THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Pursuant to the Adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, July 28, 2009.

PRESENT

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

His Honour K. St.C. BEST, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. DAVID J. H. THOMPSON, Q.C., 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.) B.A. (Hons.), Dip.Ed.,(Lond.,)

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

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

His Excellency D. St. E. KELLMAN:

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

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

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

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

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

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 Trade, Industry and Commerce)

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

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

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

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY, B.Sc., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Chairman of Committees)

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

Hon. P. M. T. TODD, B.Sc. (Minister of State, Education and Human Resource Development)

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

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

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning, Honourable Members. This the 43rd Sitting of this Session of Parliament of the Honourable House of Assembly is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, July 21, 2009.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

PAPERS

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

1. Value Added Tax (Amendment)(No. 2) Order, 2009.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Attorney-General, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Reports of the Community Legal Services Commission for the years ended March 31, 2005, 2006, 2007.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks, many of our citizens would have passed on to the Great Beyond, but there are citizens of some outstanding worth, because of their general contribution to this society who would have also passed on. Sir, one such lady who has passed on is Lady Husbands, the late wife of His Excellency Sir Clifford Husbands, Governor-General. Lady Husbands died at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Thursday, July 2, 2009.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that Lady Husbands was educated at the St. Michael Girls' School, a school which has produced some very outstanding citizens, not only during that period of time when it was an all-girls school, but it continues in that proud tradition of producing outstanding citizens for this country Barbados.

Sir, it is always said that you could tell an individual who went to the St. Michael Girls' School, not only from their attire, demeanour, character and personality but also from their speech and deportment, and one could as well said those things about Lady Husbands.

Lady Husbands became a nurse, in the footstep of others from that educational institution, including our late and dear beloved Governor-General, Dame Nita Barrow. There were also persons like Ilene Murray-Ainsley and Jean Springer, all outstanding citizens of Barbados and products of the St. Michael Girls' School.

Lady Husbands was the mother of three children, Sandra Dawne-Taylor, Anthony and Laura Husbands and grandmother of Mya and Leah Taylor. Lady Husbands worked as a nurse and midwife with the General Hospital, known to many of those of an earlier vintage in this country. It was the forerunner to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and we can still see footprints of the General Hospital, not only in its physical structure, but also by those who carried out both pastoral and clinical care for all those persons who entered the General Hospital.

Lady Husbands has been described as a committed, dedicated and devoted wife, and in keeping with those persons, particularly of that era and vintage, who understood that one of the pathways to the heart was through the stomach, Lady Husbands was an excellent cook and baker. Lady Husbands was interred at the St. Lucy Parish Church on Friday July 10, 2009, where the appropriate words were said in her honour for her passing.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of this Honourable House, we would want to make these comments on her passing and to wish her husband, her children, grandchildren and family, our deepest condolences and may she rest in peace.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I would wish to add the sentiments of the Barbados Labour Party Opposition to the expressions presented by the Leader of Government Business, and also to indicate that I met the then Mrs. Husbands, later Lady Husbands, at the Jamestown Clinic, Holetown, St. James, sometime in 1972. Indeed, I was a client at that clinic and Lady Husbands was the senior nurse to Dr. Giblin.

I always found her to be the person who exemplified in her life and in her relationship with people that caring aspect we all know that nurses generally display. Lady Husbands was warm, gentle and caring. I learnt that she was a mother and later that she was the wife of His Excellency.

Mr. Speaker, I felt proud to have known her because no query was too difficult for her to give an on-the-spot response, or for her to indicate that she will investigate and give you a call. Indeed, in those times, we know how difficult it was with communication, but she always lived up to her word.

I would not have been the kind of individual who often would be ill, but whenever I had reason to visit the office for whatever reason, Lady Husbands was always an excellent nurse, conversationalist and mentor. She was a nurse par excellence and I was very proud to have met her in my youth and to be able to benefit from some of her direction.

Mr. Speaker, that pleasant disposition was always there, whether it was at the clinic, shopping areas, or in the Church, she always carried that kind of pleasant demeanour. Therefore, she brought to her work an air of professionalism that was second-to-none. Perhaps that was the reason why I continued to visit that office until a few years ago.

Mr. Speaker, Lady Husbands carried with her that measure of professionalism when she moved to the residence of Government House, when His Excellency became Governor-General. She always found time to speak with those who visited that location, whether for swearing in as a Justice of the Peace, as a Senator, as a Minister or whether there was a social activity at Government House. Sir, as you are well-aware, during the year there are numerous occasions for one to visit that noble institution.

Mr. Speaker, Lady Husbands always engaged in intellectual conversation with everybody. She made no distinction with whom the individual would have been. She also sought to offer a measure of advice, whether in the realm of religion, education, nursing, or any other social aspects of the life of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have known her. She was one of the great daughters of the soil and I know that the legacy she has left behind would be emulated, not only by nurses, but by the women of this country. Sir, we as a people are extremely proud to have had very dynamic females, women, mothers, care-givers, to support our males and to work alongside them as partners. Sir, Lady Husbands would have been one of those distinguished persons.

10.30 a.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I want on behalf of the Opposition, the Barbados Labour Party and, indeed, on my own personal behalf, to extend deepest condolences to His Excellency, to her children, grandchildren, and other relatives and friends because they have truly lost an excellent Barbadian who would have made tremendous strives in delivering quality care.

Mr. Speaker, at the point in time when she would have been a nurse, she would have been very intimately involved in the delivery of my son and therefore, I have to take my hat off to her for her professional approach and the good service that she has done, not only for me, but for all those clients who would have been part of that institution at the Jamestown Clinic and, indeed, the lives she would have touched and changed, while she would have been in the distinguished position as the wife of His Excellency. Mr. Speaker, as I said, therefore, I want to express deepest condolences. May she rest in peace. Sir, I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honorable Member for St. John.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, despite the public role that both Sir Clifford and the late Lady Husbands played in Barbados, my long association with them has always been heralded, in my view, by the perspective that they are very private individuals who very much avoided any form of ostentation, and were very humble and quite content to live quiet lives in this country.

Like the Member for St. Thomas, prior to even the establishment of the Jamestown Clinic, as a young boy, I attended the office of Dr. Gibling, which was then in Paynes Bay, so my association with the late Ruby Husbands was as a family nurse. She was a person who gave tetanus injections, who bandaged bruised toes, removed fish hooks that got embedded in your flesh and who found a way to get the remnants of cobblers out of unnamed parts of your body, when one day I sat on a bed of cobblers.

Mr. Speaker, as children running around in those areas, Dr. Gibling was the nearest doctor and all of us invariably attended his clinic and most of the time was attended to, not by Dr. Gibling himself, but by the late Ruby Husbands. Later on when I went to Cave Hill, I came into contact with their eldest daughter Sandra Dawn Taylor, who was my contemporary, her husband who was a year ahead of me and then Laura and Anthony.

Sir, as I have always said, Sir Clifford was an outstanding judge who committed his life to public service, not only in Barbados, but in the Caribbean, particularly in Grenada, Montserrat and the Eastern Caribbean. He has an outstanding record of judicial service and acquitted himself, as I said, as a very private individual of extremely high standards, very exacting standards. His family followed very much the line of march that Sir Clifford laid down and his wife obviously supported, in every sense of the word, the role that he played, as well as the development and care of the family.

Mr. Speaker, in her public role also, Lady Husbands would have stood by the side of our longest serving Governor-General to date, since Independence. Sir, that of itself is important, the fact that Sir Clifford has survived the rigours of the job which others may feel is just a cushy adornment but, in every sense of the word, the task of the Governor-General is a very weighty responsibility.

Sir, it removes one from normal social life and places one in a cocoon, and then in addition to that, despite the obvious, or apparent comforts of office, places other restrictions on one's ability to enjoy life in the normal way in which other citizens are able to do so and, in a sense, Sir Clifford has, because of his major role in the Judiciary in many countries in the Caribbean, or in positions which would have required him to be a paragon of rectitude and good Barbadian values of restraint and conservatism.

Sir, I do not necessarily mean political conservatism. I mean normal restraint both in discourse and temperament.

Sir, these restraints are not easily acquired by all citizens and certainly not in the manner in which the late Ruby Husbands and her husband, as well as members of the family, were able to do so during the long period of their public service.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government and people of Barbados as a whole, I have already extended our sympathy to Sir Clifford Husbands. Sir, Lady Husbands will be missed and, on this occasion, I extend my own personal sympathy and that of my family to Sir Clifford and his family, and also on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party, as well as all Members on This Side in support of what the Honourable Member for Christ Church East previously said.

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, prior to taking up residence at Government House, the late Lady Husbands dwelled in the Constituency of St. James North at a place called Upper Mount Standfast, sometimes called Mount Standfast Plantation. I got to know her very many years ago and just like the Honourable Member for St. John and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, I first got to know her as a nurse, and in the context of her profession as a nurse, she did a lot of private practice.

Sir, both Honourable Members who spoke so far mentioned Dr. Gibling and Dr. Gibling like his predecessor Dr. Hamilton, first started to practise in the Paynes Bay area but then when Jamestown Clinic was established, Dr. Gibling moved to Jamestown Clinic and Lady Husbands served as his principal nurse. She was always the type of person that was very caring.

Mr. Speaker, in this modern epoch, increasingly more and more people are both looking at the caring professions like nursing and teaching and, increasingly more and more people are interested in the caring professions. There can be no doubt that she belonged to the caring profession. There is no doubt too, that in her quiet, dignified way, she was able to bring healing and help to very many people. Sir, as a wife and mother she set a proper example and work with her husband to raise a family that achieved prominence, not only in St. James, but nationwide.

H/A43/10.40 a.m. Sequence 4

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Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: It has not yet been mentioned, but she worked closely with the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. You would have noticed, Mr. Speaker, or Honourable Members who were present at the funeral would have noticed, that the St. John Ambulance Brigade came out in their numbers, in support of a lady who had done a lot of charitable work for them.

Sir, her humility is beyond doubt, is beyond question, and even after she was elevated to the position which took her to Government House, she never really lost touch, or contact with St. James North. She was known to be extremely dignified in all she did. She carried a dignity about her. There were times when she was requested to offer counselling to unfortunate persons, which she did. She proved to be exceptionally pleasant and amiable, but most people seen her as being a person given to some quietness, without necessarily being taciturn, or foina.

On this occasion, solemn as it is, and as we grieve, I want to invoke the words of Proverbs, "Who can find a virtuous woman?" That is a rhetorical question. The answer comes, "for her price is above rubies." For Honourable Members who may think I am punning, I will not trouble Honourable Members who think that the choice of the term rubies, in this context, is happily chosen. Her price was, indeed, above rubies.

I want to, on behalf of not only the St. James North Constituency, but on behalf of the whole parish of St. James, to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the Honourable Prime Minister and by my colleague, on my right, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, her contribution would never go unnoticed, and this particular loss is indeed one that would mean that many a person who could have relied on her, would now be somewhat deprived.

Along with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and the Honourable Prime Minister, I feel it my duty to offer condolences, and I believe that you are going to put a certain Resolution before this Honourable House, and I am sure that such Resolution will be informed by unanimity.

Sir, with those remarks, I am deeply grateful to you.

I thank you.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I also rise to speak and to make the point that humility is something that one can easily associate with the lady, and to say a lot of people could follow her example. In terms of her work habits, as you would have heard today, it is something that a lot of people in Barbados need to copy, because, surely, there is a lot that can be taken from what was said as it relates to her work.

Sir, not only her work, as it relates to the payment aspect of it, but the community and church work is one that we should also highlight. Even though she was placed in a high position, she never lost that common touch, and she understood her commitment to her Church and to those persons with whom she came into contact. Sir, even though she was not a direct product from St. Lucy, indirectly, we cherished her as part of our own, because of the connection, by marriage.

I want to say that we, in that part of the vineyard, understand how you have to deal with these issues. It is not by accident that she was a nurse, and she behaved in that way, because she had a good example. Some years ago, when this fair Party was able to take a nurse and make that nurse the Governor-General, the late Lady Husbands would have had a good example to follow. I can say she followed it well.

We in this country recognise that the role of a nurse, is one that any person should try to emulate, because it seems that once you have taken on that role, will have presented yourself in the right way, there is a possibility that there is a place on the hill, where you can be found.

I offer her family, once again, my deepest sympathy, and to all the women in Barbados, once you do what you have to do, there is a possibility that you can be another Lady Husbands or be a Dame.

I thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, on behalf of the entire House of Assembly, I take this opportunity to identify myself with those comments and to extend our deepest sympathies to His Excellency, and direct that the usual correspondence be sent to His Excellency in due course.

I now invite Honourable Members to stand for one minute's silence in commemoration of the passing of Her Excellency.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6,8,16,18,20,42(5),43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of this day's Sitting.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 2

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BORROWING UNDER THE SPECIAL LOANS ACT, CAP. 105 BY THE GOVERNMENT OF $165 000 000 FROM THE BARBADOS NATIONAL BANK INC. FOR THE PURPOSE

OF FINANCING THE BARBADOS ROAD NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

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

H A43 10.50 a.m. Sequence 5

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House A43, Sequence 06, 10.50 a.m.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, it is my duty this morning to pilot, before this Honourable Chamber, the Resolution mentioned by the Clerk of Parliament. The Resolution states, and I quote, that:

"WHEREAS by Section 2 of the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105 the Government is authorised from time to time to borrow from any bank, corporation, company or other institution sums of money not exceeding the aggregate BDS$1.5 billion on such terms as may be agreed upon between the Government and the lender of any such money;

AND WHEREAS by Section 3 of the said Act it is provided that any money borrowed under the authority of the Act shall be appropriated and applied to such purposes as Parliament may approve by Resolution, and that such money and interest payable thereon is charged upon the general revenues and assets of Barbados;

AND WHEREAS the Government considers it necessary to borrow the sum not exceeding $165 million by way of bonds to be issued by the Government from the Barbados National Bank Inc, a company incorporated in Barbados as Company No. 19285 and having its registered office at Independence Square, Bridgetown, Barbados for the purpose of financing the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project;"

Maybe, Sir, at this time, I will clarify for those following this debate that term refers to the ABC Highway, so when we refer to the Barbados National Network Infrastructure Improvement Project, we are talking about the ABC Highway.

"And Whereas the sum of $165 million is within the borrowing limit given to the Government under Section 2 of this said Act;

BE IT RESOLVED that Parliament approves the borrowing of the said sum not exceeding $165 000 000 from the Barbados National Bank Inc. for the purpose of financing the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project of which the terms and conditions are set out in the Schedule hereto."

Sir, if ever a catastrophe were wrought on the people of Barbados in terms of wanton unbridle spending, wastage, and recklessness, it was wrought by the Barbados Labour Party Administration in the years when it had the responsibility of taking charge of the project I referred to before, that is, the ABC Highway improvement.

Nobody in Barbados denies the fact that at the time of early consideration, around the year 2002, I think that is when my information indicates that the Cabinet started to look at what we could do to alleviate what was unacceptable traffic congestion in Barbados - Nobody denies the need for such an examination.

It is, however, clear in perusing the information within the Ministry, and indeed information available by discussion with members of the public, officials, engineers, bankers and consultants in construction, that the Barbados Labour Party's stewardship of the ABC Highway was wrought with indecision. It was wrought with confusion. It was wrought with the ability to ignore the advice of the technocrats and the consultants. It was recognisable by the fact that we were dealing with an Administration intent on doing their own thing.

Indeed, Sir, one wonders if it is not bordering on absolute corruption on the part of the Administration of the day, because the information is wrought with weighty considerations by the responsible Ministry, the Ministry of Transport and Works, about what should be the correct steps to take in a situation of this kind.

Sir, in 2002, the Barbados Labour Party Administration invited expressions of interest, to design and supervise a project to widen the Adams/Barrow/Cummins (ABC) Highway, between Warrens, Darcy Scott Roundabout, and the Highway 6 Junction, which would be familiarly known as the Gary Sobers Roundabout. It is clear that is where the confusion started because from there on, we are seeing a constant "tooing and froing" between the best advice of the Ministry and the technocrats, and the Administration of the day.

However, it is noteworthy, Sir, that somewhere around this time, 2002/2003, they entered into the picture, an organisation which was to become familiarly known to Barbadians as 3S, ever since that grand entry, there has been even more confusion to add.

At the initial presentation of 3S, they purported to the Government of Barbados that they would construct eight overpass bridges, widen the Highway between Everton Weekes and Norman Niles, upgrade the signalling system and undertake the Bridgetown traffic study and, by the way, Sir, create two monument parks to obviously house the monument of Bussa and Sir Garfield Sobers, two of our National Heroes.

Sir, that was about the time when the former Honourable Member for St. George North went on television in Barbados and told Barbadians - because he was then the Minister of Transport and Works - that he had found the panacea to all our troubles. He had found the solution to all our troubles. He was going to create - I remember it very well and I keep referring to it, in this Chamber - one or two or, maybe, eight flyovers, and these would be the solution.

Here is a Minister of Transport and Works, acting on information which he could have only gleaned from this mystic organisation called 3S, acting without the support, evidently without any kind of reference to the technocrats at the Ministry of Transport and Works, acting on its own, or I would believe more properly on behalf of his political directorate, telling the Barbadian people that he had found the solution for our traffic woes. This solution would cost in the Region of US$60 million and after that, all will be well.

I think that what epitomizes the confusion for the Barbadian public is that today, as we speak, there are no flyovers. If they were a feature of the Highway, which the Barbados Labour Party could say was their stamp of participation in a solution for traffic congestion, we should have come to office in January 2008, and found at least one, or two, or maybe eight of these great flyovers completed.

We should have then therefore, Sir, be grappling with the issue of maybe, widening the Highway. Truth be told, Sir, as testimony to the confusion, up to this day there are no flyovers. Thank God, too, because in truth and in fact, the designs were never completed and this was, obviously, a smokescreen for other activities, which the Barbados Labour Party was engaging.

House A43, Sequence 06, 11.00 a.m.

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Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: It was obviously a smokescreen for the movement of funds about Barbados and for overspending the monies of Barbadians, which is

why today we are talking about $165 million and not even the $60 million that was mentioned in passing in late 2004.

Mr. Speaker, from the time this organisation entered on the scene, we have had absolute confusion attending this project, and it was our wont, as a Government, to ensure that a special audit of this process be undertaken. Sir, the revelations of that audit would be brought to this Chamber in good time. Suffice it to say, that it is clear that serious infelicities occurred under the Barbados Labour Party, under the Honourable Member for St. George North.

There was total disregard for the tendering process. This company 3S (Barbados) Limited was allowed to continue discussion with the Government of Barbados while tenders were being sought, or apparently being sought by the Ministry. The truth is that this company, 3S (Barbados) Limited, never received an invitation to tender, neither did it ever tender for the construction of the Highway. The Honourable Member for St. George North knows that. It was by some magical relationship, some divine intervention I am hearing, that they were allowed to undertake a project which today will cost the Barbadian Government in the Region of $165 million, way over the estimates I referred to earlier which would have been $120 million, and way beyond the kind of numbers quoted by capable contractors and consultants in Barbados to actually carry out what we have completed, that is, the widening of the Highway between Warrens and the Sir Garfield Sobers Roundabout. The best considered estimates are in the Region of $80 million to $90 million and even that is considered to be a high figure.

Mr. Speaker, you would want to bring that project in well within those numbers, but as is characteristic of the Barbados Labour Party Administration of the day. That is why the people of Barbados had to intervene, and this is what we spoke to at that momentous occasion at the Trimart Roundabout, when at a public meeting we warned the people of Barbados and exposed for all to see and hear the kinds of secrets, the kinds of arrangements and the infelicities that were actually being nurtured within the bosom of the Barbados Labour Party. There was no tendering process. There was no attention to tendering, and that is important.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want the Honourable Member for St. George North getting up interrupting me on pointless points of orders, because the point is that not even due diligence was carried out by the Honourable Member for St. George North or the Barbados Labour Party on the company 3S (Barbados) Limited, which we are referring to.

Mr. Speaker, Barbadians would be aware by now that the only public information available about 3S (Barbados) Limited are infelicities which they were connected with in countries outside of Barbados, so why would we in Barbados want to entertain this type of organisation?

The approval of 3S (Barbados) Limited as the contractor for the ABC Highway Expansion Project, was made by the Planning and Priorities Committee of the Barbados Labour Party, prior to the completion of any adequate tendering process by the Ministry of Transport and Works. The local and other tenders who were invited complained about the fact that they were given four to five weeks to respond to a tender which normally would have attracted at least eight weeks' consideration.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Minister, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, is clearly misleading the House because he said that there was no tendering process and he now gets up and says that they responded to a tender. Is the Minister reading his files, or does he expect us on This Side to help him? The Minister has to tell us whether or not there was a tendering process because we have to follow this debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Okay. No point of order was found. Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: The point I want to make for the Honourable Chamber is that the point has already been made. I do not understand what the Honourable Member for St. George North is trying to get at, because I made it very clear in this Chamber that 3S (Barbados) Limited, to which he awarded the contract, was not one of those firms which was invited to tender, which was probably deliberate because of the reasons I gave already, so I do not understand what kind of red herring is being drawn across the path of this discussion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is deliberately misleading the House and he is not reading his minutes, or notes correctly. 3S (Barbados) Limited was one of the eight firms that tendered for the project. The Minister must not mislead this House. The Honourable Member must produce the facts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: The Honourable Member for St. George North is reading his notes, but I do not have any problem with him reading his notes. I am reading information that was provided to me by the professionals and those who conducted the audit into the project. Sir, they talked about seven companies to which letters were

sent. The Honourable Member for St. George North probably sent another letter to somebody else, and that is the eighth company he is talking about. I will name the seven companies, if necessary, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, this is an Honourable House. It is not fair for a Minister to get up in this House and castigate a Ministry. It is his Ministry now. Mr. Speaker, the eight firms that were invited to tender in January 2005, were Cast Engineering Service, DLN Consultants...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please state your point of order concisely. You are not permitted to give your speech now. You will have the opportunity, if you choose later on. Please state your point of order and let us have a ruling on it and move on.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Honourable Member is misleading the House because 3S (Barbados) Limited was invited to tender and they did tender like the other seven firms.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

House A43 Sequence 7

11.10 a.m.

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Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, 3S (Barbados) Limited was not invited to tender. According to the Ministry's documentation, a proposal was received from them before the invitation letter was issued to the other bidders. This implied that the integrity of the tendering process was seriously compromised. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. George North can take that for what it is worth. The people of Barbados have already spoken to it.

Mr. Speaker, the point is that 3S (Barbados) Limited was not one of the invited tenders. They were in discussion with the Honourable Member for St. George North. They were in discussion with the Barbados Labour Party Administration. Sir, that is obvious but they were not part of the official and recognised tendering process that would have normally been undertaken for an activity of this kind.

Mr. Speaker, let us move on. Sir, the confusion continues because along with the fact... Those who were invited to tender expressed, first of all, difficulties with the fact that the time for them to respond was too short. The other factor they responded to was the fact that the tender invitation lacked details, as did the entire execution of the project under the Barbados Labour Party.

There was no specific documentation indicating exactly what the Government of the day, under the Honourable Member for St. Peter as Prime Minister and the Honourable Member for St. George North as Minister of Transport and Works, wanted to see by way of a solution to the ABC Highway congestion. It meandered between widening the Highway and talked about the synchronisation of traffic lights, which we will get to, because that is another story.

Mr. Speaker, there was supposed to be synchronisation between traffic signals between the Norman Niles Roundabout and the Gary Sobers Roundabout. This would have averted the need, under their friendly presentation, not the tender's, because the tender's document did not speak to that.

Sir, that was the eighth tender to which the Honourable Member spoke. It spoke to the synchronisation of traffic lights, which would have allowed us to avert the need for the time being of widening the Highway between the Norman Niles Roundabout and the Gary Sobers Roundabout. Mr. Speaker, this has never been undertaken. The designs were never completed. Indeed, the designs for the entire project have been a source of contention between the Ministry and the company, who the Barbados Labour Party selected to carry out the project.

Mr. Speaker, the selection of 3S (Barbados) Limited was through a decision by the Planning and Priorities Committee of the Barbados Labour Party. The selection of 3S (Barbados) Limited was by dictate from the political directorate of the day. It said enough. This is what we want, this is what will happen. Sir, that is characteristic of the kind of leadership which emanated from the bosom of the Barbados Labour Party, and which we in Barbados have grown so tired of, that we had to make sure they were removed from Government in 2007.

Mr. Speaker, we, therefore, had to go about a different direction, one which would have meant some level of control and some level of measurement as to what was happening. Mr. Speaker, officials from the Ministry have constantly complained about the fact that along with no designs, there was not adequate measurement, there was never a full agreement on the rates to be paid to 3S (Barbados) Limited, so that they would invoice and the Ministry would pay, as they say, at their discretion. The Government of Barbados would pay.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement moved off on what was referred to as a rolling basis, that is, you roll in a valuation and the Barbados Labour Party would roll out some money.

Sir, that went on, and on, and on. There was no agreement how this would be managed financially.

We therefore, inherited a situation where, from time to time, the Barbados National Bank would say to the Ministry of Finance, that it needs something to carry in their hands to support the monies they were paying, that they needed a letter of comfort, a guarantee. Therefore, we continued to carry out this process, as the money rolled out of the Ministry and confusion reigned on the ABC Highway and the Barbados Labour Party laughed at the Barbadian public.

Mr. Speaker, around July 2008, we decided that enough was enough and we appointed local contractors to complete the ABC Highway. Mr. Speaker, 3S (Barbados) Limited vacated the scene and we undertook to complete the Highway, utilising Barbadian resources. Sir, let me just say, the facts are that we had the assurance from the two local contractors who are, in fact, the ones who were building the Highway. This company, 3S (Barbados) Limited truthfully...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George North, you are not on your feet but I can still hear you. If the asides are so loud that I can hear words like "criminal" and "this and that" crossing the Floor, it is definitely too loud. Please allow the Honourable Member to make his contribution in peace, as they say. Please continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member wants to talk about thief and thieving, but I am not in that with him.

Mr. SPEAKER: He will get his chance, just ignore him. Please continue, Honourable Member.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: When the Honourable Member gets the chance, he will tell us about thieving. Sir, I look forward to his contribution, when the Honourable Member gets the opportunity he will tell us about thieving.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, what we did was that we spoke to the confidence of the local contractors, C.O.W. Construction and Rayside Construction Limited who are, in fact, the persons building the Highway. They were the ones doing the excavation. They were the ones doing the filling and the compacting. They were the ones out there interpreting what little designs were provided and working with staff of the Ministry to ensure that the Highway was indeed being worked on.

Mr. Speaker, why should we continue paying an overseas company these margins, a company that has brought nothing to the table? They were supposed to have brought to the table what they call a PPP - Private/Public/Partnership. They were supposed to have brought financing to the table for this project but the Government of Barbados had to undertake the financing of this project from day one. 3S (Barbados) Limited brought no such thing to the table, so why were we entertaining them? That is what we were doing, entertaining them, when they were not adding any value to the project. Sir, the Honourable Member knows that.

Mr. Speaker, we engaged the services of these local contractors, C.O.W Construction and Rayside Construction Limited. These companies, under the guidance of our consulting engineers, would undertake the completion of the ABC Highway. That is why Barbadians can see what they are seeing today, a Highway which, at the end of August, will be delivered to the Government of Barbados as complete, a Highway which is already providing tremendous relief for the public as they mend their way to and from work in Barbados, a Highway which has allowed local artisans, local contractors and local consultants to engage their minds and their bodies around fulfilling this kind of activity for their country, and a Highway on which we have been able to constrain the expenditure on because of the actions we took.

Mr. Speaker, even as we came to office, the Barbados Labour Party was engaged in discussions with the same 3S (Barbados) Limited about flyovers.

11.20 a.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, again, here comes the flyover talk again and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, who is not in her seat as usual, comes in here and complains about Order Papers. Sir, her Order Paper is in St. Kitts, that is where her Order Paper is, so I do not know what the issue was last time I was around.

Sir, the point we are making is that they have promised to build overpasses, or flyovers, and put $145 million more dollars on the backs of Barbadians. Sir, that is the contemplation of the Barbados Labour Party. I was engaging my mind and $1 million can provide about what, 10 housing solutions?

Mr. SPEAKER: Is this a private conversation Honourable Member, or are you still addressing me?

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, I am still speaking to you. A million dollars can provide about 15 to 20 housing solutions. Sir, for every million dollars that they wasted, the Honourable Members on That Side should contemplate the 20 households which have been unsatisfied in their ambitions to own a piece of this rock in Barbados. They should be ashamed of the kind of wastage and, do not talk

about the $5 lots that they could have provided. Sir, they should be ashamed at the kind of wastage of which they were managers.

Mr. Speaker, we appointed a team to carry forward this very important work. We appointed Maurice King Limited, as our Attorney-at-law to deal with the legal issues and, as we know, the public of Barbados is aware that there is an ongoing dispute between 3S and the Government of Barbados that is being dealt with by the legal authorities.

Mr. Speaker, we appointed Design Collaborative as the architects and quantity surveyors and the planning quantity surveyors for the project because another feature of the hodgepodge arrangements under the Barbados Labour Party was that there was no proper measurement. We could not even tell what had been properly paid for and what had, in fact, been excavated as against what were the submissions and valuations being made.

Sir, we appointed Professional Engineering Services as our project management and civil engineering services company and, we have gone forward to provide the solution we have today. Mr. Speaker, most of all, along with these appointments, we empowered Barbadians to complete this Highway.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen the implementation of what is now popularly known as the Wildey triangle and, Sir, I need to speak to that a little bit. Again, this is not a new solution and information is being brought to light because, from time to time, the Ministry has to look at solutions to road management and to traffic congestion. This solution laid in the Ministry of Transport and Works for some time, I have estimated it to be at least 10 years, and the Honourable Member for St. George North is well aware of it.

Mr. Speaker, it ran in contradiction to his friends' ideas. His friends were adamant that it could not work. His friends were persistent. They even came to try to bully me about the fact that the triangle could now work but, Sir, I would have no part of it.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to the technocrats and I have seen today the implementation of the Wildey triangle as a solution to traffic in that area and, Sir, the only person I have heard speak to this arrangement negatively is the one who constantly speaks to negativity in this country, and who will have to live with her word. Sir, that is the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East as she and contributions constantly refer to an accident waiting to happen, this, that and what kind of tragedy we are trying to place on the backs of Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, it is an arrangement that is essentially working and we are committed to unfolding a series of educational training programmes, so that Barbadians could understand better how to use this emerging arrangement. Sir, all that is required, is that we understand that we are accustomed to traffic merging on the right and we are just saying to Barbadians, like you do in bigger countries, to let us now entertain and learn to use the arrangement where you also have traffic merging to the left.

Sir, if carefully attended to, I am convinced and the technicians at the Ministry are convinced that this arrangement could redound to the benefit of traffic management in the area. Sir, we intend to roll out the appropriate public campaign to make sure that Barbadians are fully aware of how to utilise this Highway arrangement and to utilise it safely.

Mr. Speaker, the point is that it has averted a $145 million in expenditure contemplated by the Barbados Labour Party Administration and, Sir, that is significant. Sir, $145 million was the promised arrangement under the Barbados Labour Party for the erection of the flyovers, flyovers that up to this day have not been presented in design form to anybody or have not been approved. Sir, even as we contemplated the solution, the Ministry remained unconvinced that they would serve in any way to alleviate the traffic congestion.

Mr. Speaker, what we have found is that the congestion occurs from the need to provide opportunities for traffic to move away from the roundabouts quickly, heading into Bridgetown in the morning and heading out of Bridgetown in the evening. Sir, these are questions that we will continue to address as we go forward.Mr.Speaker, Barbadians need not worry in this regard. We will remain committed to ensuring that traffic management is smoothly handled in good order in our country.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party used the World Cup of 2007 to justify its discussions and its decisions. The truth is, Sir, that when they finally made a decision to go ahead with the work on the ABC Highway, it was clear to all that the work on the ABC Highway could not be completed in time for the World Cup and, Sir, the Barbados Labour Party must, therefore, stand condemned in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, the short time scale in which bidders were expected to respond and the restrictions of the number of companies bidding, is a true indication of the compromise of the process and the Barbados Labour Party is responsible for this. Sir, I am not even sure, from the information I was able to gather, if the firms invited even had the financial capacity to carry out what they were being required to provide.

Sir, these are the kinds of findings that run contrary to the mouthings of the Honourable Members on the Other Side because they demonstrate fully that the arrangements for the ABC Highway were contemplated by a political directorate, who were not listening to the issues being raised by the technical people.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Honourable Members on the Other Side were aware of who the eventual, successful contractor would be and, as I have said before, the integrity of the entire tendering process was compromised with the full knowledge of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East and the Honourable Member for St. George North. Sir, there was never full and final agreement on the project details.

H/A43/11.30 a.m. Sequence 9

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Were we widening the entire Highway? Were we widening some of the Highway? Were we using steel bridges, or were we using concrete? These kinds of interventions were skillfully used by the Barbados Labour Party to try to engage the minds of Barbadians why they would go forward in an arrangement, in which the entire tendering process was compromised.

It is clear that the Ministry of Finance, under the Barbados Labour Party, paid no serious attention to the financial details of the project. The project, as I said, was allowed to start on a rolling basis. There were no firm financial arrangements. There were no full agreed designs, and project cost was allowed to soar unattended. This is an indication of total negligence.

Sir, besides the financial challenge as we intimated, the contemplation of a BOLT, or a PPP arrangement was never a serious contemplation, because the project does not have the characteristics that can inform the best decisions on a PPP. The public Highways in Barbados are owned by the Government, so we will have a situation in which you are leasing a facility from yourself, and that could not be entertained. So there were flaws right throughout the process in which the Barbados Labour Party contemplated the Highway?

Sir, why was the Barbados Labour Party rushing headlong into this arrangement with 3S, which saw us pay in the Region, as I indicated already, some $40 or $50 million than we needed to spend to an overseas company, when in truth and in fact, the local contractors were doing the work, are doing the work, are capable of doing the work, and are doing an excellent job in completing our ABC Highway.

Sir, what is the way forward? Well, today we make the arrangements for the financing of $165 million for this project. These will include certain modifications at some of the roundabouts which have been brought about because of the sizes of the roundabouts, and the fact that we can utilise the space contemplated initially for flyovers, we could utilise the space to create dedicated lanes, so that at the Darcy Scott Roundabout, which is familiarly known as the Simpsons Roundabout, we can create dedicated lanes into the complex, including Chefette, the supermarket, other business places and the Government office, which we have there.

At the Everton Weekes Roundabout, we have been able to create a dedicated lane going to Jackson from Warrens. We have been able to create a dedicated lane coming from Jackson and going left to join the Highway. We have been able to create a dedicated lane coming from the Clyde Walcott Roundabout, and intending to go down Green Hill.

These are important considerations as we as an Administration, contemplate the completion of two new office facilities at Warrens. These will form part of the traffic solution in the Warrens area, along with additional roundabouts. Further widening of our roadway network to reach as far back, eventually, is being considered now by the Ministry, to reach as far back as Lancaster, to allow for a more modern approach to the management of traffic at Redman's Village. The provision of a roundabout arrangement, which can see traffic going towards Prior Park and the university area in a freer and easy way.

Sir, the Ministry's mind is occupied at this time in presenting design details for consideration of this Cabinet, of the kind of road improvement traffic management that will be so necessary, as we complete the two office buildings at Warrens, the office buildings which will be managed differently to the one that the Honourable Members on That Side is accustomed to, with better conditions for workers.

Sir, remember, one of the things that we have inherited in this country is absolutely unacceptable conditions for our workforce, our Public Service. The Barbados Labour Party needs to hang themselves in shame this morning, not only for the wasted funds on the ABC Highway, but for the condition in which they left the offices in the Ministries throughout the country.

I did a short tour yesterday morning of the Ministry of Public Work. This is probably one of the better ones, and the needs are there. The kind of hodgepodge arrangements which have been allowed to mark the Administration of the Barbados Labour Party can no longer be entertained.

Sir, we have a situation where the Honourable Attorney-General cannot even settle his business. He cannot get his work done effectively because of the way they are scattered here, there and everywhere, under the Honourable Member for St. George North. They sit and smirk at these kinds of considerations in a period when the money was plenty, but it is obvious that this money was not utilised in providing adequate solutions for the people of Barbados. The money was utilised to ensure that political operatives would be satisfied and that their term in office would be never-ending, but Barbadians had different ideas.

Sir, even in the face of all of that, in 2008, they made the correct decision to bring the kind of financial madness which attended the Barbados Labour Party, and brought into office an Administration which is serious about the management of the finances of the country, and which intends to demonstrate to Barbadians where we can and will effect changes to bring about better conditions for all concerned.

Sir, the Highway will create new opportunities for Barbadian entrepreneurship. It will require a reconsideration of our traffic management. It will require that the Transport Board, for instance, sits down and reorganises its routing system. It will create opportunities for the creation of transit stations on, or about the Highways, at Hothersal, Norman Niles, and the Garfield Sobers Roundabout.

We even now should be looking at providing effective interchanging stations which would provide parking for buses to turn, opportunities for shopping, business, the provision of medical services, the provision of Government services, taxes, payment of licences, et cetera, and the creation of new businesses in all these little new pockets around Barbados.

Sir, we need micro business. We need to move away from the concept that Barbadians must get into their vehicles every morning and crowd and push their way into Bridgetown, one person in a car.

There is a very interesting statistic which speaks to the number of vehicles in Barbados. I think the number quoted is something in the Region of a hundred and something thousands. The point being, although our ownership of vehicles compares very well to bigger countries like the United States and England, the usership in Barbados is too high, because we have no real decent choice.

We have a challenge as a Government to create a choice for Barbadians to say, I can take a regular service from my village, from Oistin, Charles Rowe Bridge, or the Glebe, where the Honourable Member lives sometimes. I can take a regular service from Hothersal.

H A43 11.40 a.m. Sequence 10

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

House A43, Sequence 11, 11.40 a.m.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, I can park my vehicle, I can get into an air-conditioned comfortable bus, which is on time, and get to my office. Point being, Sir, that we stand to save large amounts of money in foreign reserves, in purchases of fuel and, in terms of the wear and tear that our vehicles go through, therefore, it is an opportunity which we must grab.

Likewise, Sir, our providers of transport, our private sector vehicles regularly known as the PSVs, the minibuses and the ZRs, and our taxi men, we need to expand the opportunities for this cadre of business person in Barbados. Allow our taxi men to understand that they must develop the City of Bridgetown beyond the confines, which they now have determined, that is from lower Broad Street to upper Broad Street. This, I believe, is a myopic arrangement and I think taxis are missing a grand opportunity, when they do not look to expand the limits of the City by utilising some of these newly created areas.

Mr. Speaker, we need to take in the places like the Garrison Savannah, Holborn, or the Spring Garden area as holding points for our taxis, so that we can move through the City then and engage in even greater business opportunities. This must be part of the ambition of an Administration which cares about seeing this country develop beyond the kind of consumption that is characteristic of it today, but which must be substituted for a contemplated considered drive to economies, considered drive to recognising that we must save and we must manage carefully, if we are going to be able to survive in this very competitive world ahead of us, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, the opportunities, therefore, will be explored by our Ministry, the public will be engaged fully, and the stakeholders will be brought into our confidence. We are already in deep discussion with the providers of transport, the private sector vehicles, ACTO as they are called. We are engaging them in early discussion about the kinds of opportunities we can provide for them. Sir, not the kind of punitive arrangements that were characterised by the Barbados Labour Party, an arrangement, where they saw that nothing went to these people. They were promised the world in 1996, under the Barbados Labour Party Administration. Nothing has come of it.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Democratic Labour Party are seeking to find solutions in traffic management. We are

seeking to bring about completions, and end games then, Sir, which will see these businesspeople being able to participate fully in an economic pie, which I believe in truth and in fact, is largely unexplored and untapped.

Sir, we need to address these issues as a people. We need to address as a Ministry, and to address them aggressively. Sir, we have not been able to deliver the bus stand at Sea View. It is a priority in my Ministry of Transport and Works, and I made it very clear that this must be delivered.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, we are working with the private sector and public sector agencies to ensure that this comes about in the very near future.

In the River Terminal, where the then Administration made numerous promises, we are saying to Barbadians that we have an area there which we can integrate with the existing Terminal. We can integrate our passenger traffic. We have a new boardwalk that has been developed. We have the expansion of a city in the making, which we need to take advantage of.

Sir, the demolition of the old market will be completed very soon, after which the planning for the construction of a new terminal for the public sector vehicles will begin. We need, therefore, Sir, to provide real solutions for Barbadians.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, one of the aspects of the Highway that will not form part of the August delivery, is the question of the overpass bridges for pedestrians. This is a matter that, like so many of the other matters, was left undone by the last Administration, so we have had to take this in hand. The plan is to provide overpass bridges at St. Barnabas and to provide overpass bridges at the Pine, the junction there by CBC. Sir, that was the thinking at this time.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: These are not flyovers. These are pedestrian bridges for safe traversing of the four lanes of the Highway.

There have been, of course, approaches for consideration of other areas, and I am sure that some Honourable Members will revert to them again today. We have had tragedies on our Highways, and one tragedy is too much, for instance, the Spring Garden Highway.

Sir, we have had areas like the Spring Garden, Lodge Road and Kendal Hill in Christ Church being approached about, and we need to put these solutions in place. The technology is there. We need, therefore, to work with our partners to find the financial arrangement that can bring about these long-lasting solutions for Barbadians.

At the same time, Sir, we need our Police to act urgently to make sure that the Laws of Barbados are adhered to. We need, Sir, as an Administration, to make sure that the vending in uncontrolled areas is brought under control. I hear the Police all the time, as they talk about not having the muscle to carry out these. Sir, as you know, we have Laws on our Statute Book, even as we wait for the final draft of the Road Traffic Amendment Act, which deals with vending on our public Highways, and we need to bring this under control. It is dangerous. Only last week I observed another accident that, in part, was contributed to this kind of activity, and we need to spare our nation that possibility.

Mr. Speaker, we need to put in place too, on the ABC Highway, a maintenance programme, which will see it properly cleaned. Presently, under an arrangement with Beautify Barbados, an agency of the National Conservation Commission, the curbs of the Highway are cleaned and debushed, on a fairly regular basis.

Mr. Speaker, of course, there is the introduction of the median down the centre of the Highway which has introduced another area of responsibility. At this time, our consultants are working with the Ministry to arrange for a contract, which will see these medians properly and regularly cleaned, so that our Highway is safe.

The question of lighting is an urgent one. I am again urging the Ministry to work with the consultant on the project to ensure that we have the equipment available to provide the proper and effective lighting, and the repair of our lights on the Highway. One evening without lights on the Highway is too much, as far as I am concerned.

Even now, I think some lights are not working in the area of Warrens, as we complete the final movement of a switch box, which the Honourable Member for St. George North placed where he felt like. I am surprised that he did not place it in St. George itself, but it was placed in an inaccessible area, so the technicians are now busying themselves making sure that this switch box is placed in an area that is safe, so that we can carry out the maintenance on a regular basis.

Sir, the crash barriers are being put in place. The erection of the wall at the gully outside Warrens, which is an important area, and it is part of the Constitution belt. Those walls are being erected, even as we speak, and will be part of the completion process. Some of the crash

barriers, regretfully, may not be in place on the August 29, but the Highway will be substantially completed and handed over to the Government of Barbados.

House A43, Sequence 11, 11.50 a.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, the point is that we will provide an opportunity for Barbadians to move around in a much safer environment. As I said, even as we complete the ABC Highway, we need to start planning for other routes and other traffic management solutions which will bring about relief in Barbados. For instance, we need to decide how we are going to manage the traffic leaving the roundabout at Warrens and going down Green Hill.

Mr. Speaker, we have to decide to put restrictions for turning across traffic in place because this brings about a lot of stoppages. From the time we have one stoppage, it cascades back to our roundabouts and indeed beyond our roundabouts. We need to look at alternative routes occupying probably lands in the area of the Lester Vaughan School and Jackson. These are areas which were looked at from time to time by the Ministry in the past that need to be brought back to the table for discussion and final implementation.

Mr. Speaker, Waterford Bottom creates an opportunity for the introduction of another lane. I know that this lane is high on the priority listing for urgent implementation by the Ministry. Sir, we will have a dedicated arrangement for traffic going to Combermere School and allow for two clean lanes into Bridgetown. Even as we speak, we are completing Stadium Road, not particularly in time for Kadooment, although it is important that it would be finished for that event too, but to make sure that those people who have been deprived of a decent road for so many years under the Barbados Labour Party Administration get some relief.

Mr. Speaker, I am amazed when I read the files and the complaints of Barbadians about the lack of regard for their plight by the Honourable Member for St. George North in his tenure as Minister of Transport and Works in this country. This is something which I have sought to turn around, and with the cooperation of the staff of the Ministry in large measures, we are beginning to see some relief.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to speak a lot about signage because signage would have to be part of the solution on the ABC Highway. Indeed, this is probably the time to bring Barbadians on board as to the technical thinking on the Highway. Many Barbadians who would have travelled overseas have been on Highways which are long where you can see miles ahead of you. Even as near as in Trinidad and Tobago, where there is the Solomon Hochoy Highway, you can see for miles ahead of you.

Our Highway, either fortunately or unfortunately, is a much shorter entity, and indeed the intersections occur more regularly. Mr. Speaker, the advice of the Ministry, and the advice which I have taken on board, is that we cannot necessarily implement the arrangement we hear of in the larger countries where you stay dead left unless you are overtaking because we come upon the intersections at such regular intervals, and we are, in fact, dealing with a dual carriageway, not a massive express Highway as such.

Sir, I and my staff, hear Barbadians on the call-in programmes and we talk about it, and Barbadians need to begin to understand that to force traffic to stay on the left lane, unless you are overtaking, would mean that you are likely to create an even greater catastrophe as you approach the intersection and try them to suddenly move over to do the right turn, or to go straight through, so I think that this is good advice. Mr. Speaker, part of our public education programme will see Barbadians being reminded of this feature and assisted as they deal with it.

Mr. Speaker, road signage is something that we need to bring on board in a more meaningful way, not only on the ABC Highway. At a recent meeting with our local contractors, I indicated to them that as far as I am concerned, road repairs, or road resurfacing, is not complete until they have put back in place the markings on that road, and if there were no markings, until they put in place the markings for the first time. This is something which I hold very sacred.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if we mark our roads properly, not only our Highways, but our small roads in our villages and towns, and provide adequate signage, indicating where you should stop and when you are coming to an intersection, it would bring about a much more orderly society.

Mr. Speaker, the marking of our roads is a very simple process. You measure the width of the road and if there are two vehicles passing in opposite directions, you divide that width by two and put a line down the middle. To me, that is all we need to do, because if you have an arrangement now where two vehicles pass and the road is not wide enough, they would have the same issues as if that road was marked, so certainly our intersections need to be marked.

Mr. Speaker, as we continue to advertise ourselves as an international destination, it is important that persons driving on our roads for the first time, can see signage that adequately provides them with information which they can use to predict what is happening ahead of them so that they

would not have to depend, like Barbadians, on the local knowledge.

When I became the Minister of Transport and Works, there were very few depots outfitted to do road markings. We have 13 depots in the country and only three or four of them are outfitted to do road markings. I have already mandated that all depots be equipped with the painting equipment to do markings in our villages. I am not talking about the thermoplastic material that we use on the Highways with the long stretches, I am talking about the intersections at places like Oistins, Maxwell and Fairways in Christ Church. Sir, forgive me if I refer to areas in Christ Church South today in particular, but this is the message I want to send.

Mr. Speaker, I want to use this opportunity to send a message to the team at the Ministry of Transport and Works, that we need to bring forward this activity as an urgent project and put it on the front burner in respect of making our roads tidy and manageable for the people. It is urgent, it is important and it would serve to preserve lives in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, the main signage on the Highway has to be improved. We need to provide larger signage in certain areas. Sir, the signage on the Highway reminds me sometimes of what I call subtitles or postscripts, the things you see at the end of a contract, that are sneaked away somewhere in a corner and if you are lucky and you have the inclination, you would notice them and would read them. Signage must hit you in your face as you use the Highway, so that you can see what is happening.

Mr. Speaker, traffic approaching the Upton junction from the CBC Highway should be seeing very clearly that we have an intersection approaching which can be dangerous. It is downhill, it has curves in it, so you need to slow down and be cautious.

Mr. Speaker, where signage cannot work, the Ministry should also be prepared to intervene with physical intervention like traffic cameras of some sort to make sure that the traffic is controlled because, as I said before, one accident, or one death of a Barbadian, or a visitor on our roads, is too much, and it is something that we need to eliminate as much as we can.

Sir, we are committed to the cause of seeing a safer and better Barbados. We are committed to the cause of seeing a road network which will meet the need of the travelling public, which will bring about greater opportunity for business in Barbados, which can turn our country into managers of our scarce resources, which can turn our country into one where the emissions on the road are controlled and where, by implementing these ideas, we can even reduce traffic density in the areas which I mentioned a while ago.

House A43 Sequence 12

12:00 noon

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, by reducing this traffic density, we postponed the need for the kind of interventions which we have talked about. Sir, I am sure that personnel from the Ministry will take on board those areas to which we have spoken, those areas which we have in our grasp to complete, and those areas which we must complete urgently, if we are going to be a meaningful organisation going forward.

Mr. Speaker, as we contemplate this Resolution, and as we bring to a close the debacle administered by the Barbados Labour Party Administration, as we bring some order to the arrangements for the payment of the Highway and to allow Barbadians to understand the full story of what occurred between 2002 and 2007, under the Barbados Labour Party Administration.

Sir, this is to allow Barbadians to understand the reason we had to intervene in July 2008, to bring about an end to the spillage of blood, in this case, the blood, sweat and tears of the people of Barbados, the money of Barbadians which was being thrown down the proverbial drain of the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, we had to bring that to a close. We had to allow Barbadians to understand why we have to bring on board and to bring into our confidence, the expertise of local personnel who can leave our shores and build Highways all over the world, but who are not allowed the fullest opportunity to take part in our own construction here in Barbados.

We had to allow Barbadians to understand what we meant when we said that we had to correct the mismanagement of the Barbados Labour Party, characterised by a saying which has already been dedicated to the records of this Honourable Chamber, that is, that you should bring drinks because somebody else will pay.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this Resolution to this Honourable Chamber.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in this debate on this Resolution. Sir, first of all, I want to pose the question, why is this Government borrowing $165

million, when it says on page l04 of the 2008, Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals that the increase in fees, including the road taxes that Government put on the backs of Barbadians, would gross $46 million in a full financial year, or $138 million in three years, which is $4 million less than the Minister of Transport and Works said it would cost to complete the ABC Highway some time ago? Mr. Speaker, we are here today to debate this Resolution, the Government is borrowing $l65 million.

Mr. Speaker, when we left office by the end of 2007, the ABC Highway would have cost Government approximately $l25 million. Today the Government is asking Barbadians to pay an additional $40 million. Sir, therefore, we ask ourselves the question, to whom would this $40 million be going? Why is it that Barbadians were told in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals that the increase in tax for private cars, from $265 to $400, the increase in road taxes from $350 to $450, the increase in road taxes from $600 to $900, the increase in road taxes from $1 060 to $1 600, and an increase of 60 per cent in all cases by the Government of Barbados. Sir, the list goes on and on. These fees were supposed to pay for the ABC Highway. Today the Government is taking the fees...

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

Mr. SPEAKER: In what way is the Honourable Member misleading this Honourable House?

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House by quoting from the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, so he claims. Sir, nowhere in the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals can one find that the increased fees charged were for the ABC Highway, and I think the Honourable Member should withdraw those remarks.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said, at the time, that these increased fees would go to pay for the ABC Highway. Sir, the Prime Minister said these fees would amount to approximately $46 million in revenue. Sir, the question is that the Government finds itself in a bind. They cannot collect the $46 million because since the increases in fees, many persons are not paying. Sir, for the very first time, we have people in Barbados who are driving about this country...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House and must not do so. Sir, the Government has not found itself in a bind. Sir, any bind in which this Government finds itself is as a result of the arrangements the Honourable Member would have made with 3S (Barbados) Limited, the legal shenanigans which we now have to go through, just like the Warrens building, to which the Honourable Member is also familiar. Sir, we are not in a bind. We have to tidy up the mess that was left by the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, it is as simple as that.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I have posed the question, and I know all Government Members are going to rise on points of order. Sir, I expect them to rise on points of order because I will be long in this debate.

Mr. Speaker, the additional $40 million the Government is asking Barbadians to pay - Sir, Barbadians must understand that this Government intends to raise further revenue to pay for this additional $40 million. Barbadians across this country are being asked to pay $l65 million, after the Government said that the $46 millions was sufficient to pay for the ABC Highway.

Sir, when the Barbados Labour Party left office, Phase I of the ABC Highway was costing Barbadians $l25 million. I am saying that between 2008 and today, this $40 million that Government is asking Barbadians to pay is to pay the operatives of the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, the $125 million was supposed to be the money to complete the Highway before 2007. Sir, at the end of 2007, the roads were not completed. This meant that everybody in Barbados knew that there would have been cost overruns on this road. Sir, we spoke to this before.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy better not get into this because the Honourable Member does not know the facts. I am saying the Minister must tell this Honourable House which engineering firm will be receiving 6 per cent of the total cost. Mr. Speaker, I am saying this additional $40 million, that the firm Principle Consultant Professional Engineering Services Limited is being charged 6 per cent.

The Honourable Member also made the point about legal fees for a Maurice King Associates. Sir, who are these persons, when up to 2007 the Attorney-General's Office was doing all the legal work on this firm? I am saying that the Minister must tell this Honourable House what percentage this firm Maurice King Associates is charging this Government and what percentage Design Collaborative is charging the Government.

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Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Minister must get back up and tell this House if my information is wrong, and if the Government is being charged 6 per cent of the total $165 million, or of the additional $40 million because that is what the public of Barbados is being asked to pay.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister and the Government are on record that somebody has been stealing in this project and the Minister and the Government must now put on the table all the facts. I do not want to come to this House and make the public believe that the people of Barbados had a corrupt Government.

Sir, they must come and put the facts because This Side, very soon, in the fullness of time, will be asking questions and summoning the Public Accounts Committee to ask questions on this project. We need to know about this $40 million. We need to know more abut this project and we need to know all these things.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that since the Barbados Labour Party left office this project has gone haywire, that the officers in the Ministry of Public Works are being sidelined...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I am most sorry that the Honourable Member has chosen to mislead the House so gravely in relation to this matter. The Auditor General of Barbados has carried out an analysis of this project, which the Honourable Member knows about because it relates to the period in which he was Minister. Regrettably, the Minister did not make it a document of the House, but I will do so because I do not want to delay the Public Accounts Committee since the Member says that the Public Accounts Committee wants to meet to consider this project and I do not want to delay it. I know that the Law would be such that any document that is laid - in fact, I believe it may even be referred to and can be considered by the Public Accounts Committee.

Sir, at page 36 of this Report, the Auditor General has conclusions and recommendations which clearly point to glaring deficiencies by the Honourable Member for St. George North, when he was Minister, who is speaking with this forked tongue in here today.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that remark. Sir, he is speaking so disingenuously in the House today. The Honourable Member is my friend, but I am most disappointed at these things...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, has that Report not been already laid in the House?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No. Sir, it has not been laid in the House. I have referred to it and I will make it a document of the House. I will lay the substantive report and I give the House the undertaking that it will be laid and I challenge the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee to summon a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee immediately to consider the very grave comments that have been made by the Auditor-General that amounts to the monumental incompetence, malfeasance and mis-appropriation that took place under the watch of the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, as I have said, Government must tell the people of Barbados why they are paying this additional $40 million and who really is receiving this $40 million. Sir, when you look at the staff of the Ministry of Public Works, you have more than 12 competent engineers within the Ministry of Public Works. We never invited, or had an external engineer put on the staff of the Ministry of Public Works. Sir, the Minister is an engineer, yet you have an additional engineer being foisted on the people of Barbados and you have to pay him.

Mr. Speaker, something is wrong. Why is it that the Ministry of Public Works that has a Chief Technical Officer, who is an engineer, the Minister is an engineer and there are more than 12 engineers within the Ministry of Public Works, yet we have another person, not necessary on the staff, but is being paid from the budget of the National Housing Corporation?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Sir, these are not what the Government had to put before the House. I am going to refer to what the Auditor General said. I am sorry that it might cause the Honourable Member to conclude his speech immaturely but, Sir, I am going to say it. I quote from paragraph 5(h) of page 37:

"The commencement of works without full designs and, therefore, a realistic construction cost has contributed to the disagreement between the contractor and the Ministry. Construction costs have soared and they could not agree to a final cost."

Mr. Speaker, the reason I had to do this is that the Honourable Member for St. George North said in this Chamber previously, and he misled this House, that a final cost was agreed as far as he was concerned as Minister but, Sir, this is the Auditor General speaking:

"If the Ministry had awaited the full design and final construction cost, they would have been able to evaluate the project cost and determined before the construction commenced, whether the costs were reasonable and avoid

the issues that the project had encountered with respect to the costs."

Mr. Speaker, this is the only cost we are dealing with.

"In addition, it was not possible to sign a formal design, build/lease contract because there was no agreement on the cost of the project."

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is continuing to mislead the House by giving the impression that he had settled a cost and that this Government has gone in excess of what was a settled cost by him and is now spending $40 million, when from the outset the Government said that the project must stop. Sir, based on what the Honourable Member said to this House, we agreed that we would pay the $117 million only to find....

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The point of order is that the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The price was never settled by the Honourable Member or the previous Administration and the Auditor General himself condemned the actions of the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. SPEAKER: the Honourable Member for St. George North, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that by 2007, we had agreed to a price of $117 million. However, it was estimated that the $125 million would have covered any additional works to be done on the ABC Highway. Therefore, I cannot agree.

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Mr. G. A. CLARKE: . . .

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is using an estimate as an actual figure. As you know, an estimate cannot be an actual figure.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, I want to push on. The Government must tell us in the course of this debate, who would be paid this extra money.

The Minister must tell this Honourable House why the engineers in the Ministry of Public Works are not being used on this project, when they have been used from time immemorial. I am saying that no previous Government before has misled this Honourable House, as the Minister has done today. Sir, the Minister must understand that the Chief Technical Officer in the Ministry of Public Works is the Chief Engineer by Law.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have just accused the Honourable Minister of misleading the House, which is a very serious accusation. Please indicate how he has misled the House, or withdraw the comments just put forward.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Sir, he has misled the Honourable House in several ways today. First of all, he said that 3S came to Barbados in 2002, which is not true. Sir, 3S came to Barbados in 2005, that is the first time. Secondly, the firm 3S was introduced by the public servants in the Ministry of Public Works. I am saying that the Minister has misled this Honourable House on several occasions because he never presented the facts. He just came and said things.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, just a minute, please. In my view, simply to state what is your version of facts, if he has a different position does not amount, in my view, to misleading the House. Pleas tread carefully when you are making this accusation.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, I was the Minister at the time, and I met with 3S in 2005. Therefore, I must know when I met with them.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. A very serious charge was made in this House, which the Honourable Member for St. George North would have to withdraw. The Honourable Member said that the Chief Technical Officer is an engineer, and it has been taken very lightly even though it is a fact, because it gives the impression that the Chief Technical Officer could do work for the Ministry and bill the Ministry for work outside of his job. That is a very serious point.

Mr. SPEAKER: He never said that. Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy has just introduced to this House something that I never even thought about. I did not even think that a foreign engineer had to bill the Ministry. The Chief Technical Officer is paid a salary under a specific scale. The point is, the Ministry is now asked to pay an additional officer, who is not the Chief Technical Officer, who does not operate under a particular scale, who is not answerable to the Minister, and who is at the Ministry doing his own thing. That is the point.

Sir, I am saying that when you have a situation where the consultant is being paid from the Ministry, and

his son is being paid as the engineer, you have a problem. That is why the Government of Barbados is asking taxpayers, again, to pay an additional $40 million. I am saying that the Government should not come here today for $125 million. Even if you added an additional 10 per cent, what percentage is $40 million of $165 million. It is outrageous.

Sir, this morning a gentleman came to me and said, "You guys in the Opposition are not doing anything, everything seems to have been a 60 per cent increase, but you are not saying anything, everything is in the 60s." This 60 per cent, 160 per cent, just an additional $5 million. What is wrong, $165 million and they increased water rates by 60 per cent.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member does not know his maths. He is misleading the House. Sir, 60 per cent of $125 million is $75 million. The Honourable Member is telling Barbadians that, instead of coming into the House for $165 million, the country should be charged $175 million, because $125 plus $75 is $200 million. Even though we are under, the Honourable Member is still complaining, because we are under by $35 million, according to his estimates.

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Sir, I want to move on. My time is getting short.

I have unlimited time? I did not know that.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please. Honourable Member, as the principal spokesman on the matter for the Opposition, you have unlimited time.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, I said to you, only yesterday, that I like to be in the company of the Honourable Member for St. John, so I am enjoying his presence in the House today. I am enjoying the presence of the Honourable Member for St. John in this Honourable House today. I know that he will follow this debate very carefully.

I want to read his speech, because a lot of Honourable Members and the public do not read the speeches of the Prime Minister, but I do. I usually read the speeches of the Prime Minister. I want to read his section on the Highway, because the Honourable Member for St. Lucy challenged me.

Mr. SPEAKER: What document are you reading?

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I am reading the Budgetary Proposals for 2008, delivered by the Honourable Member for St. John, the Honourable Prime Minister, Page 102, because I was saying today that the $46 million the Honourable Member said would cover the ABC Highway, should be taken from this $165 million as well, if anything. This is what the Honourable Member for St. John said:

"In addition to its scheduled road maintenance and improvement programme, the Government is now saddled with the costs of financing and servicing the obligations left to us by the former Administration, in respect of the ABC Highway widening and flyover project.

I have already explained that this project proceeded on a rolling basis without any limits."

Sir, the Minister did not explain what is a rolling basis, nor did he, the Prime Minister, explain what is a rolling basis and has left the country no wiser. A rolling basis, according to the Democratic Labour Party, is not really what it is, because you were not able to settle on the design at the time...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Member, but as you said, he has unlimited time. I am going to refer again to the Auditor-General's comments, Page 3.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Honourable Member is misleading the House because the Honourable Member said that the Government did not explain what I meant by on a rolling basis, but the debate proceeded. The Honourable Member is only quoting what I said in the Budget. The debate proceeded and on a rolling basis means an ongoing basis.

The Auditor General's Report said that in the arrangement, the contracting firm was given permission to provide road widening designs on a rolling or an ongoing basis, that is, designs will be completed for a segment of the project and work would commence while designs for the other segment were being worked on, which means that from the outset, we said there were no designs for the project when it started, and you cannot cost a project if you do not have designs.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure that would assist the Honourable Member.

Honourable Member please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Everybody in Barbados knows that a project sometimes is started without the final designs. It is done everywhere in the world. The Honourable Member for St. John knows that.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: They have about three engineers out there. They know that you start a project sometimes and then you have to adjust the project.

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Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Cabinet of the day told the Ministry of Public Works to work alongside the contractor to ensure that they have the best design, the best cost and, of course, the best legal and financial arrangements, Sir, and those things were put in place.

I want to make the point further. The Barbados Labour Party had nothing to do with this project. This project was a Government project run solely by the Ministry of Public Works. I was never involved as Minister. Today, we have a Minister who is currently involved in this project.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House because the Honourable Member wants the House to believe that the Barbados Labour Party was not responsible for the project while they were in Government but, now that the Democratic Labour Party is in Government, they are responsible for the project.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please continue, Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want to finish the quotation that I had commenced.

I am saying that in the Budget speech, the Prime Minister did make the point that he proposes to increase the fees for the use of the Highway with effect from August 2008. The new fees will be as follows and are expected to yield an additional $46 million in a full year, to pay for the Highway. Therefore, I want to find out how much of that money was raised.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, if you are quoting, please quote the speech, so that we can be clear what you are reading, and then go on from there, because I have read it and I have not seen what you just said, in the speech. Please read it.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, this is already a document of the House and I am sure that the public would have read this.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I have already given the segment, entitled Highway Revenue, on page 102 of the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals of 2008.

I have already made the point that the large majority of Barbadians are asking the Government to give them back the money, because they had to pay the money twice. You cannot be asking the people of Barbados to increase road taxes to pay for this, and now we have to pay to borrow this money, too. It is not fair to the people of Barbados, so we need to get this clear. I have already gone through these.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber. I have before me the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, delivered by the Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. John on Monday, July 7, 2008 and at page 103, the Honourable Member made it clear and I quote:

"In an effort to ensure that we meet previous commitments in respect of the ABC Highway project, I propose to increase the fees for the use of the Highway with effect from August 1, 2008."

Sir, previous commitments, not to complete the Highway, but previous commitments.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, is the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, who is a very clever person and always clear in his speech, saying that this $165 million is for future commitments in relation to the ABC Highway? This is not clear to us, so you are saying the $46 million is for past commitments, but the $165 is for future commitment? Are you really going to buy the flyovers?

I know the Minister of Public Works told me that he is in favour of flyovers, and he spoke on it today. He said he is going to be bringing overpasses for pedestrians. Is the Minister of Public Works in favour of the flyovers or not? Furthermore, as an engineer, he must recognise that we put the public...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber. I was trying to keep quiet so that the Honourable Member would run out of anything to say, and we will get to lunch. Sir, I want, for the record of this Chamber, to make the point that I had no conversation with the Honourable Member for St. George North, in respect to

what he referred. I speak to the Honourable Member like any gentleman would, when I see him. I engaged the Honourable Member, in no discussion about flyovers. The position on flyovers is a Government decision, and the Democratic Labour Party has stated its position.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that this said engineer, who was brought into the Ministry, is at the Ministry at this present time designing for overpass bridges. Is the Minister not aware of what is happening in his Ministry? The Minister must be aware that this said engineer, who cannot be guided, is designing bridges similar to the one that he designed in St. Kitts that fell down. He must tell us about this. The Honourable Member is currently designing bridges, similar to the one that killed seven people in St. Kitts. These are the foreign engineers that we are being told about. Can you imagine this?

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber. It is clear that he intends to get more and more ludicrous as he goes on and scratches for things to say. Let me say, very clearly, for the record again that the Honourable Member may attempt to confuse overpasses with flyovers, but I have no such confusion. The Ministry of Transport and Works is not in any confusion of that order either. The designs that are being dealt with are designs for pedestrian overpasses.

The Honourable Member must stop, if he has nothing to say, he should sit down and let us go to lunch. The designs of any bridge in the Ministry of Transport and Works at this time, are pedestrian overpasses for the persons crossing the Highway, and I referred to that in my presentation.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I want to find out from the Minister then, if I am wrong by saying that the present engineer whom he has brought into the Ministry, if he is indeed designing bridges for pedestrians or for vehicular traffic.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I am going to tolerate my trying to call order in this House and you continue speaking. Please, do not start it because it is not something that I am going to tolerate.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, when the Honourable Member made the comment about the $46 million for the ABC Highway, I did not have the Budget in front of me.

Aside.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: No, my brain is my Bible.

Sir, I was sure that when I got up on the point of order, I was right that the Honourable Minister of Finance did not say that the $46 million was for the ABC Highway.

Sir, now I have the Budget in front of me to substantiate what I said, and that is, Sir, Government's expenditure in respect of Highway Construction and Maintenance will, therefore, increase substantially over the coming years. Then he went on to say why he had to increase the $46 million.

Mr. Speaker, there is a difference between capital expenditure and revenue expenditure, and once you have a Highway like the one that we are speaking about, you have to speak about capital expenditure and not revenue expenditure. Whenever you hear maintenance, Sir, that is revenue expenditure. Therefore, the $46 million could not have been about capital expenditure. It had to be about a combination of capital expenditure, if anything, and maintenance. Sir, the interpretation can also be that because the capital expenditure is high, you have to increase additional revenue, because the cost for servicing later, will be higher.

I am saying, Sir, that I am standing by the point of order that I put in earlier because I knew that based on what I said in this House, it cannot be correct, and I did not need the Budget to substantiate that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the public is more confused after the Honourable Member for St. Lucy spoke on this point of order.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Sir, what the Honourable Member is saying, and he is misleading the House, because the Honourable Member is trying to imply that the public of Barbados is ignorant, as it relates to capital expenditure and revenue expenditure, and that is not true.

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Mr. SPEAKER: I agree.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: It is the Barbados Labour Party that does not understand what is current expenditure, or revenue expenditure because, whenever I spoke to it, the only Honourable Member who understood it was the Honourable Member for St. James North, and they always said I did not know what I was talking about.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well, Honourable Member.

Yes, Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Government needs to tell this House and the public of Barbados the reason for these additional funds. I am saying that the additional funds which would be expended during the next couple of months are to pay for expenditure that the Government would incur.

Mr. Speaker, the Government must be frank with this House because they have already told the public of Barbados, prior to the Election, that they will kill some calf and give it to everybody. Mr. Speaker, I am asking if this is to pay for the surveying work because I understand that they brought in a new surveyor.

The Ministry of Housing and Lands is supposed to be the superior landlord of this country. They have surveyors' services, legal services and all of these services along with the Attorney-General's Office. The Ministry of Transport and Works also have a principal legal officer and a legal team, so why is it that they are bringing in a legal firm?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member was in this House for years complaining to this House that he could not complete his work because of the shortage of surveying services in this country, and I am shocked that the Honourable Member is now complaining about additional supporting services when he has always complained about the lack of surveying services to complete works in the Ministry of Transport and Works, and in the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have also made the point with respect to surveying about four times now from my counting, so you should move on. I do not want to cite any particular rule with respect to repetition, so please move on.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I understand, Mr. Speaker, but repetition is important because the heads of the Honourable Members on That Side are hard, so you have to repeat so that they would understand you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I am not sure. Is not "their heads are hard" unparliamentary? I will probably have to check based on that, but you continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I have always liked the Speaker to rule, and I have always abided by your ruling. The Minister must tell us when he gets up to reply which firm did not tender for surveying services, but got a contract.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: It came in late, after the tenders were closed. Mr. Speaker, I was not aware of this, but a note just came from the public to my attention that some surveying firm was awarded a contract long after the tenders were closed. The Government is saying that they are a squeaky clean Government, that there is no corruption, therefore, we need to know why these things are happening. The public is aware of these things.

The Ministry of Transport and Works is aware of these things. The staff is aware that morale has dropped because they are being overlooked in a ministry that has competent staff that was left to do this project.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister and the Government keeps saying to the public of Barbados that the Minister introduced 3S (Barbados) Limited to this, and I might have to call names, because this debate is going to be a long debate.

Mr. Speaker, if you want to break for lunch, you could break because I could come back.

Mr. Speaker, 3S (Barbados) Limited, and the minutes are here, was introduced to the Minister by the Traffic Management Division within the Ministry of Transport and Works. I never saw the people. It came to me at a meeting and we had a meeting on the thing, so it has nothing to do with the Barbados Labour Party. Let us be aware of that.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. While sitting on This Side of the House, the Honourable Member told the House that he knew nothing about 3S (Barbados) Limited, that 3S (Barbados) Limited was given to him by somebody else, and it was not the Ministry that he called at that point in time. The Honourable Member for

St. James North and my brains are very close because we remember well.

Sir, the Honourable Member cannot now be saying that it was the Ministry that introduced him to 3S (Barbados) Limited because he said that it was left to him by another Minister. Sir, the Honourable Member not only said that it was left to him by another Minister, but that he was given a directive, not by the Prime Minister, but by somebody acting in the position of Prime Minister. The Honourable Member said that to the House.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I never said anything like that. Mr. Speaker, this is the highest court of the land. You could call for the minutes of the Ministry of Transport and Works for that period and you would see that 3S (Barbados) Limited was introduced to me. The very first time I saw these gentlemen, was when they were introduced to me was at a meeting by the staff of the Ministry of Transport and Works. Mr. Speaker, since 1985 when the ABC Highway was conceptualised, it was supposed to be a four-lane Highway.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Minister talking about the Constitution canal today. When we visited that canal...

The evidence showed that it was indeed a four-lane Highway that was conceptualised and designed by the late "Tom" Adams and the Barbados Labour Party. When we left office in 1986, the Democratic Labour Party did the same thing. The only thing the Democratic Labour Party did was to scale it down and named it the ABC Highway. It was ongoing. When we came to office, the staff at the Ministry of Transport and Works had been asking to improve and increase capacity along the ABC Highway because of the traffic.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make the point that when we came to office in 1994, because the Minister does not read his files, there were less than 50 000 vehicles on the road. The Minister needs to understand that if it is one thing I do, it is to retain. By 2006, because of this Government's economic policy to enfranchise Barbadians, we moved vehicular traffic on the road from approximately 54 000 to 120 000, and we did not increase road taxes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member wants this House to believe that the record advanced by the Barbados Labour Party for housing was mistakenly taken up by the Ministry of Transport and Works and there was a switch, and instead of people getting houses, they got more cars.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, when I listen to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, I am more confused, so I am not listening to him again because he has really confused me just now.

Mr. Speaker, the Government needs to tell the people of Barbados that the capacity on the ABC Highway had to be increased, but increasing capacity alone on the ABC Highway was not solving the gridlock. We have engineers out there. Let them come and explain this.

Mr. Speaker, since 1985, every Minister of Transport and Works was faced with the task of managing traffic in this country.

House A43 Sequence 17

12.50 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, because of the economic situation, because we had run this country in a sound and economic manner, because people were working, construction was booming, housing was booming, people in the agricultural belt were working, people across Barbados were investing, therefore, the Government must now tell us why it is that after receiving such a sound economy, people are now leaving this country and capital is now flying out of the country.

Sir, this Government must tell the people of Barbados what has accounted for the flight of capital from this country? Sir, something is wrong. This is supposed to be a good Government. Mr. Speaker, in January 2008, there was supposed to be newness.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Sir, I am assuming - and I have to use my words very carefully - that the Honourable Member for St. George North is only making that statement wildly. Sir, the Honourable Member is saying that there is capital flight out of Barbados, to which I have not seen any evidence. Sir, the Honourable Member would have to produce the evidence where he is saying that people are taking money out of the island illegally.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am talking mainly in terms of investment. I am saying that persons are not investing. Sir, I want to make the point that in 2008, people across Barbados had confidence in this Government. This Government came to power with a large majority, but since coming to office, the only thing that the

public could remember is that this Government has raised taxes by 50 and 60 per cent.

Sir, all across Barbados and elsewhere in the world, this Government is now known as the 60 per cent Government. Sir, other Governments have raised taxes by 3, 4 or 5 per cent. From l994 to 2007, the Prime Minister at the time always talked about not increasing niggling taxes, but this Government has increased taxes on bicycles and on every living thing that is moving.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, this Government must tell us where that revenue is going. Is that revenue going to pay for the Highway? Sir, we must understand that we have to pay that $165 million. The public is not against paying it, but this Government must tell the public what is happening. Sir, this Government cannot come and say that this is window-dressing, and that the former Minister of Public Works is responsible for all the road woes, when we had the best team ever.

Sir, we had the most roads being built. We had roads built for the Cricket World Cup,2007. We had two contracts in place but now the Minister cannot even get one in place. We had a contract with Rayside Construction and C.O.W. Construction Ltd. for $70 million each. We were doing roads across Barbados. We were also involving the small private contractors. Cabinet at the time had awarded contracts to several firms across Barbados to design 10 roundabouts.

Sir, we left 10 roundabouts that were already designed but after almost two years this Government cannot start on any one of them. Sir, the reason for this is that these roundabouts may have to be designed by only one person. Sir, this is not fair to the engineering firms across Barbados. When firms were awarded that contract...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Sir, the Honourable Member should shut up, if he has nothing more to say.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. The Honourable Member is making statements but he is not quoting from anything. The Honourable Member is making statements that are untrue, that he knows to be untrue, and that he is deliberately putting out there for public gossip.

Mr. Speaker, the persons who were contracted previously to design the roundabouts are the very persons who have designed the roundabouts, who are completing the designs for the roundabouts. They were awarded under the Barbados Labour Party Administration and the roundabouts the Honourable Member is talking about, two contracts have been awarded for their construction, with one actually starting this week at Coral Ridge.

Mr. Speaker, the other fact which the Honourable Member must not mislead this Honourable House about is the contract for road repairs under C.O.W. Construction and Rayside Construction were for $35 million each and not $70 million each. Sir, furthermore, those contracts were not awarded in time for Cricket World Cup,2007. They were awarded in time for an election campaign. That is the timing which applied to those contracts.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member must not mislead this Honourable House, we awarded contracts to have roads fixed.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: No, he spoke, once he opened his mouth...

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Yes, he did.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please address the Chair and let us move on.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. James North is just playing a game. The Honourable Member knows that once the Honourable Member says “buff” that he has spoken.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member has made a very serious charge in this Honourable House which, if left unchallenged, would give the impression that the Barbados Labour Party is a very caring Government, and that the opposite could be said about another Government.

The Honourable Member said that under the Barbados Labour Party they increased revenue by only 2, or 3 per cent. Sir, this means that in a l4-year period, they would have increased revenue by 28 per cent, or by 42 per cent over that period of time. Sir, the record is that the revenue...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, did the Honourable Member for St. George North said that when he rose to speak just now?

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, no. The Honourable Member said that before. That is why I went for the document. Sir, he did, that is why I went behind the Chair for the documents because I needed to correct that fact.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, that cannot be the purpose of a point of order at this time.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Pardon me, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: That cannot be the substance of a point of order at this time.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, do you mean a correction of something said?

Mr. SPEAKER: A point of order is with respect to something that is happening at the time. The Honourable Member had moved on, he was speaking and there was no breech of order as far as I know.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, in all due respect, a point of order relates to a speech that is being delivered.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well, thank you. The Honourable Member for St. George North, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, there is a saying, when people are hungry, they usually talk all sorts of things.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue your speech and do not refer to the rulings. I would prefer that. Let us move on.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to give way, if the House wishes and return after lunch. I am being told that this is the will of the Honourable House. Therefore, I am prepared to give way and reserve my right to speak after lunch. I will reserve my right to continue after the break if the Government wants.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have the Floor. Please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, we on This Side have made the point that the ABC Highway was necessary at the time. Sir, the Government must show the people of Barbados - because I am hearing it all the time, before Election and after Election - where we have wasted money on the ABC Highway. The ABC Highway was designed by a Barbados Labour Party in the l980s and on returning to office, we recognised that it was necessary to increase capacity along that Highway. Sir, we did that.

Mr. Speaker, I think the firm 3S (Barbados) Limited has been unfaired by the Government and for a number of reasons. Sir, on the Floor of this Honourable House, in front of all the people of Barbados, without any warning, or without any correspondence, this Government fired a company.

1.00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am further of the view that the Government made belief that it was Structural Steel Solutions (3S) that wanted to increase capacity on the ABC Highway. Sir, this firm 3S...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber deliberately. I am beginning to be concerned for him and his inability to speak the truth. The point must be made that this Administration sought to remove from the backs of the Barbadian public the burden created by the Barbados Labour Party. We, therefore, brought to an end the arrangements which the Barbados Labour Party had with the 3S company and we continued the project as stated in my presentation. The Honourable Member has to be forced, if necessary by injection, to tell the truth.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is no doctor. I do not know what injection he wants to give me. I will not take an injection from the Honourable Member because he is not a doctor.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I did not realise he had injected a few people but he is not a doctor. Sir, the Honourable Member is talking about an injection, but there are only two medical doctors on the other side that may be competent to give injections and that I would take anything from.

Mr. Speaker, I am speaking about the firm 3S and it is important because the misinformation that came from the Democratic Labour Party before the Elections and now seem to imply that the firm 3S and the Minister were involved. Sir, the Minister needs to be aware that I deliberately took myself out of the project in terms of the day-to-day running of the company.

Sir, I want to make it clear that the Cabinet of the day appointed a Subcommittee to look after this project. We appointed a sub-team comprising of the Minister of

Public Works, so the facts must be told that the Ministry of Public Works was totally in charge of this project.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please keep the asides down.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, this sub-committee was totally run by the Ministry of Public Works. A team was put in place headed by an engineer and three or four engineers were there to ensure the designs and the costing and, Sir, a legal team was also put in place. It had nothing to do with the Minister at the time, yet the public is being told every day that the Minister was involved. Sir, I must speak and repeat it over and over again because the Members of the Front Bench on the Other Side are not learning.

Mr. Speaker, until Honourable Members of the Government understand this, I will be speaking over and over again that the firm 3S was invited to come to a meeting by the staff of the Ministry and, Sir, the Minister must read the records and realise that it has nothing to do with me.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I need to rise and correct the Honourable Member again, who is seeking to mislead the Chamber in terms of the Sub-committee. The Sub-committee was elected by the former Administration, consequent on the Party's failure to reach an agreement about the cost.

The Honourable Prime Minister made the point in an earlier point of order that because there was no agreement on the cost of the project, the Government of the day, set up a Subcommittee of Cabinet, chaired by the then Deputy Prime Minister, who, as as I said earlier, is absent today, the Attorney-General, the Minister of State in Finance and the Minister of Housing and Lands, and the Minister of Public Works was given a mandate to reach resolution on all outstanding issues to Section 1.

Sir, that Committee was not to do his work and that is his problem. He was doing nothing. He is not aware of anything. He does not know what 3S was doing nor he does not know what the officers of the Ministry were doing. Sir, he came to work and did everything else, but what he was supposed to do and, Sir, we know about that.

Mr. Speaker, he now comes in here disturbing the Chamber with a lot of nonsensical presentation but, Sir, those are the facts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South does not know facts because the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, reading a presentation that he was presented, told this House that the firm 3S was introduced to Barbados in 2002, which is not true because, as I have said, the firm 3S came to Barbados in March 2005.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I have already mentioned your propensity to repeat yourself throughout this presentation, and I wish to indicate to you now that you should move on. I do not know any rule which permits you to restate matters that you have said five, six, or seven times before but, clearly, it is repetition.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I must indulge you some more on this thing because the question is that there was no Committee and the question is that the valuation team was not appointed to evaluate the tenders. Sir, I am saying that there was a tendering process, and that the firm 3S was not handpicked by the Minister because the Minister said today that the Barbados Labour Party handpicked 3S and that we did all sorts of things.

Sir, I am saying categorically now, that there was tendering with the firm 3S, because Government is saying that there was no tendering process. Sir, I am saying that there was a tendering process.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I know you did indicate that you would indulge me and so, but I do not know that I could make the point any stronger. The point you are now making is one that you have repeated time and time again. I have indicated to you that you have made a number of points on several occasions since you started speaking. I think I have to ensure that there is a more judicious use of the time of the House, so please move on and conclude your speech please.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want for the record to show the eight firms that tendered for the ABC Highway. Sir, on January 28, 2005, eight firms were invited to submit proposals for the project, including proposals for a BOLT arrangement. Sir, I could make this a document of the House. The firms which were invited to submit proposals in 2002...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I want to beg that, first of all, the Honourable Member tells us what document he is referring to and secondly, to make it a document of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure that the Honourable Member knows that he has to make it a document of the House.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, I would also like a copy of it now.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am speaking from a report of the Evaluation Committee for the ABC Highway, Signal Synchronisation and the Bridgetown Traffic Study Review Project, which was done by the civil servants themselves and, Sir, eight firms were invited to submit proposals for the project, including a proposal for a BOLT arrangement.

The criteria for selecting such firms was:

1. those firms which submitted proposals in 2002, for the widening of the section of the ABC Highway; and
2. the firm that made proposals in 2004 in respect of the concept of a combination of overpasses, widening the ABC Highway traffic signal synchronisation and traffic management for Bridgetown.

The deadline for that submission was January 28, 2005.

H/A43/1.10 p.m. Sequence 19

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. G.A. CLARKE: Responses were received from Case Engineering Services, DLN Consultants, Earthtech Canada Incorporated, Halcrow Group Limited, Mott McDonald Limited, Professional Engineering Services Ltd.; Stantec Consulting Caribbean Limited and 3S, Structural Steel Solution LLC. The firm 3S submitted a proposal on December 15, 2004, for the entire project, at an estimated cost of $59.8 million, inclusive of a maximum of eight flyovers and a Monument Park for the relocation of the Emancipation and Sir Garfield Sober's statues.

Sir, the firm agreed, at a meeting held on January 13, 2005, with the senior management staff of the Ministry of Public Works, not your humble servant, not me.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Sir, it is important that I, again, interrupt the Honourable Member to prevent him from continuing to mislead this Honourable Chamber. I do not know what document he is reading from. I am quoting from the document laid in this Honourable House earlier this afternoon, a document which is authored by the Auditor-General of Barbados. It says very clearly, and I need to quote, Page 22 of the document:

"The letter of invitation issued to the selected firms was dated December 23, 2004, and requested that proposals be submitted by January 28, 2005",

a response time of five weeks. The Ministry's normal time scale for proposals is two months. The response period was apparently shortened to produce an overall timetable for contract negotiations and carrying out the work ahead of the World Cup, which was scheduled to take place in Barbados in April 2007.

The responses from the invitees were as follows - I want the Honourable Chamber to take a careful note of this - Stantec Consulting Caribbean Limited Barbados stated that it was not in a position to make a BOLT proposal. It, however, indicated that it was willing to provide technical and managerial support for the project. I do not know if the Honourable Member is counting that. MOT McDonald Limited. The Honourable Member quoted eight companies that responded. The Auditor-General of Barbados is saying differently. It is because of that, that we make the clarification. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member states that he is quoting from a document, which he has undertaken to make a document of the House. I believe that he is entitled to do that. The fact remains though, that you have also produced a document by the Auditor-General, laid in the House, which says something differently.

Just a minute, Honourable Members, please.

There are some discrepancies which will occur. For instance, he said, and I noted, that on January 28, 2005, a letter went out inviting persons to tender, yet I am told that 3S would have tendered on December 15, 2004, for the entire project. There are these discrepancies which will arise from time to time, but Members would have to decide whether the Auditor-General is correct, or his document is correct. I do not think we should expend any more time essentially on it.

Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, I want to clarify that position. The December 15, 2004, to which you referred, I am saying they presented a proposal at the time. They resubmitted their tender for January 28,2005. Of course, they were the only company that submitted a proposal for the construction of overpass bridges, in order to stop the gridlock.

The firm 3S, when they met with me, in early 2005, talked about solving the gridlock on the Highway. The Ministry's position was, if you want to solve the gridlock, then you have to increase capacity on the Highway as well. So the firm was asked to do both projects. We said to them, at the time...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Sir, the Honourable Member is seeking to mislead the House, but as long as I am armed with this document, he will not mislead this House while I am in here. The point was

made, yes, he was having discussions with 3S and the Auditor-General refers to it, but he refers to the fact that the Honourable Member was discussing with 3S separate and distinct to the tendering process which involved the seven companies that I was about to refer to, and referred to in my earlier presentation. He makes the point that the proposal of 3S was accepted as a tender, even though it was not submitted as a response to the tender invitation. That is a very important point that is to be made.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, the Government must not clap itself on the back for something that is not true. I am saying that 3S also tendered. You have to understand the nature of the Ministry of Public Works, that people from time to time will make a proposal, and have always.

Sir, we have engineers in this country who have always submitted proposals to the Ministry of Public Works for signage, drainage, or anything. It does not mean that you have to accept them. You have to say that they must follow the tendering process. I am saying that in 2004, when 3S met with their proposal, they said to us that the proposal they gave in 2004 was only a proposal. Then they submitted a tender in 2005, like anybody else, to the Tender's Committee.

At the meeting of January 15, the senior management of the Ministry of Public Works reviewed the criteria to be used to evaluate proposals submitted by the invited firms. The officials agreed that direct open negotiation would then be entered into with the first rank firms. Two conforming submissions were considered by the Committee. The criteria used for evaluating the submissions were set out below.

Sir, the Valuating Committee evaluate these things, understanding the project to be undertaken, proposal of the plan design, type of approach methodologies, contributing services of local firms, firm's qualification and experience of a proposed path, financing plans to ensure that the project can be implemented on schedule, language proficiency, and the action plan to prevent, mitigate and compensate for any environment impact. Those are not my proposals. These were done by the Committee.

Sir, the Committee, and the Honourable Member needs to know this, on Wednesday, February 2, 2005, all this time, you have gone from January to February 2, the Committee agreed that they evaluated the two submissions, one by Professional Engineers Services (PES), and the other by 3S, (Structural Steel Solution). Members could consider the proposal for each section of the Highway separately if practical.

The points of evaluation of each criteria would be awarded from 0 to 10, and then multiplied by the appropriate waiting factor, and the financial arrangement criteria should be given a score of 0 to 10, since the firm could either accept the funding for the full value of its proposal via a BOLT arrangement, or not. Sir, 3S recommended a BOLT arrangement, while the other firms did not.

H A43 1.20 p.m. Sequence 20

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

House A43, Sequence 21, 1.20 p.m.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The financial arrangement criteria should be given a score from 0 to 10, since the firm could access either the funding for the full value of its proposal, via a BOLT arrangement, or it could not.

Sir, the 3S Structural Steel Barbados Limited (3S) recommended a BOLT arrangement, which the other firm did not. The Government of the day accepted the Committee's recommendation.

Sir, 3S was recommended by the Committee because they led in the criteria. Mr. Speaker, the Government needs to understand that this was signed, not by me, but by technical officers in the Ministry of Public Works, headed by Cheryl-Bennett Inniss, Edison Alleyne, Nash Lovell, Anne Belgrave, Sharon Griffith, June Simpson-Clarke from the Ministry of Finance, Trudy Farley, Steve Devonish and Trevor Leach from the Town Planning Department.

Mr. Speaker, I am making this a document of the House, and I have said that I am going to call names to show that the firm, 3S was duly selected, not by me, or by the Government. Sir, it also went to the Planning and Priorities Committee, which the Government had abolished, since they became the Government. Sir, let me explain what is the Planning and Priorities Committee because the Minister does not know.

The Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC) at the time, comprised the Minister of Economic Affairs, who was the Chairman of that Committee. I wish the Government would reconstitute that Committee.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Minister of Economic Affairs, the Prime Minister at the time, or the Minister responsible for that Ministry at the time. Sir, it comprised civil servants who evaluated projects and not the Minister. The Government is of the view - they keep making the point - that it was the Barbados Labour Party's Cabinet.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, just a minute, please. I had a brief look at the document, which you said you are going to make a document of the House and I noticed that it is unsigned.

Honourable Member, there is nothing wrong with that but you have now called names. As I understand it, you are only permitted to use that, if you are prepared to vouch for the accuracy of what is contained in that document. If you so vouch, you may continue, knowing as well that you have an Auditor General's Report which appears to be saying something else. If in those circumstances, you so vouch for the accuracy of those comments, you may continue with that document.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I so vouch and I am prepared to give this to every Barbadian. Every Barbadian could get a copy of this. I have nothing to hide, contrary to the opinion of the Honourable Members of Government. I was presented with the project and I felt it would solve the gridlock in Barbados. I took it to Cabinet after the recommendation from the various sub-committees, Mr. Speaker, and the Cabinet agreed to the proposal. It was sent to several PCC meetings. The Prime Minister of the day recognised this, sent it to the full PCC of all the Cabinet Ministers of the day, as well as the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, the concept was also presented to Barbadians several times on the television and it was presented to local firms. Every Barbadian knew. The Democratic Labour Party, in their haste for Government, felt that this was a case in which they could score cheap political points, and told Barbadians that there is corruption in here and they were going to expose the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, I want them to tell the public of Barbados how much money the Minister, or the Government of the day got. This is what they need to tell Barbadians. Sir, this is a full debate and if the Minister has all the facts, he must tell the truth today.

The Minister said today that we are bordering on corruption. What is bordering on corruption? Sir, we put committees' evaluation in place. If there was any corruption, he has to point fingers at the Committee that is responsible for this project, because I want to make the point that we had a Committee, headed by senior engineers, and they were responsible for evaluating the project to ensure the design.

Mr. Speaker, I am not an engineer. I have never evaluated any designs. It was designed by engineers from the Ministry of Public Works. They agreed to some things and they disagreed to others. It went on and on, Mr. Speaker, over time. The Cabinet of the day said that they could not continue having this deadlock, and the Prime Minister of the day told the Ministry that we have to move on. Therefore, a sub-committee of Cabinet was then invited to help with the process.

Mr. Speaker, we did not bring in any firm from outside to pay them any largess. This is what is happening today. I am saying to you that the Government of the day, rather than setting up a sub-committee and allow the civil servants to get on with the work, has agreed that they will pay some professional people, without tendering.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I do not know that Pandor tendered. I do not know that any of them tendered but they got the work. Therefore, when the Government came and said that there was no tender, then they must tell the people who did not tender. I know that I did not have anything to do with this project, in terms of selecting an officer.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I want to make this point. You could clap until the cows come home. I did not select a single officer. I did not select, even a maid. You could ask the Principal Legal Officer in the Ministry of Public Works. You could ask the Human Resource Officer where the maid came from. The maid did not come from St. George. I am saying to you, in front of Mr. Speaker, that I did not select a single maid in this project.

The choosing of the officers in this project, Mr. Speaker, were carried out through Rayside Construction Limited. Sir, the Government needs to understand that from the beginning, we told the firm that ranked highest that they have to employ Barbadian firms, and they agreed. They met with C.O. Williams Construction Limited and Rayside Construction Limited. We said, no problem, and the Ministry's staff had to be involved in this project, not the Minister.

I did not get a maid and when I complained about that, the Principal Officer at the Ministry told me that we have a maid up here already who is not doing very much and he is going to send her down to the Project Office. Can you imagine that? That would not happen under this Government and now I am being pilloried.

In fact, I must admit that I got more help from the Honourable Member for St. John, in terms of getting a maid, because I understand that one of my people got help in the Ministry of Finance. I did not even get a maid to work in this project, but thankful to the Honourable Member for St. John, one of my people got selected and I am very thankful because I got a maid employed.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Honourable Member for St. John must understand that I did not even get a maid in this project. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I did not get an engineer, valuer, or a contractor.

No, I am by nature a contractor, so I am worried about that. I was born that way.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the point is that you could say that this project was on a rolling basis, or that you should have had the designs before a contract was awarded. All of these things I can agree to, but the Cabinet of the day agreed that this project was very necessary for the Cricket World Cup 2007, and the people of Barbados, because we had to stop the gridlock on the ABC Highway.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if you remembered what happened between the Wildey juncture and the Pine East West Junction. Barbadians had forgotten. Sir, between the BET hill and Bussa roundabout, there used to be gridlock every day, and I came to the Ministry and said to them that we have to move the lights at the Pine East West Junction because it was causing gridlock. We put it on flashing at one time, and it moved the traffic along and I said that is the answer, so we have to move the traffic lights on that Highway. We started to do it and I am saying to you that when this firm took over, their proposals were clear that they wanted to have gridlock restricted, not the expansion of the Highway.

House A43, Sequence 06, 1.30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: It was the Ministry's submission. The Ministry has always felt that they would need to widen the ABC Highway. From 2004-2006, I took several Papers to Cabinet. They are there. The Prime Minister can review them, from BSC and all of the engineering firms to widen the junction from the Bussa Roundabout up to the Pine Hill Dairy. The Cabinet refused and said that you cannot have two firms doing the same project, and that is what the Ministry was recommending.

Mr. Speaker, when 3S (Barbados) Limited was awarded the contract for the overpasses, the Ministry said that you would have to do the entire project, and we went to the Planning and Priorities Committee for that. The Planning and Priorities Committee evaluated the project. It was done by the full Cabinet of Barbados and by the civil servants, not the Barbados Labour Party, or the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, if the same officers that I have read out come now and say they had nothing to do with the project, I would be surprised. These officers recommended this project to the Government of the day and we went with this project with the fullness that it would increase, not only capacity on the Highway, but would solve the gridlock.

Mr. Speaker, it is a good project. When we left office in 2008, this project was about 90 per cent complete. What happened is that since January of 2008 the present Government agreed that they would abandon the flyovers. That is a Government decision and we will live by it. The Government has now to agree that the space and the designs of the Highway for the flyovers had to be utilised. Mr. Speaker, because the designs which were supposed to construct the overpasses were abandoned, the Government now has to utilise the lane running through the roundabouts, or put a medium in the centre of the road.

Mr. Speaker, we had agreed for the medium, but the medium was supposed to be only to the point where the flyovers began. Therefore, a new design which suggests a total lack of coherence in the Ministry, because when I see some of the road markings up there, especially around Simpson Motors I cannot believe that the competent staff that we left up there had designed those. Those had to be designed by somebody from St. Kitts. When you look at the designs to the west of Simpson Motors that looked like a trumpet, at one time, it looked like a hammer head, it looks like a lollipop. All of these designs are now taking place because of the excess road capacity.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, some parts of the Highway now have six lanes. Mr. Speaker, from the Warrens junction where the Warrens Polyclinic is down to Chefette Restaurant, you have three, or four lanes on both sides because it is so wide. That space was supposed to carry the flyovers so that the problem that you now have at Green Hill would have been eliminated.

Mr. Speaker, flyovers are nothing new. We have examined flyovers throughout the Caribbean and Latin America and we have seen them work. Today, you still have congestion on the Highway. The only sensible thing that was done by the Ministry and the Minister since I left office, was to complete the proposal to eliminate the lights at the Pine East-West junction, so that you would have a continuous flow.

Mr. Speaker, all of these things that the Minister is now purporting that he did, were introduced to the Cabinet. If you want the full facts, Mr. Speaker, they are here. They talked about the BET junction. The Minister is telling the public that the BET junction is something new, but it is not a new idea. We were talking about having one-way traffic by Section R to go up to Upton.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: I was at pains during my presentation to make the point that the solution at the Wildey triangle, as we called it, is not new. It was buried under the ambition of the Honourable Member for St. George North and his arrangements with 3S (Barbados) Limited.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I thought I had clarified this whole thing already. I have said to the House that I do not know 3S (Barbados) Limited.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I want to know if the Honourable Member would halt at this time so that we can take a break for lunch and he can return and continue.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I did not hear your offer.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well, Honourable Member.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.40 p.m. today.

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

The question that the Sitting do now suspend until 2.40 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

House A43 Sequence 22 1.40 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is resumed.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want to continue this debate and to focus on the work that the Ministry has done on this project, between March 2005, and January 2008, when I left the Ministry. Sir, I want to make it abundantly clear that the project was evaluated by a Validation Committee comprising the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Finance, members from the economic ministries, the Town Planning Department and the Attorney-General's Office. Sir, the Validation Committee was supposed to work with 3S (Barbados) Limited which was recommended by the Committee.

Mr. Speaker, it must also be told that the Planning and Priorities Committee also met on this project and recommended it. The Cabinet of the day also met and agreed to the recommendations of the Planning and Priorities Committee. Sir, these are all documented in the Cabinet Office for all to see. Of course, there was a decision by the Cabinet at the time that the Ministry of Public Works should sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the firm 3S (Barbados) Limited, which they did on September 5, 2005.

Sir, a Memorandum of Understanding was indeed signed by the Ministry and 3S (Barbados) Limited. They were supposed to design and construct the bridges, widen the ABC Highway, supply traffic synchronisation system and undertake a Bridgetown Traffic Study Review. Mr. Speaker, these were supposed to be done in conjunction with the Ministry, where the staff of the Ministry was supposed to look after this programme.

Sir, I want to make the point that when Government at the time decided to undertake this project, we undertook it with the full knowledge that 3S (Barbados) Limited was contracted to try to solve the problem of gridlock on the ABC Highway. That was the main focus. Sir, of course, the widening of the Highway had to be done before the bridges were constructed, so that the bridges were to be constructed only after the widening of the ABC Highway.

Mr. Speaker, we recognised too that the widening of the ABC Highway was necessary because we were having Cricket World Cup,2007, and therefore we could not bring the cricketing world here to Barbados and allow them to see the gridlock. Sir, one would recognised that we were able to open, on a tentative basis, the ABC Highway before Cricket World Cup,2007. We were able to open that segment from Wildey to Warrens before Cricket World Cup,2007. It was not completed, but we were able to reopen the Highway.

2.50 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, we recognised that some gridlock was caused because when you look at why the ABC Highway was constructed, in the first place, the count was done over the years, especially in late 2004, and we recognised that 70 per cent of the traffic moving from the Sir Garfield Sobers Roundabout to Warrens actually went through Warrens, that is, if there were 100 cars moving from the Sir Garfield Sobers Roundabout to Warrens that 70 cars out of those 100 cars went through to Warrens. Therefore, on a scientific method, it meant that we had to be able to widen the junction from the Sir Garfield Sobers Roundabout to Warrens.

Mr. Speaker, we recognised too that Wildey and Warrens were fast growing urban communities and that we had to do something about those communities. We also recognised that traffic coming from St. Philip played an integral part of the gridlock along the Highway. We recognised that some mornings, between the hours of 7:00 o'clock and 9:00 o'clock, that traffic on Highway 5, used to back up from the Bussa Roundabout up to District "B" Police Station. Mr. Speaker, we recognised all this and that, therefore, we had to do something.

Mr. Speaker, we recognised that widening the Highway was not the answer to solving the gridlock. In fact, it has proven the point because there is still gridlock at the Bussa Roundabout, even though it had been widened and the wider the Roundabout got, it meant there was more congestion, so we also had to widen Highway 5. Sir, Highway 5 was also proposed to be widened from the Bussa Roundabout up to Six Roads because it formed an integral part of the Highway.

Mr. Speaker, when you see these programmes now, the Democratic Labour Party is claiming that they are doing all this wonderful work, but it was the programme of the Barbados Labour Party to widen Highway 5, and we put money in place to do that. Sir, the contract the Minister spoke about today, the one with Rayside Construction and C.O. Williams Construction, they were to work hand-in-hand with the ABC Highway.

Also, there was a proposal to widen the Waterford Bottom where there are Government lands because, in those days, I had to fight with the staff that they had to widen from Hothersal to Combermere and the Cabinet had approved a Roundabout at Combermere and at the stadium. Sir, contracts went out for firms to design them and money was put in the Estimates for all these things.

Mr. Speaker, we had a comprehensive system, not only to widen the ABC Highway because we recognised, as the Minister said, that when you widen the ABC Highway, that you also had to take into consideration the traffic moving from the ABC Highway to Bridgetown. Sir, hence a Bridgetown study, hence the synchronisation of the traffic signals, and hence the modernisation of that system within the Ministry.

How many of you recognise that the Ministry of Public Works has a new system, where they can use the traffic lights to call traffic? In other words, any morning that the traffic was built up on the Pine, the staff of the Ministry could switch their computers to ensure that the lights stay on green so that traffic could move through to Bridgetown. Sir, that was part of the synchronisation of the traffic signal and, Sir, there are cameras on all those lights.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister does not know what is happening to his Ministry because there were more than two. Sir, in most of the traffic signal systems in Bridgetown, cameras were erected in order to have the proposed systems of traffic flow. It is a system that we saw in Washington, we recognised it was needed here and it was done by the firm 3S. Sir, the firm 3S was not only contracted because the Government...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I hate to interrupt the Honourable Member but the facts are there for all to see. When this Government took over the Administration, there were two junctions which had the ability to be monitored by camera, Holborn and the bottom of Collymore Rock. Sir, subsequent to that, cameras have been installed only at Fairchild Street, and at enquiry yesterday morning, they have not even been connected.

The Honourable Member is the person who is not aware of what has been going on under his watch because there is significant synchronisation taking place. It is another item that the Honourable Member might have paid for that the people of Barbados are not able to enjoy.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, at the time, we had established within the Ministry a separate unit to regulate the traffic flow Pine East/West from Wildey and in central Bridgetown, so that a synchronisation component was paid for. Sir, the Minister of Finance could tell you because it is there, and they have to pay for it. Sir, the synchronisation aspect was part of the package and when the Government speaks, it must speak about the full package.

Sir, as I have said, the package includes the widening of the ABC Highway, the synchronisation of the traffic signals, the Bridgetown study and, of course, the overpasses. Sir, those are the four components of the package with the firm 3S.

Sir, I presided over it and I know the project. You could wake me up at midnight and I would know it and I do not have to go back to files, or ask any officer in the Ministry to tell me because I presided over the meetings.Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is, that the firm 3S was recommended by the Ministry. They tendered and got the contract.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is not only about the road programme. I have asked the Government about the $40 million and the $46 million. The Honourable Minister must tell us when he gets up to speak what is going to happen with the $40 million and the $46 million.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Sir, I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member in his stride, but I am extremely troubled that he may be misleading the House because no less a person than the Auditor General in this Report on the project in paragraph 3 on page 1 said:

"In 2004, 3S Structural Steel Solutions LCC, 3S, based in Maryland, United States of America, submitted an unsolicited proposal to the Ministry for the construction of overpasses and the widening of the ABC Highway between the Norman Niles Roundabout and the Clyde Walcott Roundabout."

Mr. Speaker, it goes on to say:

"On December 2, 2004, the Cabinet of Barbados approved, in principle, the project now known as the Barbados Road Network Infrastructural Improvement Project, the project was similar to that by 3S."

H/A43/3.00 p.m. Sequence 24

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Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, on Page 2, it goes on to Paragraph 8, and this is what the Auditor General of Barbados has found. 3S was not invited to tender. According to the Ministry's documentation, a proposal was received from them before the invitation letter was issued to the other bidders. This implies that the integrity of the tendering process was compromised.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, I made the point earlier that there were firms, and it has always happened within the Ministry of Public Works. It happened within any Ministry that companies, whether there are engineering companies, or construction companies, will always present a design, or proposal, to the Ministry. A proposal does not mean ...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. A proposal is not what I am contending. The Honourable Member for St. George North is misleading the House. He is trying to have it both ways. He is trying to say he knows nothing about 3S, that the officials accepted the tender from 3S. He knew nothing about it, but that they tendered. The Auditor General is saying they did not tender. They made a proposal before the tenders were requested.

Sir, the second point, which is fundamental and important, the Honourable Member was the Minister of Public Works, and in December 2004, the Cabinet decided this matter, based on a proposal from 3S prior to the tendering process, and the Minister was the Minister, but he tells us that he knew nothing about 3S.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, the Prime Minister in his speech is making it two dates, December 2, 2004 and March 3, 2005. Those two dates are important for us to have a clear understanding of what is happening. In December 2004, a Paper went to the Planning and Priorities Committee on November 19, which was ratified by the Cabinet on December 2. They approved, in principle, to widen the ABC Highway.

They also approved the synchronisation system. It had nothing to do with 3S. A Paper went to the Cabinet from the Ministry of Public Works about the widening of the ABC Highway. It was only on March 5, and the Paper is clear. The Committee recommended 3S after the Evaluation Committee recommended this company, and they did tender. My paper here, which I have made a document, has shown that 3S was one of the eight firms that tendered for the project, and did, indeed, submit a tender which was approved by this Committee, a Committee comprising about eight people. We have outlined the eight firms.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, again, on a point of order. I do not think we should go into this. I believe this document needs to be published so that the public can make its own assessment. Paragraph 9, pursuant to my saying that 3S was not invited to tender, this is the finding of the Auditor General.

"One of the firms submitted a proposal and this, along with a proposal previously submitted by 3S in December 2003, was assessed by an Evaluation Committee."

No eight proposals. Paragraph 10:

"The Evaluation Committee reviewed the two proposals which were not in conformity with the scope outlined in the tender invitation letter. It was, therefore, unclear what basis was used to evaluate two dissimilar proposals, one costing approximately BDS$120 million and the other BDS$60 million. Both of these proposals should have been rejected."

This is the conclusion of the Auditor General of Barbados. Now we are hearing that there were eight tenders. The Auditor-General has inspected the same file that the Honourable Member has inspected.

I am saying that the Honourable Member for St. George North is misleading the House, and despite the fact he said that he has a clear memory and you could wake him up in the night, that was then, but it is clear that not even in the day does he remember the facts surrounding the manner in which this project proceeded, and I believe you have an obligation to have this document published in full, so that

the public of Barbados can analyse, prior to us taking further action in this matter.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I would want to submit, because I do not have the wherewithal to make public any document, but I want to make the point that I know that I have made a document, a document of the House, a document coming from the Ministry of Public Works. I have kept a copy. The Committee, therefore, recommends that negotiations be entered into with the first ranked firm.

Sir, Paragraph 12:

"The Committee recommended 3S Structural Steel Solution to undertake the project" and it is signed by all of these people. It is signed. It is not signed by the Barbados Labour Party. It is not signed by the Minister. It is signed by civil servants who make up the Tendering Committee.

Sir, you must now know that none of the Ministers are part of the Tendering Committee. A Tendering Committee is made up of public servants, and they recommended this. Even though a minister, under the Westminster system, will give instruction, the civil servants are the persons who recommended this.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, I am sorry to rise on a point of order, again. The Honourable Member must not mislead the House in this way. The first point is, the same Committee that was set up expressed reservations about the 3S proposal. I quote the Auditor General, Paragraph 11:

"Despite some reservations by the Committee, 3S proposal was accepted."

Even though it was different from the scope outlined in the letter of invitation by the Ministry.

Sir, what the Honourable Member for St. George North is referring to is the tendering process, and no eight companies tendered. This is what happened. Paragraph 3.11, Page 21:

"The Ministry selected seven companies to which they sent letters in December 2004, inviting them to indicate their interest in submitting a BOLT proposal for the project. These firms were the same ones that had responded to the Ministry's invitations in 2002, to submit submissions of interest, and field proposals for the design and supervision of a project to widen the ABC Highway."

Only one of the seven submitted a proposal in response to the December 2004, invitation. What the former Minister is seeking in this debate to do is, to give the impression that a Committee evaluated eight proposals, but one proposal came in. The Ministry invited seven companies to submit proposals. If you only have one and you evaluate only that one, you cannot then argue that proposal was evaluated as part of eight proposals.

There were never eight proposals. There were two proposals in the beginning and when the invitation letter was sent out, there was only one proposal, and hoodwinked, as the Government was, blindfolded as it was, it not only breached the rules completely, but accepted the one proposal and landed us in the mess that we are in today, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, I would like to move on here. The truth of the matter is, there was more than one proposal. The Prime Minister knows full well that in a tendering process, there are many ways to invite companies to tender. Eight companies were invited to tender, and these are the ones that submitted proposals before, and these were recognised as established firms.

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House A43, Sequence 26, 3.10 p.m.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: . . .

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member one minute, please. Let us see if we could stop this too-ing and fro-ing, in terms of your making the point and Honourable Members objecting. You submitted a document. You made it a document of the House and based on that, there were no more than two proposals, one by one firm and one from 3S. Are you saying there were more tenders?

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: No. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, there were eight persons invited to tender. These were the persons who submitted proposals before. Two firms finally tendered and that is the point, and one firm was recommended by the Committee.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Again the Honourable Member is wrong. They invited eight firms to submit proposals. Those firms which had previously submitted proposals in 2002 for widening of the ABC Highway were asked, and then the firm that had made the proposals in respect of 2004. This was the outcome of it.

Mr. Speaker, of the eight, one of them expressed an interest, but indicated that they wanted specific documentation. They got knocked out. The second one said they would not be interested. The third one, no response

from them. The fourth one indicated they were unable to respond, given the short time. The fifth one said that due to restricted time given for pre-qualification, they had no interest. Another one said they would make a proposal, but only in respect of a small part of it, No. 6. Another one, No. 7, said that they were not in a position to make a proposal. Therefore, the only company that made a proposal was 3S. Therefore, it is clear that the Honourable Member is right in saying that the entire process was designed to put this project in the hands of 3S.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister is saying it was designed by the civil servants, I do not know about that, but it was not designed by any Government, because I am saying there was no design. I am not attacking the civil servants, but I am saying, Sir, that as far as I am concerned, two out of the seven or eight submitted proposals, and 3S was recommended, based on the fact that they were bringing, not only the engineering capacity to the table, but they were bringing a BOLT arrangement to the table, where they were finding the money for this project.

The BOLT arrangement was supposed to be for 25 years. They had brought in their own banks, their own designs, and all these things were done. Mr. Speaker, the Valuation Committee felt that the BOLT arrangement would have been the better arrangement for Barbados. We could not find the money at the time and, therefore, it was better at the time for us, to enter a BOLT arrangement.

Mr. Speaker, when the Democratic Labour Party Government came to power, they found that in place, but the Government decided that they did not want to have a BOLT arrangement. In fact, the Prime Minister said that there was no legal arrangement. I remember that the Honourable Member for St. John and Prime Minister, came in here and said that there was no legal arrangement for a BOLT arrangement. Yet, I found out recently that a BOLT arrangement was put in place, so I do not know.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. How can you have a BOLT arrangement over a public road, governed by the Road Traffic Act, which would be owned privately by somebody else? It would be impossible to have a sensible BOLT arrangement - a build, own, lease and transfer arrangement - over a public road and we said so from the beginning.

Mr. Speaker, it is not to say that BOLT arrangements cannot operate in relation to other projects, but it cannot operate in relation to a public road over which the public has egress and entry, and the Road Traffic Act applies. Obviously, that road would have to be owned by the Crown. Therefore, from the outset, we said a BOLT is inappropriate and we have not pursued the BOLT.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. John is an eminent lawyer, and there are about three lawyers on That Side, as well as the learned Attorney-General. All the Government had to do, was to say that this is what they want, Sir, and we could come here and change the Law.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is saying, and he would be misleading the House, that we should make what was previously a public road, built by the hard earning taxpayers of this country, the ABC Highway, into a private road to facilitate 3S. That is what his objective was, in relation to that project.

Mr. SPEAKER: If he is saying that, perhaps you should forgive him, because he is not a lawyer.

Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that. I am saying that BOLT arrangements have been made in the universal community, and Barbados is part of the universal community. BOLT arrangements are made in the USA, including Washington, where the public travel on the roads. I am saying to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Member for St. John is saying that this is an original idea, when BOLT arrangements are made all over the developed world.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, what is the difference between a BOLT arrangement for the prison and the public road? There is no difference. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that the Government had decided that the BOLT arrangement which was going at about 4 per cent interest was more expensive than this present $165 million at 10 per cent interest that the public of Barbados now has to pay for, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. John is saying to you that if you have a mortgage for your house, scattered over a 30-year period and your payment is only about $400 a month, you have money now, you are going to pay off the entire mortgage rather than pay for your house over that period of time, and invest the money into projects. This is what the Democratic Labour Party Government is doing. The Government has decided that the BOLT arrangement for this project was no good, so they decided to pay off all the money one time.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that there is nothing wrong in the BOLT arrangement for the road, or any project that the Government deems fit. I am also of the view that these things were done by the Government to show that the Barbados Labour Party has something to do with corruption of this project. Sir, this project had nothing to do with the Barbados Labour Party. It had to do with the Government at the time, and the public servants who agreed that this was a viable project of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that in time, it will show that this project is a good project. It will help Barbados economically. In fact, it has shown that it is moving traffic quite fast now at this time. It has shown too, Mr. Speaker, that even though it does not solve the gridlock on the Highway, it is helping in a meaningful way.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move on to look at other programmes. I think that one has to look at this project. I think the Prime Minister really needs to look at this project since 2008, because from my knowledge, there seems to be a number of persons being paid from this project, and that seems to be unfairing the taxpayers.

House A43, Sequence 26, 3.20 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Six per cent for any company. We have to look at this. We were trying to hold the percentage paid to companies down to 3 and 4 per cent. Mr. Speaker, 6 per cent of $165 million is $10 million. Ten million dollars for any company for any kind of work, whether it is surveying work, legal work, or engineering work, is a lot of money. That is what Barbadians are paying this $40 million for even though $46 million was supposed to pay for this road. Mr. Speaker, it is a lot of money and we have to watch that very carefully. What are we paying for since 2008?

Mr. President, these are bad decisions. 3S (Barbados) Limited was employing local contractors. The Government did not have to find the money to pay at the time, that is why I say to you that if you have a mortgage in place, you keep that in place. The Government had a programme in place with less interest rates and now the public of Barbados must pay 10 per cent for this. Mr. Speaker, we have to look at this arrangement over and over again.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister spoke about signage on the ABC Highway. Clearly, there is a need for international signage on the Highway. I am not sure if the signage that is being used by the Ministry at this time would meet international standards. We were hoping to introduce a Highway that would move people faster from point A to point B, but the Democratic Labour Party has reduced this ABC Highway to a secondary road.

There were supposed to be proper overhead signage on this road where persons would see up front, so that persons moving towards Warrens would know from early where they are heading towards. Mr. Speaker, signage has not been put in place, yet we are going to open in August.

Mr. Speaker, we counted 20 lights on the ABC Highway that have been out for the last three months. Do you have to hire an engineering firm, when the Government Electrical Department is responsible for this? The Government Electrical Department is responsible for lighting on the Highways in Barbados. A new electrical installation was done on the ABC Highway, and I see no reason why this could not have been better lit. This ABC Highway was supposed to be the premier road but this Government has reduced it to a secondary road.

Mr. Speaker, it is not fair to the taxpayers of Barbados to have to pay $165 million, according to the Government, and then there is a situation where signage is bad, lighting is poor and there is the issue of drainage. Mr. Speaker, it was recognised that drainage at the Bussa Roundabout had to be improved. I am not sure that the firm that the Government has now resorted to, because I understand that they hired some local contractor from Christ Church South or Christ Church East, which is nothing wrong, to undertake the drainage matters on this Highway.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member said minutes ago that when he was Minister, they sought to keep the fees down to 3 per cent and that there are some people ripping off the Government in charging 6 per cent. I have now confirmed that the percentage fee being paid to 3S (Barbados) Limited is 15 per cent, which is five times 3 per cent and almost three times 6 per cent. That was what the Honourable Member for St. George North agreed as to the fee for a non-Barbadian company, and we are paying a Barbadian company 6 per cent, that is the difference.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any 15 per cent. Mr. Speaker, normally when an engineering firm, or a quantity surveyor, and the Minister would recognise this, charges a legal fee, maybe less than 5, 3 or 4 per cent, the main contractors would get between 10 and 12 per cent. Mr. Speaker, if 3S (Barbados) Limited was the main contractor and the Ministry had agreed to the 15 per cent...

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I am saying that the 6 per cent was paid to the sub-contractors. Mr. Speaker, here you have a situation where a subcontractor who has come long after the project was conceptualised and brought nothing to the table, is getting 6 per cent of $165 million, or $10 million.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The Honourable Member knows that he is misleading the House on this point. The contractor that does the additional work or the new design work, cannot charge 6 per cent on what was being paid to 3S (Barbados) Limited, he can only charge on that portion of work that he does. The Government is not paying him any percentage on work that was done by another company, and we know that. Sir, the Honourable Member said he did not know that. He said it more than once, and he knows it is not so, and that it could not be so.

In addition to that,, Sir, you have the two main contractors in Barbados catching every month trying to get money out of the Government of Barbados. They have built the ABC Highway. They have built Highway 2A. They have built Highways all throughout this country and we were paying them apparently 10 and 12 per cent. They brought in a company that was allowed to come here with no plans, with a dubious track record and is currently before the courts in Jamaica and another African State, for bribing public authorities to do this project and to earn 15 per cent, and the Honourable Member is quibbling over 6 per cent paid to a Barbadian who is finishing those aspects of the project that that exorbitantly paid contractor did not do.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Prime Minister has said that the company - I wanted to find out, but the Minister never said. I asked if it was 6 per cent of $165 million, I do not know. If the Prime Minister has just clarified that it is really 6 per cent of the $40 million, which is minus the $124 million...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. That is not what I said either. I said it is 6 per cent of the work the contractor does because the $165 million would include the final settlement fee, which may include legal fees to attorneys well-known to the Honourable Member for St. George North.

I hope he says that they are being paid at an exorbitant rate. I would like him to say so, so that we could get them to lower their fees. It includes other costs relating to the completion of the Highway, the settlement of the final amount due to 3S (Barbados) Limited and all other aspects in relation to this project.

House A43 Sequence 27

3.30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, it is not any 6 per cent of $40 million. It is 6 per cent of the difference between the amount payable to 3S (Barbados) Limited and the final cost of the project. Sir, that is all it is, and that is standard.

Sir, the Honourable Member kept saying 6 per cent on $165 million, although he said he was not sure, because the Minister has never said that. He said nobody has clarified it and, therefore, I am saying to you that the Honourable Member has set out to mislead this Honourable House in relation to that matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John, your saying that the Honourable Member has set out to mislead this Honourable House is essentially saying that he has done so deliberately and that is, in fact, unparliamentary. I am sure having said that, you would withdraw those comments. I think he has now understood exactly what you are saying.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Exactly, Mr. Speaker, so I withdraw any imputation in that regard.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please continue, Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has just explained to this Honourable House what the Minister should have done.

Mr. SPEAKER: But it has been explained.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, it has been explained that the contractor would be paid 6 per cent of any work that he has done but otherwise, we did not know what the 6 per cent was paid towards. Therefore, we have to draw out the Government, like everything else, to explain to this Honourable House and to the country, what is really happening. Sir, the Prime Minister has further said that 3S (Barbados) Limited would be paid for wrongful dismissal. The Prime Minister said that 3S (Barbados) Limited will be paid for any work they have done on the project.

Sir, the Opposition is clearer, at this point in time, why this $l65 million is being charged, but we do not know, up to now, what would be the final cost of this road rehabilitation project. Sir, if you add $46 million and $l65 million, it amounts $211 million. Sir, we would be saddled for a long time now with the cost of this project.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House again. Sir, the $l65 million is what Government has estimated as the outside figure to conclude all of the arrangements with 3S (Barbados) Limited, the work to be done on the Highway, as well as any cost associated with the settlement of the case.

Mr. Speaker, anybody who is familiar with Law would know that when you terminate a contract, in most cases, you have to pay on a quantum merit basis for the work that has been done, unless there are breaches that give rise to other circumstances. Sir, in this particular case, the Government terminated its arrangement with the contractor and the Government of Barbados is not in the habit of saying, "Well, you build a Highway, leave Barbados."

We have to pay for the work that has been done but we know that Barbadians could do what we wanted done to have that work completed, and we have estimated the outside figure for the entire project to be $l65 million. It might be a lot less, it depends on the settlement figure and of course on the payment of legal fees to the very good friend of the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I have some very good friends in the Democratic Labour Party too, so I do not know if this money is supposed to pay some of the lawyers in the Democratic Labour Party, who are also friends of mine.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I want to make the point, when you look at the ABC Highway, the Prime Minister and Government of Barbados would agree that this is a good project and that it has employed hundreds of Barbadians. Mr. Speaker, I would want to say that this project started under the Barbados Labour Party Administration, and that it has continued under this present Administration.

I would want to say too that there is a need to look at a number of other things, in order to keep and to maintain this project. I believe that the Minister has to tell this Honourable House and country what maintenance programme Government is planning to put in place to keep this modern Highway a modern structure.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister has already agreed that the Highway is in a bad shape. The only thing the Honourable Member has said today is that the medium along the Highway will be kept in good shape. Sir, it is more than the medium, there are the sidewalks that are full of bushes and there is a problem with drainage. Mr. Speaker, I know that the Drainage Unit is not under his Ministry anymore, but I hope that in this debate we would be told what maintenance programme for drainage would be put in place.

I finally would want to say that we, in the Barbados Labour Party, have nothing to be ashamed of about this project. We have started it because we were the Government. 3S (Barbados) Limited was introduced to us by the technical staff of the Ministry. 3S (Barbados) Limited had presented proposals, had tendered for the project and had won the contract for the project. Sir, today in my presentation, I have shown that 3S (Barbados) Limited has tendered for the project, that they won the contract for the project and that they have carried out the project.

Mr. Speaker, some time ago, the Prime Minister said that there was not a contract, then today the Honourable Member said that there was a contract and so, I do not know which to believe.

Sir, we agreed that a Memorandum of Understanding is a form of a contract and that if you understand and allow a person to come and do work, then there must be a legal contract, as is implied in this whole scenario. Sir, the Prime Minister has, therefore, admitted there was a contract.

Mr. Speaker, we have agreed on the fact that there was a contract, that it has been terminated by Government and that he has agreed to pay them. The Prime Minister has not said how much he is going to pay them, but fees have been included in this amount to pay the company, the contractors and all other sub-contractors that Government had brought in.

Sir, Government is Government and Government has nothing to be ashamed of to get up and say that it has brought in two engineering firms, surveying firms, or legal firms. Government is Government and, therefore, has decided that it is going to pay. Sir, this Government has made a decision and, therefore, the public must be aware that this decision made by Government, since 2008, is causing us this additional money.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want the Democratic Labour Party to come back to Parliament within the next two years, three years or five years, to tell the public...

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I do not want the Democratic Labour Party to come back to Parliament within the next two years, three years, or five years, to tell the public that they have introduced this $165 million. Sir, this is what would happen. They would come and say they had to pay this $l65 million that the Barbados Labour Party

left, when we know that the contract was only for $125 million.

Sir, once we settled on that, once we go forward, I believe that the public is enjoying this Highway and we hope that in the fullness of time that the Democratic Labour Party could tell us their programme. Sir, I have not seen anything new coming out of the Ministry of Public Works since I have left there. I recognised that everything that is being done by this Government has been done based on a Barbados Labour Party programme.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that what the Honourable Member has just said last is true, that the Barbados Labour Party is a Government that can be out two years now and that they are still overruns.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that we need to deal with the traffic confusion of Barbados. It is clear that the Honourable Member who just took his seat is in a better understanding now how to solve the traffic problems of Barbados than when we was a Minister in Government. The Honourable Member said that the more you improve roads, the more traffic you would get on the roads. Sir, that is a very important point. It means that the Minister is quite aware that the more you widen the road, the more traffic you attract on the roads and the more confusion you will get on the roads.

3.40 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, what the Ministry is admitting is that even though they had committed this country to over $165 million in road expansion, that they were aware that it would not solve the problem leading from the airport down to the West Coast. Sir, I am happy to hear that, because it is a point I have continued to make in this Parliament as far back as 1994, that what we need to do is to shift some of the Government businesses to the north of the country, to the east of the country and to the south of the country. Sir, if we continue to concentrate in keeping business as it is, we will always have a traffic problem in this country.

Sir, do not care how you widen the roads, do not care how you put flyovers to land back the same spot, you would continue to have the same problems we are discussing today. Sir, we have to ensure that we speak to the electorate of Barbados and keep the Barbados Labour Party out of Government, so that we would not continue to spend all the money generated in this country on roads but instead, use the money to develop other areas in Barbados so that the traffic would not have to come from north to south all the time but that you could get people to work, go to school and do everything in their own district.

Sir, it is clear that the policy of the Barbados Labour Party has created the traffic gridlock we are tinkering with. Sir, the truth is, the more money they spend on the ABC Highway, the worse the traffic problem will be in Barbados. Sir, we saw it in the early 1980s, now we are discussing it in 2009, and I am saying that it is clear that widening the Highway will not solve the traffic problem in Barbados.

It was first thought that it would occur in the 1980s and you did what you thought was right, now you are back at it. Sir, if you put them back into Government again, they will tell you a 10-lane road will solve it, then you will have the same problem and you will continue like this all the time.

Mr. Speaker, what is needed is for the infrastructure to be shifted and divided across the country.

Mr. Speaker, it is rather interesting because I remember in 1995, which was a big joke in this country, while discussing a White Paper on Education, I said that in order to solve the problems in Barbados and discuss anything like this, that we first have to have a proper land use policy. As you know, when you are discussing land use policy, you discuss where you put schools and certain infrastructure.Sir, that was 1995. We are now back in 2008, and we are still discussing the same thing. Mr. Speaker, you know why? We are not listening to each other and we are not doing the things that should be done.

Mr. Speaker, we are behaving like cosmetologists, where once we put up a big Highway, we believe it looks good and we excite ourselves, but we are not doing anything in the interest of the country. Sir, we have to stop wasting the taxpayers' money because we go overseas, and we see these big Highways and we decide that we will do them.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you something. I have listened to a report where it was said in the United States that they thought that building Highways would solve problems but, they realised that whenever they built, or widened a Highway, all you do is generate more traffic. I hope that 13 years after it was stated in this Parliament, that we would learn too that the wider the Highway the greater is the incentive for more people to get on the Highway.

Sir, we need to ensure that you put infrastructure in certain parts of the country and develop the country in totality, so that people would not have to move to certain

places to get services. Mr. Speaker, we have to ensure that we utilise the foreign exchange and the revenue of this country in such a way, that it is cost-effective and, cost-effectiveness is what we will have to strive for.

Sir, we cannot continue to, as a Democratic Labour Party Government, be saddled with decisions made by a previous Government which we cannot get out of.

Sir, we have to continue because, if we do not continue the policy, it interferes with the flow and then we are blamed with the cost overruns which we did not create but, which we have inherited.

Mr. Speaker, if we do not do them, we will hear what a wonderful project was left by the Barbados Labour Party and we did not complete the project. Mr. Speaker, I am saying that we have to be more developmental in our thinking. For example, had we foolishly gone ahead and done the flyovers, we would have been in an even worse position. Sir, the only country that I have seen flyovers where you would fly and land the same spot, as if you were on the ground, would be in Barbados.

Sir, wherever I go in the world, I see people taking traffic off the Highway but in Barbados, you put traffic on the Highway and people get vex with you if you do not continue that madness. Sir, I am saying it was a wise decision not to continue that piece of madness and, I am happy that the Government did not commit itself to putting traffic on the Highway and not to take traffic off the Highway.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked the Government previously, if they had come to a plan, that when you come from Jackson you can fly over that section and go straight to Green Hill, or if you went to the Belle, you could move from one section of the Belle to the other section of the Belle or, from the part of St. George leading down to the back of the Barbados Community College, or when you move from Haggatt Hall down to Sherbourne or, from Upton down to Courtesy, that I would have supported it because that makes sense to me. Sir, do not tell me that I am on the Highway and I am going to go up to come back down, that is a waste of time.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that when I see logic, I support logic, but when I see foolishness, I cannot support it. I am saying it does not make sense for the former Minister of Public Works to get in here and misquote the Prime Minister in his Budget, neither does it make sense for the former Minister of Public Works to tell this House that under the Democratic Labour Party, that everything increased by 60 per cent, and under them, it only increased by 2 per cent, or 3 per cent because, Sir, they were in Government for 14 years, which means that in 14 years, things should only have increased by 28 per cent, or by 42 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I was in here long enough and I have one of the Estimates, what sometimes we call the Bible of Parliament. Sir, at that time in 1994, the revenue of the Barbados Labour Party was $1 013 600 000 and in 2008, when they left, it was $2 443 153 472. Sir, it was over 100 per cent increase, so what kind of calculation that could be? Mr. Speaker, they have tokenised, picked out two items and say that we increased something.

Mr. Speaker, when you really look at it, it works out to $0.61 per day for an essential item like water, that you could take a bath, wash your car, drink as much as you want, or throw it on somebody, but they are using it as an argument as if Bajans do not understand that water is so important, and that if you do not pay the $0.61, it is a possibility that you might not be able to get a shower or, might not be able to live. Sir, that kind of argument is being used today as if Bajans did not get free secondary education that was given to them by the Democratic Labour Party without having to pay one cent.

H/A43/3.50 p.m. Sequence 29

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, what is also worrying in here is, I always thought that contracts were issued by Governments. I am now hearing a former Minister telling me that civil servants are so powerful, that they are now attending Cabinet meetings on Thursday, and awarding contracts.

Sir, I fail to see how a Chief Technical Officer and his staff can award a contract on behalf of a Government for over $165 million, and if you use the calculation, you know I like my figures, because if from 2005 to 2007 the road was supposed to cost $117 million, now we are in 2009, the time must have doubled, therefore, the cost would have to double too. So, technically, the road should be costing $234 million.

Sir, if we have reduced it to $165 million, the Bajan public should be glad that they changed the Barbados Labour Party, because they really saved $69 million by returning the Democratic Labour Party and not the Barbados Labour Party. This is a very serious point and it cannot be ignored.

I was told that it started in 2005, and at the beginning of September 2007, the road was supposed to be completed. The Minister is now telling me that at the end of August, and the timing is perfect...

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: The present one. The present Minister said that at the end of August, this year, it will be completed. It started the beginning of September. It means that it has been well planned, because the end of August will complete a year, so it will be four years.

I am saying that we need not worry. We understand why the Barbados Labour Party is out there putting out this type of propaganda. They are selling a story, believing that once their story is sold, they will be back in Government in the next five years for some more cost overruns. They have forgotten that the people of Barbados changed the Government.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas is telling me that she has not eaten so many flying fish in her life, and we do not even have an agreement yet. I am saying that we are very happy that the Honourable Member can have some flying fish this year in abundance, even in the month of July, when all of the fishing boats are normally hauled up. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas is bragging about how many flying fish she is getting this month, even getting dolphin. I can assure you that she is even getting Barracuda at $3 a pound, and "ginnymans".

Sir, I am very happy to hear that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas expects me to do what they could not do in 14 years, in less than two years. I am very proud of that and consider it to be a compliment. She said that I am not even a minister, and the amazing thing is, what I am doing was done by the former Honourable Attorney-General, number one, then another one, and then another Deputy Prime Minister, and all those things could not be completed in 14 years, under them, but the Honourable Member expects them to be done under me.

Sir, I am saying that if the overpass had been completed, one would only have to ask what would have been the cost of this Highway, if we had gone ahead with what was left to us by the Barbados Labour Party. Those persons who thought that we were wrong to position the flyovers to land on the Highway, back in traffic, would now realise that it was a wise decision by this Party not to continue with that madness, for the simple reason, to continue with that madness, not only would it have increased by another $48 million, if you used the $177 million, or the $125 million, another $40 million, we would have had to incur all those overruns, not only for roads, but all the overruns that would have come with the flyovers.

Sir, it is as if we knew what was going to happen in the world. Can you imagine what is happening in the economic world if we were not able to make a wise decision without saddling ourselves with this cost, but ensuring that we have enough money to give some to the productive sectors? That is why we were able to pump some money into the Ministry of Tourism, and also to deal with the other sectors in this community.

Sir, when it comes to judgment, you cannot fault the Democratic Labour Party in making the right decisions, because it was not us who went on the Japanese market and borrowed badly. It was the Barbados Labour Party in the 1980s. They had some cheap money knocking around and they used only the interest factor to rate the loan. They did not realise that a loan cannot be rated only on the interest factor, but you have to use the currency as it is and what it will be after. That is why I am happy to see in these economic times that this loan is part in US currency and part in Barbadian currency, because at least we have a fixed currency.

I can tell you at the end of the year that any time you ask me what are the repayments, I can tell you, but under the Barbados Labour Party, it was quite different. They were so money-starved that they did not take certain factors into consideration, either that, or they knew that the Government was going to change, and they would leave the trouble for the Democratic Labour Party. That is why by the 1990s, the Democratic Labour Party found themselves in certain problems because of the bad loans.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas keeps saying I did not benefit from the change. I am not here about myself. I am here about my constituents. Once my constituents get what they want, it does not bother me whether I gain or not. Politics is not about me. It is bigger than me. That is why the Honourable Member has to understand that unlike other Parliamentarians, I cannot be included.

Sir, I know you cannot hear asides, but I can. So I will help you to hear the asides.

I am also aware that when I am on my feet, the public cannot hear asides. I cannot allow people to heckle me without letting the public know what they are heckling me about, so that when I use my tongue on them, the public will know why I am using my tongue on them.

We also heard in this Honourable House today that the Barbados Labour Party came to Government, and I want everybody to listen to this, they keep bragging about it, and there were only 50 000 vehicles in Barbados, only 50 000 vehicles under the Barbados Labour Party, and for the three hundred and something years we were a people in Barbados, only 50 000 vehicles.

Sir, would you believe that in less than 14 years they were able to double the number of vehicles on the roads? They were able to double and create double confusion on the public roads in Barbados. Do you know what was worse? While they were encouraging persons to buy

vehicles in Barbados, and reconditioned vehicles in Barbados, the people who wanted land could not get land, but they were ensuring, during that same period of time, that they were taking land out of the market and putting it into a land bank, encouraging persons from overseas to come and buy the land, but telling Barbadians, at the same time, you do not need land, go and buy a reconditioned car.

Sir, they come into this Honourable House bragging about how they were able to increase the number of vehicles in Barbados. I thought that any progressive Government would come to this Parliament and talk about the number of businesses that they were able to attract or bring to Barbados, locally or otherwise, but no, we are not hearing that. We are hearing that while other persons can own land in Barbados, Barbadians must own other people's reconditioned vehicles. That is a statistic that is proudly touted in this Honourable House.

H A43 4.00 p.m. Sequence 30

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

House A43, Sequence 31, 4.00 p.m.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, what I want to hear is the number of house lots and the number of businesses that will be created in this country, for the people of Barbados. Those are the types of statistics I want to brag about and not the number of reconditioned vehicles, because that is an environmental problem for us, and we have to find somewhere to put them. Sir, we have to find some place to put all those reconditioned vehicles.

Sir, do you know what is hurtful about that? While they are bragging about more than doubling the number of vehicles in this country, they came to this House once with something called, "a green budget" - no renewable energy, but a green budget - while increasing the number of cars to use fossil fuels, and talking about a green budget, and how they have progressed and they are in a tune, but when you hear them brag, you get the opposite to the whole issue. Therefore, I am saying to the public of Barbados, you now understand that the traffic confusion has been created by the Barbados Labour Party.

Sir, not only that. The Transport Board was destroyed by the Barbados Labour Party at the same time. I once made a comment that they were able to change the thinking, even of my constituents, because up to 1995 in St. Lucy, the cars were L1234 and today, they are over L3000, which is double.

Previously, growing up in St. Lucy you were taught, go to school, learn well, get a job and get a piece of land, then a house and then a car. Now, because you want to save a job, you have to do the reverse. The transportation system was so bad, Sir, that you have to go to school, buy a car and try to keep your job under the Barbados Labour Party, but we will change that. We will not only change that, but we will create the atmosphere that the people of St. Lucy will now be able to employ people. Sir, this is why we are now pushing community tourism, to ensure that development will not pass us as it did before. I will ensure that I will be in the forefront.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: I am hearing now about the airport and the seaport.

Sir, there are some of us, who are very wise in our thoughts and who can see much further than other people. There are some people who can only appreciate a second airport and a second seaport when they go to other developed country, but there are some of us who do not have to go to developed countries to understand that in order to develop a country, and to bring infrastructures to your Constituency and other areas, that things like airports and seaports should form part of the infrastructure, because once those things are put in place, the other things automatically follow. Sir, that is development.

One thing I will not do is to promise my constituents something that is not possible. Although I must admit that bringing the sea to St. Thomas would not be an impossible thing, Sir, because those persons who live in Panama would know that the Panama Canal has changed that thinking, but when people laugh at an airport in St. Lucy and a seaport in St. Lucy, then if I were like them, I would laugh at the idea of bringing a sea to St. Thomas, and that was not by me, that was by a former Prime Minister.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: I have a house there, but I do not live there. I live in St. Lucy.

Sir, I just wanted to make it clear in this House that the staff of the Ministry of Public Works cannot be blamed for any contracts being awarded to a company that we have been discussing. As Barbadians would know, that decision can only be made by the Cabinet of Barbados. I think it is wrong that because this project has not gone the way it should have gone, we are now blaming the staff at the Ministry of Public Works.

Sir, the idea that because a man is a carpenter and he is being employed in another professional capacity, if you are building houses and you are a professional civil servant, that you should be able to go and build houses too if there is a shortage of carpenters.

I am saying the same thing for a Highway. Sir, because the Chief Technical Officer is an engineer, it should not be given that the Chief Technical Officer should be out there, behaving like a normal engineer, but one would expect the Chief Technical Officer to do his job to ensure that the work that is being done, is done correctly.

Sir, this blaming of civil servants, we will not get involved in that, and we will not encourage it, Sir, because it has always been our job to protect them, and that is why we have always put systems in place to ensure that they have a better life, under the Democratic Labour Party, and that they are not tainted.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have three minutes in which to conclude.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, the $46 million that the Prime Minister spoke about to do other Highways and to do maintenance, as you drive around Barbados, you can see it happening. It is interesting that when you drive around Barbados, it is not only the Highway you are seeing work done but, Sir, from St. Lucy to Christ Church, you are seeing work done, including St. John, St. Philip and even St. Thomas.

Sir, do you know what is interesting? In every parish of this country, you are seeing work being done under the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, for 14 years I was in here and had to beg like a dog to get work done in my Constituency and never got any. The closest time I came to get any Highway work done in my Constituency was in 1998, just before an Election, when they started the Colleton to Crab Hill Road and after Election, all the equipment was removed.

Sir, I will not encourage my Party to do this to any Parliamentarian because they too, have rights to get work done in their Constituencies. Even though they might have unfaired the Honourable Member for St. John and me in those 14 years, we are here to represent everybody and we are not a too-few Government like them. They did not represent me when they were in Government, but I will represent them now that my Party is in Government, because my Party is about fairness, but their Party is about retaining seats. We think Barbados, not seats, and that is the difference between the two political parties.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, as I commence this short and modest contribution, I rather suspect that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy will jump to his feet within the first three minutes, or so, of my contribution. I am not really anticipating him, but I want to start by saying that I did hear the Honourable Member say that as far as time is concerned, there was double time in respect of a given project and he said that, therefore, there will be double cost. He said something to that effect.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St, Lucy is not rising on a point of order, but it does not necessarily follow that if something was at X figure in 2006, and then 2007 and 2008 came...

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House because the Honourable Member knows that because of the way this road work was discussed - I could not call it a contract because even though verbally it can be regarded as a contract - it was not binding. Therefore, the contracts, as I have said, it will more base on time than on a figure. The longer the road went, obviously, the higher the cost will be. The conclusion that I came to, Sir, you could easily come to than if you had something on a written document stating that it would cost X, Y or Z.

Sir, you would only hear this argument from me, Sir, when you have such a sloppy arrangement as the Honourable Member for St. James North, who was not party to it, but would now try to tarnish his name by getting involved in it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I was merely making the point that if costs in 2007 stood at X amount and then 2008 and 2009 came, that does not necessarily follow, as far as financing is concerned, that things would double or triple.

Sir, let me commence by citing three recitals from the Resolution which we have before us. I am at paragraph 3 of the Resolution before this Parliament.

House A43, Sequence 31, 4.10 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: . . .

Sir, paragraph 3 of the Resolution before this Parliament states that, and I quote:

"AND WHEREAS the Government considers it necessary to borrow the sum not exceeding $165,000,000 by way of bonds to be issued by the Government from the

Barbados National Bank Inc., a company incorporated in Barbados as Company No. 19285, and having its registered office at Independence Square, Bridgetown, Barbados for the purpose of financing the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project;

AND WHEREAS the sum of $165,000,000 is within the borrowing limit given to the Government under Section 2 of the said Act;

BE IT RESOLVED that Parliament approves the borrowing of the said sum not exceeding $165,000,000 from the Barbados National Bank Inc. for the purpose of financing the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project of which the terms and conditions are set out in the Schedule hereto."

Mr. Speaker, the Schedule refers to the break-down of how the financing is supposed to work.

Sir, I am attracted to the concept of road network. In the context of the presentation made by the first spokesman on That Side, reference was made to evolving businesses which owe their creation and development in consequence of given road developments and road repairs.

Mr. Speaker, let me focus on a few things to do with the constituency which I have the honour to represent. I would want the Minister of Transport and Works and his support staff to listen because a perilous situation can very well develop in St. James North if action is not taken immediately.

Mr. Speaker, I go to the area of St. Boniface Nursery School. When Highway 2A was developed, the developers came across an area well-known, both in St. James and in folklore as Kellman Gully. The "Mighty Liar" in 1979 spoke about flinging himself in Kellman Gully in consequence of a relationship gone bad.

Mr. Speaker, when Highway 2A was done, the engineers did a bridge a few metres north of St. Boniface School and laid metallic slabs over which pedestrians would walk. The best engineering advice at that time suggested that those metallic slabs had a life of just about 18 to 20 years. Alas, Mr. Speaker, they have started to decay. The slabs of iron, or metal by both bridges on both sides immediately north of St. Boniface, have started to decay. Children, their parents and other pedestrians use that bridge.

Mr. Speaker, I want the Honourable Minister and his Ministry, as a matter of urgency, to go down to St. Boniface, look at the bridge and check and see that those metallic slabs are rusting and decaying. Any fall from that bridge would send persons hundreds and hundreds of yards down, not just into a small ravine, but in a real big gully, I am serious, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, having verified with my own eyes this morning that this problem exists at St. Boniface, I went further into the road towards Westmoreland to the so-called new bridge that was developed in consequence of the straightening of the road that leads through Westmoreland. Time was, when one left Upper Carlton and Sion Hill, one would have made a right just close to Greaves Gap and come around and then join Highway 2A and go around.

Mr. Speaker, when the new Highway 2A was developed, the road was made straight and again there was a bridge with metal slabs covering the deep gaping hole under the bridge. Those metal slabs at Westmoreland are also rusting and decaying rapidly. Both the gully known as Kellman Gully and this gully immediately south of Sion Hill Development, and on the way to Westmoreland are very deep gullies, well traversed and frequently traversed. Alas, the elements of sun and rain, overuse and such like have had their effect, so I want the Ministry of Transport and Works to go down there urgently and see for themselves.

I do not want to alarm either this Parliament, the constituents of St. James North, or the public as a whole, but frankly speaking, Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister, accidents of dire proportions can happen if those slabs are not properly replaced. What is truly worrying, Sir, is that little children under five years old, accompanied by their parents, some of whom are no more than 19, 20 and 22 years old, use that bridge at St. Boniface.

Mr. Speaker, further across going south, you get the same problem where these slabs are beginning to see erosion on them from the junction between the slab and the bridge for the most part, and then it is spreading slowly. Mr. Speaker, it is not too late to act. I am calling on the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, as a man who had his origins and socialisation in the north, to treat this as priority.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to call the depot because the people at the depot at Prospect are for the most part outstanding public officers who respond promptly, but nothing beats a situation better than to have the head of the spring issue directives in the interest of public policy, and in this case, in the interest of public safety.

In consequence of the fact, Sir, that we are looking at infrastructure and our road network situation...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, just a minute. I am not sure that we are looking at infrastructure and so on as you put it. My understanding is that this Resolution has to do essentially with the network and so on, known as the

ABC Highway. I took your introductory remarks as remarks in passing, but I am becoming a bit concerned about the relevance of the presentation at this time to the Resolution, but you continue Honourable Member.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, with your kind forgiveness, I was focussing on the concept of road network infrastructure. Sir, in great measure, the road from Warrens to right opposite where the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was born and raised, the Ronald Mapp Highway going straight down to Mile and a Quarter, even though not originally in the ABC Highway project, is like a tributary flowing out of a river and going north.

Sir, if you permit me, I want to just request that where Government is engaged in works, whether these works have to do with the stretch of road between the airport and Paradise, or whether these works have to do with ancillary works along the route, that the Government so synchronise and harmonise business, that where there are ancillary considerations, they should be addressed.

Sir, I have no doubt that one of the very real difficulties facing the Ministry of Transport and Works is the veritable deluge of never-ending requests made of that Ministry. The Ministry of Transport and Works stands at the forefront of the consciousness of many a Barbadian, simply because many a Barbadian delights in having very good road facilities.

House A43 Sequence 32

4.20 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, what has to be done now as we consider granting this $165 million, is to ensure that any necessary accommodation works would be addressed at the same time. Sir, fortunately, most of the ABC Highway does not necessarily see the interruption of Highway activities by other utility concerns, but very few parts of the ABC Highway would attract the Barbados Water Authority and the National Petroleum Corporation, to the same degree as the older roads in Barbados, with the ABC Highway being relatively new. Sir, if it is that the Minister and his staff can discover that there are parts of the ABC Highway where there is gridlock, then that gridlock has to be dealt with.

Sir, there is some evidence that some creativity has informed the decision, below the old Life of Barbados, to have a kind of circular that works and that definitely eases the problem. Sir, the officers also have to let the Minister know whether there are any parts of that Highway that floods, or that are prone to flooding, because in the same way that Barbadians like to have excellent roads, Barbadians also do not like their roads to be flooded. They certainly resent the idea of the frequent digging up of good roads immediately after a good road has been put down.

Sir, this has transpired repeatedly in the last 75 to l00 years, where the Ministry of Public Works and Transport would do the best they could with a road and then a week after, some utility company, not having consulted the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, would come and create problems.

Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South would do well to bear in mind that I said earlier, that there is a need to harmonise planning, a need to coordinate in a way that would stop disruption and avoid wastage, otherwise the Ministry of Public Works and Transport is well-advised to check the north of Barbados, especially areas such as the Holetown Tenantry Road at Trents, to see the state of the road there and the consequential flooding that often occurs.

Sir, Government is well-advised to take in this $l65 million and to do its utmost to spend that $l65 million, not only in a transparent and honest way, but in a way to see where there could be savings. If there could be savings out of this, then any money saved could very well go towards other developmental projects. Sir, we should encourage savings where savings can be had.

Mr. Speaker, I think that even though we tend to be focussing on roads, in his wrap up, the Honourable Member would do well to go through the Schedule to the Resolution and speak to issues raised in the Resolution in terms of the funding and financing aspects. I recognised that within the Resolution, there is reference to bonds. One way by which a Government borrows is by issuing bonds, or Paper.

Sir, in circumstances where the money is not going to come initially directly from taxpayers out of the Consolidated Fund, we need to be sure to enlighten the public in respect of how the bond issue would work. Sir, clearly, if there is an opportunity in the bond issue for Barbadians like you, the Honourable Members for St. Joseph, St. Thomas and other Honourable Members to purchase bonds, if that could be worked on, it would then mean that a particular bias that has informed borrowing in this country would be obviated.

Mr. Speaker, let me explain. Governments have issued all kinds of bonds, debentures, treasury bills, saving certificates and such like. Sir, except for saving certificates, for the most part, the bonds and Government Paper are taken up by institutions as opposed to individuals.

Sir, in a culture where some people feel happier putting money on a savings account in a commercial bank,

which yields but little return, but which, if the same money is borrowed from the commercial bank, would see you paying a fairly heavy amount of interest, we need to advise the public to the variety of methods and systems available for public borrowing.

We need to enlighten the public that beyond time deposits and demand deposits, there can be opportunities to invest in Government Paper. Sir, the culture must be so arranged that the typical Barbadian does not feel that investing outside of saving accounts is beyond that Barbadian.

Mr. Speaker, I wish that enough money would be left back out of this $l65 million, to permit the Minister to visit the north and to look at the Rock Dundo/Gibbs situation, the Eastry House situation, the flooding by his friend Chris Sobers' shop and a whole host of events that occur, such as the bottom of Sweet Homes Gap and at the bottom of Hopes Alley. I trust that enough of this money would be left back so that these problems could be sorted out.

I trust too, as I started out by saying, that when Government looks at public works generally, Government should not do what it is accustomed doing, which is, prioritising particular projects. Government should so manage budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, to do what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was inferring, that is, to develop a cake and cut it up into nice pieces.

Mr. Speaker, recently I had the opportunity to go to Rose Gate, St. John. Sir, Rose Gate is benefitting in a tremendous way. Sir, not only Rose Gate, but further down there is a road that joins St. John and St. Philip. Sir, there is fantastic road development there. At Rose Gate, St. John, there is a tremendous amount of infrastructure going on, with spanking barbergreen roads and such like.

Sir, in St. Lucy too that has always had a depot. There are indications that substantial works are being done there as well. I think that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport would do very well to ensure that they measure and evaluate the need for infrastructure. They also have to consider what role the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission are going to play in the whole action.

Mr. Speaker, under the Barbados Labour Party, when it came to main roads and big roads, the question was that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport would do general maintenance, and that for big Highways the Ministry of Public Works and Transport would be responsible, but when it came to small ancillary works, the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission were supposed to deal with them.

Mr. Speaker, it is not too early, nor too late, for this relatively new Government to sit and deliberately calculate what role the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission would play in the development of our road network, especially in the context of ancillary roads, and especially in the context of the vast amount of non plantation tenantry roads which dominate St. Michael. Sir, the landscape of St. Michael is known for two things and I believe you have an interest in these matters. One of the things about the landscape of the parish of St. Michael is that there is, in large measure, an absence of proper tenantry and ancillary roads.

4.30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: The second phenomenon that should engage the attention of this House, a phenomenon to which the Member of the City always refers to, not directly, but in an oblique way, has to do with the abundance, the preponderance of tenantries all through St. Michael, but not plantation tenantries.

The problem that the Honourable Member for the City highlighted is that where people rent in a tenantry anywhere in St. Michael, or elsewhere in Barbados, and the landlord is stubborn enough to refuse these people the opportunity to develop proper sanitation, then the problems that the Honourable Member for the City has been highlighting would arise and, Sir, problems have to do with sanitation, water-borne toilet facilities and such like.

Mr. President, we are in the middle of the hurricane season. No one knows how much rain will fall between now and November, but where you have a settlement of housing and people have a sense of dignity, it cannot be a good thing that in flood rains dry pit toilets are struck by the flood waters and then bad consequences result as those flood waters, full of undesirable matter, spread through the place and threatened the health of the people.

Mr. Speaker, the time may have come when Government may have to, as a matter of public policy, develop legislation saying that, notwithstanding the normal constitutional provisions in respect of property ownership, that when something is done pro bono publico, with the highest consideration of the public good being an issue, that landlords without any prejudice to their rights, be made to allow for the building of water-borne toilet facilities.

Mr. Speaker, it can be done because it can so be arranged, that even when the water-borne toilet facilities are installed, the landlord need not bother if the legislation is properly drafted, but there is in Law already the notion of a fixture, and when the tenant puts in a fixture and leaves, the fixture belongs to the landlord. Sir, I am putting this out

deliberately because, like the Honourable Member for the City, I am concerned that we rate highly as an emerging developing country and, in fact, in some quarters, as the number one developing country.

Mr. Speaker, we must ask ourselves two questions. How developed are we in respect of our general, social and political awareness and our education, and how can we be that developed, if a substantial number of our citizens are hampered by having to deal with poor sanitation, dry pit toilets and other signals of poverty in this country.There is an existing poverty alleviation programme and I trust that it could be used to do what it is supposed to do, and that is to alleviate poverty in its many forms.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude by saying that too many Barbadians of real ability are not fulfilling themselves, are not achieving self-actualisation. I regret that the Honourable Minister responsible for Human Resource Development is not here right now, but there has to come a time and quickly, when we so develop our human resources, that no truly brilliant person, or person with ability, should be seen, or heard going for a low-involvement job. Sir, a low-involvement job is a job that does not fulfill. We have many Barbadians sticking into low-involvement jobs in circumstances where if we lift our human resources and permit these people to understand politics beyond roles because, unfortunately, too many Barbadians are as equal to roles in the same way that some unfortunate people see people as equal to money in terms of spending money.

Sir, in a clear situation where we need to develop Barbados, if infrastructure and road networks are important, our road network is so well-developed that we may have as much as 700, or 750 miles of roads craftily developed and running through different districts at the same time that we develop our social and physical infrastructure. We have to ensure that people are developed to a point where they transcend being involved in low-involvement jobs and get more heavily involved in high-involvement jobs. Sir, high involvement jobs mean that people in those jobs make a contribution beyond income that, psychologically speaking, they earn reward and that equips them better to be able to be of service to their families and to national development.

Sir, I am deeply obliged to you and most grateful to you for you have feared and you have apprehended, at the very start, that I was going to proceed down the path of irrelevance, but you have permitted me so much latitude that I have been able to make utterances that I do not believe that are either false, or lacking in commonsense.

Sir, I thank you very much.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to make a short contribution to this debate. I want to begin by congratulating the Honourable Member for Christ Church South because, given the herculean task which has been placed on him to clean up what obviously must go down in history as one of the worst and poorest displays of judgment and public Administration in this country. He should, in fact, also be congratulated for his efforts to, at least, seemingly bring some level of closure to this part of this debacle, as we have seen it unfolded.

Mr. Speaker, I speak in measured tones today because I think, as a student of politics and public Administration, just as the last honourable speaker, who I know, if not a trained public administrator, certainly has hung around the exercise long enough to know when things that ought to have been done were not done and things which were done, that ought not to have even been contemplated.

Mr. Speaker, I could understand the level of discomfort, which the the Honourable Member for St. James North, one of my mentors, in a different capacity, would have in addressing the kernel of the issue in this particular debate. Sir, the Honourable Member washed very far and very wide. He spoke of everything under the sun and did not come into connection at all, not with any level of generosity, with the Resolution. In fact, we are in the Crop Over season, and if it were not unparliamentary, I would say that his speech reminded me of the calypso by Poonka, “Poonka Donkey”. Sir, I heard it recently and he was all over the place.

Mr. Speaker, he is a good gentleman and I understand his discomfort, even though he would have wanted to defend his friend and colleague, the Honourable Member for St. George North, the former Minister of Public Works. I think he was trying implicitly and with some level of trepidation, to mitigate, even if esoterically so, to mitigate on behalf of the Honourable Member in relation to what we have seen here today.

Mr. Speaker, I am a new member of this House and I have heard and seen from the public gallery, heard on the radio and read in debates of painful experiences of Ministers who are called to account for things that happened in their Ministry either while they held the portfolio, or in their post-Cabinet experience and uncomfortable an exercise it is.

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: certainly, for the Honourable Member for St. George North who was like the proverbial drowning man, catching at the straw hoping to keep his nose above water, inhaling, no doubt, some of that water on behalf of a former Cabinet, and a Government that has bungled this exercise in public Administration. What is unfortunate were two things in his speech. Apart from the fact that the Honourable Member takes no culpability for anything that has happened, claiming not to have known anything that transpired in this political administrative debacle.

The two things that were very uncomfortable for me, in listening to the Honourable Member for whom I have a lot of respect, is that, (1) he sought to impute the integrity of the Auditor-General, a person who holds a constitutionally appointed post in this country. You may not like the individual, I do not know who he is, but you have, at least, to respect the office of the Auditor General.

Sir, a report was laid in this Honourable House by the Honourable Prime Minister, and alluded to by the Minister of Transport and Works, as having been done on this project, identifies some very telling and disturbing facts, and we have to take them as facts, because we have always accepted that whatever happens, at the end of the day when the Auditor General enters council, does his or her investigations and reports to this country, that we all accept it as the truth, the gospel truth, and nothing but the truth, because the Auditor General has no axe to grind.

He had no political bag to carry, and for the Honourable Member, a Member of this Honourable House, a senior politician in the Barbados Labour Party, to try to create the impression that lies were told, I should not say lies, that less than the truth was told by the Auditor General, in his observation of the same document which the Honourable Member himself says he saw, but which, of course, he participated in as well, is a sad day.

Sir, the second point is this. The Honourable Member sought, in my view, to cast aspersions on the staff of the Ministry of Public Works, voiceless as they are, at least in here, to respond to his allegations, that they did not take advice, they did what they wanted and how they wanted, and that he, as Minister, had no role in the process, did not know, could not have known, and that his Cabinet, or the Cabinet in which he sat, should not take culpability.

These latter day Pontius Pilate exercises will not extirpate the Honourable Member or his Party from culpability in this political debacle. It will not.

There is a very venerable Calypsonian called "Serenader", who does not support the Democratic Labour Party, who sang a song called "Too Much Steel In There", and whenever I hear about this project, or read anything associated with this project, that song rings in my ears, "Too Much Steel In There," and this is what we have before us.

Sir, what is the purpose of the project? They say the project was of a great public purpose to break the gridlock on the roads. Sir, gridlock created by the Barbados Labour Party, let me remind you of that. It is the former Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter, who said that his vision for Barbados was to see a car, three cars, at every household. Now that we have more than 100 000 cars on the roads, and our roads were not built and cannot accommodate such traffic, that gridlock was created by the Barbados Labour Party. Having created that gridlock on their own, and against good advice, and if there is anything we know from this project and otherwise is, that the Barbados Labour Party is impervious to advice, at least a good one. They set about to create a widening of the Highway, flyovers, and to do all of these things. That is okay. He said that they were the Government and they wanted to do it, so they did it.

Sir, the timing of the project, the process engaged for the project, and the implementation of it clearly, demonstrated that something went wrong somewhere. Sir, a company known internationally to several criminal investigating institutions, could just drop out of the sky like manna and find its way in Barbados with a proposal, so intricately designed as to serve the purpose contained in the head of somebody of the Barbados Labour Party Government. That is the first thing you have to look at. This is not happenstance. This is not coincidence.

Sir, 3S, SRL, seemed to have leapt out of nowhere, catapulting itself right in the Cabinet Room, on Bay Street, a Cabinet Room in which Grantley Adams sat to make public policy, and established the rubic of Public Administration in this country, in which Errol Barrow and the Democratic Labour Party devised the great social revolution that brought Barbados from a village to a nation, in which Tom Adams sat, and in which Owen Arthur had the opportunity, albeit too long, to occupy.

Sir, I say this. It is not coincidence that they landed in there with a proposal, invited by whom the former Minister cannot tell us today. Who invited 3S to submit a proposal? Sir, 3S just wake up one day and say, Barbados, they have gridlock, we are going to design a proposal and give them, and we are supposed to buy that, hook, line and sinker? I am sorry. I am not buying it.

The public of Barbados cannot buy it, because it cannot be true, that a company that knows nothing about Barbados can just pop out of the sky and come here. They were invited, not to tender, because the Auditor General, in the Report which was laid before the Honourable House, made it very clear that their proposal was unsolicited. He

said in this very Report that there was an uncanny similarity between the Cabinet Paper and the Proposal of 3S Limited, but we are all supposed to believe. There was an uncanny similarity between it.

Sir, when you look at it in the process, there was a mad rush not to go to tender, but to invoke Rule 137 (a) of the Financial Administration and Audit Rules, which allows the Barbados Labour Party Cabinet to make a decision in terms of awarding the contract.

H A43 4.50 p.m. Sequence 35

16:43:18

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

House A43, Sequence 36, 4.50 p.m.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General was very clear because he was troubled by the fact that in a Cabinet Paper, which was withdrawn from the Cabinet, a subsequent Cabinet Paper returned with changed advice and he commented on such, Sir, in the Special Report on the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project, page 31 at paragraph 4.6, and I quote:

"4.6. The Ministry's concern expressed in the withdrawn Cabinet Paper was appropriate, and offered good advice on how to proceed with the project. The specific concern about starting on a rolling basis, with its potential to increase the length of the contract, and create larger project cost, has been realized."

Sir, the advice of the Ministry in the Cabinet Paper that was withdrawn, and the Paper had to be withdrawn by the Minister and the Cabinet because public servants cannot withdraw a Cabinet Paper. They are not in Cabinet, so the advice given was withdrawn by the Minister and the Cabinet, and that is why you see in here so empty today.

The Leader of the Opposition is not here and the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter is not coming. Well he does not come here too often anyway. They are not coming to this debate because they do not want to face the music, but they will have it. They will face it in here, or they will face it out there. Understand that.

Sir, those fears were realised and he concludes:

"4.6 ... The risks which the Ministry noted could have been avoided."

Sir, I go on to 4.7:

"4.7It is not clear why there was such a substantial change in the opinion of the Ministry with regard to commencing construction, bearing in mind that the two areas of concern mentioned were not going to be satisfied before the commencement of construction..."

Mr. Speaker, do you know what happened? If you understand, as I know you do, how public Administration goes in Barbados, the political directorates intervened, between the withdrawn Cabinet Paper and the submission of the new one, and the comments and advice of the public officials were extracted from the new one, to clear the way for that project to be done.

Sir, why is it that? As the Auditor General said, mere months before the project was to have started which, in fact, was the earlier finish date, because the project started about three or four months before the date on which they were supposed to originally finish, December 2006, you know what that was all about.

Somebody knew that the electronic machinery of the Barbados Labour Party was in full flow and it was necessary to get this rolling basis. There was no design project, yet you start work, and did not finish the design.

In Barbados, Sir, we refer to a fellow called a "storm carpenter", who comes and starts to build and does not have any idea what he is building, but building. Therefore, this storm carpenter's approach to major work you cannot put two-by-fours on a roof. What was the hurry? Why, as the Auditor General said in this Report, this project did not go back out to tender? Even the tendering process was subverted, when 3S' proposal was received.

The Auditor General says in his Report, Sir, that there was an uncanny similarity between 3S' proposal and the Scope of Works that went out to the contractors who were asked to bid. Shame, destruction of every possible positive principle of public Administration in this country and anywhere in the world. I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, on that alone, the Barbados Labour Party should never be invited to administer anything in Barbados ever again.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, do you understand that at the end of the day, this "Great" 3S company, my good friend, the Honourable Member for St. George North, has been recorded in here as supporting and backing, saying that we unfaired 3S. Mr. Speaker, a due-diligence Report was done on this company the findings of which are contained in the Auditor General's Report. I quote from paragraph 24, page 6 of that Report.

"24.A due diligence performed on 3S indicated that the firm had been in existence for only a few years. There

was no evidence of this firm having a track record of Highway extension and building of flyovers."

Sir, no records at all. I tell you about "stormy" carpenters, this is a "stormy" firm, yet in a Cabinet Paper, the Ministry said that 3S was one of the few firms offering steel overpasses. A fast solution. Sir, in Serenader's song, "Steel in there". There was too much steel in 3S.

Therefore, Sir, we had to be saddled by this bureaucratic bungling, political interference and downright corruption by somebody, somewhere in the Barbados Labour Party, and we know who.

Mr. Speaker, if you think that those political vultures have put away their fangs, they have not. They are swarming all over, seeking some unsuspecting politician to drive fans into to suck the blood of the taxpayers of this country. I know what I am talking about, so listen to the Auditor General.

At page 4 paragraph 15 of the Summary:

"15. The Ministry had a clearer understanding of what it wanted for the road widening than for the overpasses, and should have separated the two components. This would have allowed for local contractors..."

Mr. Speaker, I remember a call-in programme in which a C.O. Williams complained that they were not given a chance to bid properly on this contract. I remember that distinctly. It said and I quote:

"16. ...the local contractors, who incidentally, did the work..."

Mr. Speaker, do you know that 3S did not build anything.

House A43, Sequence 36, 5.00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, 3S (Barbados) Limited dropped out of Mars, came here and, I understand, was brought by some phantom firm that the Honourable Member for St. George North said he does not know of. There are a lot of firms in Barbados that operate both inside and outside of Barbados. There are also partnerships between people in Barbados and outside of Barbados. Understand what is happening, Sir, it will come out in the fullness of time.

It was said that the local contractors who did the work, C.O. Williams and Rayside Construction, did not have a chance to be able to bid for the project. If these firms, according to the Auditor General, were successful in bidding for the project, the 15 per cent markup that the Honourable Member said he did not know anything about, which was paid to 3S (Barbados) Limited, would have ben avoided, or substantially reduced.

Sir, the Honourable Member came in here and tried to lambaste the Honourable Minister and said that we are causing the taxpayers $40 million and tried to implicate the civil servants. His Government is causing us more than $140 million in this project because of his bungling. The Auditor General said that the 15 per cent markup that went to 3S (Barbados) Limited - The Honourable Member said he did not know it was 15 per cent. Ten per cent went to 3S (Barbados) Limited, so we want to know where the other 5 per cent went.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: We are the Government and long will we be the Government.

Mr. Speaker, there are some people who, because of their intent, should not be allowed to even pass Bay Street. We should be able to pass a Law to stop some people from the Barbados Labour Party from going down Bay Street. We cannot do it because the Law does not allow us to do it, but if there was a Law, there are some people I would not let near Bay Street. If they had to get to town from Christ Church, they would have to take another road. They could go down the Highway that they built. This is what is happening and the Honourable Member says he is proud of what they did. That is the thing.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party offers no apologies, no culpability and accepts no responsibility for shackling the people of Barbados with this burden. Sir, you then hear the Leader of the Opposition in here every Tuesday, just as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition did in a press release somewhere, saying: "Oh, do not go with the Constituency Councils, $6 million can be saved." Sir, hundreds of millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money were frittered away.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I do not mind the Honourable Member for St. Thomas because the Honourable Member obviously was not paying attention when things were happening in the Cabinet.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: When this came up, the Honourable Member was not there. This is what is happening. Sir, you go through this Report line by line, chapter by chapter, it reads like a soap opera of skulduggery. When I get some extra time, I am going to

shoot a soap opera called "the skulduggery of the Barbados Labour Party," and I am going to use this as the main script starring the firm of Hobbs and Nicholls. I know what I am talking about, because there is a point in time when you have to draw a line in the sand and say enough is enough.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: You will deal with that, deal with it. You need to tell the people in St. Joseph and Rockhampton Road, St. Thomas that the reason they cannot get roads done is because we wasted money on this, and because of the greed, avarice and hunger for money by the political parasites who hang around the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke in the Election about the superstructure and people thought that I was just trying to large off of my knowledge of political science, but I read history and I spoke about the Bonaparte State. I sent other persons, not the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, because the Honourable Member would not understand anything in there, to read the 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte and about the superstructure. The Honourable Minister knows what I am talking about.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have three minutes in which to conclude.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about these issues. Sir, I know a lot of things. In political science, I read. I was a student, am still a student. I sent the Honourable Members on That Side to read the 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte and about the superstructure of persons existing around a Government created by politicians to enrich themselves. Mr. Speaker, the superstructure takes on to itself a form that cannot be controlled. Sir, this is the solemn evidence of that.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I do not know about the Laws of kidnapping, so I do not speak about them, but I could speak about political science because I know about that. I have never destroyed a public road in Barbados yet. I do not know about that either, but I could speak about what I know. Sir, this is the result of the work of that superstructure. This is what we now have in Barbados to deal with, so I commiserate, I do not congratulate, with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. Sir, you have done a good job, continue to do the work that you have to do.

Mr. Speaker, we would hear more about this Report. There are other speakers to speak in this debate and we will get an opportunity in the fullness of time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close by saying that the day we in Barbados lose sight of what is important in this country is when we fall down never to return.

Mr. Speaker, if the people of Barbados had returned the Barbados Labour Party to office, and this project on a rolling basis with no parameters, no clear purpose, with all the bureaucratic bundling, the corruption and common theft had continued, it would have been a terrible thing in this country. Thank God they did not.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please wind up.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: I say today that they are all responsible, even the uninitiated among them, for bringing this country and public Administration to such a sorry and sordid state. Mr. Speaker, I hope that through this Democratic Labour Party, we can restore some confidence in the public in the systems that we have come to enjoy that have built up this country over the years.

I am obliged to you, Sir, and I thank you very much. Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

House A43 Sequence 37

5.10 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I join this debate in support of this Resolution, with a sense of concern about the circumstances under which we are debating this measure in the Parliament of Barbados today. Sir, my biggest concern in relation to this debate is the absence from this Honourable Chamber of the Leader of the Opposition and certainly, the Honourable Member for St. Peter. Sir, they have practically left the former Minister of Public Works and Transport exposed in a matter in which they could have stood and boldly defended.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say up front that this debate is not about whether or not we needed an ABC Highway, it is not about whether or not we needed flyovers. This debate is about the approach taken by the Barbados Labour Party, which one could describe as being reckless, scandalous and certainly not a proud moment for Barbados. It gives great cause for suspicion in relation to the conduct of not only a former Minister of Public Works and Transport, but the conduct of an entire former Cabinet in relation to the

execution of what was to Barbados a new type of project undertaken with the use of public money.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of examples, some of which have already been cited, which show that the kind of foresight that one would have expected to be used in relation to this project, was never even contemplated by the former Administration. Sir, at the end of this debate, I believe that words such as accountability and financial prudence would be words that the Barbados Labour Party would never ever use in this Honourable Chamber, except to describe what they did not do.

Mr. Speaker, it is not a very proud moment for me because particularly, after reviewing what the Auditor General had to say about how this project was run, a number of very serious questions have to be raised. Sir, having reviewed all of the pages of the Report of the Auditor General, which has been tendered before this Honourable House by the Prime Minister, one has to ask the question, what was the former Government hoping to achieve and how they got, what was in their mad rush to install 3S (Barbados) Limited as the contractor for this project?

Sir, they did it by breaching all of the known Rules of financial prudence and project management in Barbados . Sir, they broke from the Financial Rules right down, in their mad rush to accommodate persons who were known to them as their friends and concubines. Sir, this is an example of an Administration believing so much that it is above the Law, that it could do anything.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say from the outset that we had an example of sheer negligence. I want to refer to a section of the Auditor General's Report. Sir, this is not a case where you could blame the public servants because in this Report, a number of concerns were raised by those persons employed within the Ministry of Public Works. The red flags went out to the former Cabinet of Barbados and that Cabinet opted to proceed in a direction which has now cost Barbados, and will cost millions of dollars in unnecessary public expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, on page 30 of that Report, at paragraph 4.2, and I wish to read from it because it is instructive in relation to a very key component of the project. Sir, it reads:

"In the Cabinet Paper, the Ministry raised its concern that a project should not commence without completion of the designs and calculation of the complete costs. The Ministry stated: "If physical construction begins prior to the removal of all encumbrances from the road corridor, the Government of Barbados can become susceptible to being charged for delays by the contractor.

Furthermore, the rolling basis procedure significantly reduces the Ministry's control of the project and has the potential propensity to increase the length of the contract and can therefore create a larger project cost. The Ministry does not recommend this approach and does not have the permission to accept a modification of the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding as proposed at 5(iii) and 5(iv) above. This Cabinet Paper was withdrawn."

Mr. Speaker, very early in the game the concern was raised that you should not embark on a project without complete project designs. Sir, what has resulted is exactly what personnel from the Ministry of Public Works and Transport feared. There was no decision between 3S (Barbados) Limited and the Government on the key and only component of merit in this project, which is the question of cost. There was no agreement whatsoever.

Sir, there was also the temerity of a former Minister of Public Works and Transport, standing in his seat, rather than saying to Barbadians that he would like to tender a public apology on behalf of himself, and the former Cabinet, for a project that has been so gravely bungled.

Sir, instead, you have the temerity of a former Minister of Public Works and Transport, stating categorically for everyone to hear, and I wish to quote him: "that everyone knows that you start a project without final designs. Everyone knows that you can start a project without formal designs."

Sir, the Honourable Member goes on to say: "I was never involved in this project."

Mr. Speaker, if ever you had a lesson of what was meant by collective responsibility, you have a former Cabinet Minister...

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, I never said that I was never involved in a project.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I never said that. Do you want to go back to Hansard Records? Do you want me to call for Hansard?

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to continue because I quoted the Honourable Member with a certain amount of detail. Sir, as a new Honourable Member to these Honourable Chambers, but certainly as a student of Law, it amazes me to hear a former Minister of Her

Majesty's Government, who would have sat in a Cabinet, who would have been clothed with collective responsibility, standing in this Honourable House of Assembly when he is called on to account saying, and I quote: "I was never involved in the project."

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member said that, when it is known that, in 2005, as Minister of Public Works and Transport, he was part of an Evaluation Committee, along with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Attorney-General, the Minister of Housing and Lands and the Environment, the Minister of Tourism and International Transport, and the Minister of Industry and International Business.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have a solemn duty, especially if we are entrusted with the kind of power that we have as Cabinet Ministers, to come to the public and offer sincere apologies when things go wrong.

Mr. Speaker, there was no design on the project and there was a project that was embarked upon, based only on BOLT principles. I will not be spending much longer in dealing with some of the intransigencies of the former Government because I have a few things that point to the future. Sir, certainly if this was the first time that the Barbados Labour Party embarked on a BOLT arrangements without any regard to international best practice, then probably I would have forgiven them.

5.20 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, in the 2007 Auditor General's Report, he had a lot to say about other projects embarked on by the Barbados Labour Party Government that have cost this country millions of dollars of wasted expenditure.

We look at the business project at Newton, which again has been bungled by them, millions of dollars down the drain. Therefore, when we have to encounter international economic crisis and the impact of global recession and we do not have a sufficient nest egg to rely on, then I really do not want to hear from the Barbados Labour Party Government, the former Administration.

Mr. Speaker, on page 110 of the 2007 Auditor General's Report, the Auditor General cautioned the former Government about how it should proceed with these PPP projects. In fact, he did it because of a number of examples of very questionable conduct on the part of the last Government, like expenditures that could not be accounted for, and projects embarked upon without any kind of contractual arrangements.

Sir, I am shocked that you have, for example, such acclaim, mostly self-acclaimed, legal luminaries on the Barbados Labour Party team and you could have a project such as the ABC Highway project, run on the basis of a very weak Memorandum of Understanding, and a project of such vast importance to Barbados and you do not make proper legal arrangements.

Sir, on page 110 of that Report, the Auditor General said, and I quote:

"A cost review....

Sir, that is where the former Government went wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that what we need to do with this project is that we need to look very seriously at how we should never ever run a project of this kind. I want to take up the recommendation of the Auditor General and to call on the Ministry and, indeed, the Government to undertake a detailed review of all BOLT arrangements in this country.

I believe we might even have to take a review of the BOLT arrangement, which has been embarked on in relation to the construction of the new Courts as well, because I do not want to see a repeat of what we have seen in the ABC Highway Project. Sir, we have to ensure that the taxpayers' monies are well spent.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that at the end of this debate the public would feel cheated because after all that the Auditor General has said, the question that remains is "What next?" How would Barbadians feel justified in relation to holding the former Government accountable to what has transpired? Certainly, as I listen to the contributions, it is certainly not one of my happy days in Parliament having to look at such glaring ineptitudes and issues that border on shady behaviour in public office.

Mr. Speaker, I really want to highlight the fact that today saw a public trial of a fallen Minister of Transport and Works and a former Cabinet in the hallowed walls of this Parliament. It was such a detailed trial that the former Minister was forced to speak for an exorbitant length of time in his self-defence and in trying to defend the actions of persons not present, but it should be a good day for transparency in Barbados because he has had to be called to account.

Mr. Speaker, I witnessed recently while on a visit to London, a practice which I would want to see in Barbados, where the Prime Minister was being pilloried by questions by a Select Committee of the House of Commons in relation to the practice and the policies of the Government generally, but more, in particular, what is happening in

Afghanistan. I would have felt better if the former Minister was before a special Select Committee and being questioned in more detail in relation to his stewardship and questioned by his colleagues.

I feel that we can take transparency and accountability in this country a step further by being more serious in relation to how Committees of Parliament function, particularly the Public Accounts Committee, because I believe that after hearing this debate, there ought to be a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee and the deliberations should, perhaps, be carried live on television and on radio in relation to a detailed look at this particular project that has gone down in the history of Barbados. Sir, we owe it to ourselves as representatives of the people to ensure that we could show Barbadians that were serious about public accountability.

Mr. Speaker, I want to focus a little bit on the ABC Highway and offer some views on how that project has taken shape. I believe that the signage on the Highway is certainly inadequate. I believe that given the nature of that Highway, we are in danger of losing lives if we do not clearly mark our pedestrian crossings. I believe that only the two overpasses that the Ministry referred to should be considered, but certainly in relation to the Kendal Hill Roundabout, where the Highway has basically cut in half a community called Briar Hall, we have already had in that junction some serious accidents, I believe, one fatal. I believe that particular junction should benefit from a pedestrian overpass. Sir, this is where the money should have been spent, because you cannot have a major Highway and not consider pedestrian safety.

Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned that as this project evolved, that not enough attention was paid to incorporating the views and concerns of residents and businesses along the Highway. Sir, I believe that no public project of this kind, particularly Highways, should be embarked upon without the implementation, or the setting up of an Oversight Committee, which would include members of the community and members of businesses, so that they could advise the technical people and the contractors of concerns and issues.

Mr. Speaker, we have had a similar situation occurring in the Wildey area where I am aware that several businesses were disrupted and affected by the ABC Highway, and I do not believe that enough was done to ensure and incorporate their views and to ensure that as little disruption as possible would be felt by those businesses and those residents of that area. Certainly the complaints coming to me is that town hall meetings and so on did not assist. I believe that far too often, town hall meetings occur after the fact, after projects have actually rolled out, we then have a town hall meeting.

H/A43/5:30 Sequence 39

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Sir, I also feel that one of the things that occurred under the former Administration, of which I am not very proud, but which I believe we are suffering from today, is the actions, I believe, of the former Minister of Transport as well, in awarding a major signage contract of interest in Trinidad, rather than that Barbadian sign companies could benefit from those signage contracts. I believe if the Barbados signage companies were involved, you would have better signage, with persons who have the local knowledge to erect proper signage.

I have always wanted the opportunity to question that particular decision. Why would the former Minister of Transport award such a large signage contract to Trinidadian interests at the total exclusion of Barbadian sign companies, many of whom, during that period, had to beg for some of the work? I believe that this mistake should never be repeated. I thought that the former Minister would have explained in his very lengthy contribution that kind of decision.Sir, some of these entrepreneurs are the same ones that the Barbados Labour Party wanted to protect.

I also feel that you should never have Highway improvement occurring in Barbados, without taking into account how we are going to develop the feeder roads. One of the mistakes made in relation to the ABC Highway was, the lack of attention to the enhancement of the feeder roads, those roads feeding on to the ABC Highway.

We, perhaps, made the blunder of creating a scenario where we had such traffic congestion and planning for traffic congestion on the Highway itself as opposed to finding solutions before the traffic reached the Highway. I feel that it is not too late to even look at that issue, to see where, particularly traffic from St. Philip and St. George, the feeder roads, can be improved.

One of the problems we have to address is the whole question of the utilisation of the Roundabouts. Even at this stage we have congestion at some of the Roundabouts on the ABC Highway, which I believe the creation of the three lanes will not solve. We have to examine whether we need to install traffic lights at some of these high congestion Roundabouts.

I have seen situations where motorists using the Roundabouts begging for a break from oncoming motorists to manoeuver the Roundabouts. That is something I believe we have to look at seriously.

We need to look at serious road traffic management, which is relevant to this debate. The utilisation of new

traffic codes in relation to communities, remains something that needs to be examined. I believe there are a number of communities not only in relation to the ABC Highway, that need to be planned specially to ensure that speedsters and those who abuse the Highway, do not pose a danger to life and limb in communities.

Sir, we still have the vexing problem of motorists failing to observe red lights across Barbados. I believe we have to address this as a matter of urgency. We have to get to the point of erecting cameras at all intersections serviced by traffic signal lights. I see on a daily basis the horrendous action of motorists speeding through red lights hoping to get to the other side. We have had no fatal accidents, as far as I am aware. Unless this practice is curbed by serious legislative action, and by policing, I fear we are going to have some fatal accidents occurring in Barbados.

Sir, the whole question of the use of the penalty point system, which has already been provided under the Road Traffic Act, where persons can be in danger of being penalised by points, in accordance with their violation of the Road Traffic Regulations. That remains on the Statute Books, but have not been afforded the kind of arrangements to ensure that it can be put into effect.

Sir, I believe that we need to get to the stage where those arrangements, that specific provision of the legislation, the utilisation of penalty points is put in place to curb dangerous practices on our Highways.

Sir, going forward, I believe that we need to take stock, seriously, of how we will improve our Highways, and the kind of approaches we will take to ensure that we do not have a repeat of what happened in this ABC Highway project.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have two-and-a-half minutes in which to wind up.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much. We still cannot stress enough, the fact, that one of the grave issues in this whole project, has been the failure to adhere to proper tendering procedure. I believe that even if we are going to continue to use BOLT arrangements in Barbados, this Government should evolve a policy framework and work out a policy agenda, and set procedures by which BOLT arrangements will be conducted in Barbados in the future.

I feel that Parliament should benefit from the referral of such a policy framework, so that BOLT arrangements are guided. One of the things that occurred in the project, the reason for the BOLT arrangement, in many cases, is to avoid expenditure of a particular kind of magnitude, to set a fixed price in relation to large contracts, but that certainly did not work in this case, and the excuse that you were trying to gallop towards completing a project for World Cup has not borne any fruit. We know the whole history behind that.

In closing, I feel that this project ought to give us an opportunity to reflect on some very serious blunders, serious breaches of procedure, and serious breaches of the Law, that should inform how we conduct ourselves as a Government going forward. While we are very correct in scolding the Barbados Labour Party Government, I think that a serious review of this project should be undertaken with a view to ensuring that the correct procedures and policies are put in place and that, certainly, the persons who are empowered with certain responsibilities in relation to project designs, are sufficiently empowered to ensure that the kind of errors and blunders we have seen are avoided in the future.

Sir, with those few remarks, I wish to support this measure before the Honourable House, and to signal that we need to move now in a new direction in relation to the management of projects of this kind.

I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I will like to make my own presentation by offering my gratitude to my colleague and friend on This Side, the Honourable Member for St. George North. I believe that in his presentation he was able to offer to the people of Barbados a level of frankness that sometimes eludes members of the political class.

H A43 5.40 p.m. Sequence 40

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

House A43, Sequence 41, 5.40 p.m.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Sir, he was able to explain to the public of Barbados some of the issues and considerations that others on the Government side would not be expected to offer.

I am a little surprised, Sir, that in the course of a debate, the centrepiece of which is a borrowing of $165 million, nobody on the Government Side seeks to focus the debate on anything related to the economy. Certainly, Sir, if a homeowner, or a householder wants to borrow $10 000 from the bank or $100 000 from the bank, they do not focus only on the desirability of the thing that they are doing. They look at the hard cold reality of whether they could afford it, what it is that the borrowing would do to

their domestic economy and that is what, at the end of the exercise, governs the issue.

The Honourable Members who have spoken on That Side want to talk about the Highway until the cows come home, Sir, but not a word about the fact that the Government is committing the people of Barbados to a loan of $165 million.

Mr. Speaker, I am certainly not an economist but prudence, Sir, dictated that we on This Side do some preparation for today's exercise. Certainly, Sir, the best advice that we have been able to receive, and I have no doubt that the Other Side has their own economic advisers, suggest to us, Sir, that there are some critical issues, which are central to the decision to embark on this loan.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt at all, Sir, that the Government's projections for its revenues have not been met. The fact, as far as we can garner from the various Central Bank's Reports and the sources that we have, suggests that Government's revenue has been steadily falling, and we are left to wonder, Sir, if in the context of all that has been said, whether it is not the truth that this borrowing is really to finance other projects relating to the Government.

The Honourable Member for St. George North in his presentation, quite rightly referred Honourable Members of this Chamber and the listening public, to the statement that the Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. John gave in 2008. The Honourable Attorney-General sought to put a very crafty interpretation on it and I think on This Side, we have now gotten accustomed to that. We have had artful interpretations of the concepts of democracy and now today, Sir, we have an artful interpretation on a simple statement made by the Prime Minister last year.

The Prime Minister said, and I quote:

"In the discussion of the ABC Highway, in an effort to ensure that we meet previous commitments in respect of the ABC Highway project, I propose to increase the fees for the use of this Highway with effect from August 1, 2008. The new fees will be as follows and they are expected to yield an additional $46 million in a full year."

Sir, the Attorney-General has said that this means nothing more than it says, it is intended to cover previous commitments, in relation to the ABC Highway.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House to suggest that I, at any stage in today's debate, interpreted anything in the Prime Minister's Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals of 2008. I quoted a statement, which the Honourable Member has just quoted again, and all I did was to emphasise the words in the statement, "previous commitment." Sir, that is not an interpretation. That is all I did. I did not place any interpretation on it, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, if the literary Rule is to apply to this statement, then it must mean that when once those previous commitments are covered, as a result of this $46 million a year, that this particular tax will be reduced on the backs of Barbadians.

It is all right for the Honourable Member to say that we will wait and see, but I believe that openness in governance is about telling the people of Barbados what you want to do, and not governing them by surprise as the Democratic Labour Party wants to do, and has done repeatedly over the last 18 months, but governing, Sir, with frankness and certainty in what you are doing.

Sir, the bottom line is, this Road Tax was increased to bring in $46 million per year. Do not let us fool ourselves that this $46 million a year was intended to cover past expenditure. This $46 million a year is to pay for the Highway. Simple.

Asides.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: I cannot help but notice that nobody on the Government side has sought to offer the people of this country, whom clearly they must think are ignorant, an explanation why a Government that, just last year has raised...

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is clearly misleading the House. Throughout this debate, no person on the Government side indicated that the people of Barbados are ignorant. I believe that the remarks that he made should be withdrawn, because no person on This Side indicated that the people of Barbados are ignorant.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Sir, having levied an increase in road tax that over a three-year period would bring in approximately $130 million, and year one of which has already gone, we are still seeking to borrow $160 million to finance the same Highway.

Sir, it is my view that the Government clearly must think the people of Barbados to be ignorant because that is the only reason you could raise road taxes to cover expenses on a Highway, and still a year later decides you are borrowing $165 million for it. Give us the explanation,

if this is what you intend to do. Apart from our commentary on it, Sir, we really - unless the Honourable Members on That Side want to be true to themselves - have to accept that Parliament will vote in favour of it, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, the Government is obligated to level with the people of this country. Sir, that is all we want, an answer to why, if you have raised road taxes, you are borrowing this money. Sir, if this $165 million will cover the amount raised in the road taxes, then we on This Side will say to the Government that it is incumbent on them - as a palliate almost, for the people of Barbados, who are now burdened in a way in which they have not been burdened since pre 1994 - to say to the people of Barbados having decided to borrow this money, that they are going to relieve them of part of the burden of this tax. Sir, they are borrowing and we will have to pay it back.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Members on That Side need to explain to their constituents that in this country, our economy is grinding, ever so surely, to a halt.

Asides.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: The Government of Barbados needs to explain to the people of this country that our unemployment, Sir, is increasing on a daily basis. They need to explain to this country what the effect of borrowing this $165 million will do.

House A43, Sequence 41, 5.50 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: We on This Side, Mr. Speaker, notice the company that is benefitting from the money that is being spent on the project, Rayside Construction. We understand that additional work has been passed on to Rayside Construction, a subsidiary of a company called CLICO. Mr. Speaker, Barbadians are not as foolish as the Democratic Labour Party may want to believe that they are.

Mr. Speaker, because of the fact that the projections for revenues are falling, Government has had to cut its expenditure by 10 per cent across every Ministry. What we are seeing in relation to the ABC Highway is not a diminution in expenditure, but an increase.

The Honourable Member for St. George North talked about the consultants that are being paid vast amounts of money all on the backs of Barbadians who are not just poor, but are becoming poorer and poorer by the day.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members on That Side have made a document a document of the House. Its authorship is unknown. No way on the face of this document do I see any reference to who prepared it, but it was prepared since 2008, it seems. It has only now made its way into this Chamber half-way through 2009. It has been made a document of this House purporting to be a Report of the Auditor General, it may well be, I only wish that evidence of its authorship were here.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members on That Side have taken to task BOLT arrangements and have proffered ideas as to the suitability of a road project for a BOLT arrangement. The Prime Minister said how could you have a Highway subject to a Public/Private Partnership (PPP) when the road is subject to the Road Traffic Act, when the road belongs to the people of Barbados. They have offered so many things that it is difficult to really figure out where to start, but I would start there, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, in order for a Public Private Partnership to come into being, the parties agree on the terms. All across the world PPPs are entered into in relation to train lines, airport, Highways, harbours and waterways, all things that belong to the Government and people of the respective nations.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this country are being asked to accept that our brains are so small that we are not able to come to grips with the idea of a PPP in relation to a road. They do it in Russia, they do it in Spain, they do it in France and they do it in England, but we cannot do it, and the reason offered is because the road is subject to the Road Traffic Act.

Sir, in all of the BOLT arrangements that we have done in this country, the freehold remains the property of the Government, and what has been done is to transfer the property to the private sector partner by way of lease. Mr. Speaker, where in God's earth in any book is it written that a country cannot lease a stretch of Highway to a private sector agency for the purpose of doing a PPP?

Mr. Speaker, I do not even think that the Road Traffic Act that the Honourable Member for St. John said is the very reason that we cannot have a PPP in relation to the road that supports him, because the Road Traffic Act defines "road" as meaning any street, road, or other place to which the public has access and any bridge over which a road passes and includes any privately-owned street, road, or other place to which the public has access.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that we have a Road Traffic Act that deals with the creation of offences and the regulating of how the road is used is not in any way a barrier to leasing the road and the land on which the road stands to the private sector partner.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Members on That Side have come up with this idea that we did not have a real agreement in place. I am embarrassed that Honourable Members on That Side. If this Report came from the Auditor General and he said that we did not have a real agreement, then I am embarrassed that he should say so too. Sir, I have heard it from the Government Benches, both Front and Back Benches.

The Memorandum of Understanding is simply an agreement between the parties. I have troubled to read a few cases to refer to Honourable Members on That Side, who may be interested in looking at them, Heilbut, Symons and Company against Buckleton, a 1913 appeal case, at page 30, J. Evans and Sons (Portsmouth) Limited against Andrea Merzario 1976, two all England Reports at 9.30. There are also a host of other cases, all of which say quite clearly that Memoranda of Understandings are contracts and are legally binding between the parties.

Sir, in my own professional experience, I have been involved in significant transactions of greater worth than the Highway, where the parties operated for some time on the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding before the actual contract was concluded.

Mr. Speaker, we liberalised an entire telecommunications sector in this country and removed a Cable and Wireless monopoly that had been in place for years on the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr. Speaker, it is to my certain knowledge that the Eric H. Holder Jnr. Municipal Complex at Horse Hill, which was finished and opened by the Attorney-General, is a BOLT arrangement, and up to the date of the Opening, the only thing that we had in place was the Memorandum of Understanding. The contract was not signed yet. Sir, the proof of the pudding is in the eating except for those who have no taste for the truth.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is clearly trying to mislead this House. No one on This Side indicated that the PPP would not have been executable because of the reason being proffered now by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. What we indicated was that a BOLT arrangement would not work in these circumstances because of the conditions of the way public Highways are used in Barbados. The Honourable Member referred to instances overseas, ports, airports, train stations, which in large measure are run by authorities who exact fees for their existence and viability.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I believe that despite the fact that there may have been some steps along the way that were little less than elegant, we have been able to bring to this country an alternative form of project execution and financing that has worked. It is as simple as that. We do not seek your credit, and we do not seek your acknowledgement for our successes.

Sir, the Government, before they were in Government, walked up and down this country suggesting that Honourable Members on the Government Side, as we then were, were engaged in corruption, we should be locked up and we had bank accounts overseas. Sir, we were accused of all kinds of wicked and pernicious acts. The people of this country were promised all kinds of special audits and forensic audits and the forensic audits were going to be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions because the members of the Barbados Labour Party were a bunch of crooks and vagabonds and should be locked up.

House A43 Sequence 42

6.00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I want to say to this Honourable Chamber today that the Government needs to put up or it needs to shut up. Sir, this Report, again I do not know its authorship, but this Report says on one page...

Asides.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: I will give it to the Director of Public Prosecutions myself. Mr. Speaker, that is the thing. A lot of comments, a lot of little innuendos, a lot of little things slipping in. Sir, if that is the way the Democratic Labour Party wants to see itself, that is fine, but I am concerned about the reputation that I have and the reputation that the Honourable Members on This Side have. I am also concerned about the reputation for good governance that this country has had before and since Independence.

Mr. Speaker, all that is happening when the Democratic Labour Party makes a lot of nasty little statements, suggesting that there is “steel in there”, when they talked about borderline corruption but on no occasion do they ever come up with a scintilla of proof or evidence to support any of the charges, then they are doing a grave disservice to governance and a grave disservice to the reputation of the people in this country, including public servants.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. George North was at pains to point out that there was a Project Unit, headed by a member of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. There was a Permanent Secretary with

overall financial responsibility. There was the Ministry of Finance. There was even the Auditor General.

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is seeking to mislead this Honourable House. Sir, in saying that he is concerned about how he is being perceived and his reputation, having presided over a project such as the prisons and the over excesses at the prison, I do not believe that is an accurate statement to be made to Barbadians.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please continue.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, this Report, whatever it is, at paragraph 1:4...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member continues to mislead this Honourable Chamber. The Honourable Member is speaking to the opposite of the draft Auditor General's Report that has been laid by This Side. Sir, the Honourable Member is juxtaposing it to a document which the Honourable Member for St. George North has quoted from all day, which he has made a document of this Honourable House.

Sir, that document is unsigned by anybody. It has a typewritten list of names that anyone could have inserted on a back page. Sir, none of these names is signed against, therefore, I want to know about its authenticity and authorship to which the Honourable Member is speaking. Sir, as we said, at the final compilation of this Report, we will publish it for the people of Barbados to read for themselves, and you could deal with that then.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please continue, Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, somebody at paragraph l:4 said:

"Applicable files in respect of the Project were reviewed, along with accounting information..."

Sir, this was done since 2008. Nowhere in it does it even hint at corruption - nowhere. If the Government wants to lock up people on This Side, they must do what they have to do, otherwise they must stop talking about it. Sir, we are prepared to stand up in any court, in any place, including this Parliament, to defend our position, but the Government needs to stop with this playing to the Gallery, trying to condemn people on This Side, hoping that it would last until whenever the next Election comes.

Mr. Speaker, the Report of the St. Joseph Hospital was laid in Parliament two weeks ago and on page 32 there is a list of about 20 contracts that were awarded under the former Minister of Health, none of which went to tender, not one of them. Sir, a whole Sherbourne Conference Centre was built on Two Mile Hill, which has never been to tender, but the Honourable Members on That Side want to stand up on some imaginary moral high horse. Sir, if something wrong was done, it was wrong. Wrong, Sir, is not subjective, it is objective, but this Democratic Labour Party Administration must remove the beam from their eyes before they can get around to somebody else's. Sir, this is shady behaviour.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that the Government has some idea about running a country that we on This Side do not have. Sir, according to them, in everything that we did, there was always an opportunity for money to get pushed into somebody's pocket. If that is how they are operating, confess and let yourself be cleansed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have two and a half minutes in which to wind up.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, $165 million is now being placed on the backs of Barbadians and what do we have to show for it today?

Asides.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing is not an improvement in the condition on the Highway. In fact, one wonders if the ease with which we move from day to day is not as a result of the downturn in the economy. Sir, as I look around the roads, I do not see the big trucks that used to be running here and there making deliveries. Therefore, when you add that to the fact that people are on vacation, we may have an illusory image of improvements on the Highway.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, please wind up.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, $165 million and not a word about the economy, and the Prime Minister, perhaps, he will speak about it tonight at 8.00 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this matter before this Honourable Chamber and to say that I am rather surprised that we have this blatant belated outburst from the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, in the closing minutes of this debate.

Mr. Speaker, I could not believe I was hearing myself correctly, when I heard the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, frankly indicating that the Barbados Labour Party would have no problem in leasing out part of a major Highway of our country to private partners.

Sir, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South mentioned, what this could give rise to would be a situation in which this private entity, which is leasing part of the public Highway, could actually charge a toll for motorists traversing this road. This exists in other countries around the world. Sir, is this the direction in which the Barbados Labour Party was taking our country?

Mr. Speaker, we have heard people in the private sector publicly indicating that this is the way to go, that to pay for the flyovers the Barbados Labour Party should have shut off part of the Highway and charged a toll. Sir, we see this right-wing conservative reactionary bourgeois approach of the Barbados Labour Party, and that is why I am happy that the people of Barbados were enlightened and came forward in their numbers and voted the Barbados Labour Party out of office and put a stop to this privatisation issue.

Mr. Speaker, the Mighty Gabby would have had to write another song. He wrote about "Jack, Dah Beach is Mine" when it was perceived in a previous Barbados Labour Party Administration that they were sympathetic to privatising beaches, as exists in some countries in the Region. Sir, clearly there is a philosophical difference in the right-wing conservative Barbados Labour Party approach, and the more progressive socialist approaches of the Democratic Labour Party, and so we put a stop to that foolishness.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to waste this Honourable Chamber's time in trying to justify any BOLT (Build, Operate, Lease, Transfer) arrangement to lease out the public Highway. Sir, even if it is legally possible, I am saying philosophically in the interest of national pride and sovereignty of our country, it is a non-starter and I am sure that this Administration would not be going down that line.

6.10 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, who was the last Attorney-General for the Barbados Labour Party Government, is trying at this late hour to justify the execution of that ABC Highway Project, and it is a reality that there was no written contract signed before that work was started. It is wrong. It is not financially ideal and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph should be man enough to apologise to the people of Barbados for their transgressions.

Mr. Speaker, it is nothing to brag about and it is a shame that a noted attorney and a former Attorney-General would go down that line. Be pious and penitent because the people of Barbados frowned upon you, the Barbados Labour Party, and voted you out of office and if you do not learn the errors of your ways, you will remain in Opposition for perpetuity. Sir, the public is listening to this unrepentant, arrogant attitude of the Barbados Labour Party and, Sir, it is a shame on them.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph talked about the proof of the pudding being in the eating. I am saying that this is a sorry set of affairs in terms of the ABC Highway Project. It was stuffed into the faces of the people of Barbados. We choked on it. It tasted bad and bitter. We spit it out and we spit the Barbados Labour Party out of office.

Sir, that is the proof of eating the pudding because it was one sorry mess from the inception. There was this mad haste to complete this project in time for the World Cup and in time for the Elections. It was a narrow political interest of the Barbados Labour Party. Sir, they started on the wrong foot, and ended on the wrong foot.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party realised there were serious management problems with the way the firm 3S managed that project and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is well aware of this because, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central mentioned, the Barbados Labour Party Cabinet had to intervene and set up a number of Sub-committees of Cabinet, one which was chaired by the then Deputy Prime Minister and including the then Attorney-General, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

They intervened because there were several meetings held before between the Minister of Public Works, the Minister of Finance, the Barbados National Bank, the major funder and the firm 3S to iron out problems, but from the onset, the thorny issue was the rates which the firm 3S was submitting for their work, which was substantially higher than existing market prices. Sir, in other words, the firm 3S was bent on ripping off the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, that is why no concrete contract could be entered into. You had to get Memorandum of Understanding after Memorandum of Understanding, because the then Barbados Labour Party Government realised that the firm 3S was not playing fair, and that it wanted to charge rates much higher than the prevailing market prices.

Mr. Speaker, it went further. There was only a final resolution with this same Sub-committee of Cabinet, meeting just in the Parliament Buildings, just on the eve of the General Elections on November 15, 2007, came into what they thought was a final agreement for Section 1 of the project, not including the flyovers.

Sir, the firm 3S had agreed to take $117 million, yet that fell through. Sir, the firm 3S was saying that it was not enough, that they wanted to charge another $9 million and they wanted to suggest that certain aspects of the programme were not included, so the whole thing fell through.

Mr. Speaker, at the same time, the major source of funding, the Barbados National Bank, was crying out, because the Barbados Labour Party had to get into the awkward situation of issuing letters of comfort and the Barbados National Bank was concerned that short-term commercial paper was not the way to go and they wanted a more long-term financing of the project to be finalised.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph must not give the public the impression that the arrangements with the firm 3S in terms of the execution of this ABC Highway Project was clear sailing when the Barbados Labour Party Government was in office. It clearly had serious problems and they left office with that problem not being resolved. Sir, the facts are there and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is silent because he knows what I speak is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and, Sir, it is on public record.

Mr. Speaker, it goes on further because the Sub-committee of the Barbados Labour Party Cabinet in November 2007, did not get into Section 2 of the project in terms of the flyovers because they realised that the firm 3S was again asking higher amounts for the execution of the flyovers than initially advised, so the Barbados Labour Party was not going down that line yet. Sir, even the preliminary assessment of the foundation designs suggested that the footings were over-designed.

Sir, the firm 3S tried to slip in extra cost to the taxpayers of Barbados.

Sir, the Environmental Impact Assessment Project was not completed by November 2007, and the programme scheduled for the construction of Section 2 was projected by the firm 3S to be over a protracted period, thereby increasing the cost overruns and cost implications. Sir, it was a sorry mess.

Mr. Speaker, moreover, the firm 3S was then proposing to have a separate mobilisation fee for Section 2 of the project, even though the entire project, Section 1 and Section 2, the widening of the Highway and the building of the flyovers, initially, were presented as one project. Sir, then at the eve of the execution of Section 2, the firm 3S said it wanted more money and that they wanted mobilisation for Section 2.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party clearly was not on top of that situation and it is only the public of Barbados that rescued the country and voted this incompetent Barbados Labour Party regime out of office. Sir, we are really thankful that the public of Barbados saw the light of day and were able to, in a mature way, and at the height of democracy, throw the Barbados Labour Party out of office.

Mr. Speaker, I listened very closely and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph tried to bring in a bit of linguistical manoeuvre to say that the Democratic Labour Party is giving Rayside Concrete Works the work to complete the ABC Highway Project but, Sir, the initial sub-contractors, the people who did the work when the firm 3S was here, were the same Rayside Concrete Works and the same C.O. Williams, so what is the Honourable Member for St. Joseph suggesting? We are just saying that these are the Barbadian companies that did the works, so let them complete it. Sir, what is wrong with that? There is nothing sinister about that. What is the relevance of the CLICO connection and so on? It is a political, linguistical, tongue twister to try to confuse the issue and put red herrings across the trail, but the public of Barbados has been educated by the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow. We are not stupid and we will not fall for all of that political hot air coming from the Other Side.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the public of Barbados that the Democratic Labour Party Government is in control, that we are going to steer this ship and steer it forward to ensure that the infrastructure of our country develops in a very orderly and financially correct manner.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I am not going to be much longer, but I thought it was very important for us to put this whole project clearly in perspective and realise that the Democratic Labour Party was justified in terms of throwing the firm 3S out of our country.

Sir, what is wrong if the coordinator of the project has been thrown out of the country? You must fill the void and, who would be having oversight over the sub-contractors? Sir, the Government decided that it would have a seasoned Q.C. as the legal consultant to the Government to ensure that all the legal mess left by the Barbados Labour Party Government is properly sorted out so that the taxpayers of our country are not left to bear massive Law suits and so on.

H/A43/6.20 p.m. Sequence 44

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Sir, we brought in Architects, Professional Engineers and Quantity Surveyors. We are a responsible Government and we make no apologies for being a responsible Government. We have been elected to govern and will not abdicate our responsibility to govern the affairs of the country in the interest of the masses of our country. Those taxpayers' dollars are earned by the hard work of our people, and we have the responsibility as a Government to ensure that the taxpayers' money is properly accounted for, and properly utilised in the interest of national development.

Sir, as I wind up, I would just take the opportunity to encourage the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to press ahead with his great leadership of his Ministry and to state that the overpasses, in terms of the pedestrian overpasses are a wonderful idea.

This foot soldier is fortunate to have travelled as a student leader, and I remember travelling to Mexico in the mid-1980s. I remember seeing these pedestrian overpasses in the heart of Mexico City and they were heavily utilised by the pedestrians in that country, so it is very feasible.

Sir, I remember, again as a student, at the University, a Kittian student, as he disembarked a mini van at the entrance of the Cave Hill Campus of the University of the West Indies, and he crossed the road, a vehicle knocked him down and he was almost paralysed. He had to spend many months in the hospital. So, the issue of overpasses along the ABC Highway, I support totally. We have to look at the possibility of the underpasses where the topography of the land would facilitate such.

I know that at the end of the Brandon's Beach Road, where the Spring Garden Highway cuts across the natural path towards the Brandon's Beach and Spring Garden, we know that a number of people have died over the years, from time to time, at that crossing. We could have an underpass there, because the overpass is not conducive to the people who may be old and suffering, who may be disabled, so an underpass may be more feasible. Of course, with underpasses you need proper lighting, security and drainage. These are issues that would have to be considered.

I would like, as the Member of Parliament for the City of Bridgetown, to note that in this whole 3S arrangement, there was this talk about a Bridgetown traffic management study, and I look forward to this Government salvaging what is left to ensure that this study is properly executed.

Bridgetown is the nation's Capital, and we really have to look at the traffic flow in Bridgetown. If we need to get into Park and Ride, all the experiments that we may have tried for World Cup to see what is feasible, what we can tweet, what we can improve upon, and what we can discard, so that there is greater traffic management in our City.

In some metropolitan jurisdictions, I understand that there is so much traffic congestion in the City that maybe, even the registration number of vehicles are allowed in the City Centre certain days of the week, then the odd numbers are allowed on the other days of the week, to reduce the number of vehicles actually going into the City Centre and creating congestion and pollution, in terms of the carbon monoxide emission emanating from these vehicles in these densely populated areas, with a lot of buildings that would reduce the natural flow of air.

Sir, I live at Reed Street, and there is a lot of black dust that accumulates in the house because of the emissions from vehicles coming down Tudor Street. I know this has environmental implications. I know that the Barbados Labour Party Government, when they were in office, did not properly equip the Ministry of the Environment with the necessary apparatus to test air quality.

I look forward to our Government shoring up with, maybe the assistance of international funding, to ensure that the air quality of our streets in the City Centre and other areas is properly monitored to ensure there is no harmful build-up of harmful carbon monoxide, emanating from the high level of vehicular traffic traversing our nation capital.

Sir, I know that the Royal Barbados Police Force had a Bridgetown Evacuation Programme, some time back. I do not think the public bought into it sufficiently. Now that we are in this hurricane season, I look forward to the Royal Barbados Police Force and other agencies, the Ministry of Home Affairs, perhaps, coordinating this sort of evacuation to ensure that there is a real scientific and practical traffic management of our City, to ensure that if there is a natural disaster, like a tsunami, earthquake, flooding or fire, that we can evacuate persons from the City without any chaos resulting.

Sir, in closing, I will remind members of the travelling public who drive vehicles that, according to the Laws of our country, the speed limit in the City is lower than other areas. We see people speeding up Broad Street and other heavily traversed areas in our City, threatening the lives of our children in New Orleans. Some of the ZRs divert through New Orleans to get away from traffic congestion, and the residents are crying out for "sleeping policemen" to be placed along the avenues. I support this tremendously, because people have been knocked down by motor cyclists and other vehicular drivers, and this is not acceptable.

The City is no Bushy Park. They are residents who are human beings like people in other parts of the country, and their safety must be paramount. I frown upon those persons who would seek to speed through the residential areas, in an indiscriminate way to threaten the safety of the residents. So, "sleeping policemen" I will support in those areas, New Orleans, Ribbits Land, Nelson Street, Dunlow Lane and Bay Land.

Sir, even the Roman Catholic Cathedral is having a problem. There is a school there, the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School, ZR people are driving through the entrance and exiting on the other side to beat the traffic lights, at the junction of Jemmotts Lane and Bay Street. This is not acceptable. A child was knocked down there. I look forward to a warden being assigned to that location to ensure that those little ones attending St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School are able to cross the road in safety.

Sir, in closing, I congratulate the Honourable Member for Christ Church South for putting his hand to the plough, rolling up his sleeves. He is an engineer. He is a practical person. The Ministry is a handful, but the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is man enough to mobilise his team at the Ministry of Transport and Works, within the Ministry, and he is reaping the success of his hard work. I congratulate him and am confident that we will take this country forward as we face the challenges head-on. I am confident that we, as a people, can unite with resilience and commitment transcending political biases in the interest of our national development.

I thank you.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Sir, I rise to support the Resolution for the acquisition of $165 million, in relation to financing the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project.

Sir, first of all, when we understand that great responsibility is placed on our Representatives, who are supposed to look after the interest of Barbadians to ensure that whatever we do, it redounds to the benefit of Barbados. Sir, to whom much is given, much is asked. It is not only asked in the form of patronage as some politicians seem to think, but also of the vigilance that we exercise in order to ensure that this country achieves its goals.

Sir, I want to refer to the same document on Page 36, the Special Report on Barbados Road Network Infrastructur Improvement Project.

H A43 6.30 p.m. Sequence 45

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

House A43, Sequence 46, 6.30 p.m.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: . . .

Sir, it says that: "to ensure a competitive process, it is important that enough independent private sector companies participate." Sir, it also went on to say that the examples of projects in other countries, it has been asserted that a competitive outcome was not achieved, because there were only one or two private sector companies in the market.

Sir, it also goes on to say that it is thus imperative that a public entity considering entering into a partnership agreement, has a sound basis for, first of all, making the final decision to choose this approach to procurement, and also, management's implementation and long term operation.

Sir, I want to focus on one thing, "achieving our goals". One of the things that we seek to do when we enter into contracts of this nature, is to get an opportunity for our country to be competitive in today's world.

Sir, we talk about exporting Barbados in a very grand way, and the very projects that we can use to help local companies to be competitive when it comes to the whole question of bidding on contracts, Sir, this is what we saw under the previous Administration. Sir, instead of designing the contract in a manner that allows local companies to be able to participate, first of all was a preference, certainly, to foreign companies coming in.

Sir, let me just say that we cannot underestimate the importance of trying to ensure that we design projects in such a way that Barbados is able to fully benefit from them. When you look at the whole design of this particular contract, it seems to me as if, basically, we brought in the foreign concern to manage a project which Barbadians themselves could have managed and that is one of the points I want to make.

Sir, I want to say too, that in the contribution of the Honourable Member for Joseph, certainly, he did not at any time, dispute what is being said in this. He did not question the assertion, conclusions and recommendations in the Report.

Sir, on page 37, paragraph 5.(5) says that: "by virtue of having submitted a proposal before the invitation letter was issued to other bidders, the contractor who was awarded the contract had more time to prepare a proposal and, therefore, the integrity of the tendering process, was compromised."

Sir, you know, very often, that when Barbadians look at things, they would say that it does not impact on me directly, so why should I be concerned? Sir, we as a country speak to the level of governance. When Barbados is spoken about, even in international circles, we are spoken of as a country that manages our affairs properly, and conducts our processes in a manner that is transparent, so that we can hold our heads high.

Sir, as a result of that, I think that the ordinary Barbadian should be concerned, reason being that when we enter into transactions of this nature, and we have so many other things in this country that need and deserve the attention of Government, when we take scarce resources and put into projects, we must satisfy ourselves that every penny is well spent. In that regard, we must be concerned.

Sir, I am sure that the Honourable Members of the Opposition are concerned, when they realise this kind of comment coming out. I know that, somehow, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was begging for something, and I would not be harsh on him. I want to say that probably he was naive and, maybe, we attribute the reasons that this particular project happened in the way in which it did, I blame it on naivety. Sir, certainly for a Government that was in power for more than 14 years, we cannot attribute naivety to that.

There has to be a higher level of responsibility that they should have exercised in this matter. It was pitiful when you heard him refer to the point when he said to take the beam out of your eye. I do not know about any beam. I am commenting, based on the facts that are presented. Again, they did not dispute any of these things. Sir, they have failed the country in terms of trying to ensure that they exercised due diligence.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Democratic Labour Party recognise our responsibility as a Government in which we know that we have an undertaking in this country but, Sir, we cannot ignore the fact that we should not have gone down the road in which we are going, and I want to point out the consequences. I want to go to St. Michael West Central.

Sir, we are speaking about the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project. The fact is, that we have spent such a considerable sum on one project, when there are other projects that we could have addressed at the same time. For instance, Sir, in St. Michael West Central, we have a road called, Fairfield Cross Road. Sir, the conditions are horrible, and that road has not been dealt with for more than 14 years. We also have Seclusion Gardens, another road that has not been fixed. When we take large amounts of the State's resources and mismanage them in the way that they have done, what does it leave us? Sir, the point is that we have neglected to do these roads.

Sir, I was in Dear's Land on Saturday and I had a discussion with some of my constituents, in respect of the responsibilities of this Government. I also believe that in some respects they were concerned, but the Barbados Labour Party machinery seems to be spreading things, because they are pointing to the fact of what are we doing - the same thing was said inside here by the Opposition - to try to stimulate business in this country and we should be focussing on this.

Sir, I want the people of Barbados to recognise this. We have been given the gauntlets to carry. We are still living in the house that Jack built. I do not think Jack is the correct name, maybe, Owen built, and they know that. This is why they can get up in this House and ask what we are doing to develop businesses, because they know they have actually tied the hands of this Government in a very effective way. They have not stressed the core principles, the core values and the goals that would take this country forward. Sir, that is what they have done, and they know that fully well. Therefore, when they get in here and say that there are certain things, which are not being addressed, and certain understandings of what they are doing, that is part of the strategy.

Sir, the Democratic Labour Party will not fail in its obligations to the citizens of this country. That is why this motion is coming before the House and that is why we have to support it.

Sir, I want to also speak to the fact that we have roads, some of which I referred to that are in a very bad condition in St. Michael West Central. These are issues that part of this $165 million, if we could have shaved some money off it, we could have used that to, at least, address some of these problems.

Sir, we have severe drainage problems in that area. I was down there, the day before yesterday, when we had a sudden shower of rain and, Sir, it is clear that when you look at the drainage at times, the drains cannot handle all of that water, but we need to have money to fix these things.

Sir, when you spend $165 million and we cannot assure ourselves in this Parliament that the due diligence that should have been conducted, was conducted.

House A43, Sequence 46, 6.40 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Sir, looking at the recommendations in the Report, we cannot say that the previous Government effectively carried its accountability obligations to the people of this country, so they have to come and give the people of Barbados a better explanation why we find ourselves in the position that we find

ourselves in today, and take responsibility for it. We are still in the House that Owen built.

Mr. Speaker, we should not be misled by the propaganda we hear coming from That Side because it is all part of a well-shaped argument by the Barbados Labour Party to try to divert from the real issues. Unfortunately, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, instead of being a statesman on this occasion - Sir, I admire the Honourable Member for St. George North because he seemed at one point in time to want to accept some responsibility, but he shook himself out of it.

Sir, we also need to understand something as Representatives of the people. Mr. Speaker, I go back to the saying, to whom much is given, much is also asked. Sir, we should not feel that when we make these kinds of decisions, they do not impact on the ordinary person. They do impact on him or her in a very full way.

Mr. Speaker, I hear talk about being emotive and passionate. Sir, when we have to go out there and face our constituents who have needs, and when we have to say to them that a road cannot be fixed, and we have a situation where we see deals struck up which, at the same time, seem to be unfair, we must be passionate and concerned because it is our duty as Representatives to try to ensure that things not only appear to be done, but also well done.

Sir, when you look at it in a very dispassionate way, it seems that only one company could have come out to be successful in terms of getting this contract, so you must ask a question. Sir, when you look at the comments, it was clear that the local companies recognised from the start that they did not stand a chance, so how can you then say that the process was fair?

Mr. Speaker, it goes down to the ordinary person because when we start at one level, we are drilling down to the other level. Mr. Speaker, how can we assure the ordinary person who is bidding on a contract that they would also be treated fairly.

Sir, we at the higher level cannot show it, so you must accept responsibility for the current state of affairs. The Opposition needs to stop using politics and hiding behind it and come out and confess. They cannot get on as if everything is "hunky-dory" and then try to pass off the responsibility by saying the Democratic Labour Party is not dealing correctly with the economic situation in Barbados. That is the kind of red herring they are throwing out in this whole thing. Sir, we do not need that. What we need is for them to come clean, because the Democratic Labour Party is showing that it can manage the affairs of this country.

Sir, we are facing difficult times. I want to go back to the $165 million. I am not missing it because, judging from what we have heard and seen in the written word, we do not know how much of that could be taken off to go to Government programmes which can have an impact in our communities. Sir, there are things in Woodstock Road and Allamby Gap, all in Spooners Hill and Yearwood Road in Black Rock, that need to be done. We could have saved some of that money to address those issues.

Sir, I know that the Minister's job is a very difficult one, but we need to have "sleeping policemen" in these Constituencies because it would prevent the situation as is happening in these areas where we have children, where fellows on motorcycles are racing through like mad. These are issues that we have to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, somehow, we are going back to the days of Tony Blair in the United Kingdom, who came with these large global projects. I called them Star Wars projects. Tony Blair built that big dome in London that was supposed to transport Britain to some sense of super nation status where, suddenly they were supposed to be impregnable. Sir, that was built by man. Mr. Speaker, that is what we did. We felt that when we put so much money in a Highway and these fellows from outside come and tell us that they have these lovely overpasses and we put them inside, they would work.

Mr. Speaker, not only that. We do not accept the fact that the communities in which we live have a right to have a say. I find that nowadays too many town planning meetings are coming after the fact. We do not sit down with people and ask what do you think we need to do in our community. That is the beauty that the Democratic Labour Party has put in, in relation to the Constituency Councils.

The Opposition cannot understand, but we are doing it because we know that as a result of doing it, it allows the community to more effectively participate in the future planning of Barbados. The Opposition would not understand that because, unfortunately, we in this country have not practised enough participation which would avoid us from getting into these kinds of schemes, from allowing ourselves to be taken advantage of by international racketeers, people shopping around the world looking for projects, who are coming to Governments, who are gullible, wanting to prove something and wanting to get associated with the latest Star Wars projects. Mr. Speaker, that is why South Africa finds itself in the position that it is in. They built big stadiums that are only getting used once every six years. They cannot support them.

Sir, we want to get involved with these people without understanding that the people themselves have a very perceptive eye, and they understand their needs, so we need to consult them, not at the end of the whole thing, but at the beginning. We should carry consultation at a real true level. Sir, that is why we must ignore the attempts of the

Opposition to detract from the real purpose that we are here today, having to approve this $165 million.

Sir, as a Government, we understand our responsibility to the people of Barbados, that despite the fact that we still, by and large, live in the house that was built by another man, we are trying to build a new house. Sir, we would, therefore, carry out our responsibility to the people in this country.

Sir, paragraph 17 of this Report makes the point that the approach to the method of financing this project was dubious. The role of Government here defies transparency. Sir, if there is anything at all that we have to agree on for the future, is that when we proceed to get involved in projects of this nature, that the transparency provisions be observed.

Sir, I am hoping that as we go through this current economic crisis that we are facing in the world, we will face it and we will get to it, that somehow we would understand that Barbados, as a nation works, and we would not go back to the point where we allow people from abroad to try to impose things upon us which are not relevant to our environment and our landscape.

In that regard, Sir, I want to compliment the Minister in his arduous task. I also want to say to him that we would have to find money, despite the fact that somehow, we spent a lot of it already in terms of trying to address some of the problems that we have in the individual areas of Barbados, that would help also to improve the road network, and ease the strain that we have now on the ABC Highway.

I thank you very much, Sir.

House A43 Sequence 47

6.50 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I smiled as the last Honourable Member spoke when he said that we live in the house that Owen built. Sir, the Honourable Member then talked about Barbados coming together. Sir, we live in the house that Owen built, but a Barbados Labour Party, from l994 until 2008, lived in the house that Sandiford built. Sir, we survived through those years and we brought a measure of prosperity and development in Barbados to a level that is second-to-none in the Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, I want Honourable Members on That Side to take what they have and to make the best of it because, at the end of the day, as I agreed with the Honourable Member, we are all one Barbados and we are looking after the needs of the people.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say at the outset that I received an Order Paper dated July 21, that told me about Government and this Resolution for US$l65 million. Sir, I am glad to see there has been an adjustment because to me that would have meant BDS$330 million. I am glad to see that this document now speaks to BDS$l65 million.

Mr. Speaker, when we are talking about inheritance, in 1994, a Barbados Labour Party came with an agenda that jobs number one will be jobs. Sir, we worked towards the achievement of job No., 1 by ensuring that the then 23 or so percentage unemployment rate would have been reduced over the years and in January 2008, we were at a rate of 6.7 per cent unemployment. Sir, that is the house we inherited. We made sure we refurbished it and expanded it in the interest of Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, that is not all we inherited and that is not all we learned. We heard so much about arrogance, corruption and mismanagement. Sir, I know of a previous Democratic Labour Party Administration before l986, where there was a ship docked at North Point, that the Honourable Members Over There are perhaps to young to tell the people of Barbados about, about the lumber and building material that came on it. Where did all that lumber end up? Sir, the Democratic Labour Party knows.

Mr. Speaker, there was also the Warrens Crematorium that a Barbados Labour Party Government turned into the Warrens Polyclinic. Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West speaking about "steel in there". Sir, there was also CARSICOT and the Sherbourne Conference Centre, where there was no formal contract, or anything as well. There were also the St. Joseph Hospital, Bath Beach and the overruns. Sir, there were all kinds of scandals.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at what the Barbados Labour Party did while in office for l4 years, because one of the Honourable Members said that there was incompetence for l4 years. Sir, I have witnessed incompetence in l4 months under this Democratic Labour Party, but let us look at what the Barbados Labour Party did. Sir, I am not going to say that perhaps there were not areas where there were challenges, some of which have been identified, but we gave responses to every Auditor General's Report over the years, to be able to justify our action.

Sir, so far, no Minister, nor Honourable Member of the Barbados Labour Party, then or now, has been

implicated, or has shown to be of ill-repute of handling Government's money, buying a car, building a house out of Government funds, or taking a kickback for that matter. Mr. Speaker, let us look at the projects the Barbados Labour Party would have done.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I hate to interrupt you, but in the interest of the accuracy of the Record, you said you received an Order Paper which spoke of US$165 million. Could you point me to that?

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, on July 21, I have it here.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Order Paper for today?

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Yes, Sir, I received one as well. I received one on July 21. It can go to the Honourable House, US$165 million.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well, you are not talking about the one which is before us today?

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I am referring to this one, but with some modifications. It meant that the persons who are organising the accounts for the Government made a boo-boo in that respect.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party, in a l4-year term, built the Tamarind Hall that this Government was able to have the honour to rename and to officially declare open not so long ago. They also built the Coast Guard location, the Prison at Dodds, the Justice Centre, which I am sure you will have the honour to be a part of what is happening there, because of the honourable profession of which you are a part. We developed Harrison's Cave, developed a boardwalk that this Government boasts of. There was also the redevelopment of the City of Bridgetown, the redevelopment of Jubilees Garden, the dredging of the Constitutional River.

Sir, we also developed recreational facilities across the length and breadth of Barbados. We also developed parks, pavilions and playing fields with lights. There is also the high-rise car park on the Princess Alice Highway. We developed schools, EduTech, housing at the National Housing Corporation, housing in both the Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission.

There was also the clearing and building of wells. There was small business development. There was road improvement across the length and breadth of Barbados. We developed Phase One of Highway 2A, that was started in the mid-1980s and now, this expansion, and I have already made mention of the reduction in unemployment of 6.7 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go on because I know this is Kadooment time and the Honourable Members seem to want to go to calypso tents, but I have been identified by the people of St. Thomas to come here to discuss their business and I shall continue to do so, once I have my mental faculties intact and my health affords me.

Sir, I am not watching the time because whereas this Government is in a Kadooment mood, this Government has set the trend in 2008, on coming into office of being a fete Government. Sir, there was fete, after fete, after fete at the now renamed Sherbourne Centre and at Ilaro Court. It is the taxpayers money that goes towards the payment of those fetes. Sir, I can name more than 10 fetes that this Government has been sponsoring since 2008, 14 months ago.

We learnt about the economic challenges in the international arena, and before an Election was called in 2008, the Barbados Labour Party Government cautioned the people of Barbados. On assuming office, this Democratic Labour Party Government maligned, abused and castigated the Barbados Labour Party while it was in office on a spending spree. This Government now is more on a spending spree than at any other time I have seen a Government in Barbados, and this is such a young Government.

Mr. Speaker, ADM Mills in February, or March, 2008, received $l.3 million to prop it up. The Ministry of Family, Youth Affairs, Sports and the Environment paid BDS$30 000 for photographs of a Minister. I want to know who is footing the bill because we are here talking about accountability.

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport that was painted in November 2007, was repainted and refurbished with all kinds of new furniture and no amount was voted in the Estimates for it. Sir, that has happened and we know that when the Estimates are prepared and there has to be any variance in that expenditure, that a document has to come back to Parliament for that to take place. We know that if there were a few filing cabinets that had to be acquired, or that the Ministry wanted to change computers, that has to come back to Parliament to be voted for.

7.00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, fuel charges have increased and now, every month, we are hearing that gas has gone up. Sir, the energy bill is climbing and climbing and Barbadians are suffering. Sir, Honourable Members spoke today about 120 cars in Barbados and that people have not got houses but, Mr. Speaker, Sir, if you look across the length and breadth of Barbados, you would

see that Barbadians are not asleep. Sir, they may be quiet now because a lot of them are hurting and speaking about the challenges they are facing with the new Administration that has saddled them with taxes beyond their heads.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Budget of 2008 was not the kind of Budget Barbadians were looking forward to because over the 14 years we were in Government, never did the Barbados Labour Party Government raise road taxes, never did we raise house rents, never did we raise fees at the Child Care Board, or things of that nature. I do not even think that bus fares were raised. Sir, some people are paying $450 and $800 in road taxes and Churches with little vans are paying $1 200 in road taxes.

Sir, land taxes have gone up and liquor licences have gone up for poor shop keepers from $350 to $1 000. Sir, ordinary people who want to hold a little fundraiser now have to pay $100 instead of $50 for an occasional licence and, Sir, the story goes on.

Mr. Speaker, the cost of living for the Democratic Labour Party was Job No. 1, Job No. 2 and Job No. 3 and, Sir, to this day, we cannot, with the visual eye, see any decrease in the cost of living. Sir, as a matter of fact, it continues to rise higher and higher.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, like my colleagues, I share great concern in relation to the management of the economy of Barbados. I know that the Democratic Labour Party wants to implement some of its Manifesto pledges and I have no problem with it, if they know that the economic climate would afford such but, Sir, how would it be able to implement the projects when there are so many challenges in this economy that all of us are cringing under the pressure of what is taking place?

Mr. Speaker - free housing. While the Barbados Labour Party has supported...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, at this time I am struggling to find the relevance of the matter under consideration. I would be happy if you could get there.

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Sir, I am going to get there. There is no disrespect meant to you. I will get there in my time, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South went four times and I will get there.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you will not get there in your time because if you continue not to be relevant, I will take the appropriate steps.

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I am trying to get to the point about the high expenditure that is taking place in this country in projects that I do not consider, or does the Barbados Labour Party consider to be as important, when we look at how people are going home and who are working week on and week off in some instances.

Sir, DaCosta Mannings is sending home people because of the challenges in this economy and I am hearing about summer camps and about $2.6 million for a summer camp. I am trying to tie in the cost of the expenditure of this Government into what is happening with this project that we are asking for $165 million and, Sir, I shall be guided by you accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, I am talking about the $19 million that this Government gave to the Barbados Turf Club. I am talking about $10 million in the CLICO project and the dislocation of Barbadians in these trying times.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask a few questions because I know that as people go home and the unemployment rate rises in the double digit, today it maybe about 15 per cent and climbing, and where men are in the higher percentage, who are employed, there are going to be social issues that are critical to what is going to happen in this country.

Sir, we all have to live here, whether we like it, or not. I see this as a democratic country where any Member of Parliament, and where any Minister can walk the length and breadth of this country and not have to worry. I trust that will happen because I want to see democracy prevail through and through.

Mr. Speaker, I want to know from the Democratic Labour Party what is the energy plan they have for this country. I want to know, because we heard earlier about Rayside Concrete Works and, Sir, I know of the competence of Rayside Concrete Works, but is the Democratic Labour Party going to purchase Sam Lord's Castle for millions because that is another project they are looking at and, Sir, that is more expenditure.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, in accordance with Standing Order No. 41, I wish to draw the attention of this House to the fact that you persist in being irrelevant, in my view, to the matter under discussion. Please continue.

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I will talk about the roads. Sir, I want to indicate some of the concerns I have in relation to the roads and I want to speak to the whole issue of the triangle, coming from Collymore Rock in order to get on to BET and going up to Sargeant's Village. Sir, I consider it one of the most dangerous spots on the whole of Highway 2A, because one has to ease and ease and, with the discourtesy among most motorists nowadays, there are more accidents waiting to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to refer to a lot of the road that, in the past, we would have called back roads, but they

are really Highways that urgent attention must be paid to them. Sir, a lot of persons, who are senior citizens, who are still motorists, who cannot travel on the Highway because they do not understand the markings and mergings on the Highway. Therefore, I want to make a case for roads like the one coming from Boarded Hall through Carmichael, which are heavily used roads that will get you into the rural community at a faster pace and, as a matter of fact, eliminating some of the clogging that takes place on the Highway. Sir, if you come through that road, through Charles Rowe Bridge, on to Applewhaites, on to Lears, on to Jackson, and so on, those are critical areas that need to be attended to and be upgraded.

Mr. Speaker, in the community where I live, in Cane Garden, that road is one of the most heavily used residential roads. I heard the Honourable Member for the City and I agree with him that a lot of traffic diverts through those residential areas at high speed, creating quite some dangerous experience for the residents living there.

Mr. President, I want to make a case for some of the roads in St. Thomas, which those motorists coming from St. Philip, St. George and so on, use on a daily basis that really deserve to be upgraded and so, Sir, I want to speak of the road that one takes from Proute Village through Jack-in-the-Box Gully. Sir, day before evening, I pass through Jack-in-the-Box Gully and that road is in a tremendous state of disrepair and really merits urgent attention.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Vaucluse Road needs urgent attention and Shop Hill Road also needs urgent attention. Sir, all the way over, through Dunscombe where there are no side walks, where lots of little children play and all the way through to Hillaby. Sir, as I speak of Hillaby, I want to highly commend the staff of the Ministry of Public Works, over the years, who have been very fair in their deliberations in requests that I would have made, because they sought to be able to prioritise some of the requests, so that they could bring a measure of comfort, and I want to highly commend them for the efforts they have given.

Mr. Speaker, the Mount Hillaby Road, which leads up to the highest point in Barbados, and is visited daily by tourists and local, was scraped since November 2007. Sir, all the sides of the roads were prepared for paving and to this day, the road, where the heavy rainfall caused it to deteriorate, that road needs urgent attention. Sir, coaches go up. There is hardly anywhere to turn around. There is a bus route and the people in Mount Hillaby deserve to get some help.

H/A43/7.10 p.m. Sequence 49

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have concerns for that little half of a lollipop by the Warrens Roundabout. Sir, my constituents live in Warrens East, but in Warrens North, after you come through the Park, and you want to make the right turn to the other Roundabout towards Chefette and the other places, is extremely dangerous. I could not conceive in my mind who would have wanted to prepare a design like that.

Sir, I witnessed a trailer, which came through that same road from over by Queen's College to the Warrens junction while trying to manouevre around it, squeezed a mini van with tourists, a month ago. Sir, the angle is so strange, that there is no way a container truck, or even a truck carrying bricks, sand and so on, can make that turn in any effective way with oncoming traffic from the Redman's Village area. Sir, I would like some attention paid to it, that location where I know there will be further serious accidents, and I really would not like to have any lost of life as a result of what is happening there.

Similarly, Redman's Village a closely knit neighbourhood, like Hinds Hill and Spring Garden, where we have now put in these big Highways, really merit attention from the Ministry of Public Works. People still have to be criss-crossing, running through traffic to get across to the beach at Spring Garden. People in Redman's Village, we have had about five or six deaths there, over the last nine or 10 years. Therefore, there has to be some other measure instituted to bring comfort to the residents of that community.

Sir, Honourable Members spoke about signage. I believe that is another undertaking the Ministry of Public Works needs to examine. A lot of the signs are termite-eaten, and I am speaking about the ones in the parish in which I live. Motorists, local or visitor, can hardly see what is written on the signs because of the deterioration.

Sir, you will agree with me that there are no less than eight sights in the area of places of interest, Harrison's Cave, Cove Cave, Welchman Hall Gully, Highland Outdoor Tours, and the list goes on, including the Flower Forest. Unfortunately, there are challenges.I want the signage put in place to give direction to persons as they move around Barbados.

Sir, I support the call for "silent policemen" as well, in Welches Height, and Fire Hill/Rock Hall. Persons speed the same way as they do in the City and the sub-urban communities. Therefore, I would wish to have some of those matters addressed. I know that they would not be addressed at this time, but I shall write officially, as I normally do, to draw the matter to the Minister's attention.

Sir, I know that the Barbados Labour Party had been pilloried, but I am happy that we today can continue as a

people to expand the Highway, refurbish, and extend it because, at the end of day, Barbadians are the ones who would mostly be using the road, and we deserve a measure of comfort. It would be a useful thing if the Government looks at the correspondence available, meet with the social partnerships and other agencies, or stakeholders, to discuss flexi time.

I believe that the introduction of flexi time, would help to minimise the heavy traffic on our Highways every day. Perhaps it might be useful if unemployed persons, retired and so on, who are making their treks to business places, leave home later because their time sometimes clashes with those persons trying to get to work. That too adds to the congestion on the roads.

Finally, I think it is incumbent upon the Government as well to service some of the communities. Give them a better quality of service through the Transport Board. I am one of the persons who, sometimes, will take a mini bus, or a Government bus to get to town. The difficulty arises when one cannot be assured that a bus will come at a particular time, or that it will return to the bus stand to take them back to their place of abode. I think that is one of the reasons why so many people use their own vehicles.

Sir, the idea of pooling in respect of persons with vehicles is also a very honourable one, not only pooling for adults, but indeed pooling for children who go to similar schools, or schools along the same route. I think it is about time Barbadians come together as a people, acknowledging that we must share. We must continue to lend support to one another and ease the terrible congestion on our roads.

I was part of the Barbados Labour Party in this whole exercise of further expanding and upgrading Highway 2A. It was the Barbados Labour Party that instituted and supported the flyovers. I feel still there is a place for flyovers, but Government has curtailed that aspect of it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have three more minutes.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Sir, I just want the Government to carry on its business, and watch the expenditure, because of the projects were started. If we direct, or redirect the funding, I believe it would make a tremendous difference, at the end of the day, any Barbadian who is unemployed will feel the squeeze. I believe we should all be looking after the interest of everybody.

Sir, I wish to thank you.

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

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Sir, I rise to support this Resolution under the Special Loans Act.

Sir, when you look at what is happening today, the $165 million, I can say that some of this $165 million that we are debating and the Government of Barbados has to borrow, goes towards paying the legal fees for 3S, and that has to be known. This is money to look after all the bungling by the Barbados Labour Party, to make things right. I am saying that some of this money could be better spent fixing some of the roads in St. Michael East.

Sir, let me say that 3S started without any design. There was no flooding problem by the Barbados Light and Power substation, but because of the poor design by 3S, the Barbados Government now has to spend more money to solve the flooding problem that was created. It does not only stop at Barker's Road. It was also flooding at 1st Avenue Haggatt Hall, and other flooding problems as a result of the mismanagement.

There was no consultation with any of the residents in St. Barnabas in respect of this Highway. Sir, so much so, that a meeting came after the fact. Like the Honourable Member for St. George North, he knew nothing, because his behaviour at that meeting clearly indicated that he knew nothing at all about 3S, that 3S was being run from the Ministry of Finance.

Sir, the person who was representing 3S apologised to the residents for not having a Town Hall Meeting to explain to them the difficulties and complaints they would have faced when the project started. Sir, everything you look at is after the fact when it comes to the Barbados Labour Party. Things are being done in the reverse.

Sir, as a result, you have at the entrance to Barker's Road, off the Highway, a road that is in a terrible state of disrepair. This road was in a terrible state of disrepair under the Barbados Labour Party. I have copies of letters from residents begging and pleading to have those roads repaired.

H A43 7.20 p.m. Sequence 50

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

House A43, Sequence 51, 7.20 p.m.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Sir, when one looks at the road network in the Ivy, it is heavily used every morning by persons trying to get into Bridgetown, and because of the heavy usage, the roads are deteriorating faster and faster every day. If you travel on "Brek Neck Hill", you have to manouevre the rough road, as a result of the heavy usage, and you had the Honourable Member for St. George North who presided over that Ministry, saying

that the road was done by Don Blackman more than 14, or 15 years ago, so St. Michael East does not deserve any roads being repaired.

Sir, I am sending a message now. The roads in St. Michael East need to be fixed now, as a matter of urgency. I will be calling on the Minister and all of the technocrats, even if it takes me to go with all my troops from St. Michael East, because these roads need to be fixed, and some of the flooding that was created by 3S must be solved. I am saying that if proper planning had gone into place, the flooding would not have occurred, and we would not be in here burdening the taxpayers of Barbados with $165 million to solve inefficiency and incompetence by the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. Speaker, with those brief remarks, I want to support this Resolution.

Asides.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, we have come to the final moments in this discussion today, Sir, a discussion which was occasioned by the need to put some order to what is essentially disorder. Indeed, the contributions of Honourable Members indicate, without any doubt, the level of disorder which prevailed.

The Honourable Member for St. George North led the case for the Barbados Labour Party, or should I say, he led the case for the Honourable Member for St. George North. He admitted throughout his speeches, his lack of information, knowledge, or otherwise, of the entire ABC Highway project. It is obvious that is a strategy he will use today because the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is not in her seat, nor is the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. George North will attempt to tell the people of Barbados that he is ignorant of what went on, and he was misled by a number of civil servants in the Ministry of Transport and Works. I think the Honourable former Minister of Transport and Works needs really to settle his score with the public officers of this country, as he sought to implicate them in a mess, for which he really owes an explanation to the people of Barbados.

Sir, the former Minister of Transport and Works, the Honourable Member for St. George North, sought to juxtapose the draft Report of the Auditor General, laid by this Democratic Labour Party, the Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. John. Again, it is a document which he produced at the last minute, unsigned, as I indicated in a point of order and trying to validate it. Mr. Speaker, mine is a draft Report of the Auditor General of Barbados. Mine is not a figment of my imagination. Mine is not a figment of any imagination, and as promised by the Prime Minister, the final document will be published for the people of Barbados to read.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph spoke at length, Sir, about financing and alternative financing. I want to make the point - again this point is made in the Report of the Auditor General and that is why we have to finish this business today - this is what he said when he spoke at the time of his draft Report about the financing of the ABC widening project.

Financing of this project has been provided by the Barbados National Bank Finance and Corporation Trust, through a special purpose vehicle, ABC Project Corp. This financing has been facilitated by a bridging loan, and commercial paper, secured through Letters of Comfort, issued by the Government of Barbados. This is what we are speaking about, that we have issued Letters of Comfort to the Barbados National Bank. We inherited this situation and this is the process which we are bringing to an end today.

Sir, I continue to quote.

"These facilities were put in place, in order that the project may proceed, until the legal documents could be signed for the commencement of the construction of funding. No legal documents have been signed."

The Honourable Members on That Side, speak to a Memorandum of Understanding between them and 3S. Sir, that is all it is. The contractor was paid by the SPV, based on certificates submitted to the financier by the Ministry.

Mr. Speaker, we therefore seek today, Sir, to bring order to disorder. We seek, by this Resolution, to allow the Government to proceed with the borrowing of $165 million to ensure the coverage of payments for work done and work anticipated. We made the point during the debate, Sir, that rather than the 15 per cent attracted by the consultancy and the contractual arrangements by 3S, the Government of Barbados in its new arrangement has arrived at a consultancy, which sees us paying professional engineering services, some 6 per cent of the cost anticipated, to be spent between them at which 3S terminated their activity in Barbados and the point at which the project is finally costed out.

Mr. Speaker, that point is important because the Honourable Members on That Side, especially the Honourable Member for St. George North, sought to give the impression in here, Sir, that first of all, the 6 per cent was exorbitant. We have learnt subsequently that 15 per

cent were paid to the consulting partnership that the Barbados Labour Party encouraged. Sir, we pay 6 per cent and we are making sure that all the additional activities required to make this Highway safe, are completed.

Sir, by his own admission, the Honourable Member for St. George North also indicated that he cannot remember what the Highway looked like. Indeed, he cannot. He cannot remember what we inherited. He speaks as though the Democratic Labour Party inherited a Highway which was complete, Sir, or he speaks as though, we took down some flyovers that they had put up. When I heard the Honourable Member speak, I believe sometimes that he had built these eight flyovers and that we in the Democratic Labour Party had come and dismantled them. Sir, nothing could be further from the truth.

Mr. Speaker, remember that the traffic lights were still out at the Gary Sobers Roundabout, the traffic lights were still out at Upton and there was no median in the middle. There was no arrangement for access. The freedom of movement that you enjoy now - the Honourable Member for St. Joseph referred to it - is not about a recession. It is about the ability to move traffic much easier because of decisions taken by the Democratic Labour Party, along with the consultants that we have employed to finish this project.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I am a "do it yourself" person and, I travel to the Warrens area regularly to acquire equipment, which I cannot necessarily own, so I rent tools from time to time. Sir, I go to Warrens normally on a Friday, because I tend to occupy myself on weekends sometimes with hanging a door here, replacing a tile occasionally that has been broken, or fallen and, indeed, venturing sometimes even to more adventurous ideas like complete renovations.

House A43, Sequence 51, 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: As a result, Sir, I can tell you about Warrens and the change at Warrens on Friday evenings. Sir, the traffic can now move. When we came to office. You had to go to Warrens and stay at Warrens. You could not move from Warrens. That is what we inherited.

Mr. Speaker, the Barbados Labour Party Administration needs to understand that they are not talking to idiots on This Side, and they are not talking to idiots when they speak to Barbadians. They are speaking to people who have seen, and observed, and who have been through the process of communication and of bringing them into our trust which we have engaged in.

Mr. Speaker, at every opportunity, I have had to speak in this Honourable Chamber or anywhere else, I have spoken to the capacity first of all of our contractors to carry out this job that we put to them. Mr. Speaker, I have also spoken to the understanding of the people of Barbados as they continue to cooperate, while we carry out the retrofit and the changes that are required to bring about an ease to this gridlock. I have spoken to their tolerance and have not taken them for granted.

Mr. Speaker, I have also spoken of the officers who I work with in the Ministry of Transport and Works, not in terms like the Honourable Member for St. George North, because that can be done at our private meetings where, if we have to deal with each other, we can deal with each other then. I do not need to do that in public. The Honourable Member needs to do that in public because he has to attempt to justify his operation and the operation of the Barbados Labour Party Administration.

Sir, they could continue to cook in their own stew. We will continue to stay focussed in our task at the Ministry of Transport and Works. I spoke to many of the areas which we will be undertaking in my earlier presentation, so we do not have to revisit those.

Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West. I want to thank him for his contribution during this debate. The Honourable Member was clear to point out the transgressions of the former Administration. The Honourable Member was also clear to put in perspective why we have to do what we have to do as a Democratic Labour Party Administration. Mr. Speaker, we would not be hoodwinked by the nonsense we heard from That Side today.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. James North tried to steer clear of the meat of the debate and the kind of confusion which the Barbados Labour Party had Ruled over during the early Administration of this project.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Lucy for his contribution and ideas which are always welcome by this Minister, and certainly by this Chamber.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central has again made good suggestions which we will take into consideration. Certainly, the question of controlling the traffic at the Roundabouts to allow for that traffic crossing the Roundabouts to have some access, is under active consideration. The use of traffic lights to bring about that control is commonly done in larger countries. Mr. Speaker, I believe that is a solution which we can put in place in Barbados too at our busy intersections, to allow

the crossing traffic during the high usage periods, mornings and evenings, an opportunity to get on their way.

Sir, pedestrian overpasses - because they do not understand on That Side - are immediate designs for St. Barnabas and the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. We will make sure, and if necessary as an extension of the considerations of this project and some of the solutions which have to be put in place as we continue to try to improve the traffic, to look at areas like Kendal Hill as well as Lodge Hill in the Constituency of St. Michael North. I understand exactly the point made by the Honourable Member when he spoke about Kendal Hill.

Sir, I also want to thank the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown for his contribution, and certainly for his good wishes. I listened very carefully to what he had to say and we must make a point of ensuring that the views of our people are always borne in mind. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central made a very important comment when he spoke to the matter of local contractors being able to participate in these economic opportunities as they occur.

As you know, Sir, one of the projects which the Democratic Labour Party is undertaking to control the effects of the international recession is the stimulus package which we have put in place.

We have had the major contractors in on one and one meetings at the Ministry in which we made it clear to them that we fully expect them to utilise the services of small contractors in the execution of these projects. Sir, it is a very simple position, and I believe that it is a position which everybody understands. They have expressed their understanding of the objectives we are aiming at and their willingness to participate as far as possible in this objective.

Fortunately, Sir, like you, I would need to pass over the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas as the relevance is still in question, and rather than be cited by you for being irrelevant myself, I would move on and leave her contribution exactly where it was.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East is constantly in my ears. I want to assure him that we are not only listening to his plea, but we will act on the points raised. The people of St. Michael East have always been very kind to the Democratic Labour Party and we are going to repay that trust by carefully considering the needs of that Constituency and juxtaposing them against the other national needs and making sure that their fair share is realised. Sir, the Honourable Member can be assured of that position which I will ensure is taken in the Ministry.

Sir, we have had an interesting day. By passing this Resolution we will be able to continue business in our country. We will be able to effect payment to some of the contractors who are waiting and we will be able to bring this whole ABC Highway expansion project to closure.

As I intimated earlier, we cannot take the approach of the Barbados Labour Party that somebody else would deal with it. They obviously took that approach that they would get it going and somebody else would deal with it. They were not careful, they were not considerate, they were not listening, but we have had to listen. We have to consider and we have taken the decision today which brings us to this point.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Prime Minister will be on television shortly to discuss matters of the economy. I believe that the Chamber, and indeed the Members on This Side, would want to be able to view this discussion. Sir, the Honourable Members on That Side should be urged to view the discussion and to make sure that they internalise the comments of the Honourable Prime Minister and gain some working knowledge of what governance and good governance is about.

Sir, I would not want to detain the Chamber any longer, and with those few closing remarks I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

House A43 Sequence 52

7.40 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

ADJOURNMENT OF SITTING

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be now adjourned until Friday, August 7, 2009, at 10.00 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, since I am on my feet and since this is an important weekend for this country, starting on Friday with our Calypso Finals and continuing right down until Grand Kadooment, I think from This Side we would want to urge the good citizens of Barbados to behave themselves with a level of decorum befitting this great nation. We would not want to see any of our citizens suffer as a result of any unruly behaviour on the streets, or in any environment where they can be found.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to remind this Honourable House of Emancipation Day. Sir, on Saturday morning, we will march to commemorate Emancipation Day, and I would invite all Honourable Members to be present. I want also to say that I think it is important for citizens to behave themselves, to give the Police Force and those in charge of security, the fullest cooperation and support. Do not allow revelry and spontaneous behaviour to spoil the day for any one of the citizens, or visitors to this country, who want to enjoy the cultural fare which Barbados provides to all and sundry.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

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

The question that the House be now adjourned until Friday, August 7, 2009, at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative, without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

7.43 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. *Heading, Order No. 2.* The title of the Resolution is split in the source: the first part ('RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BORROWING UNDER THE SPECIAL LOANS ACT, CAP. 105 BY THE GOVERNMENT OF $165 000 000 FROM THE BARBADOS NATIONAL BANK INC. FOR THE PURPOSE') is set as an ordinary paragraph and only the remainder ('OF FINANCING THE BARBADOS ROAD NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.') as the heading. Printed as in the source.

Q3. *Speaker label, Member for St. Lucy.* The Member for St. Lucy is labelled 'His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN' throughout, and so listed in the PRESENT list, while the Chair calls him 'The Honourable Member for St. Lucy'. Printed as in the source.

Q4. *Order No. 2, gaps.* Four speech headings carry only '. . .' as their text (Mr. G. A. Clarke after the take-slips at about 12.20 p.m. and 3.10 p.m.; Mr. R. C. Eastmond at about 4.10 p.m.; Mr. J. D. Paul at about 6.30 p.m.), which may mark words not transcribed. Printed as in the source.

Q5. *Take-slips, about 1.30 p.m. and 4.40 p.m.*. One take-slip reads 'House A43, Sequence 06, 1.30 p.m.' between Sequences 21 and 22, and another reads 'H/A34/4.40 p.m. Sequence 34', presumably A43; the 12.10 p.m. slip (Sequence 13) carries only the date. Printed as in the source.

Q6. *Order No. 2, speech of Mr. D. D. Marshall.* Mr. D. D. Marshall says the Government is 'still seeking to borrow $160 million to finance the same Highway', whereas the Resolution and all other speakers give $165 million. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 28th July, 2009 at 10.15 a.m. for the 43rd Sitting of the Session, with His Honour M. A. Carrington, Speaker, in the Chair; prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of Tuesday, 21st July, 2009 were confirmed. The Prime Minister, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, laid the Value Added Tax (Amendment) (No. 2) Order, 2009, and Hon. R. D. Jones, on behalf of the Attorney-General, laid the Reports of the Community Legal Services Commission for the years ended 31st March, 2005, 2006 and 2007.

Hon. R. D. Jones opened obituary tributes to Lady Husbands, wife of the Governor-General, Sir Clifford Husbands, recalling her career as a nurse and midwife. Miss C. Y. Forde, the Prime Minister, Mr. R. C. Eastmond and Mr. D. St.E. Kellman added tributes, and the House stood for a minute's silence. Standing Orders were then suspended for the rest of the Sitting.

The only Order debated was the Resolution under the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105, to approve the borrowing of $165 000 000 from the Barbados National Bank Inc. to finance the Barbados Road Network Infrastructure Improvement Project, that is, the ABC Highway. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, Minister of Transport and Works, said the former Administration had chosen 3S (Barbados) Limited through its Planning and Priorities Committee before tendering was complete, had let the work start on a 'rolling basis' with no settled price, and had contemplated $145 million more on flyovers. The Government had replaced 3S in July 2008 with the local contractors C.O.W. Construction and Rayside Construction Limited; he defended the Wildey triangle and spoke of pedestrian bridges, lighting and signage.

Mr. G. A. Clarke, the former Minister, led for the Opposition. He asked why the Government was borrowing $165 million when the 2008 Budgetary Proposals said higher fees and road taxes would raise $46 million a year, or $138 million over three years; he said a price of $117 million had been agreed by 2007, asked who would receive an additional $40 million and whether 6 per cent would be paid on it, and read from an evaluation committee report that eight firms had been invited on 28th January, 2005. His speech drew repeated points of order from Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, Mr. Kellman, Hon. F. J. Stuart and the Prime Minister, who cited the Auditor General's special report on the project, undertook to lay it, and explained that the 6 per cent applied only to the difference between the sum payable to 3S and the final cost. The Speaker cautioned Mr. Clarke several times about repetition and accepted the Prime Minister's withdrawal of an imputation that Mr. Clarke had set out to mislead.

Mr. Kellman argued that Government business should be moved out of Bridgetown to ease traffic, and Mr. Eastmond urged attention to drainage and accommodation works. Hon. C. P. Sinckler quoted the Auditor General's Special Report on the withdrawn Cabinet Paper and on the

due diligence done on 3S, and Mr. S. A. Lashley criticised the absence of the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. D. D. Marshall said road tax increases of about $130 million over three years should have met the cost and questioned work passed to Rayside Construction, a subsidiary of CLICO. Hon. P. M. T. Todd, Mr. J. D. Paul and His Honour K. St.C. Best supported the Resolution; Miss Forde was warned under Standing Order No. 41 for irrelevance.

Mr. Boyce replied that traffic at Warrens could now move and that the Resolution would allow contractors to be paid and the project brought to a close. The Resolution was agreed to without division. On the motion for the adjournment Mr. Jones urged good behaviour over the Calypso Finals, Grand Kadooment and Emancipation Day, and the House was adjourned at 7.43 p.m. until Friday, 7th August, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.