in the near future.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas raised the point about the District "D" Police Station and the facilities at Holder's Hill. I am in a position to inform the Honourable Member that this matter was discussed only recently at the Honourable Attorney-General's Office, with the Commissioner of Police and other officials of the Ministry, and that matter is receiving the Ministry's attention. We are very much aware of the very difficult conditions under which policemen at District "D" have to work and I share the Honourable Member's concerns in that regard.

Sir, when I introduced this Resolution, I deliberately kept it nonpartisan, because Governments come in, they inherit projects and they have to carry them through. It would be absurd if we came into office, and the Judicial Centre almost two-thirds completed and bulldozed it down to start another one just to say that we did it. So, we have to face the reality that there has to be a certain amount of continuity in Government, and in the way Government projects are handled.

I well recalled in 1976, tears nearly flowed from the eyes of Members of the Democratic Labour Party when we lost the Government, and what is now called the Grantley Adams International Airport was almost completed. I always remembered the "impishness" with which the new Prime Minister, as he then was, renamed it what it is called now, after it had been well nigh completion by the outgoing Democratic Labour Party Administration.

These are things that happen. We heard howls of protest when the ABC Highway was named in the way in which it was named, because it was a project we inherited. It was thought it should have been named after one person, we named it after three, and there were howls of protest. This is a continuing debate. It is not going to end. Governments will always leave projects behind, and this Government has left a few that we have to bring to completion.

1.20 p.m.

Hon. F. J. STUART: We cannot go and bulldoze Tamarind Hall to prove that we can start a new civic centre in St. Joseph. It does not make sense, so I do not think that these are really big points. I have always said that I do not get into debates about who did anything first, because the only persons entitled to have that kind of debate are Adam and Eve, and nobody else. After that, we are all successors.

Therefore, I just wanted to make the point for the record, Mr. Chairman, that we have inherited this project. It was long needed.

When we left office in 1994, a decision had been taken to build a Judicial Centre at Country Road. The incoming Government did not share our view of the location and changed it, but we are happy that there is a Judicial Centre at White Park, because of the inconveniences to which members of the lower and higher Judiciary, members of the Registration Department and the Court Process Office have had to endure. Therefore, I am pleased with the support this Resolution has gotten from Honourable Members on Both Sides of the House.

Mr. Chairman, with those few words, I beg to move that Head 19 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 30 ATTORNEY GENERAL \$2 261 080

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 30 stand part.

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

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

On the motion of the Hon. F. J. STUART, seconded by the Hon. R. D. JONES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Money Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of the Hon. F. J. STUART, seconded by the Hon. R. D. JONES, the Resolution was read a first and second time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, before I move the Resolution for adjournment, I just want to say that recognising the inclemency of the weather, I would want to urge all persons out there to be fully aware of the flooded

situations and to carry out the kind of scrutiny, in order to protect both life, limb and property.

Sometimes there are persons who see a lot of water settled around and might be encouraged to go into that pool of water, but we are urging all persons to use good sense and good judgment in these times, and where they find their neighbours under any distress to extend the hands of kindness, generosity and welfare, which are well known to Barbadians at this time.

Thank you.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, November 4, 2008 at 10.00 a.m.

Hon. F. J. STUART: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, November 4, 2008 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 1.25 p.m.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

Q1. Committee of Supply, Miss C. Y. Forde. The first part of Miss C. Y. Forde's speech runs on under the Chairman's label: the source reads 'Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas. Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Resolution ...' in one paragraph. Printed as in the source; please confirm that the paragraph belongs to Miss Forde.

Q2. Committee of Supply, Order No. 3. The Resolution is for \$10 million, but the two Heads shown, Head 19 Treasury (\$7 438 920) and Head 30 Attorney General (\$2 261 080), total \$9 700 000. Hon. E. G. Hutson also refers to 'some \$2.8 million for the purchase of furniture, fixtures and drapery'. Printed as in the source.

Q3. Committee of Supply, Mr. G. A. Clarke. Mr. G. A. Clarke is called on as 'The Honourable Member for St. George North', but His Honour K. St.C. Best's point of order refers to him as 'the Honourable Member for St. George South', the constituency of Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo. Printed as in the source.

Q4. PRESENT list and speech labels. Mr. D. St.E. Kellman is styled 'His Excellency' in the PRESENT list and in all his speech labels, and the motion to go into Committee is credited to 'Dr. the Hon. F. J. STUART', who appears elsewhere as Hon. F. J. Stuart. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Committee of Supply, Miss C. Y. Forde. The note that certain remarks were ordered expunged reads 'the Honourable Member for Honourable Member for St. Thomas'. The expunged remarks do not appear in the source. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Take-slip, about 12.10 p.m.. The time stamp reads '12:10 p.m.' with a letter 'l' for the figure one; the same occurs in '\$l0 million' and '1994' in the Attorney-General's opening speech. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 14th October, 2008 at 10.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair; prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of 7th

October were confirmed. Dr. the Hon. D. C. Estwick laid the Financial Statements of World Cup (Barbados) Inc. for the years ending 31st December, 2006 and 2007. Mr. R. C. Eastmond gave notice of questions to the Minister of Transport, Works and International Transport on road dangers at Lancaster, Orange Hill and Highway 2A, at Westmoreland near Gamble Hill, at Lower Rock Dundo and Gibbs and near Eastry House, St. Peter, and on flooding at Trents Tenantry, St. James. Hon. F. J. Stuart moved the first reading of the Barbados International Business Promotion Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2008, and Standing Orders were suspended for the rest of the Sitting.

Under Order No. 3 the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. S. A. Lashley in the Chair, on the Resolution to grant \$10 million from the Consolidated Fund to supplement the Estimates 2008/2009, as shown in Supplementary Estimates No. 7, 2008/2009. Hon. F. J. Stuart, the Acting Prime Minister, who spoke as Attorney-General, explained that the money was to furnish the new Judicial Centre at White Park Road. He traced the project from a 2002 Cabinet decision and negotiations with the Caribbean Commercial Bank and Fairways Development Limited, through the bank's purchase by the Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago and the special purpose company White Park Developments Limited, to construction from 2006. The Government had considered borrowing the sum through the National Insurance Fund but chose a Supplementary. The building would house the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the Registration Department, the Community Legal Services Department and the Court Process Office; it had been built, would be owned and leased by private investors and would pass to the Government after 25 years. Because of the specialised furniture and the deadline of the end of March, 2009, little of the furniture work had been farmed out locally. A Cabinet Sub-committee under his chairmanship was considering the use of the buildings to be vacated at Coleridge Street.

Mr. D. D. Marshall, the former Attorney-General, supported the Resolution as a Barbados Labour Party initiative, said he had urged staff to reuse furnishings from Coleridge Street, and proposed that the St. Matthias Magistrate's Court be brought back to Bridgetown and the Hastings Police Station moved to St. Matthias. Mr. D. St.E. Kellman asked for money for the Crab Hill Police Station and questioned the Barbados Water Authority's role in road repairs. Hon. M. A. Lashley described conditions at the Black Rock and Hastings Police Stations and called for Community Legal Aid to cover wrongful dismissal. Mr. H. F. Lashley spoke on the quality of justice, the profiling of Rastafarians, community policing and the decriminalisation

of vending. Hon. E. G. Hutson, noting some \$2.8 million for furniture, fixtures and drapery, criticised the previous Government for not bringing local manufacturers into the project.

Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, the Leader of the Opposition, said the decision to leave the furniture out of the main contract had been taken during her term as Attorney-General, and Hon. E. G. Hutson rose on a point of order that she was misleading the House about a conversation he could not recall. She called for the civil and criminal work of District 'E', Holetown, to be separated and for the Six Roads Civic Centre to be built. Hon. P. M. T. Todd opposed moving the St. Matthias Court and proposed that the vacated buildings be used to expand Central Police Station and house the Police High Command; Mr. Marshall rose on a point of order against him. His Honour K. St.C. Best criticised the state of police stations and Magistrates' Courts under the former Administration, drawing a point of order from Mr. Marshall.

Mr. G. A. Clarke argued that the Government was carrying out projects begun and funded by the Barbados Labour Party, and drew points of order from Mr. Kellman and Hon. P. M. T. Todd before the Chairman guided him back to the Resolution. Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo spoke on conditions for parents at the Family Court at St.

Matthias, the disbursement of maintenance payments and staffing. Miss C. Y. Forde supported the project, had certain remarks ordered expunged by the Chairman and withdrew them, and called for a new police station at Cane Garden, St. Thomas; she said the Government had paid almost \$40 million in rent the year before. Mr. J. D. Paul spoke on local furniture makers and the clearing of old criminal records.

Replying, Hon. F. J. Stuart said the Crab Hill Police Station would be opened in November, 2008, that he had no objection to returning the District 'A' Court to Central Police Station, and that the Police High Command would move to the former Barclays Bank building at Roebuck and Palmetto Streets. On the death of I' Akobi Maloney, he said he would not be pressed into undermining public confidence in the police or the Coroner, whose inquiry was to begin on 10th November, 2008, and he described a new career path being examined for Magistrates. Heads 19 and 30 were agreed to, the Chairman reported one Money Resolution, and the Resolution was read a first and second time and passed.

On the adjournment, Hon. R. D. Jones urged the public to take care in the flooding caused by the weather. The House was adjourned at 1.25 p.m. until Tuesday, 4th November, 2008 at 10.00 a.m.