
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday, December 4, 2009

Pursuant to the Adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Friday, December 4, 2009.

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)

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.), (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, Economic Affairs and Development, Labour, Civil Service and Energy)

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B., (Leader of the Opposition)

Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P., L.C.P.

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

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

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

Hon. F. J. STUART, Q.C., B.A., LL.M., (Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs)

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

Hon. E. G. HUTSON, F.C.C.A., C.A., (Minister of International Business and International Transport)

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 Education and Human Resource Development)

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER, M.Sc., B.A., (Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment, Urban and Rural Development)

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

Prayers were led by Rev. Canon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: This Honourable the House of Assembly is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, November 17, 2009.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes so cited be confirmed, subject to any omissions, observations and/or corrections.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I am in receipt of correspondence from the Speaker of the House of Commons dated November 30, 2009:

“The Honourable Senator Dr. Branford M. Taitt

President of the Senate of Barbados

Parliament Buildings

Bridgetown

BARBADOS

The Honourable Michael A. Carrington, M.P.

Speaker of the House of Assembly of Barbados

Parliament Buildings

Bridgetown

BARBADOS

Dear Colleagues:

It is our distinct pleasure to extend the best wishes of the Parliament of Canada as you and the Parliament of Barbados celebrate your Independence Day.

As presiding officers, we encourage strongly all avenues for Parliamentary cooperation and exchanges. Accordingly, we look forward to opportunities to share ideas and experiences that will enhance the good relations between our two countries.

On this important day, please accept the assurances of the highest consideration and our continued desire for prosperity and peace to you and your people.

Yours sincerely,

Noël A. Kinsella Peter Milliken

Speaker of the Senate Speaker of the House of Commons”

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members I am also in receipt of correspondence from the Honourable Member for St. Peter:

“November 22, 2009

His Honour the Speaker

House of Assembly

Parliament Buildings

Heroes Square

Bridgetown

St. Michael

Dear Sir,

I have been contracted by the CARICOM Secretariat to undertake a Consultancy Assignment.

The assignment will require me to undertake in-country research in Belize and the countries of the OECS during the months of November and December 2009.

In accordance with Order 72 of the Standing Orders of the Honourable House of Assembly of Barbados, I write to bring this to your attention, and to seek the leave of the House for my absence from its Sitting during the period cited.

Respectfully yours,

Owen S. Arthur

Member of Parliament for St. Peter”

Mr. SPEAKER: This period is not such which requires leave to be sought so we will list that as him informing the House of his absence during that period.

PAPERS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John and Prime Minister.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 6) Order, 2009.
2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Sandridge Beach SRL) Order, 2009.
3. Land Development Duty (Special Development Area) (Hastings to Rockley Area) Order, 2009.
4. Report of the Accountant General for the Financial Year 2008-2009.
5. Annual Report of the Securities Commission for the Financial Year ended March 31, 2009.
6. Annual Report of the Barbados National Oil Company Limited for the year 2008.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following:

1. Resolution to grant the sum of \$7 180 316 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the

Estimates 2009-2010 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates No. 3, 2009/2010 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Sir, I would like to indicate that we intend to debate this item this morning.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

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

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the first reading of the following:

1. Shipping (Incentives) (Amendment) Bill, 2009.

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

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

OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the people of St. John and the family of the late Verona Lashley, mother of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, would have been thrown into mourning some two weeks ago when we heard of her passing.

I first met Mrs. Lashley and her husband William in 1987, as I was first introduced to the residents of Gall Hill in St. John. One of her sons and Stephen's brother was part of the group of young people who took me to the homes and to that home, and there I met this very proud, successful, focussed, dedicated couple, who had set such a fine example in the area of Gall Hill, who successfully raised nine children, including the Member of Parliament for Christ Church West Central, who were able to build a modest, but impressive home in the community, whose children were community workers through St. John, who were regular congregants at the St. John Parish Church.

House A50, sequence 03, 10.30 a.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: They were, in the case of her husband William, who is also deceased, supporters in every sense of the word of sporting events, particularly cricket, in St. John. They were generally icons of the Gall Hill area in St. John.

Mrs. Lashley was quite a formidable woman because, not only did she raised those nine children, but she raised them to achieve very significantly in our society. Of course, depending on how you look at it, the greatest significance would be that her son was elected to this

distinguished House of Assembly. Prior to that, he had a distinguished school career at the Lodge School, had worked in the Government Information Service as a public officer, had worked in broadcasting and has, in every sense of the word, achieved some very significant ambitions.

She had other sons who were public officers and daughters who lived in other parts of the Diaspora, all of whom I think are well-rounded individuals with a great sense of pride and confidence. They have always sought to excel, but in excelling, they have in particular sought to help others, that is why they were so active in their Church and community.

When I first went to St. John, Lawrence Lashley, Stephen's older brother, was in charge of the Central Community Group. Another brother, Norville, who is a Supervisor at the Ministry of Transport and Works, was active in road tennis and in other activities in the community, and Everton, a younger brother of Stephen's, was the camp leader of the fledgling summer camps in St. John, in particular one large one that was held at the Lodge School which was one of the better summer camps that was organised.

They were members of the Anglican Young People's Association and were involved in a whole range of activities. As I said, their parents encouraged them to be actively involved, and to be successful. They were quite willing to pursue their humble professions to ensure the success of their children.

The Lashley's, as I said, are quite a unique family in St. John in that they are very orderly and neat. They have all followed the same pattern. The Lashley ladies are extremely, I mean the Gall Hill Lashleys...

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: If you go to St. John's Parish Church on Christmas morning, you would see that the Lashley family is better turned out than mine. They are extremely meticulous. That is the thing I found most about it, in their home, which is one of the reasons why Stephen has been so successful.

I think Stephen has followed in the footsteps of his parents with that sense of orderliness, almost perfection in what they sought to do, a fastidiousness and a seriousness in the tasks that were given to them. I saw that being transferred from the generation of their parents to the others who would be the siblings of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

I attended their 50th Wedding Anniversary celebrations. I saw a family, some of whom have been away for a long time, brought back together and enjoying

great joy, despite whatever stresses and strains afflict all families. On that night, they looked especially happy as they celebrated with their parents.

Some years ago I also attended the late Verona Lashley's 80th birthday celebration, this time at the new Hilton Hotel, and again I was thrilled to see this family come together. Supporting them were members of the Anglican community and members from all kinds of areas of influence that this family has had in the parish and Constituency of St. John.

I am not surprised that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central sits on this side of the House because his parents were very quiet, but determined, steadfast and stubborn supporters of the Democratic Labour Party and with every reason to be. It had nothing to do with me.

It has something to do with the fact that the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow had paved the way for the children of Verona and William Lashley to become successful and to achieve dreams that their own parents had, but were not able to achieve. In their conversation with me that was indelibly etched on their minds.

I believe that Verona was extremely proud of the achievements of all of her children. Of course, she would have been especially proud of her son, who on January 15, 2008 was elected to this Chamber as part of this Democratic Labour Party team.

All of us in St. John have lost some outstanding salt of the earth, Barbadians, because I have always viewed them as a couple rather than separate and apart, who worked and lived and with their humble means, were able to ensure that their children were more successful than they were.

Therefore, in leading off this tribute to the late Verona Eudora Lashley, I want to take this opportunity to extend to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central my heartfelt sympathy and the sympathy of all the members of the Democratic Labour Party family.

I believe that the expression of sympathy from all of us at this time, particularly on the loss of a mother, is heartfelt because to lose a mother's love, attention, care, concern and fellowship is something that can affect you very deeply. We hope that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and the other members of his family would be able to recover from this loss but would use the example of Verona Eudora Lashley as a beacon to help them to pursue those positive things that she pursued in her lifetime.

With those few words, I want to extend my sympathy to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity in a personal way, but indeed on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party, to express deepest condolences to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and his family. I was out of the island during the period of time when Mrs. Lashley passed on and indeed when her funeral took place and I did not have the opportunity before to personally express my sympathy to the Honourable Member.

I believe that Mrs. Lashley's marriage of 56 years speaks volume of the partnership and the kind of bonding that a typical Barbadian woman would have had of that era. Sir, even though she is not here, I want to say to Barbadians that Mrs. Lashley's life and witness should really be a strong example for persons in a marriage situation, or even in a relationship to emulate.

Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of my own parents who would also have been married for 56 years when they separated six weeks apart. Mr. Speaker, I know that it is not an easy feeling, or experience for the members of the Lashley family to have lost their mother, especially a person of the character of which I have been made aware, a strong Barbadian woman who has set numerous examples for other women and indeed other individuals to follow.

House A50 Sequence 4 10.40 a.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I felt proud when I saw the notes on Mrs. Lashley, that excellent bonding, that excellent nurturing, that community spirit with which she lived and shared with her children, her family, in particular, and then others in her community, as the Honourable Member for St. John mentioned earlier.

Mr. Speaker, like most women of that era, I have learned of her exploits, of her commitment and dedication, not only to her family and the community, but to her work. I learned of the pride with which she laboured to raise her family. It might not have been an easy job working in a store.

Sir, I recognised she worked in the sun and that she ensured that her children were well-looked after. Sometimes she even had to carry them with her. That is the

kind of spirit I know Barbadian women have. I believe it is the kind of spirit that they should continue to hold.

Mr. Speaker, I heard about her sacrifice, her high moral standards and of the discipline that she instilled in her children and in her neighbours. Sir, most of all, I heard of her devotion to her Almighty God. I think those virtues which she displayed should be perfect examples for the citizens of Barbados to emulate, in order for us to develop more well-nurtured and well-cared for citizens, and that we all can carry that cloak of humility.

Mr. Speaker, we are finding that there are persons who have suddenly “arrived” and have forgotten the bridge they have crossed. I recognised that Mrs. Lashley ensured that her children carried the humility which she displayed and instilled in them, therefore, they too have become outstanding citizens of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I recognised Mrs. Lashley paid great attention to education and like most parents of that era, while recognising that she did not have the opportunity to go to the tertiary level, she ensured that her children took great advantage of the opportunities. She ensured that they did their homework, which is something most parents today are no longer doing.

In the case of some of our parents, they did not know Spanish, Latin or French, but they knew an “X” from a “ ” and therefore they would have chastised their children for too many “Xs”.

Sir, parents nowadays are not looking at their children’s books. It is a pity that Mrs. Lashley may not have had a real direct opportunity to look after children in the community in a different way, to be able to pass on a lot of the skills and knowledge that she had. I know she did community work, according to what was written and said. I believe that she would have been able to do more to be able to nurture some young parents of today who abdicate their responsibilities, who expect the State or somebody else in society to do it. When parents of today do this, instead they end up with the police and prison officers doing that job. I think this is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I must highly commend her. It was not an easy task raising nine children, in hard, trying times, while having to labour honestly to be able to survive with those children. I know that Mrs. Lashley, even though I did not meet her personally, would have ensured that she made those sacrifices, that the children would be well-clothed, that they would get their books and all necessary materials for school and for Church.

I know that she would not have relied on the State for that help, as we are seeing being the case nowadays, sometimes from people who can do better, but who sit back

and wait on Government, the Church or some other institution to help them, when, in fact, they can help themselves. Sir, her self-help approach speaks volume of a powerful woman from the parish of St. John.

Mr. Speaker, I feel proud to know that a woman of this calibre exists still in this country. I believe that her example is one to be followed. Sir, for her to have focused on education, ensuring that her children go to school and learn, for her to show them that God has something special for them and that they did not have to work in the sun like she did, to make the sacrifices. Mr. Speaker, I envisaged her cautions, her admonitions, her kudos and praises. When her children did wrong, she cautioned them, but did it in a loving way. I believe sometimes too that perhaps she had to spank them, because there are times when children need to be spanked.

I believe that with the personality Brother Norville has, that he might have had a good spanking. I believe that Mrs. Lashley would have cautioned them and would have done it with love. I believe that when they did things that were good, she would have praised them and given them the kudos. I think that is the way we should all agree to raise our children, making them understand that when they did something wrong, they would be punished and when they did something good, praises would be showered on them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to laud her life and her witness, from the humility she displayed, the sound knowledge which she had and shared, the community spirit and her godliness. She recognised she had some training in culinary skills. I believe that is why Brother Norville is so healthy-looking, from her feeding him and making sure that he was fit for his employment, which I know he does in a professional manner.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to encourage the parents of Barbados to take a leaf out of Mrs. Lashley’s book. I trust too that the Eulogy prepared would be published at some time, so that Barbadians could get the opportunity to read it, to see that this was a woman of virtue, that this was a woman full of humility and pride. They would see a woman who has made such large sacrifices to raise a large family, who have all come back to offer their services to the building of this country, as we can see through the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to extend deepest condolences on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party, and my family. I trust that at this time in their grief, that God, as He always does, will place his healing hands on the Lashley family, and that He will help to uplift their spirit during this time of bereavement. May she rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, like other Honourable Members, I would like to express my sincere condolences to the family of the late Verona Lashley. Sir, I said that against the background that death is not an easy thing to accept. It leaves what I would call “emotional trauma.”

Mr. Speaker, I knew Verona personally. Sir, it is a strange thing. When I came to this Honourable Chamber this morning and spoke to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, I did not know that Verona Lashley was his mother. Sir, I could not have attended the funeral because I was out of the island at the time.

Mr. Speaker, after I read the prepared Eulogy, it then triggered in my mind that this is Verona, my good friend. Sir, I want to speak of my experiences with Verona, the community practitioner, the community leader, the actress, the singer of folk and Verona the disciplinarian.

Mr. Speaker, when we first started the National Assistance Board Senior Citizens Drama Group, I remembered Verona travelling from St. John to Queen’s Park every Wednesday and Thursday for rehearsals. I believe Winston Farrell had written the first script and I produced it, and she had a role in it. That play was known as “Golden Towers.” Sir, in doing that production, I remember rehearsing long nights and sometimes throughout the day.

Mr. Speaker, an interesting development occurred during the staging of that production. That development stemmed from the fact that when we had completed rehearsals all night long, I supposed the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central would remember the late nights and evenings she would have been coming home from rehearsals, he having to collect her sometimes from Queen’s Park, or sometimes from the National Assistance Board Headquarters in Collymore Rock.

10.50 p.m.

Tuesday, December 07, 2009

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, an interesting thing developed. When we were about to open that production, a kind of coup was launched, because we were asking the public of Barbados to pay \$5.00 to come and see the production and the cast at the time asked, “if you asking for \$5.00 to see the production, at the end of the production, what are you going to do with the money” and we said we would donate it to charity.

Some members of the cast felt they should get a part of the gate receipt and I remember distinctly Verona saying that it was a production done by them, that it should go towards community efforts and, therefore, nobody would be paid. Sir, that was a stance taken by her because at the time, there was Farrell, Wayne Riley, myself and a few others and she stood behind us on that decision.

Mr. Speaker, interestingly enough, she was also part of the National Assistance Board Day Care Activity Centre at Gall Hill, St. John. Sir, the Day Care Activity Centre at Gall Hill, St. John is the first activity centre in Barbados under the auspices of the National Assistance Board. What was interesting is that she was very skillful as it relates to doing things like basketry, smocking and other craft interests.

Mr. Speaker, I remember when Gall Hill put on their annual display of craft, that activity centre used to be the foremost and the most productive of the 11 existing activity centres in Barbados. Sir, she was a member of the St. John Folk and Dramatic Group.

I do not know how many Honourable Members in this House remember the St. John Folk and Dramatic Group, but the St. John Folk and Dramatic Group during the 1970s and the 1980s was the premier folk and drama group in Government. It is only when the Pinelands Creative Workshop came into being that, interestingly enough, we took over that No. 1 spot.

Mr. Speaker, we remember the actual folk, the indigenous Barbados folk song, the indigenous Barbadian characters like Mother Sally and the stilt men being enunciated in song and on the dramatic stage through the St. John Folk and Dramatic Group, to which she was also a serious member.

Mr. Speaker, what really impresses me is that in Barbados right now, we are moving towards a paradigm shift where the majority of our people by the year 2020, and the Honourable Minister could verify that there is a projection of the demographic, which shows that by the year 2020, half our population would be over 50 years old and, Sir, that speaks to a serious paradigm shift.

It speaks to us coming on terms with countries like Japan, China and some of the developed countries, which have a very active aged policy in place. It speaks also to the fact that Mrs. Verona Lashley from Gall Hill, St. John was part of a pioneering process of aging actively in Barbados and being fully involved in community activity.

Mr. Speaker, the most important aspect I want to speak about as it relates to Verona is the fact that she was a volunteer. Sir, you could call on her at any time and ask her to come and assist you in any activity and, mind you, it was

not only about St. John, it was also when she was a member of the Senior Citizens Drama Group. That group used to travel across Barbados and do a number of other community activities. Sir, that is why I began by saying that she was a true community practitioner.

I really do not believe that the term “community practitioner” should be inscribed on everyone, because they practise their craft in the community because some people have different reasons for doing different things, but the true essence of a true community practitioner is the one who sacrifices and makes the sacrifice beyond the call of duty. Sir, no wonder the resoluteness and the commitment of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is so pertinent in this Honourable Chamber. It is not by accident that he was selected as Chairman of Committees in this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, it was like a haunting experience. Where did this kind of characterisation come from? It suddenly struck me like a bolt of lightning this morning that Stephen was the son of Verona but, Sir, it goes beyond this. She has a son that worked at MTW for years and I remember when you go to him as an officer within the department of MTW, he would assist you. If you told him that you have a road in Parkinson Road which needs to be fixed, he would go, look at it and you could bet your life that he would fix it. I think primarily it was because we were all Lashleys together in a strange way.

Mr. Speaker, on a serious side of it, it seems now that the Lashleys in Barbados have the tenacity to lean towards community work, because I have seen the Honourable Member for St. Philip North on television now and he has taken over my position as the No. 1 community practitioner, because he is in his community all the time doing work.

Mr. Speaker, at least this Honourable Chamber could speak to the fact that it has three acting community practitioners par excellence in Barbados, who are practising their craft. Sir, because of the death of Mrs. Lashley, I think it should serve as a symbol that all Barbadians should try to give back to their communities.

The reason why giving back to the community is so critical at this stage, is because the world is going through a recession and more than ever now in the history of our country, we need to get on with what I call “Theme Barbados” through philanthropy, through volunteer effort and through being a true community practitioner and Mrs. Lashley, God bless her soul, was the embodiment of all these social and volunteering principals.

Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing that I must tell you is that when it comes to decision-making, she was absolutely decisive.

I remember another time we had a small confrontation with the Director of the National Assistance Board at the time. He was adamant, at that time, that the production must be held in the precincts of Culloden Farm and we wanted to hold it at the Steel Shed.

I also remember when most of the members were inclined to go with the position of the Director and Mrs. Lashley, and three other members joined with us on the Committee and said “No,” that we would stage the first workshop and make the provisions available right here in Verona House, where there was a prefab unit in the back.

I must say that prefab unit was the very first place that the Senior Citizens Drama Group met and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central’s mother was very instrumental in that.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and speak a whole day of the adventures of Verona Lashley and Hamilton Lashley. I remember also a time when we said that every person of the drama group was supposed to bring down something because we had a cast of about 23 persons. Sir, Mrs. Lashley brought down fruits, potatoes, all different kinds of vegetables and fruits for the entire cast. Needless to say that Farrell, the other technical crew and myself sat backstage and we had a sumptuous time. Sir, I am saying these things because it also speaks to the generosity of Mrs. Lashley.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude and, as I said earlier, it is a sorrowful time, I know that the family would be hurting very much, but at least they should be comforted in the knowledge that she played a very critical and crucial role to the social upliftment and development of this country. She practised her craft, whether singing on stage, whether in dramatic art, whether in the culinary arts, whether in the whole artistic field of artistic development and social development.

Therefore, on behalf of my family and I, and certainly the constituents of St. Michael South East I would want, through the Chair, Steve, to express to you and your entire family since I was unable to attend the funeral, my sincere appreciation, first of all, for the life that she lived.

H/A50/11.00 a.m. Sequence 6

Tuesday, December 4, 2009

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: ... the constituents of St. Michael South East, I will want to express to you, through the Chair, and your entire family, since I was unable to attend the funeral, my sincere appreciation, first of all, for the life that she lived. Secondly, I want to express again my sincere condolences and regrets to the passing of a great daughter of this soil of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing me this short intervention.

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

His Hon. K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Speaker, I want to agree with all that was said in respect of the mother of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and Chairman of Committees.

Sir, it is a touching moment because we both had parents of similar background who worked in the sun. Their aim and object were to ensure that the things they went through, their children should not go through and should have a better life. Sir, their primary object, thanks to the Right Honourable Errol Walton Barrow, is that we should obtain an education at the highest level.

Sir, when I heard the Eulogy being read in St. John's Parish Church, by his sister, I broke down, because that Eulogy reminded me about everything of my mother. As the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said, at that time our parents were not aware of Latin or French, but the method they used to ensure we did homework, was to check your book for those ticks and Xs, and you had to account for the many Xs against the ticks. You also had chores to do. Sir, not that you would get up on mornings, have a shower and go off to school. Each and every person had chores and those chores had to be done before you go off to school, and when you return from school.

Sir, hearing these words about Mrs. Lashley brought tears to my eyes, because my mother ensured and instilled that in us. She always said that if you have a strong education, no person can take it from you.

Sir, listening to the Eulogy of Mrs. Lashley, it is a clear indication that those were the things that she instilled in all of her children, even passed down to her grand children, when you have it up there, no one can take it from you.

I want to say to the Lashley family, as I said to him, be strong. Every person would say that they know what you are going through. They do not. Every person reacts differently. Again I say to the Lashley family, be strong and remember that God has given you a mother who cared and that love will always continue.

I thank you.

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

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the comments made by all

Honourable Members in relation to the tribute this morning. Indeed, I have to say a few words because of my association with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

I recall coming into contact with the Honourable Member at the Law Faculty at Cave Hill, and then we had further contact when we were at the Hugh Wooding Law School, in Trinidad. I recall having some enjoyable moments with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, in Trinidad. At that time I recognised certain qualities and skills in the Honourable Member.

It was mentioned earlier that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central was a community activist. Let me say that when I listened to the Eulogy, Mrs. Lashley would have passed that on, no doubt, to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

I looked at the groups that Mrs. Lashley was involved with the St. John's Dramatic and Folk Singing Group, the St. John's Women's Auxiliary Group, the Altar Guild, the Senior Citizens' Drama Group and Senior Citizens Arts and Craft Association. All of her children were community activists.

I believe it is something that is missing in today's society. I want to say that it is important because even the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, no doubt, or other children at the time, who obviously would be looking to chart their own careers, still found time to devote to the community to assist the community and to build the community up, of course, the fact that it is clear and manifested evidence that Mrs. Lashley was a strong community activist, which obviously charted the children's and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central's way forward and their future.

Let me say that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is my constituent. Of course, Mr. Lashley, at the time when I was venturing into politics in 2003 always offered good support and always had good ideas to give to me, and in fact, assisted me greatly in 2003.

Mr. Speaker, when I listened to the Eulogy, to me it is clear that a lot of parents from humble means gave up early because their sons would say they do not have the financial resources, or do not have the wherewithal to support, or to push their way forward, or by extension, their children forward.

It is evident that here is a lady from humble means, through hard work, dedication and commitment, not only made a contribution to the development of Barbados, but made sure that it was passed on to the other children, who at this particular point in time, are still making an

outstanding contribution to the social and economic development of Barbados.

Indeed, her life is a shining example for anyone to follow, a shining example to encourage those who want to be involved in community activity, and obviously to be a community practitioner, this is the way to do it, and there is still some hope out there for other community practitioners.

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House A50, Sequence 08, 11.10 a.m.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, in fact, I remember when we did a case together in the Assizes. It was Stephen's first case in the Criminal Court and I decided to let Stephen have his way. It was his first time at the Criminal Bar and he did an excellent job. In fact, he was, and is very methodical, skillful at cross-examination and did good research.

It was quite evident there and then that there was a young man that I knew will make an outstanding contribution in whatever field, whether the legal fraternity or the political field, and so it is evident that he is making a contribution in both the legal field and political field.

I want to say to the family - in fact, I remember having contacts with his brother. We spent some enjoyable moments together on Saturday nights in Moncrieff, St. Philip.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: One thing that was passed on to him - in fact, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East mentioned Mrs. Lashley's involvement in folk singing and the Drama group and that singing ability was evident on Saturday nights. In fact, on a light note, I recall when he was in Law School, we had the calypso competition and Stephen wrote a song in about 10 minutes and entered the competition. I cannot recall if he had won the competition, but I know he had showed some talent and Stephen was there as a young man full of talent.

Sir, let me say that I also noticed the belief of Mrs. Lashley in the Credit Union Movement and what people commonly term the poor people's bank. I know for a fact that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is a pillar in that Movement and that he made, and is still making an outstanding contribution to that Movement. And so, these examples were set by Mrs. Lashley and, no doubt, passed on to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and her children.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to express my condolences to the Lashley family and we will be there for them in these times.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me a chance to add a few short words to this Obituary Speech in tribute to Mrs. Verona Lashley, the mother of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

I was not privileged to know Mrs. Lashley, like the other Honourable Members, but I obviously have come to know her son quite well. There is a saying that the apple does not fall far from the tree, and if her son is any measure of what she was like, then I have no doubt that she was a strong person, a person who obviously contributed much to her community and by extension, the society.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is the Chairman of Committees. I have assessed him when he sits in that Chair and I have found him to be very just and to be quite fair. I cannot say the same when he is sitting over or the Other Side, but certainly when he is sitting in the Chair, I have always found him to be very just and very fair. Sir, I appreciate that because it gives the distinction of Honour to the institution to which we are all part. I think that is the crux of the matter and very important.

Sir, an old politician once told me that he was told by an even older politician that we may be on opposite sides, but we are still members of the same club and that has stuck with me because even though sometimes we can get into the cut and thrust of the politics, at the end of the day, we are still members of the same club, and the society at large sees us all as such.

I was always struck to see how balanced the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central was when he was in the Chair and it gave a significant indication to his upbringing and how his parents would have taught him to be a good, trustworthy and honest person. I have no doubt after reading the notes on his mother, that she would have instilled in him, those morals and those values that he has brought to high office.

Mr. Speaker, reading that Obituary, it was certainly specific to her, but this society is built on people like that, people who have put their shoulder to the wheel, people who have worked, struggled and toiled, who did not have much, but they invested everything they had in their children. It is because of their sacrifice and their

commitment that we have been elevated to this high office, and it is on their shoulder that we now stand. Sir, although we may be here representing a Constituency, or ourselves, it is because of their sacrifice and their commitment that helped us to be successful and to be the people that we are, Sir.

I was intrigued to find that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central was actually from Gall Hill, bearing in mind that he obviously loved Gall Hill so much that he could not get into that Constituency, so he had to find another Constituency that had a Gall Hill in it, because the only other Constituency that has a Gall Hill in it, is Christ Church West Central, that I am aware.

I can understand because we share a boundary in the Sargeant's Village area, not that I have ever seen him canvassing. I do not know why he does not canvass. I canvass all the time, but I do not see him canvassing that common boundary at all. I canvass my boundaries all the time and I am constantly in Sargeants Village. Maybe the licks were too high in that area that he is frightened to go in there.

Obviously, I saw as well in the Obituary that his Mom instilled in him what fights to pick and he did not want to pick a fight in my area because he knows that he could not win, that one. I understand that and I respect his wisdom in knowing the battles that he could win and to stay away from the battles that he could not win.

Obviously, Mrs. Lashley has done a tremendous job in raising nine children. I mean some families have difficulty raising two or three, and to be able to have raised nine children from the most humble of backgrounds is a true testament to the ability of the woman. I salute her and I salute all that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central has accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, I really do not like funerals and it is hard for a politician to confess that he does not like funerals, but I really do not, because when I go to a funeral, especially of a mother or father, it brings home very forcefully to me the loss of my own father at a very young age. I cry at funerals all the time. I do not let people see the tears and I try to wipe them away quickly, because it reminds me of how much my own parents contributed to my success, and how much my father was there instilling in me, the morals and values to continue, to persevere when you fall down, to get back up and go again and to never give up.

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Dr. W. F. DUGUID: These are the traits and habits of successful people. It is through parents that we adopt our own morals and values and our own moral compass that helps us to navigate life. That is why I cry because it brings back so forcefully those emotions that I would have felt when my father passed away.

Mr. Speaker, to the new orphan in this House, I give my sympathy and my own feelings of that when I lost my father. You never get over it, but you learn to live with it, and it is something that I did. I thank the Lord that my mum is still alive. I hold on to her with both hands. It is just a sad thing.

Being a politician is not easy because you meet people in the Branch and in the Constituency who you get really close to, who otherwise as in my job as a neurosurgeon, I might not have gotten that close to. As a politician you go to their homes, they come to yours, you go to events and you work together and you work in the community and in the society together and you share the same friends, and then you see those people over time become widowed, go senile or die one after the other almost surreally.

I find that as the hardest thing being a politician. Maybe I am too soft. Maybe I am not as hard as the jaded politicians we have seen of the past. It hurts me and I die a little bit every time one of my constituents dies, because it really gets to me in a hard and painful way, and I miss them terribly. When I go to an event, I miss their faces and I am remembering them all the time. Ruth Jones would have been there. She would have made us say the Lord's prayer and not just a simple prayer. Harold Hinds would have come and offered his assistance. These are people in my own Constituency.

Mr. Speaker, we learn to deal with it but we really do not get over it, so I give my sympathy to the Honourable Member. I know he would continue in his just way when he is in this Chair. I do not know how he would behave over on That Side, but I understand.

I thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I rise to add very brief words of condolences to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and his entire family, on the sad and unfortunate passing of his mother whom we are honouring here today in these speeches of condolences.

I too share with other Honourable Members of the House the pain and sadness which envelops any family, in particular the Lashley family, on this type of occasion. It is often something that on occasion we have to deal with. One never knows the true extent of the dislocation which occurs for any member of a family who has to lose a very close and cherished loved one, in particular, someone as close as a mother or a father, and therefore on behalf of my Constituency members, and indeed, on behalf of my wife and family, I wish to express our support for the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and his family.

Only two days ago, I had the opportunity, along with the Honourable Member for St. George South, to participate in a book launch at the Ministry for one of our officers, a Mr. Lloyd Springer, Sociologist and Counsellor, who has penned an excellent piece of work. I invite Honourable Members of the House to procure this particular text about fatherhood in the neighbourhood. It is an excellent read, particularly on the reflections of how the West Indian family structure has come to change so considerably in the last generation.

Indeed, if one throws one's mind back to the seminal work by that celebrated author Edith Clarke who penned that excellent piece of work "My Mother Who Fathered Me", one would know that from that time in the early 1970s and onwards, sociologists and social workers were clearly identifying a disintegration of the traditional family unit, and what we call the nuclear family, which had been visited upon us, I believe, perhaps, by our Judea-Christian ethics which we have come to accept as part of our own existence as a black, or multi-racial society within the West Indies. Of course, the Honourable Member would have come from a similar family-type structure in which both a mother and a father were in the house.

Mr. Springer's investigation, which incidentally is the first real serious investigation into fatherhood in the society, spoke to the extent to which even men within the community, those who have fathered children, still in their own wisdom and own way, look to the mothers as the persons who essentially are the core hard rock elements of any family structure, whether nuclear, extended or single parent.

I think that encapsulates what we as practitioners in the political field, have now discovered within our various Constituencies, that even to the extent where there are fathers present, those fathers rely very heavily on the women within the family structure to keep that structure together, both in good times and in times of challenge. That is why I said it is interesting to get it and read it, not only for the empirical and statistical data which is there, which was very difficult to come by because several of our

agencies did not have information on fathers, but had a lot of information on mothers.

I think that when one heard the Eulogy and when one reads the additional facts that have been provided, if one knows of Mrs. Lashley's contribution both to her family and to her community, then one comes to a very firm conclusion that indeed, the Barbadian female, the West Indian female, is still the centrifugal point of the family structure within the Region and within Barbados.

The way she, along with her husband, had nurtured their children, all of whom have distinguished themselves in varying fields and ways and have brought from her a spirit of community and giving to the nation, is a clear example of the type of families we want to have in this society.

We know that the family structure and those traditional values, moral, ethical and otherwise, are under stress as we know them, we see it every day. However, we know when we reflect on persons like Verona Lashley that there is light at the end of the tunnel, that we are not navigating these choppy waters without a compass, or without a map of what can be and what should be a good example for how families can be raised in Barbados.

House A50 Sequence 9 11.30 a.m.

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Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I want to commend her story, both in the literal literature sense and also in the sense of viewing how her children have performed and continue to perform in this society.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that my connection with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central goes back a number of years. I have always found him to be a no-nonsense individual, straight to the point and matter-of-factly. If the Honourable Member had something to tell you, he would tell you, regardless of whether or not you want to hear it. That is not to say that he is always correct, but he will tell you what he has to say. I have found that in everything he has done, so far I have known him.

Mr. Speaker, I have got to know him even more now that we are Members of Parliament. We talk very often, at least a few mornings a week. I find him to be a very solid, upright and honest person within the context, not only of politics and Law, but certainly as an individual who has strived and continues to strive to improve, not only the lot of his constituents, but the lot of persons in Barbados generally.

Mr. Speaker, I am told by my wife, who emanates from the Gall Hill area of St. John, that Mrs. Lashley was a

cousin of her grandmother. Therefore, I have some slight connection, more than the average person, to the family. My wife gives me stories all the time, particularly about Stephen, which I would not repeat here. Mr. Speaker, my wife always makes the point that the Lashley family was a family that was always revered and highly respected within the Gall Hill and St. John communities generally.

Sir, I think we have lost a great person. “Red Plastic Bag” has made the point that there are a number of heroes and heroines in this country that go unnoticed and unheralded, but today let it be said for the record, that this heroine of Barbados has been recognised by this Parliament for the outstanding contribution that she has made to the development of this society, and that she has offered to us offsprings who will continue that strong and fantastic legacy, demonstrable by their action, content by their giving, and with the dedicated humility that is expected of persons who have achieved and who are willing to give back to society.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you and once again, I express my condolences.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable for St. James North.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, within this country, there exists an institution known as the Government Information Service. Sir, many years ago, I got to hear of a young man, who was then attached to the Government Information Service. This young man is today, years after, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Mr. Speaker, to comment on the Honourable Member’s contributions to the Government Information Service, I would have to concede that he brought a measure of professionalism to his work there. This reflects the fact that his was an upbringing which was informed by the highest ideals and the highest standards.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the Honourable Member recalls this, but years after, while I was a lowly tutor in Law at the Faculty at Cave Hill, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, of which he was not yet a Member, was a member of one of my tutorials. Sir, the Honourable Member seems to remember and I am heartened that he has remembered, because on occasions the average student does not necessarily remember a lowly tutor. The Honourable Member has distinguished himself, like most Honourable Members, as a disciplined person, the product, no doubt, of disciplinarians.

Sir, Honourable Members have spoken well. The Honourable Members for St. Thomas and St. Michael North West have both made some telling points that go to

the socialisation process. These points have also been reflected upon by the Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Mr. Speaker, the question of the socialisation process, the socialisation of children and the rearing of youngsters, has come into very sharp focus in recent weeks in this country.

Sir, the reason I said that is that we have been having a debate in Barbados, sometimes quietly, sometimes not so quietly, on the question of punishment. Sir, within the last four weeks, you would have heard different views put on flogging, different views put on the extent to which parents should be humane in the rearing of their children, and different views put on the extent to which parents ought not to be too excessive, or too indulgent when it comes to raising children.

Mr. Speaker, let me simply reflect, and this is a point I am responding to in reaction to observations made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, who is distinguished, well-read and who never makes an utterance unless he thinks it true. I am responding to him, benignly, from the perspective that as far as the socialising and discipline of children go, we in Barbados have to realise that some children are supersensitive.

Mr. Speaker, a supersensitive child, who is beaten by way of corporal punishment and who does not understand the purpose of the punishment, a supersensitive child who is wounded by the punishment, can become a personality where an imbalance will inform that person’s behaviour.

Mr. Speaker, the point I am making is for the benefit of all parents. Sir, each child has to be assessed on its own idiosyncracies. Where we have erred in Barbados in relation to brutalising children is that some of us have been heavy-handed, so heavy-handedly as to beat sensitive children, make them feel bad about themselves, hurt their feelings, but when those children do well, we do not reward them. How then can we have a happy, mental balance among such children?

Mr. Speaker, to her credit, Mrs. Lashley raised nine children, all of whom are of happy mental balance. One reason for that is that in the era in which she experienced her prime, there was a concept of family that has been reflected on by the Honourable Members for St. Thomas and St. Michael North West.

Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West was speaking of the nuclear family and the extended family, I experienced actual *deja vu*. Sir, the reason I experienced that *deja vu* is that I seem to recall, some time ago, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, while still a promising youth, may

very well have echoed those thoughts in a different forum, before a different group, and in my presence.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Lashley not only succeeded in ensuring that her children got the best, her contribution to the community also has to be taken into account.

11.40 a.m.

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Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, somebody in this country has to venture up to Gall Hill and pick up the history of Gall Hill from 1960 and come through.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleasantly delighted to hear that Joan Glasgow was recently honoured. The reason why I was pleasantly satisfied that Joan Glasgow got an honour is that she was a member of the community group that functioned simultaneously with "Sing Out Barbados." Sir, in the 1960s and 1970s, down this side, there was "Sing Out Barbados."

Mr. Speaker, That Side of Barbados there was a community group with Joan Glasgow and others. Ultimately, we are now at a stage with the Wilson Hill Folk Group and I recall people like Earl Glasgow being on Gall Hill pasture helping the socialisation of the people of Gall Hill. I recall the people of Gall Hill staging some community events, including athletics between 1969 and 1972 and inviting others from other parishes to come there.

Mr. Speaker, when the history of this island is written, a special chapter or special chapters are going to have to be reserved on this question of the evolution, not only of community life in Barbados, but the evolution of culture and a lot of agencies will have, of necessity, to be involved, including the very Government Information Service, which from its archives and records will be called on to provide information for posterity sake.

Mr. Speaker, only this week, the Right Honourable Prime Minister - I always call him the Right Honourable Prime Minister, his actual title is "Honourable", but he qualifies to be called Right Honourable and he should go for it. His Attorney-General would be able to advise him on the basis on which he could become Right Honourable.

Sir, that term "Right Honourable" transcends even an ordinary knighthood. The only title higher than "Right Honourable" is when the "Sir" comes from among the Knights of the Garter, otherwise, the "Right Honourable" is higher than ordinary "K.A." or ordinary "Sir". Do not look at dismay at what I am saying. I am saying that the title "Sir", when it comes from the Knights of the Garter is a title reserved for the royal family. When you get your knighthood from the Order of the Garter, it is a knighthood

reserved for Earls, arons and persons who are descendants of Princess Sovia in accordance with the Act of Sermon of 1702 and, Sir, that is accurate.

Mr. Speaker, we have here a situation where we are coming head to head and toe to toe with the fact that there is something unique about this Barbadian culture. Edwin Yearwood, in celebrating the anniversary that Cross Fire has recently been able to achieve with success, was suggesting that he is prepared to work with the Prime Minister and the Government on this whole question of the place that culture is going to play.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East as far back as 1991/1992, was speaking to the concept of the extent to which we can use culture as an earner of foreign exchange, a point repeated yesterday by the Honourable Member for St. John, and a point that we should not lose sight of.

We have a place called the "Corporate Registry" and the number of registrations at the Corporate Registry is not only increasing, but there are more and more artistes, writers and promoters of cultural activities who are forming corporate entities with a view to making business out of them.

Mrs. Lashley toiled and laboured as a volunteer worker in the community not wanting anything for her contribution, but wanting to give, and the Holy Bible says that it is better to give than to receive. Her giving to this country of nine noble children, her wonderful example, her capacity to socialise, her children in a way in where they could make a contribution towards national development must, of necessity, be upheld by this Honourable House. Her example in the area where she lived will linger on.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things about Gall Hill is not only that it is a compact community, but if you look at the richness of the community living, you would also have to reflect on the fact that Gall Hill, St. John is not known to be an area where youth are involved in deviance to any degree, which raises a very important point, Mr. Speaker. Is it that a community with a solid base of cohesion will outdo another community that is not united?

In other words, if in this Caribbean setting of ours, you have 75 housing units without a supermarket, without a Church, and without a community leader, how can that area compare with an area where the elders of the community join in the socialisation process, where the elders of the community espouse to the youth that hard work is a good quality and where the elders of the community, such as Mrs. Lashley, could always be available, not only to her immediate family, but available as a matriarch to an entire society.

Mr. Speaker, I make bold to say that even though she did not consort with kings, queens, princesses, earls and barons, her example has been such that her passing has made St. John, and indeed Barbados, the poorer. This country would have been the richer for her example during her life and now in her passing we are in deep mourning, but we take comfort for the fact that her life was not a life lived in vain.

Mr. Speaker, I comment, at this point, where tomorrow, my own life, where the remains of my first cousin will be taken to St. James Parish Church. She was extremely close to me, Angela Unita Eastmond, and it requires us who confront death to be able to empathise with others who have gone through the same experience. Sir, at the end of the day, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West suggested, we have to be philosophical about these things.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is going to feel the pain of our loss but he can take comfort from the fact that she would have definitely enriched his life and his strong sense of discipline and his clear thinking would have resulted from being mothered in an outstanding way.

Mr. Speaker, he is not the type of Honourable Member who rises to his feet and spouts what comes first to his mouth. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is systematic, is always prepared, is thoughtful and is an excellent listener and those who listen a lot are often best qualified to say a lot.

Mr. Speaker, with those remarks, I am deeply obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I am glad for this opportunity to publicly express my sympathy to the Lashley family on behalf of my constituents, my family, including my wife and my mother, who the morning when Stephen called me, I went into her bedroom, gave her the sad news and her response to me was: "There were three of us, now I am the only one left to carry on." She was referring to the fact that the Deputy Speaker's mother had also passed just over a year ago, I believe.

Mr. Speaker, if you, like myself did not attend the funeral because I was out of the island, and if you did not have the opportunity to read the Eulogy or to meet Mrs. Lashley, you only need to know one of her children. I have had the pleasure of being a friend of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central for many years. In

fact, Mr. Speaker, we share the same birthday, January 6, and I dare venture that we have similar qualities.

11.50 a.m.

Sequence 11

GS 1

Tuesday, December 4, 2009

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I will say one of the things I looked at and smiled, in the tribute is, one of Mrs. Lashley's favourite sayings, "You did not grow by accident, you know." That says a lot. It says a lot about her children, because the children that I know are filled with integrity, including Norville, I hope he does not mind me calling his name in public, are filled with integrity and intelligence, not just education.

As we know, there is a difference between education and intelligence. They are all intelligent young men filled with maturity. This tribute is much about her children, as it is about Mrs. Lashley, because her children are her legacy. I daresay that the children that I know indicate that Mrs. Lashley has left an outstanding legacy in Barbados, and in St. John, in particular.

There is something very special about the mothers who were born in the late 1920s, early 1930s. They seem to be able to be mothers, doctors, psychologists, economists and pastors, all in one household. As I said, I understand. Even if I had not met Mrs. Lashley, even if I had not read her Eulogy, having met her children, given the era from whence she came, I understand very well the qualities Mrs. Lashley possessed.

I want to say from the bottom of my heart, Stephen, my friend, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, I was told several years ago, by a very good friend of mine, that no matter how strong you are, no matter how tough you believe you are, the death of your mother is the hardest thing you would ever face. Like the Honourable Member for St. Michael East said, many people may say that they know what you are going through, but it is a personal thing.

I do want to say that based on the comments I heard this morning, and based, no doubt on the comments you will continue to hear over the next couple of weeks, and no doubt based on the comments you would have heard over the last two weeks or so, you can say with pride, you can say with certainty, that you are the son of a lady who, for years to come, will be remembered.

Let me just also say in closing, that in fact, I have noticed in your own daughters, my friend, the discipline

that has come down from your mother to yourself, into your own children. No doubt for generations to come, the Lashley clan will be strong, and Barbados will benefit from their continued presence in this country.

Sir, with those words, I thank you.

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

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Sir, I did not know Verona Eudora Lashley, and I believe I am the poorer for it, but if the measure of this noble lady is borne out in the qualities exemplified by her son, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, then her sojourn here on earth was well worth it. Certainly, by all indications, she was a typical salt of the earth person of a bygone era here in Barbados, self-sacrificing and philanthropic, always giving of her all to her husband, children and certainly, her community, and sharing with others who were in need, both physically and emotionally.

Sir, from all indications, she was a self-taught woman, and, of course, a counsellor who would have learnt from her experiences in Barbados, having grown up in Barbados where people were certainly kind to each other in that era, experiences she would have mustered from living in a Barbados of yesteryear. She was a Christian who loved her Church and loved the Lord.

Certainly, from witnessing her resting in repose and certainly from pictures in the Hymnal, I can see that she was also a lover of fashion. Certainly this was borne out in several of the Tributes paid to her, at her funeral.

Sir, certainly, she was an eternal student of life's university. Reading from the Eulogy, it is evident that she was a voracious reader and also had a voracious appetite for knowledge. Sir, thrift and enterprise was also one of the virtues which she possessed. Certainly that would have helped her to tackle poverty and wrestled it to the ground, and certainly brought her family, her husband and herself, to the point where they are today,

Sir, a mother and a matriarch, certainly she was. Of course, rearing a large family with the help of her husband was not unknown to families of that era. Certainly, families of that era were large families, so rearing nine children was not unusual, but she nevertheless, with the help of her husband managed to raise those nine children.

Sir, she was devoted to life and rearing her progeny, teaching them values, good manners and, of course, insisting that they all be educated and educated well. She, of course, knew that this was one of the areas where she would have insisted that they can raise themselves up by their boot straps, to be the men and women they are today

in Barbados, or overseas where they live. She had an unswerving dedication to hard work.

Sir, I read also in the Eulogy that she was on the job at 7.00 a.m. on days and getting to her job on foot. That also added to her dedication to her job and life in general, and certainly mindful of her maternal responsibilities to her children at all times.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Lashley ends her sorrows, and I believe that she is truly one of the generals of this fair land we call Barbados, and I believe she has found her way sitting on the right hand of God.

I want to proffer my profound sympathy to her family, especially to my Parliamentary colleague. May she rest in peace.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to offer my sympathy to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and to say that I am proud to be associated with the comments in this Honourable Chamber this morning. As I said previously, to make a tribute to Mrs. Lashley is like something I have said in this Parliament already. This House has a way of honouring people, but the honour that goes to a person like Verona Eudora Lashley could never be measured by this Chamber.

Sir, when one looks at what has been achieved and what has been contributed by this fair lady, we as politicians sometimes have to ask ourselves if we truly know how to measure the contributions of the masses of people in this country.

In a day and age like this, when we have all the technology, when we have everything that has been offered, we find it difficult to raise two or three children, but this lady was able to raise nine without the resources that are now available, and she was able to do it in a significant way, without anybody suffering or anybody crying down any of her children.

H50 12:00 noon Sequence 12

Friday, December 04, 2009

House A50, Sequence 13, 12.00 p.m.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, today, we have two or three and we cannot discipline them, but this lady was able to discipline nine and sometimes one more, the husband.

Sir, we must ask ourselves if we are fair to persons like these, if we have truly honoured these persons for laying the foundation for the development of this country.

Sir, when one looks at the way they have been able to discipline people, we should be taking these persons as examples and using them to the fullest to correct the wrongs that are occurring in this country, when it comes to discipline because they have demonstrated without a shadow of a doubt, that not only they know how to discipline their children, but they know how to discipline their finances.

I do not know her, but I think I could speak without even having to ask for the facts because when one considers the lady that you are speaking about who came from Gall Hill, St. John, can be found anywhere in any small district to the north of Barbados, Sir, carrying out the same duties and achieving the same amount. They would have owned their homes and they would have ensured that when they pass this world, they did not owe anybody for it, Sir.

We sometimes measure people based on what we think they own and never by what they really own. I have said in this Parliament already, Sir, when one looks at the masses of people in Barbados, all the trappings that we sometimes give to other people who do not own them, these people owned because the majority of times what we call ownership for other people, is really the ownership for the credit unions, the banks, et cetera, but these people do not carry the debt as it relates to the assets.

They have the assets but not the debt, because they knew, as we would say, how to cut the cloth right. I am saying, Sir, that these are the types of people I look forward to, to the day when we can truly honour them, because they would have left a mark on this earth that we need to imitate. They ensured that their children went to school, Church and were well disciplined.

Sir, the best thing about this Eulogy is that the family members were not ashamed to speak of where she worked because sometimes, we do not know how to measure achievements. We believe that if we were not born with a lot of money, we are “a nobody”. What we do not understand is that when you were born poor and you achieve something, you have measurement, but when you are rich and you remain rich, you are still rich, but you have no measurement.

Sir, a poor person who has achieved and who has been able to give something, has something to point to and I am saying that I have seen on many occasions, many people whose parents were poor, whose parents were maids, whose parents worked in the field, were ashamed to talk about it and I am saying, Sir, I am proud of the Lashley

family because, at least, they knew how to measure their achievement.

I have said, and if you read Hansard, Sir, this family reminds me of a family in the Checker Hall area called the Yearwood family, a very poor man who had many children, but, at least, at the end of the day, he had something to show for it, Sir, even though he supported his children well. Sir, I am saying that if we are to recapture Barbados, we need to use these types of examples like the Lashleys. They worked hard and have been able to take their one farthing, and not burry it but they planted it and saw it grow into some meaningful usage, which they have been able to share and spread it among the family so that the grandchildren can now get a blessing as well.

Sir, we need to let our young people know that it is not growing up and finding everything you want, but it the ability to take what you have and transform it into something much greater and leave a foundation for others to follow.

Sir, to all those who have spoken before, I want to join them and offer him my deepest sympathy. I also want to welcome the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central to the “No Parents Club” of which I joined a long time ago. Sir, there is one good thing about it always, that there is measurement. There is something to measure, and this family has done some measurement.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Thank you for the opportunity to just add a few words to this tribute this morning. I first want to join with all those who have spoken before in their kind words to the mother of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central. I believe that I recall having met her only once, but I had the privilege of being at her funeral and I say the privilege because for me, it was an opportunity to reflect.

As I sat there and I observed the family and how they supported each other, I heard the things that they said about their mother, it stirred me, Mr. Speaker, as I am sure that it stirred many women today, who are hearing these words in honour of Verona Eudora Lashley.

Mr. Speaker, hearing how she raised nine children, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy just said, some of us have two and three and we wonder how we could manage to do the things we want to do, and here was a lady who raised nine children, and not only raised nine children, Sir, but was able to keep her family together all these years. Even after they have grown and gone their separate ways,

she was able to maintain that family unity, perhaps herself being at the core of that family.

Sir, to watch how the family still interacted, to see the brothers and sisters how they talked about their relationship with their mother, not only when they were younger, but now that there are results, they continue to have that relationship with their mother.

For me, Mr. Speaker, I sat and reflected as my children are teenagers, I want to make sure that as they grow and they leave home, I have that kind of relationship with my children, so that we can still interact regularly and still be close to one another. I urge all mothers who are hearing this and all young women to take a leaf out of Mrs. Lashley's book. She has taught us and she has reminded me that the sacrifice we make for our children is certainly worth it.

Indeed, sometimes we attempt today to measure our worth and the value of our life by what we have accumulated for ourselves, what possessions we have managed to acquire, but certainly that does not seem to have been the goal of the departed. Certainly, she measured her life and her worth in her family and what she could see her family accomplish, and what they have been able to accomplish.

I know she was proud when she came here last year to see her son, and in the achievements of all her children because I gather that she has managed to raise all her children and all of them have become quite accomplished and that is no small feat. For indeed today, there are mothers and fathers who are trying to raise two and three children, and wondering where they went wrong and wondering what will ever become of them. Certainly, to watch nine children make their way in the world must certainly have given her a sense of accomplishment.

I want to encourage young mothers to do like Mrs. Lashley did and model values for their children. She obviously taught her children discipline. She raised them up in the Church. She certainly stressed the value of education, something that we are not seeing a lot of these days. It does not seem that many families are stressing the value of education. They may insist that their children go to school. They have no choices because that is the Law, but they are not stressing the value of education and what education can do for them.

Many of our young people today seem to think that because they have not acquired anything and they have not grown up with anything that they are not likely to make anything of themselves. Sadly, I see too many children like that, but we can see here, a family that came from modest means in a rural community achieve, because their parents taught them the value of education, as indeed other values.

House A50, Sequence 13, 12.10 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Listening to her life, it was a time for me to reflect. It reminded me that regardless of all the other things that I now have the opportunity to do, that my greatest role is that of being a mother and that indeed, my greatest legacy would be my children and the care of my children.

I certainly have recommitted myself to ensuring that my children can grow well, that they can be accomplished and that they have the sense of values, morals and discipline and certainly, the family unity that was indeed so evident at the funeral service that we do not see a lot of in families these days. In fact, extended families tend to go their own way but certainly that did not seem to be the case.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to all that was said and I just want to recall a few verses from a passage of scripture that is so obvious and so relevant here today, which is Proverbs 31, a proverb that many of us know about the virtuous woman. I have at some time sought to be this virtuous woman, but I have given up a long time ago because it just seems to be so challenging. Proverbs 31 speaks of the virtuous woman as one who stretches out her hand to the poor, indeed, she reaches forth her hands to the needy, her clothing is fine linen and purple, strength and dignity are her clothing and she openeth her mouth with wisdom, she looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness.

Sir, that is just a few of the descriptions of the virtuous woman. Indeed, to me that seems an apt description for the woman we have heard described today and in recent times. Proverbs 31 goes on to say that above all, her children rise up and call her blessed. Indeed, I have seen the Lashleys rise up and called her blessed.

Sir, it is with those words that I too express deepest condolences to the Lashley's family on the passing of their mother.

I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did not want this moment to pass unless I added my words to reflecting on the memory of a person that could only be described as a great Barbadian woman. I did not have many occasions to meet the late Mrs. Lashley. On the occasion when the Honourable Member for Christ

Church West Central was sworn in, she was present. I remembered being introduced to a very meek, almost serene lady, who spoke very quietly and pleasurably about her son, the Honourable Stephen Lashley.

Mr. Speaker, what grabs me the most about this moment is that on the evening when Mrs. Lashley took ill, I was down in the precincts of Parliament speaking with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and I remember how he described his feeling about her not feeling well and how he summoned other members of the family to proceed with her care until he was able to get to her. We chatted for a moment and I remember him talking so very fondly of his mother.

We have had other occasions. As many of you may know, the Honourable Member tends to tease me a lot. As a matter of fact, I am now understanding why he thinks that I should have at least five or seven children because he is the product of a large family.

I am also the product of a large family because my mother is the mother of 10. She would have been born around the same time as the late Mrs. Lashley, and I am quite sure would have gone through many of the travails that she herself would have gone through in those early years building her family, her home and indeed her legacy.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, what is good about whom we are as a society is very much reflected in the lives lived by persons like the late Mrs. Lashley. As we reflect for a moment on her life, some of us can only see her life through the eyes of, first her marriage. As I understand it, it is a distinguished marriage for many, many years. It is a marriage that clearly stood strong on her commitment to family, her commitment to her faith and her commitment to her heavenly Father.

I believe that these are examples that can teach today's society how it could continue to pursue the course of becoming a great society because of the fact that persons such as the late Mrs. Lashley would have left behind a legacy of commitment to family, that once we choose to embrace such legacies, that we too can be successful in making an indelible contribution on our society.

As we reflect on her passing, we also reflect by looking through the eyes of motherhood. I have said this to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central before that I consider him to be one of the greatest human beings I have met particularly when it comes to his sincerity and his seriousness about life, particularly as it reflects on his seriousness and love for his family. His mother was devoted to her children.

She obviously instilled great values in them that were not only values of good humanity, but values of good

spirituality. She was decisive in demanding the highest standards of living from her children, both personally and professionally, as reflected in the lives of her children. I do not know the others of her children very well, but if they are anything like the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, then they also must be great human beings.

Very often I find in politics we consume ourselves with matters related to the State and we encircle ourselves with great people, but very often we forget to remind ourselves how that greatness has impacted on us as individuals. I am quite sure that the qualities that are exemplified in the life of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central are qualities that have touched us all, even in the way he conducts the business of the Chair when he is there.

I believe that is testimony of how he was raised and how he has been socialised, but beyond that, it is testimony how he has taken on those values and has incorporated them into his lifestyle, and how that perhaps might well be the greatest memory that he holds of his dear late Mom.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking of this great lady, I believe that we can say for sure that she was an exemplary citizen. We have learnt how she has made contributions voluntarily to the society through the arts and other forms.

House A50 Sequence 14 12.20 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Speaker, when it comes time for me to celebrate the life of my mother after she has passed, I would want to know that it would be said of her that not only did she give herself to her family, not only did she give herself to her marriage, but that she also gave herself to making the society where she now stands a great society than how she found it.

Mr. Speaker, it is true there is a compelling need in this Barbados to have persons take on the level of seriousness about how they would make a contribution to shaping the society. Therefore, we as policymakers, who come to this hallowed Chamber, have a special obligation to recognise the lives of those lived in honour of their country, their families and friends. Therefore, when time comes to honour Barbadians who, in some people's estimation, may be just simple citizens, we must ensure that they are remembered for the greatness they gave to society.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Lashley was not only an exemplary citizen, but an extraordinary community worker, which again is another quality that we would wish to see in so many of our citizens today. She was an exemplary

citizen, an extraordinary community worker, an excellent care-giver, as is seen in the lives of her family. Mr. Speaker, my exhortation to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is to be strong, to follow her example and to cherish her memory.

Mr. Speaker, with those remarks, I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of the late Verona Lashley and to say that I have known her son, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, for many years. I remember him first as a member of his cabinet in the Guild of Undergraduates at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus of the late 1980s, where he served as President and I served as National Affairs Chairperson, the same portfolio held by the Honourable Prime Minister a few years earlier.

Mr. Speaker, even in those days in the late 1980s, the Honourable Member has always displayed tremendous leadership qualities. As a Chairman of the Guild, he was always fair. When he chaired meetings that go on for more than seven hours, I remember on occasions, he was very disciplined and very determined to get the job done in a fair manner. I saw this reflected in him again as he became President of the Public Workers' Credit Union, of which I am a member and would have attended Annual General Meetings. He was always professional. Mr. Speaker, I believe this upbringing from his parents would have manifested itself in these fine qualities exhibited by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Mr. Speaker, I share in his grief because my mother too has been ill, in recent years, and I had to visit her daily at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Sir, as a child, you would know if there are only two people in this world who love you, invariably they would be your parents. You can count on their love, therefore, to lose a parent would be a tremendous blow. Sir, my condolences go out to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and to the rest of his family.

I remember one of his brothers being a member of the Young Democrats and the St. John's Cultural Group and displaying this discipline and humble personality as well.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, like you and me, attended that wonderful institution in St. John, the Lodge School, and so I see him as a true comrade. Mr. Speaker, while talking about St. John, I am sure you would agree with me that having spent many formative years of our lives in that

parish - the ambience of Gall Hill, Massiah Street, Sargeant's Street and other areas of St. John - that ambience is very serene. There is lush vegetation, rich soil, the people are very humbled, friendly and dedicated to being Barbadians. Sir, Mrs. Lashley would have sprung from that wonderful part of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I was at the funeral and noted from the Eulogy that Mrs. Lashley had nine children. As others said, she did not have a vehicle, yet she was able to persevere and raise her children. She was able to move from a wooden house to a wall house. She made her family not to feel sorry for themselves, not to be resolved to living a life of deprivation, but to lift themselves up. Sir, through education and determination, she was able to build a bungalow, now all of these children have become successful citizens of our country and in countries in which they have settled.

I believe this is a shining example for other working-class families in our country to follow. Sir, unfortunately, there is a class divide in many areas around the world, and Barbados is not excluded from this. Sir, I frown upon those bourgeois elements that seek to look down on people. If you do not have a car, you are no good. It has even raised its ugly head in the political divide, where even former Honourable Members used that sort of rhetoric, but they are no longer in this Honourable Chamber and the foot soldiers were able to walk up the steps, while they were driven out of the House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it is a disgrace when as human beings because some of us have more means than others, we condescend upon working-class persons. I do not associate myself with this. I am saying that as a people, we must be more Christian. I think the basic human spirit, the moral code, dictates that we respect our fellow human beings as equal. It dictates that we must not look down at others as lesser human beings. Sir, people do not have a car or that they live in a wooden house with a pit toilet, you must not assume they would remain that way, or that they have to live a life of crime and prostitution and would come to no good. The Bible speaks about the fact that it is easier for a poor man to get into heaven than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom. Sir, I am not saying that because you are rich you should be ashamed. All I am saying is that poverty does not mean that one is inferior. I am very serious about this and I appeal to working-class citizens, whether they live in the City or wherever, never to feel inferior to any other person because that person may have more money.

Mr. Speaker, this is nothing new. I remember going on a safari trip. As the motorcade passed an old plantation near Malvern Great House, St. John, the guy showed us the footprint of the plantation house was such that the stables were at the front of the house. Clearly, we understand that back then there were no vehicles, so owning a horse was

like owning a vehicle. Sir, the owners of those plantations wanted to parade to the world how many more horses they had and so they had these smelly horses at the front of the house.

Sir, this class divide is a problem that human kind has had to endure for centuries, and I am saying that we need to put a stop to it. We are all human-beings and we all can lift ourselves up through the visionary policies of the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, policies that are supported by successive Administrations, to providing full taxpayer-funded education from primary to tertiary. Sir, we all can take advantage of these opportunities available to us, to help to improve our standard of living.

12.30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 07, 2009

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: We may be with a pit toilet today but down the road, with hard application, taking full advantage of these educational opportunities, we can become professionals, we can get the motor vehicles, the houses and so on with hard work. Sir, that would lift all our citizens up and, therefore, propel the country forward and secure the future of future generations. Mr. Speaker, we need to unite as people and get away from all this class prejudice that really serves no good to our people.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Mrs. Verona Lashley for being a shining example. She has demonstrated, as we read in the Eulogy of being proud. She might have been poor, but she was proud. She had high self-esteem as demonstrated by her desire to be well dressed. Sir, within the funeral booklet, we saw some photographs of the deceased and she was always immaculately dressed. Sir, that demonstrates high self-esteem, not feeling inferior to other people because they had more means than her.

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that family planning is not important, but I am an only child and I really envy those who have siblings, brothers and sisters because no one can call me uncle. I am saying that there is nothing wrong with having a few children and, Sir, I look forward to having a toddler or two myself, with the grace of God.

Mr. Speaker, science is now advanced and it now allows some women to become pregnant at later ages, but there is risk as you get older, as I understand it. Sir, I am saying that when you are studying to be a lawyer, a doctor, a veterinary scientist, or what have you, sometimes you have to be studying for seven years or more and I am encouraging our women and men to factor in reproduction.

Mr. Speaker, if all of us decided not to reproduce, then human kind would become extinct. Sir, it is as simple as that and so, we need to replenish our population. Sir, in

some countries the population is actually decreasing and, therefore, you have challenges in terms of the security of national insurance.

Sir, if you do not have enough people working, then there would not be enough taxes or National Insurance collected by the working population to pay the pensions for those retiring and national productivity in terms of human capital would be threatened.

I am saying to become the Lawyer, doctor, or whatever, but to factor in a child or two and also factor in a husband because some women, nowadays, want the child, but they think the husband is a bother. Sir, that is not necessarily so, because we see the Lashley family being married for 54 years and, Sir, that is commendable.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying well done to Mrs. Verona Lashley, Barbados is proud of you. You know you are seated in heaven resting, and deepest condolences to the Lashley family and may God continue to bless you all.

Thank you.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give condolences first to my friend, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, to say a few words in respect of his mother and also to say what I think she symbolises in terms of Barbados today.

Mr. Speaker, I always remember one thing in terms of my own upbringing and when I look around our society today, and I look at the reaction of people to each other, I remember that great things come from humble beginnings. Sir, very often in our society, you see people who we regard as ordinary, going along doing the things that they need to do to provide for themselves and their family, not knowing in years to come what that would produce.

Sir, very often, if we look 30 years back or so, many people would say that where they are today, others around them would not have anticipated. Sir, in that regard, I think we need to pay tribute to the fact that the mother of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central was able to be successful in her own way, in raising her children, to provide for them and also to provide for her husband.

Mr. Speaker, today in our society, we demonstrate an impatience with each other and sometimes we tend to take for granted the very small things that people do that would lead to success.

Sir, in my own Constituency, there is a family headed by Miss Watson from Kildar Close in Grazettes. She has two young people who are, at this time, interesting in athletics and she is persistent in making sure that these young people are able to pursue their career in athletics. Sir, the steps might seem quite simple, but I see a certain parallel in what she is trying to do with her children and what, in a sense, Mrs. Lashley did for her children when they were at an age where they needed it.

Mr. Speaker, what it says to me is that very often, even today, we do not support the efforts of mothers and fathers in terms of trying to raise children and to provide the necessary things that would help them to succeed later on in life. Sir, somehow we seem to think that things around us do not matter. In that respect I think that the life of Verona Lashley says to us that we need to take into consideration the things that ordinary people are doing in order to ensure that their children and their families can lead more comfortable lives in the future.

Mr. Speaker, when I was looking through the Eulogy, there were a few things that came to mind. One of the things that she said to her children was that you cannot take life for granted. The very simple things that mothers and fathers do for children that they cannot take these things for granted. The expression that people make in terms of trying to teach you things might seem simple but, on the other hand, you have to appreciate them for what they are.

Mr. Speaker, in that respect, I think we have to give credit to the fact that she was able to be successful in terms of raising her children and to offer Barbados, not only Stephen, but when we listen to the fact that her children were still able to make significant contributions to the society, which they are part of, she did extremely well in trying to ensure that she provided Barbados with citizens that were able to make contributions in all aspects of Barbadian life.

Mr. Speaker, with that, again I want to give my condolences and I am sure that the family would be proud of the contributions that this great lady made. Sir, I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged to you.

The Honourable Member Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I join this debate and take the opportunity to pay tribute to the life of Verona Eudora Lashley, mother of nine children, one of whom is our colleague, the Honourable Member Christ Church West Central and, indeed, a very close colleague in our case. Sir, I say "ours" because he represents part of five seats which the Democratic Labour Party would have

contested in the last Election as a bundle, so to speak, as a group.

H/A50/12.40 p.m. Sequence 16

Tuesday, December 4, 2009

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: He contributed in no small way to the kind of success which we were able to reap in Christ Church generally. The only survivor in the Barbados Labour Party is the Honourable Member who spoke earlier, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. Sir, it is because of the special abilities which the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central brought to the campaign, which he added to the campaign, which has been fought for a long time. I happened to have had the distinct honour of being one of those who tried for a while in that Christ Church Constituency. I have always held the view that Barbados is really one Constituency, and you only begin to get results for your organisation for the Democratic Labour Party, for instance, when your comrades around you begin to appreciate the necessity to work as a team.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is instrumental in bringing about that sense of unity and that sense of strength, which obviously helped to bring about the results which we saw.

We have learnt the kind of strength which he brought to the political arena was no doubt in part, instilled by his mother, the late Verona Eudora Lashley and the Lashley family from Bowmanston, St. John. Sir, other colleagues have spoken at length about him and his work. Maybe, like the President of the United States of America, President Obama, he still has his work to do.

Although the accolades are being placed on him today, I think it is in anticipation of the contribution which he will continue to make, and which he will be able to bring benefit to this Parliament, to the people of Christ Church West Central, and to a larger sense to the people of Barbados in general. I am very proud to be a colleague of the Honourable Member during all this time.

Sir, I have also learnt of the strengths of his brother Norville. Of course, I know Norville well too. He works in the Ministry of Transport and Works. I was delighted to learn from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East that he is the kind of gentleman, if you go to him and you say that you want a road done, you can get a road done, so I now know who you can go to directly whenever I - not necessarily in his own area of responsibility, but anywhere that I want a road done, I will seek out my friend and make sure that we can bring about that transition.

Sir, one of the contributions spoke to the fact that there was something special about mothers born in the time, 1928 and 1930. I thought about that a little bit because it so happens that my mother was born in 1926, and she is still alive. Sir, the answer I believe rises in part that these are parents largely of large families, because in those days we practised much larger families than we do today in Barbados, but it also coincided when in Barbados where parents reflected on the fact that they could now send their children to school at no cost. This is not a political statement.

It is a social fact that in the 1960s, when young mothers with six children and more, woke up to the reality that they could now have their children educated free of cost, Barbados undertook a transformation.

Sir, we are now charged with taking Barbados to another stage, and we have heard Honourable Members speak of the challenges of the modern Barbadian family. We in this Parliament have the charge to make sure that we are in a position to bring about whatever transition is required by way of legislation, or whatever transition is required by way of activities in our Ministries to make sure that we take a hand and start to direct so many of the issues which are facing our young families today. These are the kinds of thoughts that emanate as we discuss and pay tribute to the life of Mrs. Eudora Lashley as we offer our sympathies to our colleague.

As I stated before, her greatest CV is, in fact, the CV which speaks to her community work. The fact that she was honoured, happy and satisfied to serve in so many groups within her community. She was a tower of strength in the community in which she lived. She was a member of, and I quote, “the St. John Women’s Auxiliary Altar Guild, the Senior Citizens’ Drama Group and the Senior Citizens’ Arts and Craft Association.” This is the kind of parent of whom we speak.

Sir, we do not have therefore, to search too hard to find where lie the answers that are required to be put in place for a Barbados of the 21st Century, a Barbados that sees us once again grab hold of the destiny of our young people and offer the kind of assistance and opportunity to young parents, mothers and fathers, throughout Barbados. Our social agencies need to be informed by events of this type.

I want to end by saying that we are indeed honoured to read and to see the results of the labour and the work of women like Eudora Lashley. I am offering again my sympathy to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, to his brothers and sisters and his family. They can take comfort in the fact that we are so much better for the contribution she has made, and that they are

now in a position to make to this great Barbados community.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my small contribution and to offer sympathy to the family of Mrs. Verona Eudora Lashley. I want to associate myself with the comments made by the Honourable Members in this Chamber this morning.

It is indeed, and what I found remarkable in terms of the presentation that was made at her funeral service a few days ago. Unfortunately, being out of the island, I was not able to attend that service.

What is significant is, Mrs. Lashley had been married for 56 years, and it is in a family environment that she has been successful in raising her children and grandchildren. Certainly in her comments that were aired this morning, a lot of the benefits and the observations made by Honourable Members would have come out of the fact that the family was able to work as one family unit with God’s blessings.

H50 12.50 p.m. Sequence 17

Friday, December 04, 2009

House A50, Sequence 18, 12.50 p.m.

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: I think it has been played out all across Barbados over the last 50 years.

Mrs. Lashley has been able to live the dream of the Democratic Labour Party, so to speak, in terms of the vision of our founding father and the vision for economic enfranchisement through education, and that has been reflected, certainly in a lot of the comments made this morning and she has been able to see her own vision reflected in the lives of her children and grandchildren.

Members have spoken about the manner in which our honourable colleague from Christ Church West Central manages the Chair when he is in there, his firmness and his sense of discipline and fair play, and that has been obviously one of the hallmarks of being part of a big large family.

Mr. Speaker, I notice as well, like many persons who would have been able to live to the age that Mrs. Lashley was able to attain, some 81 years. It is pleasing to me that she has been able to benefit, certainly in terms of her travel and so on from the hard work and sacrifice that she would

have made on behalf of her family. It is always pleasing when we speak to senior citizens to be able to see that in their older years, they have been able to benefit from that sacrifice and hard work that she would have done in her younger years.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words I would certainly want to offer my condolences to the Member of Parliament for Christ Church West Central, the Honourable Steven Lashley and, by extension, to his wife and other members of the Lashley family.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by Honourable Members on Both Sides of the House as we pay tribute to the late Verona Eudora Lashley, mother of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

I was not able to attend the funeral since it clashed with the funeral of a very close friend of mine, the late Patrick Bradshaw, whose untimely death resulted in his interment on the same morning that Mrs. Lashley was interred.

I did not know Mrs. Lashley personally. Of course, I have only known her through her son, who is an Honourable Member of this House and a colleague of mine in the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, somewhere on the walls in St. Paul's Cathedral in London there is an inscription attributed to the son of one of Britain's greatest architects, Sir Christopher Wren, and that inscription in Latin says, "si monumentum requiris circumspice", if you want to see my monument look around and I believe that if the late Verona Lashley could speak to us today, she would address us in words not dissimilar. If you want to see my monument look around, the monuments left in the nine children she successfully raised to wise, mature and dignified adulthood.

Verona Lashley was born in the year 1928, five years after my own mother was born, and the Barbados of 1928 produced people whose aspirations far outdistanced and far outpaced the opportunities that were available at that time for the realisation of those aspirations, produced people whose intelligence far outstripped the opportunities that were available for the deployment of that intelligence, so many of these products of that dark period in Barbadian history, dark from the point of view of the limited opportunities that were available, had to do jobs and pursue vocations that were far below what they would otherwise

have aspired to and, therefore, they were limited in the extent to which they could fully deploy the talents which God had given them.

In the immortal words of the poet, Thomas Gray, these were many of those flowers that were born to blush unseen and to waste their sweetness on the desert air, so was Verona Eudora Lashley. She worked hard, raised her children confident in the belief that she could lay the foundation for a better life for her children. She could help to fight for a Barbados that would create opportunities for the deployment of her children's intelligence and for the realisation of their aspirations, and it must have brought her no small pleasure to be in this House when her son took up his seat in the year 2008. She would have seen her cup of joy full, as a result of the sacrifices that she would have made to bring about that reality.

The parenting of people like Verona Eudora Lashley falls to be considered in this tribute, because people of that generation did not have the opportunities for enlightening which the modern day parent has. Most people born in 1928, had to settle for just a seventh standard education because opportunities for secondary education were severely limited and, of course, university education was far beyond the reach of the vast majority of people. Yet, people of that generation defined success in terms not of what they could acquire, but in terms of what they could do for their families and particularly for their children.

House A50, Sequence 25, 1.00 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Hon. F. J. STUART: Raising your children to adulthood and ensuring that those children never collided with the Law, ensuring that they had reputations that could pass any kind of scrutiny, ensuring that they pursued standards of excellence and that they understood the value of dignity, were the indicia of success for families of that period. People like Verona Eudora Lashley made no small contribution to the Barbados we have today by her investment in that definition of success.

Unfortunately, we are seeing some slippage in that area in Barbados today. Too many of our parents, with far larger opportunities available to them and a more highly varied set of opportunities available to them, are not able to produce families of the nature and of the quality which people of old Barbados were able to produce. As politicians and as leaders, we have to make sure that we arrest that slippage if we are to continue to have a society that guarantees us peace, order and personal security.

Verona Eudora Lashley not only worked to raise her family successfully and to ensure that her children fully exploited the God-given talents which were their good

fortune, but contributed in other ways to the development of her community as we have heard from Honourable Members who spoke in here this morning, particularly the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East who knew her personally and who actually interacted with her in her efforts to help build the Barbados we know so well today.

Now, of course she is gone. One of the most chastening realities that we as human beings always have to face is that from the day you are born, you are dying. Death came to Verona as to all of us come it must. To the rich it comes, to the poor it comes. In fact, I cannot say it better than Thomas Gray in that famous poem, "The Elegy in the Country Churchyard" puts it.

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e're gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

Mr. Speaker, death is certain, whether we are rich or poor, or whether we are great or small.

Verona Eudora Lashley was a committed Christian who spent much of her life worshipping at the St. John's Parish Church. As a Christian, therefore, she would have had to believe, as most Christians or all Christians do, that death is not the end. She would have had to believe that she would see her children again. In fact, the renaissance Cleric Dr. John Donne captured that very beautifully in the famous sonnet in which he delivered an apostasy to death and asked death, why swelleth thou.

"One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death should be no more; Death thou shalt die."

Verona Lashley would have believed that. That would have been the engine that drove her to continue her steadfastness and her unwavering worship of God and subscription to Christianity through the St. John's Anglican Church.

Sir, if it is any consolation to her children, and if it is any consolation to her son who sits in this Honourable Chamber, if he believes what she believed, he can take comfort from the fact that he will see her again in that resurrection in which all Christians believe and to which all Christians subscribe.

The wise man Solomon once asked an immortal question: "Who can find a virtuous woman?" That question has been asked right down through history. Perhaps, the voice of Solomon echoes down the halls of time, but I

think that were Verona's husband William alive here today, he would answer the question, "I found one."

It is with those words, Mr. Speaker, that I extend to my colleague and his family heartfelt condolences and pray for the unceasing refreshment of the soul of Verona Eudora Lashley in paradise.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the mother of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and this Parliament's Chairman of Committees. I do so conscious that it is at times like these that we reflect and remind ourselves that we may sit on Opposite Sides of the House for the purposes of affairs of the State, but that there are things that unite us and bind us as a people.

The speeches that I have heard today, as Honourable Members paid tribute to Mrs. Verona Lashley, suggest to me that truly we have in this 21st Century to find a better way of conducting the affairs of the State such that the divisions do not outnumber the bonds that unite us as a people.

I am more and more convinced of that because last night - I came in yesterday specifically to celebrate my mother's 65th birthday and my father's 70th birthday which was last Thursday. Their 45th wedding anniversary is in two weeks. Sir, in the last two weeks or so I have had much cause to reflect on families, and bonds, and those things.

I truly did not know about the passing of Mrs. Lashley. Had I known and been here in the island I certainly would have attended the funeral. I say this because sometimes you could confuse the trees for the woods and we do so I think, in the heat of the moment and in the pressures of the day, but the truth is that we are a proud people and we are a people who have been born of great sacrifice, who have exhibited great resilience and there is much that unites us in terms of the values that almost every one of us in here has been exposed to by those who raised us and those who caused us to understand the things that matter.

The truth is that when we leave this country, we recognise that and perhaps more so, because we realise that what we share in terms of our values and upbringing, irrespective of race, gender or class, has been unique. The Barbadian spirit is a strong spirit. The Barbadian values are a strong set of values.

House A50 Sequence 19 1.10 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, all that I have heard and read from the Eulogy, which is an excellent one, reflects that this lady, born in 1928, of circumstances that might have daunted others, has sought to build a family and to provide for them in a manner that all of us can relate to and in a manner that would cause just tribute to e paid.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have to find a way of capturing, in these changing times, that story that reflects so many of our families, but of a generation past, such that those who today have a greater commitment to the transient nature of life and the portability of things can recognise that there is virtue in the values that allow us to recognise that commitment, steadfastness, perseverance, resilience, loyalty, are all things that have made us a great people.

Mr. Speaker, there was no Barbados Labour Party or Democratic Labour Party when Verona Lashley was born, but there was a Barbadian who faced challenges because of the society in which he, or she lived at that time. Sir, if we were to be honest with ourselves, we would see that every one of us in here is within one to two generations of poverty. We would see that those circumstances would reflect the struggle that has caused so many Barbadians to be able to withstand the great pressures of life.

Mr. Speaker, it is remarkable that there has been very little written on the role of the matriarchs in this society. Very often, not because men wanted to, but because the social and economic circumstances of the day marginalised the role that men could play in families, largely because of what they had to do to help earn a living, women were forced to stand in the breach and to raise families in circumstances that could only be described as difficult and arduous.

I remember paying tribute in here for the mother of the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, whose story itself bears repetition. Sir, if I go through every one of us, there are elements of commonality that I believe requires that we as a society, we as a Parliament, ought to give priority to that aspect of our history being captured, even if not by reference to a named individual, but by reference to a class of people who have worked hard to build this society and have allowed us to reach with pride where we are, as one of the top developing countries in the world.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is, as we go forward, the challenge to sustain that will be great. Sir, in this Parliament, we sometimes speak only of the divide in relation to matters of the State. The truth also is, as each of us knows in our heart, that it is not only the effort of

Parliament, Government, or Opposition, that would matter in that challenge, but that it is the effort of all people.

Mr. Speaker, I have gone on record from the time I have entered public life to even now, to say that it is my view that the greatest challenge that faces us in these next 10 to 20 years is how do we deal with the issues of self-confidence and self-esteem that are required to allow us to move to the next level as a people and as a country.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it was the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, who spoke of her strong sense of self-esteem. You can only face the greatest odds if you have the greatest faith and the greatest belief in yourself and in God. If we can say that with a united voice to more and more of our younger people who are challenged by forces and information that come from outside - more information they use is generated from outside these shores than from within - but who is telling the story of how women, against all odds, could raise six, eight or 10 children, where men helped supported them in circumstances where their dignity was being challenged, almost on a daily basis, in a Barbados that did not value people, perhaps, because of the circumstances of their birth.

Mr. Speaker, who is going to tell this story in a way that is real and not just a cliché? Who is going to help us to understand that those of us, including all who sit here, who have risen from the depths of poverty, who now have advantages and elements of privilege, have a responsibility, not just to romanticise the past, but to accept the responsibilities of the privileges which have been conferred on them?

Mr. Speaker, we now live in a society where there are too few public spaces for people of different races, different classes and different backgrounds to mix. Until 20 or 30 years ago, cricket clubs had captains of industry. There were carpenters, well diggers and school boys who all mixed together. How many of us in here can name cricket clubs that now provide an opportunity for people of different social and economic backgrounds to mix together? How many of us can find and can identify other public spaces where Barbadians of different backgrounds can mix readily other than perhaps at Crop Over, which is not a conversation-like atmosphere or a dub concert, like tomorrow night, where you may get people of different backgrounds together, but equally that is not a conversation-like atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, I say this because it is important that stories of these persons, like the mother of the Honourable Member, be shared and that the values, as well as the ability for them to guide and mentor, be made available to all, not just those who may be the members of the particular community or folk group of which she was a

member. Sir, more so, even in the context of the Church, the level of activities that see the congregation and parishioners mixing in that social way, are not as great as they used to be in the past.

Mr. Speaker, I did not know Mrs. Verona Lashley, but I know her story, which is one that is being reflected across the households of thousands of Barbadians. It is that story on which we stand proudly today, as a people, as a Parliament and as a nation.

I believe that we who have the opportunity to influence the priorities of this country, have a duty to preserve that story and to ensure that those who are coming up now, who are at risk of being influenced by values and by a world that may not necessarily reflect the best of whom we can be - and I am not one who is xenophobic, but I do recognise the challenges - that we have a responsibility to share and renew that story in a way that would allow our younger people to take the best of the past, to be the best of the future.

I truly would want to express my condolences, not just to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, but he has a brother of whom I am very fond, who promises me, whenever I see him, yellow cassava. Sir, we have that relationship that goes back about a decade now. I believe he is a worker in the Ministry of Public Works. He is an outstanding public servant and I have had cause to operate with him in a most professional manner. Even though he and I know things of each other that might separate us, we have chosen to deal with those things that unite us.

Sir, it is that spirit that has caused me to want to speak in this debate and to say sincerely to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, that we cannot know what he is feeling, we are sensitive to it and that we empathise with him at this most difficult of times.

Sir, as the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown said, the relationship that one has with one's parents is perhaps one of the most unique and special relationships that each of us would face and would enjoy as human beings.

1.20 p.m.

Tuesday, December 07, 2009

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, to that extent, the road that you walk must inevitably be lonely because even if others have faced it with theirs, it is your first and only experience in losing a mother and to that extent, the level of emotion must be one that can be challenging and to have to sit here for the last three hours even and listen to us as we speak and pay tribute to her, cannot be an easy task.

I wish to salute your composure for being able to do so, but say to you that there is a God and there is a God that will take you and comfort you in these times. In so doing, we are confident that you too, with the passage of time, would choose to remember those things that bring joy rather than those things that may give you a tinge of sadness.

My deepest sympathy is offered to you on my own behalf and on behalf of my family. I believe we are neighbours in terms of our Law practice, and my deepest sympathy on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself fully with the words of condolences and, of course, the tributes that have been expressed in here this morning, particularly to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central and officer of Parliament and like others in here I, too, was away on Government business and was unable to attend the funeral, but thanks to modern day communications technology, I was able to instantly express my sympathy at the passing of Mrs. Lashley and so, once again, I express those sympathies on the Floor of the House.

Mr. Speaker, however, I must say that I think it is, indeed, quite appropriate that we are spending this entire morning, four days into Barbados' 44th year in the whole concept of the experiment of a nation State, focussing on what I think is important, because the reason why we have had relative success to date and, what to my mind would contribute to our success into the future, are not the economic indicators, or not how well we might be doing in terms of material accumulation, but those values that we have been focussing on.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is remarkable to note that Mrs. Lashley came from a big family and had a big family herself, and that they are all doing very well because even in these days of smaller families, parents struggle. Sir, sometimes people have only two children and cannot seem to get them on the straight and narrow, but yet, we have examples of big families, parents with modest resources, who were able to imbue those values that are important. It was service over self, a sense of community, values like thrift and all of those concepts.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it is good that Parliament is spending the entire morning today, because it is a good opportunity for all of us in here as Honourable Members and, in fact, those beyond the Chamber, those who are listening to reflect on those things that are really important

and that would determine our success as people as we go forward. I have not been through losing a parent. I can only imagine how the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central must feel and his siblings.

I have seen both of my parents and others close to me lose their parents and I know it is extremely difficult and so, I would certainly want to express sympathy to the entire Lashley family, the grandchildren, to everyone else, and to the communities in St. John that would have been impacted by the work of Mrs. Verona Lashley. Sir, I associate myself again entirely with all of the expressions of condolences that have been expressed.

Mr. Speaker, again, I think it is important for us to reflect on the values that Verona represented, and how much we can extract from her experience in order to enrich her own experience, and to get us to focus on those things that are really important in these times, when there are so many distractions that abound in this society.

I completely associate myself with the words of condolences and, Mr. Speaker, I am deeply obliged to you.

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

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I would certainly want to take this opportunity to record the thanks of my family to the many accolades that have been showered on the memory of my mother. I have been very touched by it all and certainly all Members who would have spoken in this debate have added a touch of calmness and assurance that is often necessary to get over such a difficult period. I am certainly touched by all the sentiments that have been echoed in this Chamber from Both Sides of the House.

I want to, perhaps, reflect a little bit on the memory of my mother, because I believe that had she been here and had she heard what has been said, she would have been truly touched. She was a great woman. She lived a full life and she entered Barbados, in terms of her living, at a very difficult period being born in 1928, a mere eight years after the birth of Errol Walton Barrow and, certainly, affected by the experiences, not only of the late Errol Walton Barrow, but the experiences of the late Excellent Grantley Adams, who in the 1930s, together shared a common vision for the development of Barbados in a very difficult time, when housing and education were elusive for the majority of the Barbadian population, mainly the black masses of Barbados.

She would have been part of that fight, that struggle along with our father, for political and economic enfranchisement. Sir, certainly she took that fight and vision by cuddling the provision of education, which

became a reality under the Government of the late Excellent Errol Walton Barrow.

Mr. Speaker, her passion for excellence, her passion for high principles and great morals underpin her very existence as a human being. Sir, certainly the honour and tributes, which this House has so generously bestowed on her cannot, in any way, beyond the stretch of our imagination, go unnoticed when the annals of history record the life of this great Barbadian matriarch.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly share the sentiments by Honourable Members that perhaps we need to refocus on the stories and the real life experiences of those of our parents who have gone before. Sir, not only matriarchs, but the patriarchs as well, my dad, along with my mother would have partnered in a journey, a journey that brought them success not immediately but a journey that started in all humility where poverty, once confronted, never became a barrier to success.

H/A50/1.30 p.m. Sequence 21

Tuesday, December 4, 2009

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe it is a story that has got to be captured and I usually ask myself, faced with situations of this kind, what really will our historians record in relation to the immense contribution both socially and culturally of persons such as my Mom, Verona Lashley.

Speaking on behalf of all of my family, all nine children were proudly in Barbados to give praise and thanks to Almighty God for her life. Most of them have returned overseas. My sister is here in this august Chamber along with my brother and other sisters, but her influence and her impact transcended her family. Her aura of brightness, cheerfulness, strictness and adherence to discipline were able to ignite a movement beyond the boundaries of St. John. She was focussed and determined on the task ahead of her.

I certainly would want to thank Almighty God for having the privilege of being her son. Certainly without the tremendous support of the people of Christ Church West Central, much of what she did as a citizen would never have been recorded in this Chamber, because I would not have been here as the Member of Parliament for Christ Church West Central. Certainly, I feel a debt of gratitude to the people of Christ Church West Central, and I thank the entire family. We have been touched over the last days by the outpouring of love, the outpouring of sympathy, both by my colleagues in this Chamber and persons across Barbados and, indeed internationally, as a result of this event.

The history of Barbados, as I said, can never be complete unless we find a way to honour and to uphold the tremendous influence and memory of persons such as my mother. She was never alone in this journey. There are many mothers and fathers who have journeyed, and who have been able to eke out an existence from humility, but always with a view of the further enhancement and the further development, not only of their children, but of this rock which we call Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, though the times are sad and though we will miss our Mom, we feel a sense of joy, a sense of deep pride in her life. That pride and joy which we got from her certainly have helped to give us an inner warmth, a continuous cuddle which only a mother can give, but those experiences that she gave us will continue to live with all of us forever.

I am obliged to this Chamber and I am obliged to your Honour.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I too would like to associate myself with those words of appreciation and also offer sympathy to the family and the Honourable Member. Of course, I direct that the usual communication will be despatched in due course.

Honourable Members, we now stand and observe one minute's silence in appreciation of the life and passing of Verona Eudora Lashley.

SUSPENSION

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 2.45 p.m. this afternoon.

The question that the House be now suspended until 2.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. H50 1.36 p.m.

Sequence 22

Friday, December 04, 2009

House A50B, Sequence 02, 2.49 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is resumed.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of today's Sitting.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now the order of the day.

House A50B, Sequence 02, 2.50 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER No. 4

SHIPPING (INCENTIVES) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2009

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Speaker, this Bill, which is before this Honourable Chamber, is to amend the Shipping (Incentives) Act, 1982.

Mr. Speaker, the intention of this Act had been to try to develop shipping industry activity in Barbados as well as to diversify the economy and to support the continued development of our tourist industry.

Mr. Speaker, some amendments have been made with time to that particular legislation and again today, we are being asked to make some additional amendments. These amendments are arising after a review of the Act. The Attorney-General's Office has been asked to review the complete Act in order to make a number of corrections to improve and clarify certain provisions contained in the Act.

Mr. Speaker, I want to lead this Honourable Chamber through the amendments this afternoon. The first amendment would be to Section 3 of the Act, which states that:

"The Minister may, on application being made to him in such form as he approves, declare by order any company that is engaged in shipping activities to be an approved shipping company for the purposes of the this Act".

Mr. Speaker, that is the revised amendment. That amendment is necessary because there was some uncertainty in respect of the way in which it had been phrased initially. Initially, that Section 3 required that the Minister, on application made to him on such forms as he approves, by order, approve any company that was engaged in shipping activities, or that is wholly-owned by the Crown, or to which the Government has a majority interest.

Mr. Speaker, persons felt that subsection (b) and (c) of the old Act were unnecessary provisions primarily because the Crown is able to take advantage of any statute that is not binding on the Crown. Therefore, any shipping company in which the Crown had an interest would, therefore, be treated as any other company supplying the concessions. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we are amending Section 3 to give effect to that new thinking.

Mr. Speaker, in the Budgetary presentation of 2009, the Prime Minister indicated that there were going to be amendments to this Act. I want to quote from page 69 of that document under the heading "Shipping":

"Shipping (Incentives) Act will be amended to include game/sports fishing. I will extend customs duty-free concessions to fishing rods and reels, safety equipment such as life rafts; satellite tracking systems; flares; fire extinguishers; life jackets; satellite navigational systems; depth sounders; VHS; SSB and AM Radios, to any company engaged in commercial shipping and boating in the tourist industry (including games/sports fishers) from 10 to 15 years."

Mr. Speaker, those were the proposals in the Budgetary Proposals this year. These amendments will give effect to those provisions in the Budgetary Proposals for this year.

Clause 2 of the Bill says that:

"The Shipping (Incentives) Act, in this Act referred to as the principal Act, is amended in Section 2 by

a) deleting the words "10 years" appearing in the definition of "concession period" and substituting the words "15 years".

That, Mr. Speaker, is as enunciated by the Prime Minister in his presentation.

Sir, concessions contained in the original Act would now be available to persons over a 15-year period, rather than the 10 years as originally legislated.

Mr. Speaker, that change also requires an amendment to Clause 6 of the principal Act to give effect to the extension. Clause 6 states that:

"Section 9 of the principal Act is amended in paragraph (a) by deleting the words "10 years" appearing in that paragraph and substituting the words "15 years".

This thereby completes the amendment.

House A50B Sequence 3 3.00 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Hon. E. GEORGE HUTSON: Mr. Speaker, under the old Act, a number of applications have been made, over the years, from persons engaged in shipping activities. Sir, those amendments, which have been approved as necessary, are at Clauses 8 and 9 of the Bill. Sir, at Clause 8, it says:

"Section 2(a) of this Act shall be deemed to have come into operation on March 24, 2005."

Mr. Speaker, at Clause 9, it says:

"All shipping companies, in respect of which orders have been made under Section 3 of the principal Act after March 24, 2005, and before the commencement of this Act, shall have a concessionary period of 15 years with effect from the date on which the order declaring that company to be an approved company came into operation."

Mr. Speaker, as we have now given new companies extensions of 15 years in order to make it equitable, it would only be fair that we go back and make that appropriate adjustment, so that, in effect, it would be retroactive.

Mr. Speaker, another amendment being contemplated in the old Act this afternoon is to amend the description of the term "shipping activities" and substituting the following at Section 2:

b) "commercial shipping, boating and sports fishing in the tourist industry;" and

c) "sport fishing" means fishing for the purposes of recreation, personal consumption and competition."

Mr. Speaker, that change was on account of creating some clarity in the definition of the old Act. Previously, the definition of "shipping activities" meant:

a) the operation of ships for carriage of passengers or cargo;

b) commercial shipping and boating in the tourist industry;

c) the leasing of ships; and

d) shipbuilding, including reconstruction, alteration, refitting, equipment, maintenance or repairing of ships."

Mr. Speaker, that was the original definition and this afternoon, we are making an alteration which would clear this definition of "shipping activities" to substitute, where instead of at:

b) commercial shipping and boating in the tourist industry”, that is to be replaced by:

“commercial shipping, boating and sports, fishing in the tourist industry.”

Mr. Speaker, the development of our tourist industry is critical to our continued economy, and it is necessary that all persons have an opportunity to share in that economic activity.

We are trying, in this particular Government, to give additional opportunities and to clarify the provisions of the Shipping Incentive Act, so that persons engaged in sports shipping will be able to have benefits under this particular Act. The Act also goes on to define the words “sports fishing”, which will mean fishing for the purpose of recreation, personal consumption and for competition purposes.

Mr. Speaker, more and more, we find that little niche markets are developing within the tourist industry, in terms of different activities. We have sports tourism, and environmental tourism. We do think there is an opportunity for persons who are engaged in sports fishing to develop further and to encourage tourists to come and share in that aspect of tourism.

Mr. Speaker, I want to add that it is important, in terms of developing our fishing sector, that we ensure we have proper fishing stocks.

Sir, over the years, the reefs along the coastline of Barbados have been deteriorating and for a number of reasons. With that, our stocks of fish have also been depleted, particularly the near-shore fishing.

It is important then, that we look at measures that could also try to increase our fishing stock. Certainly, if one does any serious fishing in the United States of America, there is the catch-and-release programme, where if your catch is below a certain size you are expected to put it back into the water. I think that in going forward, this is something that we in Barbados would do well to adopt. Of course, the challenge would be to police it. I know there are some provisions within the Fisheries Act that control the size of fish one can catch.

Mr. Speaker, I think that if we want to look at that particular aspect of our tourists in any serious way, that is something we need to ensure. It can be implemented and enforced, so that our fishing stock can continue to grow and we can actually develop that particular aspect of our tourism product.

3.10 p.m.

Tuesday, December 04, 2009

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Speaker, in recent times persons have also been making substantial livings with yachts and so on to take tourists out to view turtles along the West Coast and other parts of the coastline, and those persons will be able to benefit from the particular amendment to the Shipping Incentive Act in terms of the adjustments that they are making to their vessels. Mr. Speaker, that particular amendment and definition of sports fishing to include fishing for recreational purposes, personal consumption and competition, is included within the amendments to this Bill this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, at 4, we are also withdrawing the old Section 5 and replacing that by a new Section 5. Sir, Section 5, therefore, will read:

“that notwithstanding the provisions of the Income Tax Act, that where an approved shipping company incurs capital expenditure in an amount not exceeding \$200 million in respect of shipping activity, the expenditure shall, for Income Tax purposes be deducted against the income derived during the concession period.”

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, that concession period has been extended from 10 years to 15 years. The new Section 5, where persons other than a commercial bank provide funding for shipping activities by means of a loan, or otherwise, that the dividend on that loan or the equity investment would be exempt from Income Tax again during the concession period. Sir, that amendment was because there was some uncertainty in respect of the way the old Section 5.2 had been phrased.

Mr. Speaker, in making these amendments this afternoon, we wanted to have that provision clarified as well.

Sir, Section 5.3, says:

“The approved shipping company that is granted concessions under this Act made for the assessment of Income Tax carried forward in respect of the first nine years of assessment after the expiration of the concession period, losses that are incurred during the concession period and that have not been written off.”

At Section 5.4 it says:

“Where the approved shipping company has in an income tax year incurred expenditure for any of the purposes specified in the First Schedule, then in calculating the assessable income of the approved shipping company for that year, there shall be deducted an amount equal to 150 per cent of the expenditure incurred.”

Mr. Speaker, the First Schedule to the Shipping Incentive Act provided concessions which relate to the marketing expenditure incurred by an approved shipping company and went on to include, Mr. Speaker, for example, the cost of advertising, or other means of soliciting business, or publicity outside of Barbados, salaries and wages paid to employees during their travels overseas, or on a promotion of yachting and boating tourism, or training in respect of marine skills, calculated proportionally in accordance with the duration of the trip and fares, accommodation, and subsistence to taxpayers, or his employee travelling from Barbados to promote yachting or boating tourism, or training in agreed maritime skills exclusive of the cost of a holiday trip.”

Mr. Speaker, there are several other marketing expenditure instances, which are detailed within Schedule 1, which I do not propose to go through, but those are some of the types of concessions that have been included in this Section.

Mr. Speaker, at Section 5.5, it says:

“An approved shipping company, which operates a restaurant on board a ship shall be exempt from the payment on custom duties on the items listed in the Second Schedule, where the Minister is satisfied that those items are not produced or manufactured in Barbados.”

Mr. Speaker, those items in the Second Schedule to the Principal Act included all the items to be exempt from custom duties in respect to restaurants operating by approved shipping companies. These following items may be imported without payment of custom duties and are exempt from excise tax once every five years. Sir, that includes all kitchen and beverage equipment including appliances, stoves, ovens, grills, et cetera, which are all part of the original Act.

Mr. Speaker, our fifth amendment is to Section 7 of the Principal Act. In this amendment, at (a) by deleting Section 2 and substituting the following new Section 2:

“An approved shipping company is exempt from payment of custom duties on items listed in Part 1 of the Third Schedule during the concession period where the Minister is satisfied that those items are not produced or manufactured in Barbados”.

Mr. Speaker, at the Third Schedule to this Bill and by extension to the Act, the old Third Schedule has been removed and is being replaced by this new Section 3, Part 1 which relates to the exemption of items for all approved shipping companies.

Mr. Speaker, I will go through that. Sir, articles including trailers imported by an approved shipping

company for use exclusively in the building, refurbishing, equipping, transporting, maintenance and repair of a ship, all water sports equipment, including towables, imported by an approved shipping company.

Mr. Speaker, Part 2 of the Third Schedule, exempt items for approved shipping companies engaged in sports fishing in the tourist industry to include things like fishing tackles, rods and reels.

Mr. Speaker, at Part 3 of the Third Schedule we are including life rafts and satellite tracking systems for boats in distress, flares, fire extinguishers, life jackets, GPS, depth sounders, VHS, SSB and AM radios, compasses and things of that nature will form the Third Schedule to the Act.

H/A50B/3.20 p.m. Sequence 5

Tuesday, December 4, 2009

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Sir, that gives effect to the proposals that have been articulated by the Prime Minister in his 2009 Budgetary Proposals.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of some housekeeping matters on that provision, we will note that the old Act, at Section 6, you will notice that in the amendments, originally there was reference to items that would be exempt by the Second Schedule, items that would have been made or manufactured in Barbados.

In tidying up the amendment to the Act, it was thought that we should remove the words “made or manufactured” in Barbados and replace that since made and manufactured are effectively the same thing, and replace that by items that are “produced or manufactured” in Barbados. That housekeeping exercise would also be done at that appropriate Section.

Sir, at Section 5 (b) of the amendments, it is proposed:

“by inserting the following new sub-sections immediately after subsection (2):

3. An approved shipping company that is engaged in commercial shipping, boating, sport fishing in the tourist industry is exempt from the payment of customs duty on items specified in Part II of the Third Schedule during the concession period.”
4. An approved shipping company that is engaged in commercial shipping, boating, sport fishing in the tourist industry is exempt from the payment of customs duty on items specified in Part III of

the Third Schedule during the concession period.”

Sir, those amendments are the amendments we proposed within this amended shipping legislation. You will observe that concession has also been made in respect of the navigational equipment and so on, on hold the vessels. That is of increasing importance to persons within the shipping industry in Barbados, to be able to ensure that navigational equipment is made available duty-free to persons within that particular area.

Sir, one additional observation is, the Act originally had intended, as I said at the beginning, to try to increase the opportunities for persons in Barbados, to try to create some additional jobs within the shipping industry. Sir, this is an area that has been getting increasing attention from my Ministry.

There was a time when in the history of Barbados when many persons and certainly some persons within this Honourable House themselves, may have been raised as young people by persons who made a living at sea, whom we called, many years ago when I was a boy, seamen or sailors, if you want to call it that. Certainly it is a significant part of our history in terms of the development of families in Barbados and the way families in Barbados have been supported in the old days, so to speak.

Sir, within the shipping industry there are over

10 000 jobs that are becoming available, within that particular industry worldwide. We are finding that less and less persons are going into the shipping industry as a career. It is projected that by 2012, there will be an excess of 30 000 jobs available worldwide within the shipping industry.

Sir, it is an industry of great opportunity for persons, young people particularly in Barbados, to seek to develop their careers. As I said before, my Ministry is putting increasing evidence on this. We need to address the whole question of training, making young people aware of the opportunities that exist within the maritime sector. We started that two months ago when we had our Marine Week. We did an exercise in terms of Career Showcase, and in terms of generally sensitising the public to the opportunities within the marine industry. There are four young people.

Sir, I am talking not just in terms of jobs at the bottom end of the scale in terms of deck hands and jobs of that nature. It is a question of getting young people to be aware of the other opportunities that are there within the industry behind the back office, so to speak, and in related disciplines, the whole area of the hydrographic science, marine science and so on.

There are a number of opportunities for our young people, particularly those people that are aspiring to take their education through the university, whether it is a first degree or second degree, but to look at opportunities outside of the traditional area and seek those other specialised areas. We need to get our young people to be very aware of those opportunities going forward.

Sir, as I indicated, there are many job opportunities outside of Barbados in that area. I believe that, certainly when I was a youngster, just about to leave secondary school and looking for a career. I felt that I should look for an area of great demand, rather than going into a career that attracted several other persons, get a glut-type of situation. Where there are too many of that type, one should be able to look at careers that are in demand, where there are very few people going into that area and try to put your energies there.

H A50B 3.30 p.m. Sequence 6

Friday, December 04, 2009

House A50B, Sequence 07, 3.50 p.m.

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: The whole question of the marine environment and marine science is an area for many young people in Barbados to start paying their attention and putting their attention and energies in that particular area.

There is also an area that I would want to recommend, or to get our young people to be very conscious of and that is the whole question of ensuring that they are doing a language other than English, that they are trying to focus on a second language. Certainly, some of the discussions that I have had recently at the International Maritime Organisations Assembly which I attended recently, a number of the shipowners that I spoke to indicated that they need persons who are speaking languages outside of English. Certainly, there are opportunities within the cruise tourism for people that are multilingual.

When you look at the cargo on some vessels, everybody might be speaking Korean and one needs to be able to be aware of the fact that you need to have more than one language. I am not suggesting that you do Korean, but in doing your research in terms of job opportunities, you need to look outside of the norm, the traditional areas, in terms of how you prepare yourself for the job market. Essentially, there are several opportunities within the maritime section and I want our young people to be aware of these opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that I have covered all the amendments to this Shipping Act and I would now ask that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I do not intend to delay the House any longer on this matter except to say that we on This Side support this Bill. It is certainly a step in the right direction to try to make things a little easier for the people in Barbados, who continue to suffer under this difficult financial situation in which we find ourselves. I see that, in particular, the Schedule talks about the fishing rods and satellite GPS systems, which gives an opportunity to some of the small boat owners.

Asides.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: Sir, it certainly gives an opportunity to some of the small members who participate in the tourism Ministry by offering an opportunity for tourists to go fishing in our waters and getting a chance to enjoy the better times and the coastal aspect of Barbados. This is something good and giving those people an opportunity to improve their business, I think is a great thing, and we will support that venture full and completely.

In addition, the Act also speaks to the shipping aspect and amendments to shipping. I noticed, in particular, and what drew my attention, and I know the Honourable Member for St. Philip North would have drawn his attention too, is to this concept that an approved shipping company which incurs capital expenditure in the amount of \$200 million, but certainly when you speak of a capital expenditure of \$200 million, that does not apply to any small man in Barbados at all. If there was any small boating venture in Barbados making \$200 million in expenditure in a year, that obviously applies to the very large shipping companies.

Sir, we understand the concept. We understand there are lots of companies which carry the Barbados flag and that we benefit from taxes from those companies, and we think that anything to improve the situation of the people in Barbados, anything to get a few people some more jobs, all the people that are losing their jobs day after day, to come to uplift their spirits and add to this country and to improve this economy, we will support, because that is what we need at this time.

We have been preaching and asking all the time, when are we going to bring programmes and policies to improve the lives of the average Barbadian? Sir, if this can even in some small part of the society, improve one or two people, because there are not thousands of people working in this industry from the small side, there are hundreds of people and anything we can do to improve that, would be supported by This Side.

Sir, we support the amendments. We understand that some of the amendments relate to the tax incentive relief, but a lot of it also is technical and relates particularly to the larger shipping industries and the larger shipping companies but you cannot expect to give to the larger shipping companies, which are having an expenditure of \$200 million in a year, and not also give to the small boating ventures as well.

Sir, we like the balance that is shown in the Bill and we think that this is something that we must engender and continue to provide. If you are going to provide ventures and incentives for large businesses, it is good that you also give an opportunity to the smaller businesses as well, because we all have to live and survive in this community and this society, and we all must be given a chance to continue and to make ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, this is a Shipping Bill, but I would not want to be harsh on the Minister and say that in his presentation, he appeared really out to sea, but one would have thought that he would have done more.

Asides.

Dr. W. F. DUGUID: I would not want to say it, neither would I want to have said that he was completely out of his depth in this particular presentation but certainly, one would have expected that he would have put a little more attention into what we can do for the small entrepreneur, giving them more of a chance to find a way to provide for their families, to provide for their communities, to add a benefit and to become a productive and contributing member to this society because at the end of the day, it is about spreading the wealth so that everybody would be able to have a chance to survive.

Apart from that, I do not see anything really political, or anything that I would want to respond to in a negative light. I think that this is something that does not really have much of a partisan divide and we will support it fully and completely.

I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Asides.

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

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support these Amendments and let me commend the Honourable Member for St. James Central.

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: The amendments to the Shipping Incentives Act, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West spoke about the fact that there is no political divide on this issue. If we take his argument, we can say that it is correct. I was a Member of the last Parliament that amended the same Act in 2005 and we supported it, but having said that, it took them 11 years to pay attention to the Shipping Incentives Act. Sir, we have done it in less than two years.

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Sir, no sooner than those 2005 amendments were made, the Game Fishing Association pointed out that there were shortcomings and it needed work. The same people that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West spoke about - this other element of our tourism product - were omitted from those amendments in 2005, but again, there is no political divide. We have heard it.

House A50B, Sequence 07, 5.40 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Hon. R. L. SEALY: The Honourable Member wants to see that we embrace this particular group. I am glad that the Honourable Member for St. James Central has moved with haste and energy to bring those amendments into this House.

Mr. Speaker, just in case anyone says that we are only responding to the lobby of the Barbados Game Fishing Association, what he has done is to put other amendments in there that we can embrace all of those other players. I think again he should be saluted. He understands what we are trying to do with respect to our tourism sector. It is an opportunity to broaden the stakeholdership so that other people can play a part.

This issue of using our sea for marine activity and involving other people in it, is a very serious one. There are fishermen who off-season are able to carry tourists to visit and swim with the turtles and snorkel with the rays and so on.

Thanks to the foresight of the Honourable Member for St. James Central and this Government. They can now

have access to various safety elements, GPS and the like, and they can now carry out that trade, they can enhance their living and they can become players and have a stakeholdership in our principal industry. They are now being embraced in this Act.

Mr. Speaker, I think that what is taking place in here is very significant and I am pleased with what is happening. It fits right in with this Government's determination that we should try to involve more people in our principal industry, our tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker, while I am on that note, I would only say that we must also locate this effort within the determination by this Government that our marine ecosystem has still been somewhat under-utilised in the whole context of Barbados, I would say in tourism and recreational activity generally. This is why it has been a deliberate decision, for example, to have the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated, along with the Barbados Port Authority, look at improving berthing facilities in the Shallow Draft, and in the Inner Basin, so that we can develop this sector more.

Barbados hosted a world-class event earlier this year for one-metre yachts and we have a significant event, the fireballs. Those are two-men yachts. We would have over 100 vessels here participating in what would be the largest Fireballs World Championship. We are now trying to claw our way back so that we can create more activity with these very natural God-given assets we have of our marine environment. I think it is good to see that we are putting all of those various pieces in place.

In amending the legislation, we have to amend and bring in the necessary progressive policies, both at the Ministry of International Transport and the Ministry of Tourism, in order that we can benefit far more from this advantage that we have.

I do not think that many Barbadians realise how blessed we are geographically. We are the first landfall over the Atlantic coming from the Western Hemisphere, whether you are coming from the Azores or the Canaries. That is a fact that we need to take greater advantage of. Many vessels sail past Barbados and go elsewhere where there are better marine facilities. This is a whole element of our tourism industry that we have been missing out on and it is something that this Government is determined to see that we benefit from, and therefore, these amendments have to be seen in that light.

The whole effort to extend the duty-free concessions and so on, speaks to a recognition that this sector does have tremendous potential, and that if we offer the correct suite of concessions and incentives, they will develop and will employ more people.

I really have to commend the Honourable Member for St. James Central. One of the most fundamental points he has made, and I think we need to understand it, is the job opportunities that are out there for Barbadians in the maritime realm. To some extent, that is nothing new. The sea has made a man out of many a Barbadian boy. We know that in the 1950s and 1960s, several young boys went to sea and came back as men being able to take care of themselves, being able to cook and with a sense of discipline and so on, so this is nothing new.

However, the point is that, given the way the world has changed and the opportunities that exist, not merely for working on a cargo vessel, or a cruise vessel, but also within the context of fisheries management and other areas as well. Of course, the whole question of environmental consciousness is taking place so there is also the whole question of marine environmentalists.

There are a whole host of opportunities that are available and, therefore, I think that this Government is moving in the right direction and is doing so at the right time. We have a golden opportunity to see that ordinary boat owners can get involved and can upgrade their craft. There is going to be duty-free concessions for things like flares, fire extinguishers and life jackets. If you are inviting someone to go to sea with you to take a view of the West Coast, or to see a sunset or, as I mentioned earlier, to swim with the turtles, you need to have those things in a modern age. No one is going to get on your vessel if you do not have life vests, flares and so on. GPS and a depth sounder are pretty much basic equipment. Mr. Speaker, I think that it is only appropriate that we should try and cover all of those items.

Mr. Speaker, I would agree that there is no political divide, but it was necessary for us to come in and to plough the gapping holes that were left from the 2005 Amendments, and that is why I am very glad that we have done this today.

Mr. Speaker, I just would say that...

Miss C. Y. FORDE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I just wish to draw to your attention that there is no quorum in this Honourable Chamber.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: What are you fussing about?

Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, there is not a single Honourable Member of the Opposition. Is this what we have come to? Is there no political divide? Yes, we agree this thing is so good and not a single member of the

Opposition could come and, at least, participate in this matter. We have just agreed that there is no political divide on the issue.

Asides.

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, I am actually going to conclude to let the Honourable Member take it from here but I really must also say again that we at the Ministry of Tourism are doing our part. I have already indicated that cruise tourism is up in spite of all the challenges, but I also believe that we have to do a number of things to diversify our product range of activities and to have greater levels of involvement by more Barbadians.

Even now in these economically challenging times when several players in the tourism industry have found it difficult to remain viable, we have done our part to try to support them, but at the same time, if we are to remain an exciting destination and a place that people can come and have memories that they would take with them, and that would remain with them, we have to also create opportunities for people to do more things as well.

House A50B Sequence 8 3.50 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Mr. Speaker, to the extent that the marine environment offers several options, I think in that context we have to see this amendment to the Shipping Incentives Bill as very much in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, obviously and sincerely, I look forward to the Games and Fishing Association. They have an annual tournament every year. It attracts vessels from as far as Jamaica, French Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago. I have attended that event and I think now, with this issue that has been so much on their minds, that it will encourage more of them to become involved. By extension, they should be able to participate more in the other tournaments of the Region. Further, that we can also see our tournament becoming one of the premier tournaments as well.

Mr. Speaker, as much as I support all of the work that the Barbados Games and Fishing Association is doing, it has to be seen that we are not merely responding to their lobby. We are saying they have a role to play and that we have located what they wish to see in a wider context, so that more Barbadians can participate; therefore, I am very happy to be part of this exercise today. I think Government should be commended and also the Honourable Member for St. James Central for doing some very good work.

Mr. Speaker, with those remarks, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to represent a Constituency which, for a large part, consists of coastline, from Women's Bay in the east, to Worthing Beach in the south. Sir, any activity which is going to see the further utilisation of the Barbados marine environment for opportunities, as has been pointed out in the Amendments to this Shipping Bill, where persons can look to invest more in equipment, boats, marinas, excursions, et cetera. You can imagine the opportunities for having tours along the South and West Coasts of Barbados. Sir, the kind of incentives this Bill offers are absolutely important.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members on This Side who have spoken, the Honourable Member for St. James Central and the Honourable Member for Tourism, have both made the point. It is only mine to reiterate and to look forward to this economic opportunity as it unfolds. Of course, we all understand that the economic situation today is one in which we have to be very cautious, and we have to be preparing for that next great world opportunity.

It is heartening to see that Barbados has been able to keep its head above water. This speaks kudos, not only to the kind of Administration which we seek to bring to the situation of governance and Government in Barbados, it also speaks kudos to the actual depth and strength of the Barbadian resolve to see this situation through.

Mr. Speaker, as I monitor my tourism numbers on a visual scale, I can see certain encouraging signs on the South Coast, in terms of occupancy and visitors to Barbados. Sir, this Shipping Incentives Bill, as we have stated, by offering concessions to developers and investors, will certainly provide greater opportunities for Barbadians and non-Barbadians to participate.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West tried to make the snide remark that there was some extravagance about a \$200 million investment, which, in his presentation, would have excluded so many things.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, within that \$200 million investment, or within any investment that takes place in Barbados, or on the coast of Barbados, a marina being built in Barbados offers an opportunity for employment for ordinary Barbadians. Sir, after a long time, reluctantly, the Honourable Member came around to that point.

Mr. Speaker, the question of a political divide comes up all the time and Honourable Members on That Side believe that Barbadians, who listen to these debates on Tuesday afternoons and today Friday, do not understand what is being said. Sir, Honourable Members on That Side have to be very careful, just as we have to be, because the investment that goes on in the marine sector. Sir, the people who may be able to take the greatest advantage of the opportunities being offered in this Bill will naturally offer jobs and developmental opportunities to Barbadians, including small boat owners. Sir, all kinds of trades will see opportunities being offered in these measures.

Mr. Chairman, we need to chronicle the facts, and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was careful. Sir, from the time the first amendments were done, there was need for a revisiting. The Barbados Labour Party has sat on that situation for 11 years and in two years, we came and revisited the question of the amendments that are necessary, yet those on That Side would like to ridicule the activities and the action of Honourable Members on This Side.

Mr. Speaker, we are not making sport with them. We are doing the people's business. We are doing it in a very serious and meticulous way. We are also doing it under tremendous pressure. We are carefully doing it with a hand dealt by them, which normally could be termed as unplayable, but we are making sure to point out to Barbadians, every step of the way, the facts behind the hand we are playing. Sir, more will come and Barbadians will continue to understand.

Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate my support for these Amendments. Sir, I commend the good work of the Minister and the related Ministries, as we seek to bring Barbados to continue on that strong developmental path that we need to have in this our great island Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, with those remarks, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Honourable Members for Christ Church South and St. Michael South Central for their contributions to this particular debate and to the amendments to this Act.

Mr. Speaker, as a point of clarification, the Amendments we seek this afternoon in respect of the reference by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, in respect of the \$200 million, let me say that this is only an Amendment that we are making to the Bill.

The actual Shipping Incentives Act, passed December 1, 1982, where I believe the Party forming the Government at that time was the Barbados Labour Party, that provision of \$200 million is the provision they implemented in the Act and, Mr. Speaker, now it is being criticised.

4.00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 04, 2009

Asides.

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Speaker, we sought to tidy up some of the Sections but that particular provision was not one that we have interfered with, in the purposes of these things.

Mr. Speaker, when you think just in the context of the \$200 million, this Act, when originally conceived in 1992, what has been neglected is that one of the objects here in terms of shipping activities was the whole question of ship building including the reconstruction, alteration, refitting, equipping, maintenance and repair of ships. Sir, businesses that are supportive of the shipping, not necessarily engaged in shipping in the form of a ship, but the support of businesses, call out businesses and that sort of thing, those types of businesses are given incentives under this particular Act.

Mr. Speaker, within the Manifesto and direction of this Government where we speak in terms of trying to encourage a fast ferry-type service between Barbados and the islands, certainly and project or investment along those lines would be a significant investment and certainly would be able to benefit from the provisions within this Shipping Incentives Act.

Mr. Speaker, we do not want to have a situation where every time new business is being conceived in Barbados, that you have to run back to Parliament for a specialised Bill.

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

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

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

On the separate motions of Hon. E. G. HUTSON, seconded by Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. S. A. LASHLEY in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 - 9, inclusive, were called and passed.

The Schedule became the Schedule to the Bill.

On the motion of the Hon. E. G. HUTSON, seconded by Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee, without amendment, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of the Hon. E. G. HUTSON, seconded by the Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Shipping Incentives (Amendment) Act, 2009.

H/A50B:4.10 p.m. Sequence 10

Tuesday, December 4, 2009

ORDER NO. 7 – 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. J. D. E. BOYCE, seconded by the Hon. F. J. STUART, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. S. A. LASHLEY in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$7 180 316 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL

OF THE GOVERNMENT AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO.3, 2009-2010 WHICH FORMS THE SCHEDULE

TO THIS RESOLUTION

HEAD NO. 66

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT, WATER RESOURCES AND DRAINAGE

\$7 095 316

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

Dr. The Hon. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Chairman, this Supplementary provision is being sought in the amount of \$7 095 316 under Head 66 - Ministry of the Environment, Water Resources and Drainage. Contained in this Supplementary are Programme 400: Environmental Health Services and Sub-programme 0372: Sanitation Service Authority, Programme 511 - Drainage Services and Sub-programme 0515: Maintenance of Drainage to Prevent Flooding, and Sub-programme 0501: National Enhancement Programme. Programme 650: Preservation and Conservation of the Terrestrial and Marine Environment: Sub-programme 0401, Coastal Infrastructure Programme and Sub-programme 0386, National Conservation Programme. Programme 0651: Primary Environmental Care Services, Subprogramme 0411: Environmental Protection Department.

Sir, this Supplementary is coming, of course, at a time when the Government is very tightly managing its programmes and ensuring there is maximum productivity out of every penny spent within Government. Sir, the programmes in the Ministry of the Environment are very critical programmes to ensure that the infrastructure of this country is well maintained as it relates to environmental issues. Therefore, we come today to outline part of the reason why the Supplementary is necessary and to talk broadly about some of the programmes affected by the Supplementary.

First of all the Sanitation Services Authority need additional funds to cover cost where, we are finding it somewhat difficult to cover, in covering some of our cost relating to services, purchase, et cetera. We are seeking \$3 377 459 for this programme.

Sir, of course, the Sanitation Services Authority provides one of the essential services for Barbados. Barbados in its development mode, is now causing the services of the Sanitation Services Authority to be expanded in some very critical areas. For example, the growing developments across Barbados by the National Housing Corporation, the ageing fleet of the Sanitation Services Authority is causing us to re-calibrate our cost. At present, approximately 40 per cent of our fleet is inoperable and we are seeking funding to ensure that we correct those issues, so that there is no problem with the collection of solid waste in Barbados.

Sir, as you would know, the collection of solid waste is very important to ensuring that the aesthetics of Barbados continue to be of the highest level, and to ensuring that there is no discomfort as a result of lying around of solid waste not collected by the Sanitation Services Authority. Therefore, we find it extremely

important to ensure that we have a highly efficient Authority, to ensure that the Authority is fulfilling its mandate, and to ensuring that all Barbadians can be satisfied with the quality of service put forward by the Sanitation Services Authority.

I might want to, at this point, compliment the staff of the Sanitation Services Authority for all the wonderful work they have been doing, the hard work they have been doing and, in some cases, under strenuous circumstances, to ensure that the mandate of the Sanitation Services Authority is, in fact, carried out on a daily basis.

Sir, we understand that when communities grow, the demand of the service also grows. We also understand that with the vast housing development programme this Government is undertaking, it means the expansion of communities and, therefore, the necessary expansion of the service. We understand, as we go forward that we have to continue to plan on a continuum of efficiency and ensure that the services rendered to Barbadians are rendered in an efficient manner to produce the best possible result for all citizens of this country. Therefore, this additional money will assist in helping us to liquidate some of our debt, and will also help us to continue to ensure that the full operation of the Sanitation Services Authority is not placed at risk.

We do understand, however, that as we go forward, there may well be some revenue generating opportunities in the Authority, and therefore, we want to take a second look at how we treat to areas where we could generate some of the cost of running the Authority. For example, we have a thriving Skip Rental Programme that we intend to intensify. Currently there are a number of requests for Skip service that we have not been able to supply because there is a shortage of Skips.

We also have a programme in the Authority, where we respond to citizens who call for services in the clearing of lots and the removal of debris from their properties. This is a paid for service. We also intend to beef up that programme, but in order to do so, we would need additional equipment that would be available to provide these services.

Sir, we now look at solid waste quite differently. We do not see solid waste as a nuisance any longer, but we see solid waste as an important commodity that will help us in addressing issues of waste to energy, that will help us in addressing issues of land filling, and that will help us to convert our waste into other usable commodities.

Therefore, we are taking on an approach where we are constructing a major solid waste management system at the Vauxcluse site, where in Barbados there is limited land space, where we can reduce our waste by converting it to

energy and by ensuring that in those cases where we can take on new renewable energy activities, we would factor in the role of the Sanitation Services Authority. Therefore, we ask this Honourable House to grant the sum of \$3 377 459 that would be required to respond to the needs of the Authority.

I should also like to address the matter of drainage, which is one of the programmes under this Supplementary request. This Government took on a very ambitious drainage programme when I came to office, and the establishment of the Drainage Division has provided the Ministry, and by extension Barbados, with a wonderful opportunity to address issues of drainage in this country.

We inherited a situation where drainage was just an annex to the Ministry of Public Works. While it was there, they did a very good job, but now it is our job to ensure that the drainage services in Barbados are expanded in a manner where it responds to those perennial flooding issues that we have contended with for so long in this country.

H A50B 4.20 p.m. Sequence 11

Friday, December 04, 2009

House A50B, Sequence 12, 4.20 p.m.

Dr. The Hon. D. S. LOWE: Sir, we have established a full-fledged division and it was a timely and a bold initiative. Mr. Chairman, at the time when it was established, we anticipated that there would be a lot more liquidity in Government, and we would be able to take on many of the programmes that we would want to take on, but at present, we are focusing on those critical drainage challenges in Barbados.

I have to compliment the Drainage Division for they have done an outstanding job in addressing some of the perennial drainage challenges in Barbados. For example, what is commonly called Headley's Land, which is really Brathwaite's Land, we have looked at that issue, established a programme there and that programme has yielded an outstanding result so far, where the residents have reported very high success with the operations of that new drainage system.

We have also addressed the issue on the West Coast, which has resulted in the complete mitigation of the drainage challenges that we have had there.

Mr. Chairman, of course, there are lots of issues in Barbados that we have to look at, and drainage is a matter that should not only be treated during the rainy season. We have argued that it has to be a year-round programme where the Drainage Division pays attention to the cleaning of wells, the construction of new wells, ensuring that

waterways are cleared and make sure that wherever there is an issue in Barbados that needs to be addressed, they can respond to this issue. Sir, we have a very strong staff.

Mr. Chairman, any resources that can be directed towards the Drainage Division, I as Minister, will be fighting for because it is a very critical service in this country. It helps to work with the infrastructural development of Barbados and it responds not only to flooding issues, but it helps to ensure that natural water courses and other types of adaptation programmes and strategies are put in place.

Mr. Chairman, in recent years we have found that a lot of coastal construction and inland construction have interfered with the natural water courses in Barbados and have forced a lot of obstruction of the run-off of water in the country and, therefore, the Drainage Division has been working to address those issues.

We cannot address all at the same time, but while we are responding to the problems in the country with flooding, we are also looking at visioning where we have to go in terms of ensuring that the problems we have had in the past, we will no longer experience in terms of the flooding issue.

Sir, drainage is not only about flooding, wells and the clearing of wells. The Drainage Division has an important role to play in our integrated Water Resource Management Programme.

There has been a lot of talk recently about Barbados being a water scarce country and there will be a shortage of water. The truth of the matter is that Barbados has enough water and if it is properly managed, we will never be in any danger of not having water to supply our citizens.

Sir, in the past, we have not been looking at strategies where we can track run off water, where we can do damming across the country, as some other private citizens have done, and where we can establish a programme that will assist the Barbados Water Authority in helping to harvest water across the country, so that it becomes part of the total pool of water that supplies this country's needs.

Mr. Chairman, we have asked the Drainage Division to become more involved and to work in an integrated fashion with agencies like the Barbados Water Authority, the National Heritage Department and other areas in the Ministry, to put together this water resource's strategy that will allow us to be able to meet our water needs.

Mr. Chairman, the Drainage Unit is also involved in assisting with the Town Planning process because the construction of new buildings and so on, when they require

Town Planning approval as they always do, the Drainage Unit also has to participate in helping with the sign off process, in terms of if they are meeting the drainage standards in the country.

Sir, this is a vital role, which takes a toll on the staff because the administrative staff of the Drainage Division is very thin and, therefore, we have been importing help to get us to look at applications, to make sure that applications do not remain within the Drainage Unit for a long period.

Mr. Chairman, it is important that as we look at funding for drainage, we do not only think in terms of digging wells, clearing wells and water-ways, but we see the broader role that draining must play in the country's infrastructure and development.

Mr. Chairman, we also have to look at the whole matter of the National Environment Enhancement Programme (NEEP) Programme, which is part of the drainage programme. Sir, unlike some popular belief, the NEEP Programme is not a crash programme. The NEEP Programme was designed by the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Social Care. It was intended to put together a team of workers, some of whom would have been Welfare recipients in the Welfare-to-Work Programme, to bring them into a full work programme.

I believe that we would have recruited some 86 persons from that programme and brought them into the NEEP Programme, along with other persons to make up a population of 162 workers. I am saying to this Honourable House that of the 86 persons that came from the Welfare Department to work in this programme, to date, only one person has dropped out of the Programme.

Asides.

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Sir, we took this bold initiative, in this piece of social engineering, to tell ourselves, first of all, that we could convert non productive cost into productive cost, because we argued that if we were paying Welfare sums to individuals who are able-bodied and can go out and work, then we believe that it is important that we could convert that funding into a programme, where they could go and earn their way and become part of the productive workforce in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, that is what social transformation is all about. It is about transforming people's expectations. It is about transforming people's opportunities, and it is about the State taking the lead in ensuring that those persons who can carry their weight in the society are given the opportunity to do so. The NEEP Programme is a solid programme that any country, in the Region, or anywhere else could take a lead and emulate the programme.

As a matter of fact, I remember some time ago the Social Care Minister in Grenada asked us about the programme, how it works and how we got it to work. I hope that as things become more buoyant in terms of our economy, that we will be able to go after additional workers within the Welfare Department and bring them onto the productive workforces, because it is the way that this Government wishes to go. Sir, rather than giving people handouts, we give them a "hand up" and we enable them to be empowered to earn their own way in the society.

Asides.

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Chairman, what these workers are doing is that they are providing support for the Drainage Division in terms of clearing the roadways and ensuring that those pedestrian trails around the country are safe for people to walk, because there are lots of people now who are working early in the morning, so we try to make sure that the workers are deployed strategically across the country. Sir, truth to tell, if you are getting around the country as you should, you will discover that there is an intense programme going now clearing the Highways.

I am amazed. Only last night I was out and I was in a particular area and I said to the person who was driving the vehicle that it is a tremendous benefit to this country. When tourists come into this country, we want those roads that they traverse to look a certain way and the NEEP Programme is providing that outstanding service in supplementing what the MTW and the NHC are doing, and providing a stronger workforce to ensure that those corridors of the country that are so essential, are taken care of.

Sir, that is the vision that we have and we are not ashamed of it because it is working, not only for Barbados, but for those persons who need that kind of financial support which they are willing to earn themselves, and not wait until somebody comes and hands them a token at Christmas time and say, this is for you.

House A50B, Sequence 12, 4.30 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: This is the way we must go because we have people who are willing to work and we will find the work for them and make sure that they are part of a working Barbados, therefore, NEEP, as part of the Drainage Programme, is only asking for \$15 000 to cover insurance payments and the maintenance of vehicles.

We are hoping that as things recover economically, and that as the country moves forward, that we are able to find more unique social programmes, working in

conjunction with the Ministry of Social Care and the Ministry of Transport and Works, to ensure that those young Barbadians out there who may not have the skills to become engineers and so on, but have the heart and the willingness to work, are able to participate in the work of this country. That is important and it is the right way to go.

I believe that if we continue to work in that vein, we can reduce the number of persons depending on the welfare system, and we could put them into a work fair system where they get fair opportunities for their work, and they become their own productive agents of earning, that is important to us. I am sure that the Minister of Social Care and the Minister of Transport and Works are willing, and we can continue to put these programmes together to make these systems work for our people.

I think it is commendable for the Prime Minister to have agreed to such a programme and, therefore, we would work every possible area in this country to ensure that the presence of the NEEP workers are felt across Barbados. They are now a population of over 160 and they are deployed all over the country. We have given them permission to move in to certain areas that traditionally would not have been touched.

They are working in conjunction with the National Conservation Commission, and the National Heritage Department in the Beautify Barbados Programme. We are going to take every single highway and byway in this country and clean it up and make Barbados as beautiful as it ought to be, that is our commitment and that is why we come for this money here today, Mr. Chairman.

The other programme that is involved is the Coastal Infrastructure Programme which is requesting \$2 831 857. Some of this money, Mr. Chairman, is reimbursable funds where the Coastal Infrastructural Programme has to put up its cost first. For example, the Holetown Beach Improvement Project which costs \$15 million, is a reimbursable programme by the Inter-American Development Bank. The retention fee for the Rockley Project is also a reimbursable retention fee.

Mr. Chairman, Barbadians are now enjoying two wonderful boardwalks in this country, one on the South Coast and one on the West Coast. We are not taking credit for starting these programmes. What we are saying is that this Government examined these programmes and determined that these programmes were worthy of completion and has dedicated funding to ensure that they are completed.

I am proud of the staff of the Coastal Zone Management Unit, because they have been doing an exceptional job in transforming our coast. They should not just be seen as individuals who are trying to beautify the

coastal areas with boardwalks. The Coastal Zone Management Unit is the premier response unit in the Government dealing with matters resulting from climate change, such as the beach erosion issues and the coral bleaching that we have. They are not just putting boardwalks, they are doing marine studies, they are ensuring that Barbados can respond and is responding to matters relating to coastal erosion resulting from sea level rise and so on.

Mr. Chairman, we, therefore, have an obligation to ensure that these programmes are funded so that we do not sit back and lose our precious assets, especially as they relate to our tourism product. Mr. Chairman, I hail the Coastal Zone Management Unit and the Coastal Infrastructure Programme for the marvellous work that they are doing and, therefore, I am proud to come and advocate for an additional \$2 831 857 for this programme.

Mr. Chairman, there is also Sub-programme 386 of the National Conservation Commission which is asking for an additional \$366 000 to cover Pensions and Other Emoluments. Of course, the Environmental Protection Programme is asking for \$70 000 to cover the cost of a new utility vehicle which is intended to assist officers in responding to issues dealing with their work relative to water quality, testing, and so on.

Mr. Chairman, we recognise that we do not have the luxury of spending as some others did spend, when they occupied where we are now occupying, because economic times have changed and the economic crush, which is global, is affecting how we do business. We intend to be a responsible Government. We intend to ensure that we spend only what we have and that we manage that spending carefully.

These programmes are critical to the development of Barbados. We intend to ensure that they are protected programmes while, at the same time, we ask all of our officers in the Ministry to ensure that they manage their programmes effectively, that they only go after programmes that are achievable during these times, and that when they go after these programmes they go after them efficiently and that their productivity is at the highest level.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud of the work of the Ministry. I am proud of the hard work that our directors are doing in each segment of the Ministry. Mr. Chairman, I believe that as we continue we will be able to achieve our targets and our objectives in this Ministry.

We realise that the environment is of critical importance. We realise that everything we do in the Ministry of the Environment, Water Resources and Drainage is an interconnected service, that sanitation, water and national conservation, all contribute to the management

of our environmental heritage. We would, therefore, fight to ensure that these programmes continue, wherever possible, and that Barbados gets the best possible, deal in the process.

I, therefore, beg to move that this Money Resolution under Head 66 stand part.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, we on This Side would support this estimate, but we have a few queries to make. I recognise that the Honourable Minister mentioned Government tightly managing its fiscal programmes. Mr. Chairman, I believe it is about time that should happen and take out some of the feting and the other things and deal with the real serious infrastructural challenges that we have in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to know that many of the programmes which would have started under the last Barbados Labour Party Administration, continue to bear fruit, because without them, I do not know what projects this Government would have pursued over the last two years. In particular, the Honourable Member spoke about the Welfare-to-Work programme, making a non-productive situation a productive one. I just want to remind Honourable Members here, and indeed the public of Barbados, that the Welfare-to-Work programme started under the Barbados Labour Party's Ministry of Social Transformation. Mr. Chairman, a few weeks ago there was a graduation ceremony and I was very proud to hear the Honourable Minister of Social Care speaking eloquently of the role that programme has played in helping to empower Barbadians. That was really the major objective of that concept when it was developed and unfolded more than five years ago. The Minister was very clear then, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, in indicating to the public that they will now change the name. He said that after five years things are unfolding and they want to be creative.

House A50B Sequence 13 4.40 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, it means that the Honourable Member, the Minister for the Environment and Drainage, cannot now come speaking as though this is a bright new idea coming from the Democratic Labour Party. We in the Barbados Labour Party instituted this project and we are happy to know that it is bearing fruit.

Sir, what bothers me is that at this time in our life, when thousands of Barbadians have lost their jobs, many of them are not so sure when they would go home as a result of mismanagement, in some instances, of this Democratic Labour Party Government, there are persons from the Constituency of St. Thomas - Sir, I cannot speak to the Constituency of Christ Church West, or to the other Constituencies, I can only speak specifically to the Constituency in which I live, and have the honour to represent.

Sir, in my Constituency there are persons who have, for the last five and six years, been an integral part of the debushing programme, where at Independence and Christmas times, they have been able to put food on their tables. That is what some of them have been able to get for a whole year along the lines of employment. Their names were submitted and they pursued the efforts.

Mr. Chairman, I am supporting this call because I want to see Barbados cleaned and I am not going to make anything light of it. Sir, the point I am making is that if this Government is talking about Welfare-to-Work Programme and about the other creative ideas of which the Honourable Member has just mentioned, I would wish to know why all of my people were turned away on that one occasion when they are accustomed to maintaining their families at this festive time.

Mr. Chairman, it therefore, means that those who have been brought from the Welfare-to-Work Programme under this Administration, have now taken the place of those who were working and not relying on welfare. Sir, I believe that under this, as they say, caring Government, these folks would get an opportunity to receive welfare grants and other services, because they have not been given a chance to work.

Mr. Chairman, do you know what registered in my mind? Sir, what registered in my mind was the fact that the people who have been turned away, the people who are proud Barbadian brothers and sisters who want to work gainfully, have been turned away as though they are non-nationals, ever so welcomed, wait for a call. Sir, that is the part that bothers me.

Sir, at the end of the day we as politicians have created the idea in the eyes of the public as though every politician is out there grabbing to see what he or she could get, but we do not spread the word to let people know that politicians sometimes have to pull their pockets to ensure that families have food on their tables. Sir, I hurt to note that at Christmas time those five families in St. Thomas cannot put food on their tables and would have to rely on others, or on the Welfare Department.

Sir, I am supporting this Bill because I believe that, at the end of the day, that those who benefit are Barbadians who want to do better, who are happy for the opportunity to be able to become productive citizens.

Mr. Chairman, I do not want the Honourable Member to be making a sound and dance about something that really hurts me to the core. Sir, anybody who knows me would tell you, I do not look at people in the eyes of politics, I look at people as human being who have needs, who want to make a contribution to the development of Barbados.

Sir, at this juncture, I would wish to congratulate all workers of Barbados. I am a pro-worker person and when Barbadians work well, I will praise them. When Barbadians play the fool, I will tell them they have played the fool and that they need to straighten up and fly right.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East seems to have a problem, but the Honourable Member has had his opportunity to speak.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you were going quite well, until you made the statement which I am going to ask you to withdraw, which I have ordered to be expunged from the Record.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I withdraw the comment. I did not mean that in the true sense of the word.

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

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, I do not have a "Skyline" working in the Bridgetown Port. None of my PSVs is competing with anybody in the Port. What the Honourable Member for St. Thomas needs to do is to look carefully at the programmes she is running in St. Thomas that would be a benefit for her people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, I want to bring back a level of decorum. This is precisely why I asked the Honourable Member to withdraw the remarks because I am not going to preside over a Chamber in which Honourable Members are going to cause the debate to go in a way in which it should not.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas, please proceed. I am going to ask that your remarks in relation to the Honourable Member for St. Michael East be struck from the Record and that you proceed along the subject matter of the matter before this Honourable House.

Mr. Chairman, I want to find out from the Honourable Member... The Honourable Member has made it very clear and I liked his frank approach in that particular respect where I deduced from what the Honourable Member was saying, is that 40 per cent of his fleet is inoperable. I believe that we must have a fleet of trucks and tractors and other forms of equipment in the Sanitation Services Authority to fulfil its role, therefore, that is supported.

Mr. Chairman, what I would wish to know is how many trucks and tractors that the Honourable Member intends to include? Sir, the Honourable Member cannot come with an estimate, unless there are quotations for the necessary equipment, et cetera that will go into the project. And I do not think that three or four may be able to cover the 40 per cent of the fleet that is lacking.

Sir, I live in a real world and I know that the cost of rental of equipment from other private firms is really prohibitive in respect of the work that has to take place at the Mangrove Landfill and the other areas that deal with solid waste. I trust that the Honourable Member would be able to share with us the kind of equipment that is being purchase.

Sir, I am not objecting to the amount, because the amount is insignificant now when one looks at the role that has to be played by these very hardworking men and women in the Sanitation Service Authority, who every day, and more particularly at Christmas, Crop Over and other festive times, are working at 2.00 a.m. to 3.00 a.m., ensuring that this country is kept clean. Sir, I have absolutely no problem with that. I just want for the Honourable Member to indicate to us.

Mr. Chairman, I have other concerns. I listen to the call-in programmes and sometimes I make small contributions but there are persons from St. Peter who call in often to speak about the Sanitation Services Authority not granting them any service for three months. Sir, I do not know how true the story is, but I believe that measures such as those need to be paid urgent attention.

Mr. Chairman, I have cul-de-sacs at Carrington's Village, Bridgefield and other communities where the garbage truck does not go. Sir, I understand, it may have to do with the cul-de-sac, or with the fact that the road is narrow or rugged that the truck cannot reach.

Sir, I believe that some measures have to be taken on the ground to ensure that the collection of refuse is done on a more timely basis so that after three weeks, we would not see such big piles of garbage, which encourages dogs, rodents or “parros” who tear open this garbage because of the fact that they want to take out the pep bottles.

I should at this time commend those agencies that are looking at the recycling aspect of it, to ensure that our environment is free of the large amounts of plastic and such that go into the system.

Mr. Chairman, the Supplementary Bill speaks to a grant, but I want to know from the Honourable Member if the amount for the Sanitation Service Authority also includes payment for property.

4.50 p.m.

Tuesday, December 07, 2009

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: I know there is a cell at Mangrove where I believe that the acquisition may have taken place by now. Sir, I want to know if there is any payment in this amount for the new cell that has been developed. If the Minister would please tell us when does this Government intend to close off the Mangrove Landfill that is overworked, overused and coming to a stage where it is creating a terrible discomfort for the people at Arch Hall, Bennetts, Butts, the other communities and downwind? Sir, Butts as well, which is the closest community to that area. When does the Government intend to relocate to another location or another site to ease the problems that have been experienced in the area of Mangrove in St. Thomas?

Mr. Chairman, the other question through you, I would like to ask is, if this amount that the Honourable Minister just indicated includes salaries for staff that has been taken on. I do not believe that Services Commission is aware, but I know that every day young men come to me to write them a letter. Sir, they tell me that the Sanitation Board has just taken in 10, that National Conservation Commission just took in 25 rangers and, Mr. Chairman, it is fact.

Mr. Chairman, whether you have got jobs for your constituents or not, I do not know, and I am sorry if I am exposing the Honourable Minister, but there are large numbers of persons who are being hired and I do not think it is going through the right authority for persons to be able to get work.

Sir, does this include salaries for those persons who have been brought on to work that the Government system does not know about, or has not supported in respect of what is happening here?

Mr. Chairman, I live in a community where it rains every day, thank God. It is an arable parish. The grass grows really fast and so do vegetables, fruits and so on but, Mr. Chairman, what bothers me a lot is that we have wells, due to the actions of some persons who took off all the grass at one time, leave the top soil exposed and the top soil goes into the wells and gutters.

I just want to indicate to the Honourable Minister that Allan View has a well that needs to be cleared and I have been asking for a while now and at the bottom of Ashford Hill, where there is a lot of flooding. Sir, over in Cane Garden, near to the Bridgefield pavilion there is another big problem and I would like for the Drainage Unit to give us some assistance in that area.

Mr. Chairman, the person at the Ministry of Public Works at Bagatelle do an excellent job but, Sir, they cannot do it all. Sir, sometimes they have the men or women to do the work, but they do not have the equipment.

I know that under the Barbados Labour Party at one point in time, each of the depots was given at least a truck, or a tractor to be able to carry out the work. It seems to me that is no longer happening and, therefore, when the work is to be done and the staff is there, or the materials are there, the tractor or the truck cannot be assessed. Therefore, persons are on the stop three days or four days, not because of any fault of their own, but because the vehicle is not available.

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

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Sir, I thought in response to it that I would have had the same time as the Honourable Minister, but that is okay.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, in Committee, basically, the Minister has 30 minutes.

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, as I come nearer to the close I would wish for the Minister to pay some attention to the clearing of the well and to sending the team of very hard working persons in those various sectors identified to give us some help in St. Thomas. I think it is about time that we become serious, because St. Thomas still has a lot of land that is owned by plantation owners and private individuals who desist from carrying out their duties.

When we were small children, sugar cane would lean over in Ashford Road and the plantation owners would send some of their workers to tie them back to afford vehicles to travel more freely but, unfortunately, the bush is growing over and each time the tractor and truck owned by the Ministry of Public Works have to be clearing at least a

car space from the gutter or from the hedgerow to let traffic pass freely.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that we have reached the stage in Barbados where a bill should be given to the plantation owner and the private owners in the same way that I believe a bill should be given to them with costs when the property of people have to be cleared, because they refuse to do anything with them. They block the view of people. It creates a hazard with rodents, mosquitoes and even with robbers. I believe that measure has to be instituted, it has to be properly policed and the legislation has to work for it in order for us to get an ease as to what is happening in this society.

Mr. Chairman, as I close I want to also lend my support to the Coastal Infrastructural Programme at Sub-programme 401 for the \$2.813 million, even though I would take another opportunity at another time to speak about the slippage and the challenges we have in the Scotland District and other parts of the parish of St. Thomas, St. Andrew, St. Joseph and so on. I would wish to lend support to this project because we recognise that we need to protect our beaches.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas started to talk about the fact that the Welfare-to-Work concept was introduced by the Barbados Labour Party Administration. Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the Welfare-to-Work Programme was very limited. Sir, one officer in the Welfare Department volunteered her services and was not equipped with the necessary support staff, other finances and other support to really train those welfare recipients effectively.

This Democratic Labour Party came in and found this officer, who volunteered her services with a full case load of welfare recipients to see. Sir, she was going over and above the call of duty and was very frustrated in that process.

H/A50B/5.00 p.m. Sequence 15

Tuesday, December 4, 2009

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: This Democratic Labour Party Administration came in and gave its support and that is why you see this programme going from strength to strength, so the public must know this fact.

Let me proceed to look at the Head on the Sanitation Service Authority. I would wish to say that in looking at this Head, I support this concept of the Sanitation Service Authority getting an extra \$3.377 million, and am saying

that the work of the Sanitation Service Authority is essential in keeping Barbados clean, notwithstanding what I would call unwarranted criticism on the Other Side, whenever this Honourable Member has to speak about keeping the place clean, and not feeding the vermin and the other vectors that will threaten the health of citizens.

This Honourable Member will continue to call on Barbadians to stop littering. Rats cause leptospirosis which has killed a number of Barbadians over the years. This is no laughing matter. I am saying that we as Barbadians must ensure that we practise proper sanitation and desist from littering the streets of our country.

Sir, this Honourable Member is the Member of Parliament for the City of Bridgetown, where thousands of Barbadians, not just residents of Bridgetown, but throughout the island converge on our City's streets and if they litter, then we have a perennial problem of the proliferation of rats, mice, mosquitoes, cockroaches and flies that can all spread diseases, jaundice, yellow fever, malaria, dengue fever and so on. We do not have to find work for those hardworking Sanitation Services Authority workers. They have their hands full already. We must give them support.

Sir, I am saying that the businesses can get involved in terms of pumping back some of the profits, which they have gained from the patronage of the Barbadian shoppers, pump some of that back into keeping the environment around their stores clean, by donating litter bins along the streets.

Sir, I am convinced that some people litter because there are no litter bins within close range of where there are located. So if we have more bins accessible to the travelling public, then I think it would be a more realistic goal to inculcate within these people the practice of putting their litter in a nearby litter bin.

Sir, we must go further. I believe we should do some research to see if we can lock some of these bins which are currently placed in our streets in our City and other parts of our country, because we know we have challenges with persons with drug addiction and other challenges, who rummage through the garbage bins daily, searching for pep bottles to sell, which is a good concept of recycling and removing a lot of the plastics out of the landfill. That is an industry which is thriving, recycling.

Sir, because these vagrants have these mental challenges due to drug abuse and alcoholism and so on, they are very untidy in their search for the pep bottles, and sometimes they throw the litter all over the streets. This is a serious problem.

Sir, what comes to me is, perhaps we can lock these bins so that there are not accessible to these vagrants, and the Sanitation Service Authority workers would have a special master key, which will only allow staff and they alone will be able to open those bins to take out the garbage when the trucks pass, so this is something for us to consider.

Mr. Chairman, not only does the litter pose a health problem, but the litter on the street seriously compromises the drainage network. The City is very low-lying and many areas in the City are prone to flooding, such as Murphy pasture, Chapman Lane, Mason Hall Street and surrounding districts.

Sir, we have found that a lot of the litter that is left along the streets of our country, washes into the drums when there is heavy rainfall. There are box drains running along Mason Hall Street to the south of St. Mary's Primary School, along Murphy's pasture, to the north of Emmerton Waste Water Collection Sewerage Treatment Plant, to the north of the Chefette Restaurant, Harbour Road, down to Pelican to the Pump House where it is pumped out to sea.

Sir, the Barbados Labour Party Government neglected the Drainage Division, to the extent that a number of those pumps at Pelican were not properly repaired and replaced. I am saying that when this litter gets into the pumping mechanism, it causes them to burn out. This Administration had to come in and work assiduously to replace and repair those pumps to allow the drainage to work properly.

Sir, in the past, when the pumping mechanism at the Pump House at Pelican is not working properly, it resulted in heavy flooding in the Chapman Lane area, Murphy's pasture and all the avenues in Chapman Lane, because that major box drain, that I described earlier, pulls the water of that land area into the sea via the Pump House, so as long as you have a blockage, you have serious flooding.

In the past people had to be rescued, children and old people, with water above their heads. In some instances they had to be rescued by boat, so people's lives and limbs are at state. Littering can seriously threaten peoples' lives.

I congratulate this Administration for pumping money and other resources. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East mentioned that we have transformed and upgraded the Drainage Unit, as it was, within the Ministry of Transport and Public Works, under the last Government. We have now made it into a full-fledged Division within the Ministry of the Environment. This must be lauded because we must be proactive. Again, a lot of silt gets into these drains, clogs the drainage and reduces the proper flow of water.

I must congratulate the Drainage Division as well as the Ministry of Transport and Works. Since this Government assumed office in January 2008, they have been working assiduously, with remedial work going into the drains, fighting the rats in those drains to take all of that garbage and silt out of the drains.

I remember one Sunday passing along the Nelson Street/Fairchild Street area, seeing those men hard at work clearing those drains. It was a joint effort of the Ministry of Transport and Works and the Drainage Division within the Ministry of the Environment. Those drains had not been cleared for several years under the Barbados Labour Party Government. That is why we were having flooding. Business people and others have been complaining, at the corner of Nelson Street and Fairchild Street, a perennial problem with drainage.

The Drainage Division and the Ministry of Transport and Works have actually done major repairs there, where they dug up the drains and increased the depths of the drains, thereby reducing the likelihood of flooding in that area and moreover, along the stretch of Baxter's Road and Tudor Street. This road was rehabilitated under the Barbados Labour Party Government, new box drains dug and covered.

Sir, do you know that although it was a new project, this Administration came in, again with a combined effort of the Ministry of Transport and Works and the Drainage Division of the Ministry of the Environment, they were able to actually clear those drains of tonnes of debris, silt and garbage that had blocked those drains.

We would have seen Baxter Road flooding, although it was a new road, because those drains were not properly serviced, to the extent that the workmen had to take sledge hammers to break up the concrete because the drain covers were sealed shut. They had not been cleared for years - shame under the Barbados Labour Party.

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

H A50B 5.10 p.m. Sequence 16

Friday, December 04, 2009

House A50B, Sequence 17, 5.10 p.m.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: We lifted up all of those drain covers and I applaud the hard work of those personnel. We had to put down concrete to cover these drains so that pedestrians would not be hurt as they pass along the walkways. Now that this drainage system is properly cleared, I would imagine this would be cleared on a regular basis.

In concluding, I look forward to the reconstruction of the concrete ally, King William Street, that Nelson Street Area Public Bath as well as the Green Park Lane Public Bath which were totally neglected by the Barbados Labour Party Government. The residents of Bridgetown look forward to the Sanitation Service Authority (SSA) being able to reach the financial position where these two baths can be rebuilt.

I took the professionals there when I acted as Minister of Health on one occasion, when the SSA was within that Ministry and all from the Chief Medical Officer to the SSA Deputy Director and others concluded that the Barbados Labour Party has neglected those public baths to the extent that they should be condemned and totally rebuilt. There are still a number of people in the City, Mr. Chairman, who rely on those public baths and the waterborne toilet facilities there, and they are asking me daily to remind all and sundry that they are looking forward, and we can assure them that as funds become available, we will deliver.

Mr. Chairman, I would also congratulate the NCC for really keeping Barbados clean and I look forward to community parks being developed. You would remember that when the Prime Minister was Minister of Development under a previous Administration, he initiated the community parks. I have identified a number of venues in the City such as the Bay Land, New Orleans, Chapman Lane, Green Fields and King's Village where we can have community parks, kept by the community. We could also employ some young people to debush the areas to uplift the aesthetics of the respective communities.

I thank you, Sir.

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

His Hon. K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this money Resolution in respect of the Environment. I must congratulate the Minister of the Environment, Water Resources and Drainage for doing a fairly good job but, Sir, we need to really take stock and look to see where we are going, in respect of this Ministry and all the Ministries that adjoin or complement this Ministry.

I heard the Minister speak of where developments are going up around Barbados and blocking the water courses. I think that the Town and Country Planning Department, along with his Ministry, need to police these developments very carefully to ensure that when these developments are started and completed, that our water courses are free from problems, Sir, if it means that we have to ask these developers to put in retention dams to trap some of the water.

Sir, as you know, Barbados is known as a water scarce country, but we can trap some of the water that ends up in the sea. Sir, I would want to see the Minister look at a comprehensive programme in that regard, along with some of the developers to have dams to trap some of that water, and then channel some of this water to be used for agriculture, or it could be recycled for other productivity.

Sir, regarding our question of food security, and our food Import Bill, this would be reduced and that is why I said that we must look at the various Ministries which must enhance one another. The Minister is doing a fantastic job, in respect of the Drainage Unit, but we need to ask the workers to ensure that, as he said earlier, "Honest day's work for honest day's pay".

It is critical because what can be achieved today, do not postpone it until tomorrow and believe that because you are an employee of Government that you have the right to malingering, because in these difficult economic times, you are creating greater hardship, not only for yourselves, but for the country at large, because something that could have been done today, for the price today and you malingering, tomorrow you would have to look for extra money.

Sir, we also need to ask these workers to pay greater attention to productivity in whatever contribution they are making, as far as development in this country. Sir, the supervisors of these workers, must take some responsibility because if you are being paid to supervise persons, you must ensure that these persons do what they are supposed to do. They are doing a fantastic job to a certain extent.

Mr. Chairman, I have some perennial and difficult problems in St. Michael East. I have problems in the Back Ivy with a couple of wells that are giving problems. I would ask the Minister to get the persons from the Drainage Unit, in correlation with the Minister responsible for Public Works to look at the problem that is being created in the Back Ivy.

As long as I knew myself, Sir, being at the Community College and otherwise, there was a problem with a well at First Avenue Skeete's Road and that is still a problem.

I was reliably informed that persons under the last Administration received lots of money to make sure that the wells throughout Barbados were cleaned, but nothing was done. I believe that greater accountability needs to happen with persons who decide that they are given contracts by Government to do specific work that they do what they are paid to do.

I heard the Minister talk about a 40 per cent reduction at the Sanitation Service Authority, and I want to ask him what maintenance programme, and if he has taken

a critical analysis of the Maintenance Programme at the Sanitation Department. They are doing a great job in these trying times, but we need, Sir, to look at the maintenance of our fleet to ensure that there is availability of parts for these vehicles.

Sir, we are aware that it does not make sense just to buy a new vehicle, when you can source a part for a vehicle, where the life has not expired, because you have the private individual having the same type of vehicle, probably not working as hard, but they ensure that they have a proper maintenance programme.

Sir, we need to ask the questions: How do you make it? Do you have a rolling base maintenance, for instance, that every Sunday these vehicles are maintained? Then, in any given period, you are almost up to the maximum and to make sure that you have an adequate supply of parts and in doing that, you must have a loving relationship with your workers. Sir, the job of the Sanitation worker is not easy.

Mr. Chairman, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas speak about an area in her Constituency which is a cul-de-sac and is not being cleared, but we must ask if it is the question of the Sanitation Service Authority, or the residents who in a narrow street, park their vehicles on Both Sides of the road. Sir, you have to ask what is the problem.

House A50B, Sequence 17, 5.20 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

His Honour K. St.C BEST: Is it that the Sanitation Service Authority is neglecting these people in these areas or is it the persons who live in these areas who are contributing to the Sanitation Service Authority not being able to get into that area to clear the garbage?

Sir, when we speak in this House we must encourage our constituents to understand that they must park on one side of the road on narrow streets.

I would not be bothered about the problems that were created by the Barbados Labour Party in the Belle about people building illegally, which we are dealing with now, because we are trying our best to have land. I was assured that we will have a reverse osmosis plant in the Belle area that would solve some of the problems that they promised the people of St. Michael East. They hugged up the former Honourable Member for St. Michael East and walked the length and breadth of St. Michael North East and told the people to give him another chance, they will give him a mini sewerage system.

Sir, today as I speak, the people of St. Michael East have no mini sewerage system. Today, they have hope

because tenders have gone out and it has been put in the Estimates that there will be a reverse osmosis plant in St. Michael East that will solve some of the problems and the water woes of the people of St. Michael North East. Mr. Chairman, I have constituents who day after day say to me that they have paid money to the Barbados Water Authority over a period of time, they took their money, promised them water and they cannot get any water. What is troubling to those persons is that the Urban Development Commission built houses in the area that they said is a Zone 1 area and gave those persons septic tanks and running water and the people who live next door cannot get any. That was under the Barbados Labour Party Government, but this Government will address that problem.

The problem with persons on the Other Side is that they always say that they had this thing in motion and they want to take kudos and holler hard and believe that people in Barbados are not listening to what is happening. They want to take all of the praises for the activities that have started to develop in Barbados and say they had that in the pipeline.

Sir, in respect of the rental of skips, there are companies in Barbados which manufacture skips, so I would want to urge the Minister to look seriously at giving Barbadian welders the job to build those skips to complement what the Sanitation Service Authority has instead of importing them.

Sir, I want to compliment that Division of the Sanitation Service Authority which comes around and assists constituents with the clearing of lots and the removal of old things. Sir, when the taxpayers' money is spent to clear a particular area in any part of Barbados, I want Barbadians to make sure that the area remains clean, because if it is cleaned today and you wait until the next six or seven months when it is overgrown with bush again and then ask the Sanitation Service Authority to clean it up, would be a waste of resources.

Mr. Chairman, with those brief remarks, I support this Money Resolution. I thank you.

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

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First let me thank Honourable Members who made a contribution to the discussion on this Resolution.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown pointed the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in the right direction when he made the distinction between the debushing

programme of the Ministry of Health and the National Environment Enhancement Programme (NEEP).

This Honourable Member never claimed that the Democratic Labour Party was responsible for creating the Welfare-to-Work Programme. What this Honourable Member did indicate was that the establishment of the National Environment Enhancement Programme was, in fact, the brainchild of the Democratic Labour Party and its Government. I did indicate also that a major feeder for this programme is the Welfare-to-Work Programme because the NEEP was created to facilitate the passage of persons from the welfare roll to the work roll. That is the point that we sought to make.

I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas who said that when workers work well, we should praise them and when they do not do their jobs, they should be scolded.

It is the policy of this Minister to persistently indicate to members of our workforce that it is important to render an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. I think that is important, Mr. Chairman, because these exercises are not for the purposes of making sport because when we make sport in here, we by extension make sport at the public. What we seek to do on This Side is to take the business of Government and governance seriously.

Mr. Chairman, we do not claim rights to things that are not ours, but we believe that Government is a continuum and, therefore, when there are programmes that deserve to be continued, this Government commits itself to continuing those programmes, and when there are programmes that we have to relook and to rethink, then that also will be done.

Mr. Chairman, the question of the National Conservation Commission hiring 25 rangers is an absolute unequivocal untruth. Since I have been Minister responsible for the National Conservation Commission, it has never been the case where 25 rangers were hired. It is absolutely unbelievable that an Honourable Member of this House could come and misrepresent the truth in such a blatant way.

Mr. Chairman, what I can say though is that at the Sanitation Service Authority there are over 200 persons who go to that place every day under the category of job hands. These are persons who were hired just before the last Election. They pay bus fares, go to the Authority but they do not have jobs. As a matter of fact, if you want to talk about hiring people without following the stipulated rules of the Civil Service, that is where it happened, but this is not a place for that at this point in time. We would have our say on that.

Mr. Chairman, when you want to respond to an issue, it is always safer to respond to it on the platform of truth and not seek to mislead the public that the Democratic Labour Party Government is hiring people illegally, because that is what the claim is. Mr. Chairman, I categorically deny that and render it as absolutely untrue that any such practices are taking place in any of the agencies that are under my watch.

Mr. Chairman, I go further to the question of what is in the Estimates. We cannot discuss the Estimates here at this time because we cannot anticipate the Estimates. The Estimates would come to this place in its time.

House A50B Sequence 18 5.30 p.m.

Friday, December 04, 2009

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Chairman, I want to talk about the Mangrove Landfill issue. Sir, it is amazing because every time this Party is in office, the Opposition questions us on things that should be done. Sir, on the matter of Mangrove, between 1991 and 1994, the then Representative for St. Thomas took the Government to court and claimed compensation for the residents and legal fees for himself and for the other attorneys.

Sir, that Representative demitted office and has never taken care of Mangrove, which he paraded about and called it "Mount Stinkaroo". Sir, suddenly another Honourable Member for St. Thomas, who has been in here long enough that she should have been able to do something about Mangrove, but has done nothing, suddenly wants to scold an Administration that has only been in office for two years, on the Mangrove issue.

Mr. Chairman, we will have a statement to make on Solid Waste Management in this country, in the very short period and we will tell the public what this Government's policy is on the management of Solid Waste in Barbados. We will also tell the public how much of their taxpaying dollars were wasted in creating the Greenland Landfill, where until this day, it would still take this Government \$100 million or more to put solid waste at Greenland.

Mr. Chairman, I do not mind all the flares that are being thrown. They would throw flares until they are tired. They are not going to get this Government off its programme. We know where we are going. We know how to get there and we are determined to take this country on that journey. Sir, we do not mind the naysayers, for when they have nothing to say, they must keep noise. The noises they keep only reflect their own ineptitude, not the competence of this Government.

We will keep focussed on where we need to go, because we believe it is in the interest of this Government

to listen to the people and to seek to fulfil the people's mandate, which they have given us to be in This Place at this time. Mr. Chairman, that mandate has not been given to the Other Side, therefore, I am satisfied that this Government is on the right track. I am satisfied that we are focussed on our journey. I am satisfied that our Leader is taking us where this country has to go, particularly in these difficult times.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the Ministry of the Environment, Water Resources and Drainage is delivering its mandate, and that during difficult times like these, that we are achieving much more than was achieved in the past, and it is only less than two years that we have been in office. Sir, we will not become distracted by the talk.

I am now convinced that what they tried to do on That Side, was to raise flags, hoping that they would distract us from focussing on the substance on where we have to go. Sir, the fact is that we have a carefully-crafted programme, a programme that is people-centred, a programme that is vision-centred and we know exactly where we have to go.

Mr. Chairman, whether or not we are liked by the Other Side, we will stay focused on our vision. We believe that to steer this country through these difficult times would not be unlike what we did in the 1990s, when the Other Side took over office in 1994, and absolutely squandered every single piece of prosperity that this country was able to reap under the restructured programme of the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. Chairman, we understand that. We understand where we need to go. We know it is not easy, but we are committed to this journey. This is not a journey that Barbados alone is taking, every country in the world is taking this journey. What bothers the Other Side is that every time we have to take this country up at times like these, we do exceptionally well in keeping this country afloat. Sir, that is what bothers the Other Side.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this Head stand part.

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

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

HEAD 19

TREASURY - \$70 000.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 19 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 62

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, INVESTMENT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$85 000.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 62 stand part.

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

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

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, we have come to the end of Government Business for today. Sir, I beg to move that this Honourable House be now adjourned until Tuesday, December 15, 2009, at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that the House be now adjourned until Tuesday, December 15, 2009, at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

5.40 p.m.

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Dates in the text. The source gives ‘Tuesday, December 07, 2009’ (7 December 2009 was a Monday). The weekday and date do not agree; printed as in the source.

Q3. Order No. 7, Supplementary Estimates No. 3. The Resolution (and the notice given earlier) is for ‘\$7 180 316’, but the Heads passed are Head 66 ‘\$7 095 316’, Head 19 ‘TREASURY - \$70 000’ and Head 62 ‘\$85 000’, which together come to \$7 250 316. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 7, Head 66. The Minister gives the Coastal Infrastructure Programme as ‘\$2 831 857’; Miss C. Y. Forde refers to it as ‘\$2.813 million’. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Take-slips, about 11.00 a.m. and 4.10 p.m.. Two take-slips are dated ‘Tuesday, December 4, 2009’; the sitting was on Friday, December 4, 2009, as other take-slips show. Some take-slip references (‘House A50B Sequence 3 3.00 p.m.’, ‘H50 1.36 p.m.’) are run into the text or into the procedural line on the suspension. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Obituary speeches, Mr. H. F. Lashley, about 11.00 a.m.. Either side of the take-slip the source repeats the sentence beginning ‘... the constituents of St. Michael South East’ (about 35 words), once at the end of one take and again at the start of the next. Both are printed as in the source.

Q7. Order No. 4, Shipping (Incentives) (Amendment) Bill. The Bill is headed ‘SHIPPING (INCENTIVES) (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2009’ but cited on third reading as the ‘Shipping Incentives (Amendment) Act, 2009’. In his reply the mover says the principal Act was ‘passed December 1, 1982’ and later that it was ‘originally conceived in 1992’. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Order No. 4, speaker labels. During the second-reading debate Hon. J. D. E. Boyce and Hon. E. G. Hutson each begin a speech ‘Mr. Chairman’, although the House was not in Committee; one heading reads ‘Hon. E. GEORGE HUTSON’. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Friday, 4th December, 2009 at 10.15 a.m., with the Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair; prayers were led by Rev. Canon Ivan Harewood. The Speaker read Independence greetings from the Speakers of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada and a letter from Mr. Owen S. Arthur, Member for St. Peter, informing the House that a CARICOM consultancy would keep him in Belize and the OECS during November and December 2009. The Prime Minister, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, laid six papers, among them the Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 6) Order, 2009 and the Annual Report of the Barbados National Oil Company Limited for 2008. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce gave notice of a Resolution for \$7 180 316 under Supplementary Estimates No. 3, 2009/2010, and the Shipping (Incentives) (Amendment) Bill, 2009 was read a first time.

Obituary speeches followed for Mrs. Verona Eudora Lashley of Gall Hill, St. John, a mother of nine whose son is Mr. S. A. Lashley, Member for Christ Church West Central and Chairman of Committees. The Prime Minister, who had known the family since 1987, opened the tributes, and nineteen Members from both sides followed, among them Miss C. Y. Forde for the Barbados Labour Party, Mr. H. F. Lashley, who recalled her part in the Senior Citizens Drama Group, Hon. M. A. Lashley, the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, and Hon. F. J. Stuart; they spoke of her discipline, her community work and her children’s achievements. Mr. S. A. Lashley thanked Members on behalf of his family, the Speaker directed that the usual communication be sent, and the House observed a minute’s silence before suspending until 2.45 p.m.

After Standing Orders were suspended, the Minister of International Business and International Transport, Hon. E. G. Hutson, moved the second reading of the Shipping (Incentives) (Amendment) Bill, 2009. He explained that, as announced in the 2009 Budgetary Proposals, the concession period would rise from 10 to 15 years, with retroactive effect for companies approved after March 24, 2005; that ‘shipping activities’ would include sport fishing in the tourist industry; and that new Schedules would exempt fishing tackle and safety equipment such as life rafts, flares and satellite tracking systems from customs duty. He spoke of more than 10 000 shipping jobs becoming available worldwide.

Dr. W. F. Duguid supported the amendments but said more should have been done for small entrepreneurs. Hon. R. L. Sealy said the Game Fishing Association had pointed out shortcomings in the 2005 amendments; when Miss Forde drew attention to the absence of a quorum, he remarked that no Member of the Opposition was present. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce defended the \$200 million capital expenditure provision, and in reply Mr. Hutson said that figure was already in the principal Act. The Bill passed Committee without amendment and was read a third time.

In Committee of Supply on Order No. 7, Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe sought \$7 095 316 under Head 66, Ministry of the Environment, Water Resources and Drainage, including \$3 377 459 for the Sanitation Service

Authority, \$15 000 for the NEEP workers under the Drainage programme and \$2 831 857 for the Coastal Infrastructure Programme. Miss Forde supported the estimate but said the Welfare-to-Work idea had been the Barbados Labour Party's; she withdrew a remark the Chairman ordered expunged, after His Honour K. St.C. Best rose on a point of order. She asked about the Mangrove landfill and equipment quotations. Mr. Todd and Mr. Best also spoke, and Dr. Lowe replied, promising a statement on solid waste management. Head 66 and Heads 19 and 62 were agreed to, and the Money Resolution was read a first and second time and passed.

The House was adjourned until Tuesday, December 15, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.