
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, April 20, 2010.

PRESENT

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

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

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN

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

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B.B.S. (Minister of Economic Affairs, Empowerment, Innovation, Trade, Industry and Commerce)

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

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

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, B.C.H., MRAC (Minister of Transport and Works)

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

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL, B.Sc. (Chairman of Committees)

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE, Ed.D., M.Ed., B.A., Dip. Theology (Minister of Environment, Water Resources and Drainage)

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

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY, B.Sc., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of Youth, Family and Sports)

Hon. P. M. T. TODD, B.Sc., (Minister of State, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Empowerment, Innovation, Trade, Industry and Commerce)

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS, Dip., B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Health)

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO, M.B.B.S. (Minister of Labour)

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning Honourable Members, this the House of Assembly is now in session. Let me take this opportunity to welcome you back from our recess. I know that some Honourable Members may say that it was too short but we have the peoples' business to do. I hope that you are all refresh and I wish you all well as we continue to do the peoples' business.

House AB61 Sequence 124 10.20 a.m.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

MINUTES

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have with me the Minutes of the meeting held Monday, March 15, 2010.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: 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. R. D. JONES: 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 Bills:

1. Land Development Duty (Special Development Area) (Hastings to Rockley Area) Order, 2010;
2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Mayfield Cardiology Inc.) Order, 2010;
3. Annual Reports and Financial Statements of Hotels and Resorts Limited, for the years ended December 31, 2006 and December 31, 2007;
4. Annual Report of the Barbados International Business Promotion Corporation (Invest Barbados) for the year ended March 31, 2009;
5. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Barbados and CLICO Holdings (Barbados) Limited;

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

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the First Reading of the following Bills:

1. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill, 2010;
2. District Auctioneers (Validation) Bill, 2010.

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

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip West.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, on the last day that the House sat during the Estimates Debate, an event occurred which has given cause to much debate and discussion on a number of issues, including Parliamentary Privileges and Immunities, and the conduct of Members of Parliament, the carrying of firearms, and other related political issues.

Mr. Speaker, on the day in question, certain remarks made sotto voce and across the political divide caused me to leave the Chamber and to get into a heated discussion with two Members of the Opposition, within the precincts of Parliament. On reflection, the entire episode was unnecessary, and viewed by others may have sent the wrong message. However, Sir, let me make it abundantly clear to all that I did not initiate the confrontation and neither did I brandish nor threaten, with a weapon, any

Member of this House, as has been implicitly speculated. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I believe that given the circumstances I have outlined and the attempt to blow this matter entirely out of all proportions, I wish to apologise to you for whatever part I may have played in the event of March 19, 2010, and which might have reflected poorly on the standing and reputation of this Honourable Chamber. Sir, I will reiterate that at no time did I brandish nor threaten any Honourable Member with a weapon.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well. Honourable Members, I wish to have a very brief say on this matter and of course, it comes about as a result of the wide public debate which has taken place, the various statements attributed to Members of this The Honourable House of Assembly, which I believe concern the incident to which the Honourable Member for St. Philip West just referred, at the Sitting of the House of Assembly on March 19, 2010.

Now, while I regret having to deal with this matter in this way, at this particular time, I am of the view that it is necessary in preserving the authority of His Honour the Speaker and in the interest of preserving the dignity, authority and political maturity of this Honourable Assembly. Let me say too that I have received no communication from any Honourable Member of Her Majesty's Opposition about his or her absence this morning and it is not for me to speculate nor be guided by the media in that regard. I simply consider it unfortunate that all Honourable Members of this Honourable House are not present at this time.

I wish to say that on the evening of March 19, 2010, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, accompanied by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, the Honourable Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, called on me shortly after the adjournment. They reported to His Honour an incident which is said to have taken place between the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and the Honourable Member for St. Philip West. They made certain requests. I gave the assurance that the matter would be addressed urgently, and it was agreed that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph would reduce his complaint to writing. Shortly, thereafter, there began what I now call a most unfortunate and vulgar discussion of the matter in the public domain, and I shall return to that later.

I wish to put on record, though, certain other matters and I wish to say to this Honourable House that as promised by letter dated March 22, 2010, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph wrote as follows:

"March 22, 2010

His Honour The Speaker

Parliament of Barbados

Trafalgar Street,

Bridgetown

Dear Sir:

On Friday, March 19, 2010, an incident occurred in the precincts of Parliament which causes me, and the entire of the Opposition grave concern.

During that evening, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West brandished his firearm in front of me, in a manner that was calculated to intimidate and threaten me, in the precincts of Parliament, and more specifically in the area of the office of the Leader of Government Business in the House, which is itself within the Chamber. This conduct on the part of the said Honourable Member was intimidatory and caused me to fear for my safety and well-being.

All Honourable Members are entitled to be present in Parliament, free from intimidation and having all of the ancient privileges to which we lay claim.

After careful consideration, I feel that I must ask that this conduct of the said Honourable Member be referred to the Committee of Privileges for urgent action.

I remain respectfully yours,

Dale. D. Marshall, Q.C., M.P.

cc. The Clerk of Parliament”

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I responded to the Honourable Member by letter dated April 1, 2010.

“1st April 2010

Mr. Dale D. Marshall, M.P.

Burkes Village

Horse Hill

St. Joseph

Dear Mr. Marshall:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of March 22nd, 2010, and have made note of the matters raised therein with respect to the conduct of the Honourable Member for St. Philip West.

I advise that your letter will be treated as an application for leave to raise the matter under Standing Order 76(2) of The Honourable The House of Assembly.

I assure you that this matter continues to receive the full attention of this Office, and I will revert to you on the question of leave in the shortest possible time and prior to the next Sitting of this Honourable House scheduled for April 20, 2010.

Yours truly,

Michael A. Carrington”

H:No.A61 (125&126)

Friday, April 20,, 2010

MR. SPEAKER: I followed that up with a letter dated April 14, 2010.

“Mr. Dale Marshall, Q.C., M.P.

Burkes Village

Horse Hill

St. Joseph

Dear Mr. Marshall:

Further to my letter of April 1st, 2010, I advise leave is hereby granted for you to raise the matter set out in your letter of March 22nd, 2010, as a matter of privilege in accordance with Standing Order 76 of The Honourable the House of Assembly.

If, when raised, His Honour is of the view that a prima facie case is made out, the matter will be referred to the Committee of Privileges established under Standing Order 59(3) of the said Standing Orders for its consideration and subsequent report to the Honourable House of Assembly.

Please note that since the matter involves the behaviour of another Honourable Member, courtesy demands that he be so advised and it is for this reason that this letter will be copied to the Honourable Member St. Philip West.

Yours truly,

Michael A. Carrington.

cc Honourable Member for St. Philip West.”

On April 8, 2010, I received the following letter from the Leader of the Opposition.

“8th April, 2010

His Honour the Speaker

The House of Assembly

Parliament Buildings

BRIDGETOWN.

Dear Sir,

I write you to follow up formally the request made by the Deputy Political Leader, Dale Marshall and myself in your office on the evening of Friday, March 19, 2010, following an incident which took place in the precincts of Parliament.

On that occasion, we requested of you to have developed and implemented a policy as it relates to the carrying of firearms in the precincts of Parliament. It is the view of the Opposition Barbados Labour Party that no person entering or speaking in Parliament should at any time feel intimidated or threatened as a result of merely performing his or her duties. The members of the Royal Barbados Police Force adequately provide security in Parliament. Hence there is no reason for any other person to be carrying a weapon within the precincts.

This is a matter that we believe to be fundamental to giving meaning to the ancient privileges claimed by the Speaker on behalf of Members of Parliament at the commencement of each Session of Parliament.

Accordingly, we look forward to the urgent settling and the implementation of this policy before the resumption of Parliament on April 20, 2010. Should you require any further information from our members or wish to consult them on the same, we stand ready to do so.

I thank you for your cooperation in this matter that affects the welfare of all Members of Parliament in both Chambers.

Yours sincerely,

Mia Amor Mottley, Q.C., M.P.

Leader of the Opposition.

cc Prime Minister of Barbados,

Leader of Government Business

Clerk of Parliament.”

My response to that letter was dated April 14, 2010.

“Hon. Mia Mottley, Q.C., M.P.

Leader of the Opposition

Opposition Office

West Wing

Parliament Building

Bridgetown.

Dear Miss Mottley:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of April 8, 2010, and note the contents thereof, particularly your reference to a request “... to have developed and implemented a policy as it relates to the carrying of firearms in the precincts of Parliament.”

While noting the concerns raised in this said letter, I am to advise that matters of this nature which have implications for the authority and dignity of this Honourable House, stand properly to be investigated initially by the Committee of Privileges established under the Standing Orders of the Honourable the House of Assembly.

As you are aware, Standing Order 59(3) of the Honourable the House of Assembly provides as follows:

“There shall be a Committee of Privileges which shall consist of the Speaker as Chairman and six members who shall be nominated by the House at the commencement of every Session. Any matter which appears to affect the powers and privileges of the House shall be referred to this Committee by the House. The House shall consider such matters and report on them to the House.”

Further, the applicable procedure for accessing the Committee of Privileges is set out at Standing Order 76 of the Honourable the House of Assembly.

Please note that by letter of even date, the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has been granted leave to raise the incident to which you refer, as a matter of privilege in accordance with the said Standing Order 76.

In the circumstances, the matters raised by you can be addressed neither in the manner, nor time-frame set out in your said letter.

Yours truly,

Michael A. Carrington.

cc The Honourable Prime Minister

The Leader of Government Business”

It is also to my certain knowledge that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph sought and received from the Clerk of Parliament guidance as to the relevant procedure applicable to his raising the incident as a matter of privilege this morning.

I have gone to great lengths to set out the above in the interest of transparency and in the interest of preserving the authority and dignity of the Office of Speaker as well as The Honourable the House of Assembly. I must say that I deprecate the suggestion made both directly and obliquely that the Speaker has not done his job properly or quickly enough.

In this regard, permit me to point to the following matters:

1. The incident is reported to have taken place while the Honourable House was in Committee of Supply. Our system of Government considers matters of privilege to be of paramount importance and it basically insists that such matters be raised at the earliest possible time. This would have been when His Honour took the Chair for the conclusion of the debate and the adjournment on that evening. It was not so raised yet leave has been granted by His Honour to have it raised this morning.

It was the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, who requested that the matter be sent to the Committee of Privileges. Again, this has been accommodated in terms of the procedure but, of course, neither member is in his or her seat at this time. Of course, I have also indicated to the Honourable Member St. Philip West that he would have the opportunity when this matter was raised, in all fairness to him, to speak on the matter if he so desired. In spite of that, I could read in various places in the media certain comments which I draw to your attention because I feel that they impact on the dignity of this Honourable Chamber and it may be necessary for this Chamber to take further action.

It is reported on the back page of today's Nations-News, April 20th:

“In a statement released yesterday during a Press Conference, Mottley took the position that the Speaker of the House, Michael Carrington, had ample time to put the policy in place following a March 19 incident in the precincts of Parliament.”

They quote:

“As a consequence of the failure of the Speaker of the House of Assembly to act decisively in this matter, the Opposition Barbados Labour Party will not be attending (today's) sitting of Parliament,” Mottley reported.”

Again, at page 4 of today's Advocate News it reads as follows:

“We are in disagreement with this course of action. This is a matter for the Speaker of the House of Assembly. Access to the Parliament and conditions under which access are granted, as well as the security of the precincts of the House are matters for the Speaker of the House of Assembly. It is too simple a matter to solve and one on which there can be no divide. The safety of Members is paramount regardless of political affiliation,” charged Mottley.

“Having to wait on the investigation of the Committee of Privileges for the fundamental right of a Member's access to Parliament and the conditions of that access is a clear demonstration of the Government circling the wagons and attempting to sweep the matter under the carpet. We believe that the Speaker has a duty to deal with this matter urgently in the interest of both the safety of members and workers in Parliament as well as preserving the dignity and the political maturity of our Parliament,” Mottley said.”

House A61

Sequence 127 & 128

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. SPEAKER: ...

Honourable Members, I wish to say as follows, in addition to the above. This Honourable Chamber is not a Kangaroo Court or Parliament. It is guided by the Standing Orders, buttressed by the ancient rules and precept established centuries ago, tried and tested over the years and adapted as necessary in the appropriate way to deal with a changing world. Members should therefore familiarise themselves with these Standing Orders, and if in doubt, should do as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph did and seek the assistance and/or direction of the Clerk of Parliament. Once that direction is given, it should be followed. The Clerks at the table are trained Attorneys-at-Law. They are also experienced in their jobs and you will note that I rely on their advice throughout the day. This is really partly what they are there for, to assist us and to guide us.

In addition, the Rules of this Honourable Chamber will be applied without fear or favour. Members will note that I stated this on the very first occasion on which I took

this exalted position, and it is my intention to do so each and every time I take the Chair, and while looking at each and every deliberation which comes before me.

It is therefore against that background that I deprecate what has transpired. I consider it essentially a slap in the face of Parliament. I consider it an insult to this office, which I believe borders on contempt. What I am saying essentially is, it seems to me that having requested that the matter be sent to the Committee of Privileges, I think that Honourable Members owe it out of the upmost respect to this Honourable Chamber to wait until this Committee has deliberated, reported to this Chamber, and thereafter take whatever actions this Chamber deems necessary, but I go further.

This question raises the whole question of the security of Parliament and, yes, it has been suggested that His Honour could if he so wishes, put in place a firearms policy or a similar policy. That is not to be denied. However, I wish to say that this Chamber will not be guided by the whims and fancy of one or two Members, no matter how well intentioned. The fact remains that to date, the report received is simply the account of one Honourable Member of Parliament. That has not been tested in anyway. It has not been investigated. It would seem to me to be improper in those circumstances to say that, look, we will take either action, A or B, in response to that report. I go further.

We are aware that there are other Parliaments in the Commonwealth, which have found it necessary to put policies with respect to firearms in place. I must thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, the Honourable Opposition Leader, for providing information and examples of a number of these Parliaments. Yes, we are and we have been aware of this but we are not necessarily aware of the circumstances which led to the implementation of such policies and I would only add, in passing, that the jurisdictions cited seemed to be among what are considered the more volatile jurisdictions. Jurisdictions pointed to, Pakistan, Jamaica, Trinidad and Sri Lanka, I believe.

Now, essentially what I am saying is that I will not permit this Honourable post to become involved in the political posturing of either side of this House. I insist that the Chair be treated with the dignity, the respect and the authority which it commands, and if that is not done, the appropriate action will be taken, as I have been doing in the past.

I have said that we will look at the matter but in the final analysis, a firearms policy will not be put in place simply on the insistence of a few Honourable Members, nor simply because other Parliaments have done so, nor seemingly as a knee-jerk reaction to a reported incident

sensationalised by the Press of Barbados. Any such policy would be put in place after cool, calm and careful consideration, after consulting with those charged with the authority of looking after the security of this August Chamber, including the Commissioner of Police, and bearing in mind the consideration of the safety of all people who do business here, including Honourable Members, staff and visitors.

No Honourable Member has the right to insist that a given action be taken simply because they think that is the way to go. I wish to say that one of the most unfortunate aspects of this matter is that Honourable Members appear to have seen it fit to impose their opinion, their judgement and their feelings on the collective will of this august Assembly, without further consideration, and that will not be allowed to prevail.

I thank you.

HAB61

Sequences 129 & 130

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Clerk.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, at this time we recommit to Oral replies to questions.

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

Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the replies to Parliamentary questions to 8 and 9 asked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East are ready.

AB61 10.50 a.m.

Sequences 129 & 130

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

House AB61, Sequence 131 & 132, 10.50 a.m.

Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, replies to Parliamentary questions Nos. 8 and 9, asked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East are ready.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY YOUR HONOUR THE
SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have with me a letter from the Minister of Economic Affairs and Empowerment, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West

“March 30, 2010

His Honour D.A. Carrington, B.A., LL.B.

Speaker

Parliament

Parliament Buildings

BRIDGETOWN

Dear Sir,

I hereby tender my resignation as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee.

I am now Chairman of the Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs and a Member of the Infrastructure Committee which meets on alternate Fridays. The Public Accounts Committee is also scheduled for Friday, thus resulting in a conflict.

It was an honour and privilege to have been granted the opportunity to serve in that capacity and to have contributed to the development of the country.

Best regards.

Yours faithfully,

David C. Estwick”

Honourable Members please take note of that and the relevant announcement of a replacement will be made at the appropriate time.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government business is now the Order of the Day.

ORDER NO. 6 – A RESOLUTION TO RESCIND THE
RESOLUTION PASSED IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
ON THE 15TH DECEMBER, 2009 AND THE
SENATE ON THE 22ND DECEMBER, 2009.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member Prime Minister.

Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this is in a sense a housekeeping matter. The description of the area of land, to which the Land Development Duty Order that had previously been passed by this House was to refer, has been amended. Therefore, what I am seeking the House’s approval to do first of all, is to rescind the previous Resolution which would be set out in Order No. 7 and to replace it by a new Resolution that has a new description, which would be the new Land Development Duty Special Development Area, Hastings to Rockley Resolution.

Mr. Speaker, subsequently to Cabinet’s approval, for the westerly boundaries of the lands in the district known as Hastings in the parish of Christ Church to be declared as a Special Development Area, the Chief Surveyor reviewed the locations of the land and has declared the description should read Rockley and Hastings since the most easterly and westerly parcels are situated in Rockley and Hastings respectively. Sir, the amended description would now read as follows:

“ALL THAT land situated at Hastings and Rockley in the parish of Christ Church abutting and bounding on the west by lands now or late of Evelyn Mary Clayton (Land Tax Parcel No.:88/07/01/025) on the north by Highway #7 on the east by lands now or late of The Peterkins Ltd. and known as Magic Isle Beach Apartments (Land Tax Parcel No.:89/05/01/025) and on the south by the Caribbean Sea.”

The Cabinet agreed then to the appropriate amendment and an Order has been therefore prepared giving effect to that change, where it would be referred to now as:

“All THAT land situated at Rockley and Hastings.”

Sir, what we are really talking about is the land that covers the area where the Government constructed a Boardwalk on the south coast. Therefore, it is a very straightforward matter in the sense that the House had already agreed. There is no increase of the area, there is no change of the area, it is merely the description.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the passing a Resolution to rescind the Resolution passed in the House on the 15th December 2009 and the Senate on 22nd December, 2009.

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

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

ORDER NO. 7 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LAND DEVELOPMENT DUTY (SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT AREA) (HASTINGS TO ROCKLEY AREA) ORDER, 2010

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member Prime Minister.

Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This therefore is the replacement Resolution to approve the Land Development Duty Special Development Area Hastings to Rockley Area Order, 2010.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 8 – THE TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COUNCIL BILL, 2010

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

Dr. Hon. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: Thank you, your Honour.

Your Honour, I rise this morning to move the Amendment of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Amendment Act. This Technical and Vocational Education and Training is what we would abbreviate and known commonly as the TVET Council. I shall be referring to it as such during my brief presentation this morning.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is committed, even at a time like this, to decent work for all Barbadians. It is a principle of our labour policy and it is one that we are committed to, even though the economic recession and other factors would tend to chip away at that. Decent work, of course is a foundation for self actualisation.

Today, our country faces challenges such as, I mentioned, the economic recession, globalisation, economic liberalisation and these can erode many of the gains that have been made by our workforce over the years. There are other challenges as well like the opening up of markets and increase labour mobility. Also we expect that with the movement of labour our existing remuneration levels will come under pressure. The free movement of

labour is something that is very topical across the region as well.

Multinational corporations that seek to set up in Barbados and other countries have been known to impose their work cultures on the local worker and we have seen in many countries that this has had a potential for conflict in industrial relations in those countries. Indeed, we know that is something that could easily happen here in Barbados as we seek to open up our market as well.

House AB161, Sequence 131 & 132, 11:00:08

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: To that end, over the course of the next few months, this Administration would be seeking to put legislation in place that would protect the rights of the workers and also legislation that would enhance their employability and their self-actualisation.

We know, we have said it over and over again, that Barbados is not an economy, that Barbados is a society. To that end, we see the workers in Barbados not just as workers but as Barbadians who have set goals for themselves that they want to achieve, that self-actualisation, in terms of academic qualifications and material gains and in terms of the development of themselves and their families.

Indeed, many people who seek employment today and seek enhanced employment do so for the betterment of their families so that their children can take advantage of further education and things like that. Mr. Speaker, we will be putting in place legislation and other structures to ensure that Barbadians can take full advantage of that so that they can develop themselves.

We know that there has been an increased in unemployment due to the economic recession. Thankfully, this Government has been able to keep the unemployment figures to a minimum, something that many countries have not been able to do. What we are endeavouring to do is to encourage Barbadians, especially those who have been made redundant for whatever reason, to seek to retool and to re-skill themselves.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to be hearing more about that in the coming months as we put funds and other structures and programmes in place to ensure that workers who are no longer working would not just sit idly by and wait for a job but would be able to make themselves more employable so that they can take advantage of what new opportunities there are out there to them.

Indeed, there are many persons who have been working for years in a particular area who now, maybe because they are significantly older, cannot find opportunities in that particular area. The job of the Ministry of Labour and its various departments is to see, among other things, what jobs are available out there and to encourage training.

Today, we are here to amend the TVET Council Act. The TVET Council was established by the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Act, 1993-11 of the laws of Barbados. The Council was mandated to plan, coordinate and establish standards and qualifications for technical and vocational education and training. Mr. Speaker, technical and vocational education and training is the principal engine of workforce development and so we want to see more people taking advantage of that. The Council can be used as an arm of economic policy supporting businesses, competitiveness and growth and as an instrument of public policy to address equity concerns about disadvantages in the labour market.

The TVET Council plays a role in preparing our economy for the future and in helping to close Barbados' productivity gap with its competitors and also in contributing to social inclusion.

The TVET Council has as its main objective to develop a competent workforce that possesses the requisite skills and knowledge and understanding that would enable effective performance of work roles.

Mr. Speaker, to that end, what we would like to do today and what we are proposing is that the TVET Council be given the responsibility to award full National Vocational Qualifications and Caribbean Vocational Qualifications to those persons who have qualified. The National Vocational Qualifications, as you would have heard mentioned, is the NVQs and the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications, the CVQs.

Mr. Speaker, there are currently about 21 persons who have completed the programme and have gained such qualifications but are awaiting formal certification for the NVQs and the CVQs. In Barbados, the NVQs and CVQs are going to be available through approved assessment centres. Those centres that are currently approved are the National Initiative for Services Excellence, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and Sandy Lane Hotel. Mr. Speaker, there are others that are preparing to be approved centres. These include the Barbados Community College, the Barbados Vocational Training Board and the Cave Hill School of Business. There are also five secondary schools that are part of a pilot programme for the NVQs and CVQs. Mr. Speaker, NVQs are awarded at levels 1 to 5. The Caribbean Examination Council is also going to be a part of the awarding at level 1 in the schools.

Mr. Speaker, the idea behind the National Vocational Qualifications is to allow persons to use the skills they have and to get recognition for that. There are persons who are employed who are seeking to move up the ladder in that particular field. There are also persons who have become unemployed and are trying to get back into a similar field. We have heard of cases of persons who are, for example, in their mid 50s, who would have been working in a particular area for many years but who having been made redundant are now trying to get a new job in that particular area. I am told that their age may be against them. There are younger persons who may be looking for that job and those younger persons may be coming out of school with two or three CXC certificates. There are persons who have been turned back because they do not have basic English at CXC level.

Mr. Speaker, there are many persons out there who at age 55 and 60 would not have basic English and basic Maths and so on as a CXC qualification, therefore, what we are encouraging those persons to do is to have their skills recognised and certified and employers would recognise those not just nationally but regionally as well.

Mr. Speaker, there are competence-based occupational standards of what a person can do. It is not based on what a person knows in terms of their academic experience and academic qualifications, it is based on what a person has a skill to do.

Currently in Barbados, we are recognising several areas for training. The approved National Vocational Qualifications in Barbados are very wide-ranging. They include bar service; food and drink service; food preparation and cookery; housekeeping; reception; amenity horticulture or what we may call landscaping for those who are not familiar with the term amenity horticulture; management; information and communications technology; developing a new or existing business enterprise; customer service; care of the elderly; and occupational safety and health. Those are the 12 areas that are currently approved.

There are some other areas that are under development and as time goes on we would be seeking to add more and more to this programme, such as providing security services; human resource management; coaching; business administration; entertainment technology; marketing; production for television; and retail financial services.

Mr. Speaker, among the CVQs, the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications, are things like electrical installation; mechanical maintenance; nursery care; cosmetology; wall and floor tiling; masonry; plumbing; carpentry; training and assessment; training and development; furniture making; interior decorating; musical performance; and welding.

Mr. Speaker, there are a wide range of courses that may not be offered in the schools. There are persons who are coming out of school or who are in the school system who may find an interest in this particular area but would not have the opportunity to qualify in that area within the school system and we are saying that this is an opportunity for them to become qualified.

Mr. Speaker, we see the NVQs and CVQs as something that our young people can take up.

House AB61 Sequence 133 & 134 11.10 a.m.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. Dr. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Speaker, at a Special Summit of CARICOM Heads of Government on Youth Development in January, in Suriname, our young people met. Sir, across the Caribbean those young people had done a survey and they presented some the findings of that survey to ministers, then and to Heads of Government. It was the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development. Of course, our young people used the opportunity to vent and to complain about things that would affect them and things that are affecting them.

Mr. Speaker, sadly, many of our young people at the time expressed concerns that they have no vision beyond five years; many of them do not know where they would be in five year's time; they do not know what life would afford them in five year's time; they do not even know if they would be alive in five years. They were concerned about crime and violence. Sir, what concerned many of them too was the level of unemployment which was recorded to be especially high in the 20 to 35 age group, so much so that many of them in that particular survey felt that there was no point in looking towards getting a job because it was not going to be likely; many of them, 85 per cent of the young people who were surveyed, actually said that if they had an opportunity to leave the region, they would do so. Sir, that is a really sad tale, that 85 per cent of our young people would leave these shores and leave this region, if they had the opportunity. Sir, they see overseas as offering them more, they do not see much scope for their development here in Barbados and in the region. Sir, that is something we have to address and that is something we are addressing, even as we speak. Mr. Speaker, that is something, of course, that is for no one Ministry, that is an area that needs to command the attention of every area of Government.

Mr. Speaker, the National Vocational Qualifications and the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications are part of that programme because it allows our young people to see that there are opportunities that they can achieve; there are opportunities of development and of self-actualisation that young people can achieve, even though they may have

been marginalised in the school system because they were not particularly good at French and History but that they do have something to offer. Our people may experience a sense of low self-worth because in the school system they did not find themselves excelling, and we have made our young people sometimes to feel as though they are worthless and as though they would never amount to anything because they were not contributing at school. This system would allow our young people to know that because they have other skills, they are able to contribute to our economy, to their communities, to their families, and to their own self- development.

Sir, we are validated what it is they can do, therefore, it is important that we change our mind set when we think about vocational training and about technical education. Sir, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council is not only for those kids who were not doing well in school. We have set up a system that says to them if they are not doing well in French, if they were not likely to get five CXC's, they can go to Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council and do plumbing. Therefore, by that, we would have relegated certain areas of work and certain types of training for those persons who were not doing well at school. Sir, I can tell you, plumbers and tilers today make a tidy sum because if they are doing their work and doing it well, they can command a tidy price for the work that they do. Therefore, we need to stop looking at vocational training as being something to which we would not give any validity.

Sir, one of the things we need to encourage our students in our schools is that there is academic training but when they come out of school with qualifications, they still need to do some sort of vocational training on the job. Maybe this training would not be in a formal setting as what is being offered here but every one of us, when we leave school and go into our careers, we find ourselves having to do some sort of technical training on the job; indeed, in medical school we start with the academics, we spend our first year and one-half only in our books; after that we have an apprenticeship programme, or internship, where we are on the job doing some sort of vocational training. Mr. Speaker, we need to encourage not just our young people but our society to think more along the lines of technical and vocational training, and we promote the National Vocational Qualifications and the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications, this would be happening a lot more. As I said, there are five secondary schools that are coming into the programme as well. This should also assist in getting people to think more along those lines.

What this also does is that it allows people to start to think about the concept of lifelong learning because there are opportunity to continue retooling or enhancing people's skills. The CARICOM Community has also committed to this process and established a Committee of National

Training Institutions. Sir, the Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Technical, Vocational Educational and Training Councils met and has recently put to a recently held COHSOD (Council for Human and Social Development) standards for training in CVQs. Sir, 60 standards were put to the COHSOD for approval in CVQs training. I mentioned some of the ones we are doing here in Barbados but the ones that were included among the 60 to COHSOD, which are a wide range of programmes, include crop production, motor vehicle engine systems, motor vehicle chassis systems, garment production. These would be developed, based on what we see the market needing at the time. Interestingly, what we found was that coming out of Trinidad and Tobago there was a proposal, which was accepted, for steel pan tuning at levels II and III. They realised, coming out of their workforce, that there was a need for persons who can tune steel pans. That was accepted by COHSOD as one that they would promote.

Jewelry production in leather and in seeds is another

such programme. We have a lot of young people today who are making a living and plying their trade at Pelican Village, the beaches and craft fairs, doing a variety of jewelry. We see some very nice pieces and unique pieces, therefore, the offering in NVQs and CVQs in that area recognises the skills of these persons. These skills, when recognised, would allow for freer movement across the region. As we look at the free movement of labour and skills across the region, the NVQs and CVQs would allow for them to move more freely.

Mr. Speaker, this is a rather straightforward amendment. What we are proposing is that the NVQs have already been developed and more will come; the CVQs have been developed; 60 standards have been developed by COHSOD and there will be more to come, we are developing others; we have persons waiting in the wing, some 21 persons waiting formal certification and we aim, within the next three years, to train and to approve about 1 500 persons. This year we are aiming to do over 5 00 persons and so these persons would need to have the certification.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, the amendment that is being proposed to the Act is primarily to allow for the certification to persons who have applied. Additionally, the Bill allows the Minister to make independent appointments to the Chair of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council in the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair. The Bill also makes provision for the establishment of a committee to be called the Standards Approval Committee, that will be responsible for establishing the programme for developing these occupational standards, in accordance with agreed priorities and strategies, as will be determined by the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council.

There will also be a Quality Assurance Committee that would elaborate the criteria for making the awards.

11.20 a.m.

Friday, April 20, 2010

Dr. the HON. E.R. BYER-SUCKOO: (Sequence 137) There is a Standards Approval Committee and then a Quality Assurance that would elaborate the criteria for making the award. It would also deal with the approval of entities that want to offer these qualifications and also the oversight and operation of a system of external verification of approved centres to ensure overall consistency and quality. The idea here being, Mr. Speaker, that in amending this Bill, we are expanding TVET's ability to help to develop our workforce both for our nation as well as for our region and, certainly, for the development of our people.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged.

HIS HONOUR K. St. C. BEST: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

HIS HONOUR K. St. C. BEST: Mr. Speaker, I rise at this point to support the amendment to this Bill. I think I must compliment the staff and all the workers at TVET for the excellent job they are doing.

Sir, history would have shown that the whole question of internship and apprenticeship have served Barbados well over the years. One of the fundamental problems you hear creeping into internship and apprenticeship is that they need to be a greater responsibility by employers as well as participants in this apprenticeship and internship system for the benefit of the system. Sir, too often you hear complaints from participants in the system about poor working conditions and being overworked because they are doing the internship.

Mr. Speaker, I believe they should be mutual respect on both sides in order to have a better understanding of what is happening. Sir, too often people complain that they go on the internship programme and they are overworked. Sir, the condition of work is very poor and when they have to complain, they are sent through the door and the programme within the system is broken.

Mr. Speaker, on the other side, some persons believe that because the system has been provided for them in respect of the vocational and apprentice system that they should go to work places and fool around but, Sir, their

behaviour does not benefit them because, at the end of the day, if you are in an apprenticeship system and this is the area you have chose to put your energy in, I believe that first impression should count and you should make the employer feel so comfortable and impressed by you that you can guarantee that before your apprenticeship system is over, he is writing to the Board to say that he needs that person in his workplace.

Mr. Speaker, we need to educate both parties, both the employer and the person who come to the system asking for assistance. Sir, I must agree with the Honourable Minister where people believe that you almost categorise a certain group of people, that you are sent to the Skills Training for TVET Council all because you do not have the ability to get six or seven 'O' Levels.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we are at the stage in the developed Barbados that we must identify those persons who are skilled so that we can have a beautiful skills bank throughout Barbados. Sir, if we have a cadre of plumbers, carpenters, et cetera throughout St. Michael East and a person in the constituency of St. Michael East wants the services of the plumber, that person should not call somebody in St. Peter to come to him, we should be able to find that network within St. Michael East.

(Sequence 138) What would happen is that the cost would be cheaper because the person coming from St. Peter would charge for labour and transportation but the cost of labour and transportation of the plumber who lives next door would be smaller.

Sir, TVET is going an excellent job and we need to really market this organisation and market it to the benefit of Barbados and to the Caribbean and the world at large. Sir, skilled persons have an important role to play in the development of any country. Sir, it is about time that we increase the various courses and run more courses during the year so that there is a greater amount of persons looking to find work, who are well trained and qualified.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Minister of Education, in conjunction with TVET Council is looking at harmonising themselves so that persons who have this TVET certificate would know for sure that they have an accredited qualification that would redound to their benefit.

Mr. Speaker, with those brief remarks, I want to support his Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognise the Honourable Member Christ Church South.

HON. J.D.E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to join the discussion on the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill. I want to congratulate

the Honourable Minister and her team for what I would say is the timeliness of this kind of work. Sir, as we contemplate a Barbados coming out of a recession, which we are in now, it is extraordinarily important that along with all the economic planning and financial arrangements that we put in place that we also have a workforce that is ready and armed to take up the challenge of a new development paradigm.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that especially in the courses highlighted by the Council and its work, it would provide the appropriate tool for Barbadian to take their rightful place in a new working environment, an environment which calls for accuracy, efficiency and a higher degree of accountability. Indeed, the Council is clear in terms of what the objectives of the qualification standards are, and in reference to the award of the National Vocational Qualification and the Caribbean Vocational Qualification and, Sir, that is important.

Mr. Speaker, National Vocational Qualification would appropriately apply to the qualifications which we in Barbados accept and get accustomed to in terms of standards and appropriateness and, of course, the Caribbean Vocational Qualification, to my mind, speaks to some level of ability to move around our countries in the Caribbean with less encumbrances. It would allow us to move around freer and take one's rightful place in the work society of not only Barbados but the wider Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, it speaks to the paradigm shift in certification as it intends to serve as a guarantee for competence. Sir, qualifications awarded by trained providers have tended to speak about what people know and can produce in an examination rather than on what people can do and demonstrate in a work environment.

Sir, the Minister was at pains to make the point that we are talking about persons who seek to arm themselves for more practical application in our work environment. Sir, not everyone can be taken...

Sequence 138

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. J.D.E. BOYCE: We are talking about persons who seek to arm themselves for more practical application in our work environment. Not everyone can be taken up in the traditional, I am not sure there are so traditional now but in what was once called the white colour jobs, and we need more and more to look at the emergence of a wonderfully skilled cadre of young men and women in Barbados to take up these practical positions. The important thing about awarding the NVQs, for individuals NVQs offer certification for having met national standards of an occupational role. It would therefore, I would think,

bring about a level of confidence, not only in the worker themselves but in the employers who take on these workers from day to day. They would have a criteria beyond the obvious things that we look for in terms of deportment, the manner in which we put across ourselves, but they would have that additional qualification criteria on which to base their final judgement. It gives the bearer of the qualification that extra authority and standing, in terms of his or her ability to take their rightful place in the work environment.

Indeed, the centres that have been approved are, again, listed and the Honourable Minister was at pains to point it out. I want to speak especially to the work at the Vocational Training Board and the apprenticeship system which in large measure will be intertwined in this arrangement where former qualifications would be set against the work that we do in a training our people in these areas.

Sir, I certainly find in my interaction with my constituents in Christ Church South, that a number of the young men and ladies require that additional training. Any attempt by this Government to ensure that the training is not only provided in larger measure, but in a more measurable and quantifiable way is an important step in terms of building the morale of our people.

I would like to join the Honourable Member for St. Michael East in calling upon our people to embrace this opportunity and recognise for what it is out there. I find that too many young people between the ages of 17 and 20, in the early formative years of our lives, when we are best able, in my view and indeed in my experience, to assimilate things you are being taught, I have found, with age, one tends not to be able to absorb the kind of capacity that you could absorb as a teenager, or a young man or woman. I am sure that without much diversion, I think most teachers would agree with me.

Sir, I want to urge the young men and women to really grasp these opportunities, and I want to urge the parents to understand that sacrifice which we may have to make for two years, because we are agreeing to forego the immediacy of additional financial income in the household, which in a lot of ways will not be sustainable because an unqualified worker obviously would endure the whims and fancies more-so of the employer than one who is qualified and accredited. I must make the distinction. It is not everyone but the trend would certainly speak to this reality.

We need to be prepared as parents to make that two-year sacrifice, or however long it, takes an 18-month sacrifice, to ensure that our children have that opportunity to grasp and to benefit from the kind of service, which these training courses and these qualifications will offer.

Sir, in an economic environment in Barbados, which is moving so rapidly in terms of growth in the service industry, and more specifically I speak to the area of tourism, it is heartening to read the list of areas now being covered and considered for the approved national qualifications. These speak to things like Bar Service Levels, Food and Drink Service Levels, Food Preparation, Cookery Levels and Housekeeping Levels. These are very important aspects of how we train and tool our people for very important tasks.

Do not think for one moment that this is limited to persons who are necessarily or dropouts from the traditional system. I know of young men and women who work in the hotel sector and who are skilled in foreign languages, and when they interact with our guests in the hotels, it is a wonderful sales experience for Barbados which cannot be matched. Indeed, it is normally the practice in these kinds of hotels to reward these persons who have that additional ability not only to serve in the traditional area, the direct requirements of their job of producing a beverage of taste and class, but being able to communicate to our visitors about Barbados in their own language. This is extremely important.

Sir, I want to indicate that this is one of the ways in which we can ready our island Barbados, as I said, for that plunge forward, that which will be, as I stated before, featured by a new understanding of what efficiency is, what competency is and what being accredited to carry out a particular task is all about.

I therefore want to urge the Council in its work to try to spread their wings and to integrate their work, to bring about a conversion of our resources and a conversion of our people into that oneness of service.

In this regard, I am happy to report, for instance, that we in Christ Church South are presently working with the National Vocation Training Board. In such an exercise where we are looking to combine the efforts of the TVET Council, the Vocation Training Board, with the Constituency Council to create an area which cannot only see the training taking place, but to put into effect the results of this training by creating kiosks, booths and areas where the student, along with the guidance from their teacher, is able to put into practice those things which they are learning every day.

It is a wonderful opportunity for Barbados. It is a wonderful opportunity for our young people. I can only close by repeating that for this work to be a true success, we have to let our young people know, those who require the training, that the sacrifice they make now for a couple of years to attain the training and the accreditation, will stand them in excellent stead in the future in terms of sustainable employment. We need, as I said before, to

emphasise to our young parents that they need to be prepared to make that little sacrifice to ensure that the best opportunities are taken by our young population.

I am obliged to you.

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

His Excellency D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in this debate and from the outset to say that one must recognise that this Council is not now a local Council, but it is has now been accepted among the CSME countries, and it is also part of CARICOM.

I want to make the point that for years I have been commenting in this Chamber that the other side needs not to speak on this matter.

HAB61B 11.40 p.m.

Sequences 1 and 2

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

House AB61B, Sequence 03 & 04, 11.40 a.m.

His Ex. D.St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, for years I have been lamenting in this Chamber that the Honourable Members on the other side need not to speak on this matter if they do not want, but they have always been able to bring large votes to Parliament, and every year the money has not been expended. Sir, they have also been able to use training to interfere with the unemployment statistics of this country. I have evidence of this, which I have placed in Hansard, on more than one occasion.

Sir, what happened over the years is that instead of people being able to come to the job market, the other side has always been able to use placed like the TVET Council, the Barbados Community College, the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus, Erdiston Training College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and divert people from seeking employment and pushing them into training, so that they would not be included in the unemployment statistics. Sir, even though they have done that, every year, substantial sums of money were not expended.

Sir, another problem I have, is that the stipend that is supposed to be paid, I want to know how many deductions are taken from them and why they are being paid late. I am saying this is frustration for the young people of Barbados and if it still continues, I am asking for it to be stopped because this is not the best example of how to bring up a young worker. I am saying that there are too many people complaining that these young people are not receiving their stipends, and when they do, Sir, they are not receiving the

full amount. This is wrong, and somebody needs to carry out an investigation.

Sir, we also have to see this as the stepping stone to a job and I will say something that I have said over the years, that I do not support training a man, retraining a man and yet still when he is finished, he has nothing to do. We have some productive sectors in this economy and those sectors need workers. We need to target certain sectors, identify them, look at the sectors that have export capacity and maybe Government might need, after these workers have been trained in a particular field, to pick up the cost to put them in employment in the private sector but to ensure that when it is done, the capacity is increased.

In other words, Sir, if there is a demand for the Pine Hill buddy pack juices and Pine Hill does not have the capacity to increase the export, maybe that might be a good field for us to provide the labour to increase the capacity, so that we can increase export.

For example, if Sweet and Dandy is the mauby in demand, or Star Products or any other mauby in Barbados is the product demanded on the north American market and the manufacturers do not have the capacity to employ more people, after coming out of the TVET Council, we might be as a Government be able to challenge some of these persons to the production line, so that we can increase capacity to increase our export earning.

Sir, if rum, whether it is Mount Gay Seven now that is seen or the E.S.A. Field but especially Mount Gay Seven that is now seen as the new vodka in the world, if there is added capacity for that and they do not have the capacity, we might be able to source some workers, using this system to ensure that we increase the capacity.

Mr. Speaker, you know I have always made the point in here that it is not revenue but foreign exchange that will run this country and make it right. I am saying if foreign exchange is what is needed, and we are training people and we do not have anything for them to do after they have finished training, it is better to attach them to the productive sectors of this country than allow them to go on the block, or to turn up at some Government agency to beg alms. I am not supportive of that, Sir, I am one who believe that anything to increase the capacity of this country must be done.

House AB61B, Sequence 03 & 04, 11:45:11

Sir, we give away a lot of money and we attach nothing to it and I am not supportive of that. I am interested in increasing the capacity of this country and ensuring that we can fight. There is a belief in this country that because the world is in a recession that we should wait. I do not support that. I have heard it from the Opposition all the

time. They need not talk on this issue. They could sit over there with their mouths shut.

Asides.

His Ex. D.St.E. KELLMAN: You might not be able to see them but I can see them.

Asides.

His Ex. D.St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, we have to understand that we have a country to run and we cannot be just training people for the sake of training people. We have to ensure that when we train people that we have something for them to do and it must be to increase the capacity of this country.

Sir, we have a golden opportunity and it is quite clear that the other countries within the CARICOM region have accepted that these councils have a role to play and they have joined in it. Sir, we must continue to set the lead but at the end of the day, it cannot be a showpiece. It cannot be a statistic because the only statistic I am interested in is how we are going to increase the social welfare of the people of Barbados and the most important thing, Sir, is how we are going to increase the capacity of this country to benefit one and all. Sir, this is all I have to say on this matter.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. R.D. JONES: I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to just give a few comments to the amendment to the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council (TVET) Bill that is before us this morning and to compliment at the outset, the Honourable Minister who has responsibility for this particular area. I want to commend her because as a recent Minister of Labour, she seems to have got a quick grasp of this particular area so for that, I want to give her my compliments.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Of course, it demonstrates the quality of her intellect in this particular exercise.

I want to state from the outset, again, this is where the Democratic Labour Party is separated from the Barbados Labour Party relative to areas of education and training in Barbados, the Honourable Minister mentioned the year 1993 when the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Act was passed, and then

you had the establishment of the TVET Council. Anyone who is familiar with the political history of Barbados would recognise that 1993, the Democratic Labour Party was the Government of this country. I want to state that from the outset.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: Of course, when one looks across the educational and technical and vocational training landscape of Barbados, the great pillars of education and training in Barbados were, in fact, established by the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: The Samuel Jackman Prescott Polytechnic (SJPP), the Barbados Community College, the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus, the National Training Board, the TVET Council, all of these important institutions of education and training were established by the Democratic Labour Party so it is not surprising that at this stage, the Honourable Member for St. George South can bring this amendment of that particular Legislation to this House. Sir, this is because we are again, establishing the framework, the foundation, the groundwork for the further development of Barbados and the provision of technical and vocational skills for all of our people because we are not only talking young people. We are talking about persons who want to benefit from this area of development, this area of enterprise, this area of innovation and this area of activity.

The Minister has pointed to the CARICOM Vocational Qualifications (CVQs) and the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

House AB61B, Sequence 03 & 04, 11:50:14

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. R. D. JONES: We all know that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who is on this side - of course, there is no other side today so it is only this side that we are speaking to - has great knowledge as an innovator of a beer that had some presence in Barbados at a particular time. Unfortunately, I had to use the word had. It is known that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is a master brewer and also a consumer because that which you produced you should be also be able to consume. The Honourable Member was an innovator so he has some great technical and vocational ability in relation to this area.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: I am not going to listen to any Honourable Member from St. Philip speaking about any Honourable Member from Christ Church, I protect Christ Church very fervently. The Honourable Member spoke of the National Vocational Qualification, which would be a domestic qualification accredited and provided by the Technical and Vocational Training Council of Barbados.

The CVQ is a regional qualification supported by COHSOD, which is one of the agencies of CARICOM. It is known that under the CVQ there are five levels moving from level 1 right through to level 5. Level 1 would essentially be dealt with or be done by students in our secondary schools. Level 5 might very well be equated to either a Masters or Bachelor's qualification, if we use the same kind of ranking that we have. What this does is to give all of our students in the secondary school at level 1 the opportunity to come out with a mix basket of qualifications both in what we refer to as the academic qualifications and the technical vocational qualifications.

Mr. Speaker, one should first recognise that within the school system we have always had some level of technical and vocational qualifications in the area of woodwork, metal work, automotive work and other areas of such activities but this takes it further. The various standards which have been established would be standards used throughout the entire Caribbean. As the Honourable Member has stated, this gives the body and soul to the whole notion of the CARICOM Single Market and the movement of skilled labour across the region. Mr. Speaker, one would not have to go through the tortuous route of trying to give value to the particular qualification from one territory to the other because the standards are universal across the region.

All of the work has been done in six or seven of our secondary schools to start to roll out the CVQs come September of 2010, so we are moving together in relation to this activity. There are some schools which stand out at this moment for this particular exercise. They have started work some two to three years ago and they have established and done the training for those persons who would be doing the assessing as spoken to by the Honourable Member for St. George South. I believe that we have trained some 21 assessors who would be able to go in and establish the various standards and competence in those areas of activity. The Alleyne School; Combermere; St. Lucy Secondary; Grantley Adams Memorial; Garrison Secondary School; Alma Parris Secondary School; Coleridge and Parry School; and St. Leonard's Boys are some of the initial schools that will be part of this exercise. More and more will come on stream as the relevant facilities are established at these schools and the various competence among the instruction staff or the teaching staff of the particular schools.

The St. Lucy Secondary School stands out as a beacon relative to the introduction of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification. In fact, it would be a centre where students from several of the other schools that are without the relevant facilities would be able to go to, to receive the requisite training for their certification.

Mr. Speaker, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council will find that it will have a lot more work to do. Maybe that is why you would have this amendment to the relative Act, Cap. 43 where there would be the establishment of a Standards Approval Committee and a Quality Assurance Committee because we have to ensure that the standards are consistent across the board.

Mr. Speaker, the Caribbean Examination Council will remain the awarding body for level 1 of the CVQ, which is essentially being done at the level of the secondary schools but as you move through the various levels, the Technical Vocational and Education Training Council would be the awarding body for the requisite qualifications.

Mr. Speaker, the employees of that body are competent. They have in fact been trained and are going through further training to ensure that they have the standards, the knowledge, the competence and the skills to make the appropriate judgements relative to the awarding of such qualifications.

Mr. Speaker, I think that Barbados as well as the other countries in the Caribbean are going in the correct direction relative to these competency-based qualifications. You know what you have to do based on all of the various standards as set out in order to be certified as competent in a particular area. Mr. Speaker, this gives those employers who would be seeking to employ any of these persons a template to note where the various persons are at as they look at level 1, level 2, level 3 right through to level 5.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy made a good point when he spoke to the utilisation of the competencies of these persons in the field of employment in the various businesses. The Honourable Member mentioned certain products and certain brands, so I do not need to repeat them. We know that there are excellent entrepreneurs and innovators in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, when we speak of technical and vocational education and training, we sometimes miss the point when we look at persons who used both the cognitive structures and the innovative capabilities that they possessed and we sometimes make claims that cannot really stand the test of time. We should understand that when you are dealing with an innovator, you are dealing with someone who employs cognitive structures as well as deep and serious... They are thinking outside of the box.

These are persons who really think outside the box, not persons who are really the run of the mill persons who simply rely on what they strictly call their simple intellectual capacity to do something. These are persons who really test the strengths and the capabilities of a society to develop as a civilisation and as a society.

Mr. Speaker, I am going down to the very basic. Yes, I could hammer a nail but I also have to know how to hold that hammer.

House AB61B Sequence 5 & 6 12:00 noon

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, a long time ago, I tried to help my father, who was a carpenter, to do some nailing and he had to show me how to hold that hammer properly because I was holding it short, I was holding it close by the claw and the head. He said to me that there is no way that I was going to be able to nail that nail properly. Sir, I was being instructed right there on the job. That is part of the apprenticeship system for which this country was noted. My father showed me how to hold that hammer properly and how to assist him in nailing the nails through the wood.

Mr. Speaker, I became quite competent by utilising the knowledge which he provided and the technique for holding the hammer and to assist him in driving that nail into that wood.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I see the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West smiling greatly when I mention the word hammer head and supported by St. Michael West Central. I do not know if these gentlemen know how to use the hammer with the head appropriately. Sir, all of us who came up in the village would have had some experience, particularly if we help others on Saturdays as they move their chattel houses from spot to spot and as we helped put them back up.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was making an extremely important point, that with a cadre of trained and competent persons within our society, we

should be better able to innovate even more than we are currently doing. Sir, a society like Barbados will depend more and more, as it goes forward, on that innovative capability, that entrepreneurialship capability of its people to develop more and more products for sale locally and across the world. Therefore, we have to support our various institutions, both public and private, as they make all necessary steps and measures to ensure that the people of Barbados are adequately trained and certified as being competent in the given area of activity or endeavour.

We are caught up now in Barbados in ensuring that in the area of aesthetics and cosmetology that people look good. There are persons in the past who, beyond the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic where there is a heavy demand for persons to be trained in the aesthetics field and in cosmetology, were never able to satisfied the demand being placed on that institution. Sir, by September of this year there will be an expansion in that area at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic because if there is a need within the society, then some training institution has to be able to satisfy the need for training a competent person in that area of activity, and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic is stepping up to the plate to satisfy, albeit still not at the level that we should have that area of expertise but we also have to be utilising the private trainer to assist in that activity. Sir, that is where Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council is important because those institutions should also be seeking that badge of approval relative to the particular standards that are established under this framework.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, the appeal would be to all those persons who have been private providers over time - Carmen School of Cosmetology, among others - to make use of the competence of this expertise which now lie within the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council. The certification, the establishment of standards, among other things, would make sure that all of our persons know that when they go to institution A that the standards are there, the competence is there, the delivery of the final product is there, and that it is an excellent product for utilisation in Barbados, that they can go to any one of these places where these persons possess the various qualifications to be trained.

Mr. Speaker, we had in the past, particularly for graduates coming out of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, when they go on attachments with employers out there, the employers actually keep them. Sir, when that happens, that is a truncation of their learning curve because a person maybe trained reasonably well at that foundation level, who would have demonstrated that expertise but it is only fair that employers allow those young persons to finish their certification, so that even if those young persons are fully employed during the day, there must be some opportunity for them to finish that two-year or three-

year course and to obtain the relevant certification. Sir, that young person must be able to move with that certification wherever he or she goes, he or she might not remain on the shores of Barbados for all of his or her life. I know that we are an open society and an open economy and that we do not and should not put restrictions on the movement of our trained people, as they seek to go other shores. There are other benefits which accrue to the nation as some of our people migrate to other pastures, green or dry, one does not know what they would be at the end of the day.

Sir, I support the amendment to the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill, 2010, recognising the important components of the authority of the Council to coordinate and supervise; maintain a system of assessment; approve any institution or body as one that is coveted to offer the awards approved by the Council.

Mr. Speaker, the work is carefully spelt out within the amendments. The Council shall have the authority to:

(f) grant an award, to be called the National Vocational Qualification Award;

(g) grant an award, called the Caribbean Vocational Qualification Award on the attainment of the Caribbean Vocational Qualification that is based on regional standards approved by the Caribbean Community.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister has already stated the standards already agreed to, and there are many other standards out there to be unfolded gradually in Barbados, as the facilities are established and as the competence is developed across Barbados, and the various other activities that have been entrusted to this Council. Sir, this has the wholehearted and full support of the Minister and the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development. Sir, I am sure it also has the support of all of the young people whom I represent in Christ Church East Central, who would be using the opportunity to look at themselves and become part of training in the post secondary school institution, if they are out of school. If they are in school, to be attracted to the offerings under the CVQ and NVQ programme. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. STEPHEN A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to join in this debate in support of the amendment to the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Act and certainly to join the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sport in the support of these very important amendments and certainly the foresight of the minister of introducing such an important amendment to this Honourable House. There are a few points I would like to make in relation to the amendment, particularly as it relates to the move of the Government to fulfil a very important aspect of our Manifesto, in relation to ensuring that we create a trained or a better trained population,

particularly as it relates to our young people. Mr. Speaker, two very important qualifications for which this Act will pave the way relate to a National Vocational Qualification, as well as a Caribbean or CARICOM Vocational Qualification, again creating an avenue, both locally and in the Caribbean, for the kind of quality recognition of vocational training.

Mr. Speaker, our ethos in the Government has always been to ensure that we reflect the reality that training in the area of vocational and technical areas are very crucial and are just as important as the academia. Sir, in Barbados we are seeing more and more of our young people moving towards technical and vocational endeavours. What this amendment is seeking to do is to ensure that as they do that, that the kind of quality standards are protected both in Barbados and across the region.

H:No.AB61B (7&8)12:10 p.m.

Friday, April 20,, 2010

MR. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, we are into a very important phase of our development. What we recognise we have to do as a Government is to ensure that not only do we talk about what we want in terms of youth empowerment but that we put in place measures to ensure that our young people, in particularly, have avenues for their own personal development. I can see the need to even further canvas and to ensure that these opportunities, that we are making available, are known to our young people. Mr. Speaker, certainly, in relation to the Minister of Youth, Family and Sports, I expect later this year to look at an intervention programme aimed at targeting a considerable number of young people to ensure they are brought on board, both in relation to training opportunities available through the TVET Council as well as other areas of training that are available through the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports both at the level of entrepreneurial training through, for example, the YES Programme as well as the main-streaming programme. There are obvious synergies which can be obtained between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports. Of course, there will be avenues by which we can more or less get into the trenches and to ensure that our young people are brought on board and that they are involved in this kind of creative activity.

Mr. Speaker, there are number of other areas which are very relevant. One of the things we recognise is that when we train and equip our young people in their various areas of competencies, that we need at this juncture to even become more aggressive in relation to the extent to which we secure markets for our young entrepreneurs in particular. Sir, that is an area that would certainly get a renewed focus and new attention from my Ministry

because we recognise that in relation to the Youth Entrepreneurial Scheme and in other areas where we are creating avenues for entrepreneurial activities, we are seeing a number of fantastic innovations and a number of fantastic business developments in Barbados through these programmes. What I recognise that we need to do is to create opportunities both across the CARICOM region and most, importantly, internationally for our entrepreneurs to generate much needed foreign exchange. We cannot await our young entrepreneurs to find these markets on their own.

Mr. Speaker, what we recognise is that we are going to have to basically intervene in the process and secure, particularly, international markets for our young entrepreneurs. This is an initiative which we have already started to look at and work very closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This would be one of the most important interventionist strategies that would be forthcoming in relation to ensuring that our particularly young entrepreneurs have access to those emerging markets across the world.

Mr. Speaker, it is only fitting because, as we expect to emerge from this ongoing recession, we have already, very early, identified the need to use this period to train and to retrain our young people. What we recognise we have to do is to use this period to ensure that the market which would bring foreign exchange into Barbados are made known and readily available to our young people.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other strategies which we will have to focus on and there is ongoing debate in Barbados in relation to making available a number of facilities to accommodate training and so on. I think there is an avenue to further decentralise the training opportunities available in Barbados, not only those avenues that are available at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic (SJPP) but at other institutions whether it be in the secondary schools, which have technical and vocational departments but we have to find a way to better utilise our school plants after school hours. Sir, this is something I feel very strongly about and is something that we have actually earmarked as an interventionist strategy (Sequence 10) where after hour training must be one of the things that we proactively pursue. Sir, rather than focus a lot on developing and building buildings, which are only going to be opened during the day, we have to find a way to open up our school plant after hours and ensure that our young people most of whom tell you they have nothing to do during the day, that we find a way and certainly the initiative that I will be speaking about very shortly will be designed to ensure that we can target a certain number of young people who are not engaged but who need to be engaged in national development and, Sir, we have to find a way to utilise our school plant after hours.

Mr. Speaker, this is also a major opportunity for us to ensure that we can bring a kind of focus to those young people who feel they are on the fringes of economic development and we recognise we have to do that very shortly. The range of skills and the range of opportunities that this amendment to this Act creates a complete new picture in terms of how we would actually protect the skills once they are learnt and actually ensure that we are matching our vocational and technical learning with our academic learning and that we can signal to our young people that those who are inclined to technical and vocational training that if you are not inclined to strictly academic training, you can gain a Master's or whatever qualification you desire in areas of technical and vocational training. This is a very important and wonderful opportunity, it creates a framework and an underpinning bedrock by which we can champion the cause of alternative economic activity in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I would also dare to say that it is a recognition by the Government that in further diversifying our economic base that we have to create these systems to ensure they are not only talking about an economic base on tourism and other traditional sectors but based on innovative economic endeavour, which across the world are fast being recognised as the engines of future economic growth and development. It gives us an excellent opportunity, certainly, in the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports to engage afresh with our young people and to cause them to believe that there is significant opportunity for them to engage in vocational and technical education which has a structure and a system. They would not necessarily have to operate in Barbados but across the Caribbean we are having now a CARICOM technical vocational qualification, which is recognised and based on the points which the Minister raised and looking at having a system which is protected by quality assurance and that you are not only talking about training young people but you are ensuring that the systems are going to guarantee quality across the Caribbean and in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks, I am certainly happy to support this amendment and to encourage the Minister in terms of the kind of focus particularly in relation to technical and vocational training, which we in the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports will endorse and incorporate into certain interventionist strategies that we will be announcing very shortly.

Mr. Speaker, I am much obliged to you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. P.M. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I join in supporting this matter before this Chamber and to support the Honourable Member who spoke before me in saying that

this move towards the certification and recognition of technical and vocational studies within our curriculum in our schools and within the workplace is very important as it reduces the likelihood of stigma and discrimination against technical and vocational studies.

Mr. Speaker, I remember attending that great institution that you and I attended in St. John, the Lodge School and then going over to Harrisons College in the sixth form and...

H/AB61B:12:20

Sequence 9 & 10

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: I attended that. In St. John, the Lodge School, and then going onto Harrison College in Sixth Form. Notwithstanding the fact that I am very proud of having attended these schools, but in the 1970s and 1980s students at the Barbados Community College had a wider range of offerings from which to choose, be it A'level Law or Business Studies. Even in the secondary schools, back then, subjects such as Principles of Business and Principles of Account, typing and so on were available readily in the newer secondary schools, but did not find place within their curriculae for these subjects.

Fortunately, as time evolved, more and more of these subjects are being offered in the older secondary schools. It gives me the impression that within certain quarters of society, we are still looking at the Ethan model of grammar school education in Great Britain, which says that we must focus on strictly traditionally academic subjects, be it the classics, sciences, modern languages and general studies, and excluding any practical hands-on technical and vocational studies, as if this is unnecessary.

I know that we have limited time within the school day and school week, and everything cannot be offered within a school. I think it is very important to give a student a well-rounded education. As speakers have said before, we should not condescend and assume if somebody is inclined to technical and vocational studies, they are somehow academically inferior to the persons pursuing the traditional studies. It takes intellect to be a good carpenter. I am trained in mathematics and I am involved in carpentry and joinery, that is Geometry. The calculation of angles and symmetry, very technical, very academic application of your intellectual power. We should not frown upon those who seek to perpetuate this notion that technical and vocational studies are inferior to the traditional academic subjects. They all have their place. As I understand it, the NVQs and CVQs are to be offered at all secondary schools within our island, bar none. This is sending a very positive signal in my view.

I remember attending the launch of the Green House at Harrison College, a few months ago. I said publicly then, and reiterate now, that I was surprised to learn then, even as we speak, that agricultural science is not offered in the curriculum there. I understand, as I said, you cannot offer everything. When I see that agricultural science is being offered to CXC General Proficiency Level, for decades now, in newer secondary schools, what signal is that sending to the young people who may wish to pursue a career in agricultural science. This is very important in terms of national food security and so on, and the need to feed ourselves, save foreign exchange and indeed earn foreign exchange in the application of modern agriculture.

Last night on television we saw a GIS programme where hydroponics and Green Houses, have been perfected in Barbados to the extent that we can now produce crops such as tomatoes and herbs, at a high quality and high yield via Green Houses and this modern technology as opposed to the traditional open farm.

Sir, a student of mine, from Queens College, being a leader in this sector. Do you understand, Mr. Speaker? We must not limit our young people into focusing on one area at the exclusion of the other. We must have an integrated and multifaceted approach to national development.

I believe that this exposure, in terms of insisting that these technical and vocational studies are available across the spectrum of our secondary system, would augur well.

Sir, the Honourable Minister of Education made the point about learning from his father how to hammer. I remember, when I moved up to Chancery Lane, Christ Church, as a lad having sprung from the working class in the Bayville/Chelston area, I was weeding outside the house, and some people passed and thought that I was the hired help. They were very impressed with my competence with the use of the hoe, because a simple implement like that could be deadly in the hands of the uninitiated, because if you do not swing the hoe between your feet, as it were, you would chop off your foot, or a toe or two.

Sir, I see in the CVQ/NVQ programme a simple area of landscaping is being implemented, so that the person who goes to an older secondary school and wins a Barbados Scholarship should be able to handle a hoe.

I just had to pay a plumber to change the seat on my toilet bowl, a simple process like that, but I did not have the skill to do it. So I decided that exposure to basic plumbing or electrical installation at whatever school you are attending would produce a rounded citizen, a jack of all trades, as it were, so that we men can be a good asset to our household, including the ladies who will look to demand manly things, not just to be just be filled with the academic

application and not seized with the basic skills that the man was able to master.

Sir, for example we heard that the CVQ Programme would be at several levels, from level 1 to 5, such that the higher level would be equivalent to degrees. I believe this will go a long way to give recognition to the fact that one can excel at the highest level in these technical and vocation areas.

As I understand it, for example, one may be exposed at an older secondary school to electrical installation, but this may sort of wet one's appetite to transition into an electrical engineer, which is similar to the introductory work which would have been done in the electrical installation. It reminds me that for years before the Barbados Community College offered an Associate Degree, students would do the ordinary Technical Diploma, (OTD), offered by City and Guild in Mechanical and Civil Engineering, and Building and Civil Engineering, and they were able to receive a scholarship through the Commonwealth Programme to Cyprus to do the HNV, the higher national diploma, which was then equivalent to a degree. So, someone who was not able to attend St. Augustine to get a degree in engineering was able to use this alternative route to reach the similar equivalent.

Sir, this was very exciting. I was able, while in the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, to have attended a graduation programme offered at the Garrison Secondary School where we saw lads trained to effect barbering, to the extent that they were able to give their Principal a little 'block' as they called it. He emerged unscathed with that experience. This was in conjunction with Brothers Barber Shop which has been volunteering their services to that school and other schools. I know that the Ministry of Social Care also assist in the training in the Welfare to Work Programme. I congratulate them. They have just transferred their school. The Minister of Labour was there with me one Saturday, at City Centre, where they dedicated that shop to training on a daily basis young recruits in the barbering trade. In fact, they were able to tell us that they perfected the process of the dry cut, which is phenomenal and world class, not found in other parts of the world, right here in Barbados.

Sir, the Hilton Hotel had partnered with the Garrison Secondary School, in terms of funding and equipping their labs which include hair dressing, where girls are able to produce very attractive professionally done heads of hair, as it were. These areas are very lucrative as the Honourable Member for St. George South mentioned, because some of those same graduates in the barbering from the Garrison Secondary School, while students, on weekends have been able to earn incomes to support themselves and families, in terms of carrying forward that skill.

Sir, this is very exciting. Again, at the St. George Secondary School's Speech Day, this year, they had a very promising programme within the technical and vocational area where, again, they partnered with businesses within the vicinity and throughout the island. The results have been overwhelming in terms of the...

HAB61B 12.30 p.m.

Sequences 11 & 12

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

House AB61B, Sequence 13 & 14, 12.30 p.m.

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: The results have been overwhelming in terms of the interest of the students and their competence in these technical and vocational areas. This is a very exciting era that we are now entering, Mr. Speaker, and I believe this will augur well for national development because this would provide a workforce that is properly skilled, where best practices are being perpetuated in terms of standardization of performers, given that this is a competency hands-on-based approach to knowledge and skills' development.

Mr. Speaker, in my role as Minister of State in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, I am very excited to learn that there is a proposal within the development of the CVQ/NVQ Programme, according to the Honourable Member for St. George South to perfect areas, such as jewelry production in leather and seeds, in the garment production and the development of new and small business enterprises. This is tremendous.

Mr. Speaker, I remember just a few days ago, through our Ministry, the BIDC and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, we held an exercise where the players in the garment and textile sector were able to speak to us frankly, as we prepared to participate as a country in the Chenghai Expo in China, shortly.

For example, they were able to point out to us the need not just to have a display that is a sort of DVD production of our textile but the need to have samples, and manikins up there, so that the prospective buyers would be able to physically touch the garments produced to ensure that the seams, hems and so on are properly done. In other words that best practices obtain in this regard, the feel of the fabric and so on, if we are going to have a realistic chance of developing markets, in terms of buyers.

Sir, CVQ/NVQ Programme will assist in this drive to ensure that the standards in Barbados and throughout the region, in terms of production are at world-class level. This is very exciting where persons will be recognised officially, in terms of their certification, not just at school but as they

go into the world of work, they will be properly certified. Therefore, the necessary commensurate remuneration by their employers would be provided because they would have this certification to prove their competence in the various skills.

Again, a few months ago, I was at the last graduation ceremony of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and there again, we had a number of students who had actually been certified at Level I in the CVQ/NVQ Programme. I believe it was in the care of the elderly. There was tremendous interest there, not just the very young but even some more mature persons taking the opportunity to be properly certified.

Of course, this assists in terms of the free movement of skilled labour in the region in an organised way, where in order to qualify to be eligible to access job placements in the region, one would have to demonstrate that certification in terms of the CVQ/NVQ Programme.

In closing, I congratulate the Minister. We realise that this in a multifaceted approach to Government and governance, where you see the work of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development. Take note that it is the Honourable Member Prime Minister who took the initiative to name that Ministry, Education and Human Resource Development, so you see that there is a seamless approach to Government by this Administration, where we are not being territorial and say that this is a labour matter but we realise the integrated approach, in terms of the fact that education will have to be involved.

We heard the Minister of Youth Affairs is involved with his Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme. I have heard their Director mention recently that the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme would provide the technical assistance but not funding to the emerging entrepreneurs. Then, they can come over to the Ministry of Economic Affairs where we have provision for assistance, in terms of small grants to the tune of \$5 000 that this Administration was able to inject further assistance in terms of a Supplementary, which we provided giving the huge demand in the financial year.

Sir, we have a Cabinet Committee system of Government, again initiated by the Honourable Prime Minister, where we have the Economic Policy Committee, headed by the Honourable Member for St. Philip West and Social Policy Committee, headed by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, where we bring the relevant ministries and ministers and parliamentary secretaries together so that we could have a cohesive and consistent approach to national development. This CVQ/NVQ Programme obviously would benefit from this collaboration within our Government. Congratulations to

this administration, as we move and develop our country forward in this coming year.

Thank you very much, Sir.

Asides.

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. C.P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House be now suspended until 1.40 p.m. today.

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

The question that this Honourable House be now suspended until 1.40 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

House AB61B, Sequence 13 & 14, 12:36:30

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Good afternoon Honourable Members, the Sitting of this Honourable Chamber is resumed. When the suspension was taken, we were on Order No. 8 and with that we shall continue.

ORDER No. 8 (RESUMED)

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to close this debate. I want at the outset to thank my colleagues for what has been to my mind a very good debate and one that I know has pleased the staff of the TVET Council no end as they heard all of the expressions of support for their work. I had envisaged this morning that this would have been a much shorter debate. I want to thank all Honourable Members for lending their support to this and for articulating some of the areas. I want to particularly thank the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, the Honourable Minister of Education and Human Resource Development, who has lent his support and outlined the role and the synergies between education and this vocational and technical training.

I also want to thank the Minister of Youth, Family and Sports, the Honourable Member for Christ Church

West Central, who again outlined the synergies between that ministry and, as I had mentioned earlier when I started, the concerns we have about our youth and the development of our youth. I also want to thank him for what he has been able to mention about that ministry and how we can work together to ensure that our young people are trained and ready for the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, it seems that everybody has an understanding of what the National Vocational Qualifications are and I hope that out of this the public would be able to understand what it is and how they can benefit and be a part of it. Indeed, the system of the NVQs would result in enhanced status of technical and vocational training. We talked about not marginalising that type of training. In fact, mention was made about the fact that we seem to have established a dichotomy where persons are either academically inclined and if not, there is vocational training.

Mr. Speaker, what we see happening in the very near future is more of a crossing over eventually where persons with academic training would see the need for vocational training and persons with vocational training would be able to use these vocational qualifications or similar vocational qualifications as entry level into the world of academia.

Indeed, we know that there are many persons who may not have been interested for whatever reason or who may have been late starters in school and would not have been inclined to academic training but having been involved in some sort of vocational training might find themselves inclined to do some more work in the area of academics. We are hopeful that because of the standards that are set and because of the standards that the TVET Council through the committees that would be established would be able to maintain that these qualifications would be recognised indeed even as entry level points into academic institutions.

Mr. Speaker, even as I talk about academia, we are also pleased that the Cave Hill School of Business has come in on the act as well and has become a part of the approved centres for administering these CVQs and NVQs. What I also was pleased to learn is that not only is our University of the West Indies involved in this type of training but they have also been preparing to build capacity in the area of technical vocational and education training because they have now submitted proposals and have taken initiatives to train leaders in this area at the Masters and the PhD levels. Mr. Speaker, everybody is recognising the value that this type of training would have, as I said, not only for individuals but indeed for our entire economy.

Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage our young people to take advantage of the opportunities that are being offered. This call was made by many of my colleagues. I

know that right now our young people are very concerned about having a job, but that is the nature of youth. They want a job and they want it now. In the meantime there are many young people who are sitting down waiting for that job to come to them but I want to encourage them that where there is training to take advantage of that training. I know my colleagues would be doing this in their constituencies when young people goes to them asking for jobs. Mr. Speaker, we do not have jobs available for them and so we are trying to help them to improve their skills so that when the jobs are available they are more competitive in the workplace. This kind of qualification is not only about enhancing productivity but also about improving competitiveness in our workforce.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to urge our young people that when they start the training through whatever institutions, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic or the Vocational Training Board to stick with it. I also want to urge the parents and grandparents and those who are responsible for them to encourage them to stick with it because too many of them come out of the programme too early because they have been offered a job maybe on a construction site - there is money flowing and they are enjoying themselves for a few months - but then that job is over and they are back to square one. Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage the parents who may see this a little more clearly and understand it better than our youth would understand it, to encourage them to stick to the training because it will pay dividends in the long run.

Mr. Speaker, the call was made for ensuring that the training is in sync with both the current and future needs of our local and regional markets. I want to assure Honourable Members as well as the public that that type of research is ongoing through the Ministry of Labour and its different departments and agencies. There is a labour market information system. One of the things that the Ministry has committed to and is indeed part of the medium term development strategy is improving the quality of the labour market information use to support the employment and training fund decisions. That information and the strengthening of that system is definitely ongoing.

There is also manpower research. At the regional level, there is a regional labour market information network. There has been a proposal as well to enhance that network. Indeed, as we look to move as a single market in a single economy it is important that we have not only our local information but that we have a networking of information across the region.

Mr. Speaker, I will wrap up where I started. Mr. Speaker, we must remember that what we are doing is for our workers. I am particularly concerned about those frustrated young people. I have encouraged my colleagues to help our young people who are frustrated with what is

happening in our region and what they see as a lack of opportunity individually, at the constituency level and in our ministries because our young people are everybody's business. It is not for any one ministry, we must all work together to encourage our young people so that they do not feel as frustrated.

We who have gone that way can show them how they can be productive citizens and productive members of this society. Jobs may not be plentiful now but we are being told that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Mr. Speaker, is the time for us to prepare for when we reach that point.

House A61A Sequence 2 2.00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. Dr. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the Biblical parable of the five wise virgins and the five foolish virgins. We are told that the five wise virgins had prepared before hand having their oil ready until the bridegroom come, as opposed to the five foolish virgins who waited until that time then to look for oil, only to find that it was too late, that nobody had any oil for them, and that they had to miss the party.

Mr. Speaker, we are not let Barbadians in general miss the party because when we reach to the end of that tunnel, we want our workforce to be sharpened and to be ready to take advantage of the opportunities that will be there. If they are not ready now, then they would find themselves waiting even another few months before they can take that advantage. If everyone takes the advantage that is offered here, they can find themselves better able to jump into the opportunities that are there. Mr. Speaker, this will also redound to the benefit of our society and of our workplace.

Mr. Speaker, as we start to explore these opportunities, we mentioned some of the standards and areas that are already being investigated and elaborated upon but even in discussions at lunch, there was talk about programmes that are being done by the Ministry of Community Development and Culture, where at community centres across this island there are programmes which are being offered in a wide range of areas, for example, dressmaking. Sir, there are some retirees who take this up as a hobby. They would do a Level 1 course, after that Level 1 course they would then another course and then they would find themselves making money out of it just from these courses offered by the Ministry of Community Development and Culture.

Mr. Speaker, I see there is an opportunity here that even as we look to expand the NVQ programme, that those persons who have those skills could then look to become

certified nationally and regionally. All this has gone to highlight for the public that the Democratic Labour Party remains committed to its manifesto pledge of increasing the productivity of workers and improving our competitiveness, nationally, regionally and internationally. Sir, the Party that brought the people free education, the Party that brought the people the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council, is still committed to human resources. Sir, that human resources development is what made us stand out in the world, it has given us the edge across the world. It is not about our mineral resources or about our financial resources that we may have but Barbadians stand out, Barbadians can stand proud anywhere they go, primarily because of the investment that have been made in their development.

Mr. Chairman, this Government remains committed to investing in the people, to reminding us that at the end of the day it is about our people and about our society. Therefore, in the area of labour, as well as in all the other areas, you can see that we are putting people first; here in this Bill before us and we always will continue to put people first.

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

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

On the separate motions of Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER, seconded by the Hon. R. D. JONES, the House resolved itself into Committee. Mr. JAMES D. PAUL, Chairman of Committees, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 - 6, inclusive, were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. Dr. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of the Hon. Dr. ESTHER R. BYER-SUCKOO, seconded by the Hon. F. J. STUART, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council (Amendment) Act, 2010.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS (Resumed)

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the replies to Parliamentary Questions numbers 8 and 9, asked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East are ready. The Honourable Member is not in her seat nor in this Honourable Chamber and therefore I will lay the two replies.

MR. SPEAKER: I am obliged, Honourable Member.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Honourable House now revert to Government Business.

Mr. JAMES D. PAUL: I beg to second that, Sir.

2.10 p.m.

Friday, April 20, 2010

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the second reading of the District Auctioneer's Validation 2010. Sir, notice of this bill was given on the 15th day of April, 2010, and today, it was read for the first time. The District Auctioneers Act, which governs the appointment of district auctioneers in Barbados was passed in the year 1904 and, therefore, that Bill is now about 106 years old. The remit of the Act, as contained in its long title, was an Act to consolidate the acts relating to the sale of goods taken under executions issuing from the inferior courts.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think I have to lecture Barbadians or this House on what auctioneers do. They receive proper, restrained on, on which execution has been levied and they sell that property to satisfy the settlement of debts for persons who are entitled to reimbursement. Mr. Speaker, generally speaking, they will receive these items for sale from bailiffs or from other persons authorised by law to take up other people's property for the purpose of settling debts. Distraint, of course, as Your Honour well knows, usually takes place where there is a relationship of landlord and tenant and where the tenant has not been paying his rent or her rent and has run into substantial rental arrears and the landlord is satisfied that the tenant owns property upon which he can distrain and property which, if sold, would allow him to make good the default of tenant, so far as those arrears are concerned, and bailiffs also carry out instructions from Magistrates Court, which instructions are intended to indemnify persons who have suffered loss at the hand of debtors of one kind or another for people who have not paid their rates or who have not paid their taxes or are in debts of one kind or another.

Mr. Speaker, the role of auctioneers is a very serious one and the relationship between auctioneers and bailiffs is

necessarily a close one. I note in passing that the bailiffs of Barbados have now formed a kind of association which meets periodically so that they can discuss matters of common interest and discuss common challenges to make sure that in the discharge of their responsibilities they do not work injustice to the citizens of Barbados and that they discharge their responsibilities within the four corners of the law.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that when the stage is reached where a bailiff has to be pressed into service that the relationship between the bailiff and property owner, the person whose goods are being distrained or whose property is being taken up for purposes of sale as a result of an order made by the court, that relationship can become very tense as people can feel that they are being embarrassed or put in a position where they can be the target of ridicule and derision by members of the public. Sir, the word "bailiff" is a highly charged word in terms of the average Barbadian village. If the bailiff turns up at your place that is not an occasion for celebration, it is really, usually, an occasion for embarrassment and for having to hold your head down for the next few weeks in the village in which you live.

Mr. Speaker, this relationship between bailiffs and auctioneers, therefore, is a critical one. Sir, bailiffs have to do their work properly and act within the four corners of the law so that when they pass property to auctioneers to be sold so that the process of sale can satisfy debts own to landlords and other creditors that the auctioneers themselves can act within the four corners of the law.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, this legislation the District Auctioneers Act was passed in the year 1904. It is an old piece of legislation and it has been tinkered with over time and amended from time to time as challenges of various kinds have popped up and the reality of the situation on the ground in the society has demanded that certain amendments be made to the Act. Sir, in 1992, when the Democratic Labour Party was in office the District Auctioneers Act was amended and it was amended to change the way in which auctioneers were appointed. The legislation is called the District Auctioneers Act and is so called because auctioneers are supposed, by law, to be chosen to reflect the existence of the number of magisterial districts in Barbados, that is the significance of the word "district", so you would have auctioneers covering District A which covers the general St. Michael area, District B, which covers the parish of St. George and certain parts of Christ Church, District C, which would cover the parish of St. Philip and the parish of St. John, District D, the parish of St. Thomas, District F, St. Joseph House and St. Andrew and District E, which would cover the parish of St. Peter and the parish of St. Lucy. We would have auctioneers covering all of those districts and that is why they are called district auctioneers.

Mr. Speaker, prior to the amendment of 1992, these auctioneers used to be appointed by letter issued by His Excellency the Governor-General. It was thought in 1992, after certain concerns were raised about that procedure that the legislation should be amended and that the method of appointment of auctioneers should be changed from appointment by letter to appointment by instrument and that the person appointing the auctioneers should no longer be the Governor-General but should be the Minister in this case, the Attorney-General. Sir, that legislation was passed and was duly assented to by His Excellency the Governor-General and so, and came into effect but between 1992 and the year 2010, in spite of the fact that the legislation was changed, auctioneers continued to be appointed in the old way that existed prior to the amendment of the legislation.

H/A61A/14:20

Sequence 4

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. F.J. STUART: ...Auctioneers continued to be appointed in the old way that existed prior to the amendment to the legislation. So we find ourselves in a situation now where all the Auctioneers who were appointed since 1992, since the Act was amended, since we were appointing in the old way but since they still carry out their duties as auctioneers selling people's property and so on to settle debts, in fact, what was happening, they were not acting legally because they were not properly appointed in the first place. Now, that situation obviously cannot be allowed to continue. In the brief background that I just gave, the kind of work Auctioneers have to do is not work that endears them to people whose property is being sold. So you can well imagine, even now as I make this intervention in the House, people who may have fallen victim to the Auctioneers between 1992 and today may be alarmed to learn that the persons who sold their property really did not have the right to do so. For the 14 years during which the previous Government was in office, Auctioneers continued to be appointed in the old way in spite of the fact that the legislation was amended in 1992. Auctioneers should now really be appointed by Instrument signed by the Minister and not by letter signed or issued by His Excellency the Governor-General.

The purpose of this legislation is to do what we have to do in this Honourable House from time to time. That is to put all of those Auctioneers who in good faith would have discharged their responsibilities and sold people's properties and so on, referred to them by Bailiffs to carry out orders made by the Magistrate Court, or referred to them by Bailiffs who would have distrained on behalf of landlords to recover rent.

We now have to validate all that was done by those Auctioneers so that they are put beyond the pale of legal pursuit, and that is really the thinking and the rationale behind this Validation Bill. It seeks to validate actions taken by Auctioneers between 1992 and the present, even though the legislation was amended in 1992 to change their method of appointment, they continued to be appointed in the old way and would not have been properly appointed therefore in terms of the statute, and therefore would have been acting outside of the four corners of the law while they were discharging their responsibilities.

Sir, that is the background to the District Auctioneers Bill, 2010. With those few words I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. F.J. STUART, seconded by Hon. C.P. SINCKLER, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. J.D. PAUL in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. F.J. STUART seconded by Hon. C.P. SINCKLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His

Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motion of Hon. F.J. STUART, seconded by Hon. C.P. SINCKLER, the Bill was read a third time and cited as the District Auctioneers (Validation) Act, 2010.

ORDER NO. 11

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 of the land acquisition act, cap 228 THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION BY THE CROWN OF THE PARCELS OF LAND SITUATE AT BUSHY PARK IN THE PARISH OF SAINT PHILIP IN THIS ISLAND FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSES OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

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

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, it gives me tremendous pleasure to move this Resolution not only as Minister of Housing and Lands but also as Representative for the particular area of Bushy Park. Sir, this, of course, provides an opportunity given the fact that we are acquiring two large parcels of land, an opportunity for more economic development and opportunities in St. Philip, given the fact that it is a very fast developing parish.

Sir, the Resolution before this Honourable Chamber, if I may speak specifically, mentions that the purpose for acquiring this land, under the Land Acquisition Act, that is the public purpose, is for housing development and recreational facilities. Sir, at this moment Bushy Park Racing Track has been in existence for a number of years. I believe the person responsible for sports, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, will deal with the recreational park but I will still touch on it.

HA61A

Sequence 5

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

House A61A, Sequence 06, 2.30 p.m.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, this gives this Government an opportunity to make an impact in relation to housing development in the parish of St. Philip and also Barbados as a whole.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: I looked at what really happened in St. Philip over the past 14 years, in relation to housing. Mr. Speaker, I must repeat it again because there are some naysayers, and there are some people who are parading as politicians, who often use another medium to criticise this administration on the provision of housing. I want to put it on the record, Mr. Speaker, that during the 14 years of the Barbados Labour Party Government, I could only count ten houses in St. Philip, which were built during the past 14 years. I must also say that although the ten houses were built in the area of, I believe, St. Philip South, the families living in the houses had no legal title to the houses.

In fact, it fell upon this Government to come to Parliament to vest the property in the National Housing Corporation, in order to convey the property into the hands of those ten families, so that they can have absolute ownership. Although they gave them the houses, they had no title to them. What happened during the 14 years is that the families were paying what we call, occupancy rent over a period of time and nothing was done by the other Ministers of Housing to rectify the problem, although they

got a slight gift from the Government in the form of ten houses.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to put it on the record that ten houses were provided in St. Philip by the former administration and that is in one constituency. Sir, in St. Philip South none were provided, and in St. Philip North, the National Housing Corporation was actually absent in relation to housing development.

Mr. Speaker, what they gave us, I am not proud to say it, is a \$700 million prison at Dodds on good Crown lands that could have been used for housing, and they gave us the Hardwood Housing Factory in Six Roads St. Philip. Sir, we were left with those three, the ten houses, the \$700 million prison and the Hardwood Housing Factory, obviously a factory that produced no houses in St. Philip and whatever houses they produced, this administration is, quite obviously, still looking for them, having accepted deposits for them. I believe that is tantamount to a criminal act.

Further, Mr. Speaker, we looked at what is proposed and what we believe can be done at Bushy Park. We have said in our Manifesto at page 10 that this administration would commit to realising the concept of housing communities for low income earners, in which all the amenities, social, recreational and commercial are provided. For example, day nursery, play area, laundry and Minimart. Mr. Speaker, these two parcels, which is a vast area of land, gives us an opportunity to build what we would call a community. Mr. Speaker, we are building communities and we believe that it also gives an opportunity to provide a mix development, in the form of affordable housing for those in the low income, middle income and upper-middle income brackets. Mr. Speaker, the question will be asked, how will the Government finance a project this? Sir, we have developed a joint venture programme that at this stage is working, not a joint venture programme like the previous Government.

Mr. Speaker, when we looked at what obtained under the previous Joint Venture Programme, what happened is that it failed. It failed in respect in the selection of contractors, the experience of the contractors, the fact that they were unable to provide the financing that they had promised and, of course, the National Housing Corporation did not benefit, as was intended by the Joint Venture Programmes of the former administration.

Mr. Speaker, it is this Government's intention to involve Joint Venture Partners in developing the area at Bushy Park for housing. Indeed, I want to also state that we had a number of meetings with the Minister responsible for the Barbados Water Authority and his Ministry. In fact, we have been given the assurance that the assurance that they

are currently working on the provision of adequate water supply for this development.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, I am entirely comfortable. Indeed, I feel comfortable and confident that the Minister and his team will be in a position very soon, to give us further details on the specifics, in relation to their plan to provide the water supply for this development.

Mr. Speaker, this development will provide, not only housing for the people in St. Philip North and other areas in St. Philip but, as I said, the wider Barbados. Mr. Speaker, a rough estimate would tell us that we can provide at least 2 000 housing solutions, as a result of this acquisition.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, with the provision of 2 000 houses in St. Philip, obviously to be done in phases, we cannot just place homes there without providing certain amenities. As I said before, the Democratic Labour Party is committed to realising the concept of housing communities.

House A61A, Sequence 06, 14:40:14

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. Speaker vacated the Chair and Mr. Deputy Speaker assumed the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Philip North, you can now continue.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fact that we have that amount of houses in that particular area, we have to look at the provision of amenities. The fact that we have near to Bushy Park, Six Roads, it is my view, that we can shift some of the burden off that area, which is a very highly charged commercial area and provide in this development, a town centre. We would obviously have to provide a day care centre, probably a post office, commercial and medical facilities, an additional primary school and of course a church or a chapel. Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I speak to developing communities, we have to provide all of these amenities.

During the past couple of days, we had some statements uttered by the Honourable Minister responsible for Sports. Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to assure the residents of Philip North, St. Philip South, St. Philip West and all parts of Barbados that the motor racing facility would not be troubled but in fact would be maintained.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this gives us an opportunity to meet and discuss with the players in the motor racing arena

to look to see how we can improve the Bushy Park facility given the fact too that the Minister of Culture has already endorsed it by placing one of the major Crop Over events on the calendar at Bushy Park. The Honourable Minister has endorsed it as a one of the areas we have to look at in terms of holding cultural and entertainment activities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that given that fact, we can now sit down as Ministers... The Minister responsible for Sports is my constituent and I believe that he would support or should support any attempts to improve this facility as one of the major sporting and entertainment facilities and probably takes it past the North Stars facility in St. Lucy. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy would respond but I believe that we can overtake North Stars and make sure that we have a facility that would enhance sporting development in Barbados even if it is to have the primary schools meets in St. Philip North that would allow them to really enhance their athletics skills. We have Bayleys Primary, St. Martins Primary and St. Catherine primary that obviously would benefit from a facility like this.

Sir, this is a welcome development in the area of St. Philip. There are areas of lands in St. Philip and St. Lucy that can be utilised for housing, recreational and tourism development. What is proposed is a master plan for this area. I believe that with the facility we should have shops so that the small man who sells in Six Roads, the small man who sells at Well House Corner, the small man who sells in River and the small man who sells in Ruby can have an opportunity now to go in an area like Bushy Park with a modern facility to sell their goods. Apart from Six Roads that is already crowded, they can have another avenue to sell their goods.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make it clear that the development would be a mix development. Precedent has already been set by this Administration in relation to the development at Coverley because what we are doing at Coverley is basically a community, a town centre, a church, a day care centre and shops to support the development. Bushy Park would be similar in the extent that we are building a community and providing these amenities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in relation to housing generally, we believe that the mix development would also provide an opportunity for the small contractors along with the large contractors to participate in a project like this. Certainly, we have heard a lot about housing and about the fact that this Government has not given one single house to a small contractor. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the evidence is crystal clear that we have provided over 100 houses so far for small contractors.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is evidence that the houses at Constant, Marchfield, French Village and Stewart

Lodge in the St. Michael South Central constituency have been built by small contractors. In fact, I believe that if someone puts an opposite view or tries to put an opposite view as is customary now on Sundays by the other party to make statements without having any sort of evidence whatsoever, that we should produce to the public the real facts.

House AB61 Sequence 7 2.50 p.m.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I said just now are the real facts, that over 100 houses have been built by small contractors.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the National Housing Corporation has just negotiated...In fact, we are finalising, the financial institution has already committed itself to the tune of \$40 million, which will be geared towards the provision of houses. It will also engage more smaller contractors in that programme in relation to areas of St. Philip, Parish Land, Lancaster Phases One and Two, to provide additional work and additional opportunities for those small contractors.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to speak to the fact that I was at a meeting on Sunday and some residents came to me and said that they had already paid their deposits on some of the National Housing Corporation units and that they have not received title deeds thus far. Sir, let me say that the former administration, in their divestment of units programme, put to the public that once they came and paid their deposits, once they satisfied certain conditions, they would then received title or conveyance to these units. Sir, the public was kept in the dark in relation to some of the challenges and problems that the National Housing Corporation encountered in providing good title to these units.

Sir, one as you know, in your constituency, particularly The Ivy, we had to vest those units in the National Housing Corporation only a few months ago. Sir, those units were not before vested in the National Housing Corporation, yet deposits were taken from the tenants. Therefore, it meant that the National Housing Corporation received deposits from persons, an agreement for sale was signed but the National Housing Corporation could not provide the units to those tenants because of the fact that the National Housing Corporation had no absolute title to those units. Secondly, the National Housing Corporation surveying work to establish proper boundaries was incomplete.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, throughout the housing estates, there were numerous extensions which were contrary to the Town Planning Department Act, therefore, it meant that

persons could not have received their certificate of compliance in order to finalise or to complete the sale of the units to the particular tenant. Sir, we were faced with these challenges and what the National Housing Corporation is now looking at, is how can we fast-track the vesting of the units at Deacons, Rosemont and others housing areas. Sir, this has gone to Cabinet and Cabinet has approved the vesting of these units into the National Housing Corporation and the Resolution should soon be brought before this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also now have to meet with the surveyors to speed up the process. We are looking at what ways we could fast-track titles to these tenants. I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have options. I believe that after bringing a Paper to the Social Policy Committee of Cabinet and to the Infrastructure Committee of Cabinet, we will be mandated to look at special legislation, in terms of bringing legislation to fast-track the title of these units to tenants who not only qualify under the 20-year programme but tenants who paid their deposits to the National Housing Corporation. Sir, we are looking at two options.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must also say to you in this Honourable Chamber, and I believe that you are seized of the fact, that we have provided draft conveyance to lawyers - I do not know if you are one of the lawyers but I say to lawyers - to peruse the draft conveyance to send back to the National Housing Corporation, so that we could send those final conveyances to persons in your constituency, who qualify for the 20-year programme. Sir, that would be happening very shortly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that the lawyer is known to this Honourable Chamber but I will not call his name but I know the lawyer is working at a very swift pace to get those conveyances into the hands of his constituency because obviously it will redound to his benefit in future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are also looking in relation to how are we going to treat to persons who cannot qualify for a mortgage or persons wishing to purchase land in this country. Of course, time and time again, in this Honourable Chamber I have said that we have developed the rent-to-own programme which was accepted by Cabinet, which has already been launched. I believe too that we are looking at the provision of housing units for those who want to rent units. This will target and assist that category of persons who cannot obtain mortgage or who cannot purchase a piece of land outright. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have also looked at an area of Crown land in Vallery to start the construction of two six-storeyed housing units to house residents and constituents of St. Michael South Central and other areas. I believe we have also started the construction of a road at Four Roads, Christ Church/St. Michael and very shortly the National Housing Corporation

will be building more units at Four Roads to assist and to target that group of persons who cannot purchase a house or a piece of land but who could only rent. Sir, we are definitely catering to those persons.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would want to say that we have satisfied our Manifesto pledge that we commit to building and maintaining a pool of rent-to-purchase units for low income earners, pensioners, the disabled and others who may not qualify for mortgages and loans. Mr. Deputy Speaker, by that, we have satisfied our portion of our Manifesto pledges; what we have to do now is to look at other areas where we can build other rental units.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I always ask what was happening in the Ministry of Housing and Lands, what was the former administration was doing.

3.00 p.m.

Friday, April 20, 2010

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: We have Crown land available in Barbados and only recently, I did a tour with the Leader of Government Business in this House and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and we looked at an area that is Crown lands. The building is occupied but it is a condemned building and we look at the idea that we can construct rental units in that particular area. Obviously, we have to relocate that person because we cannot disrupt the particular programme that was going on in the condemned building because this Government is a sensitive and caring Government and we will not move them out but obviously we will look for some area, owned by this Government, to put that particular person and that particular programme in, and then we will look at what we did similarly at Valarie and to construct other housing units in that area so that we can now house more people, particularly in the urban area. Sir, we have to look for open spaces and look particularly for Crown lands that is unoccupied to see if we can construct rental units for those who cannot qualify to purchase a unit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, obviously that defeats the argument of the other side that this Government does not have a programme to house the poor. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is such a fallacious argument. They had the opportunity to look for Crown lands and to look for opportunities to construct houses for poor people. In fact, when we were at Marchfield, one of the candidates for the Barbados Labour Party was invited to come to Marchfield and, Sir, he came. It is true that I could not understand what he was saying. In fact, when you listen to him on Friday, you do not understand one word of what he is saying but this time I was able to understand what he was saying. He said that he wanted to congratulate this Government for the work it is doing and that he was glad to see ordinary people get their

keys that afternoon for their houses. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a prospective candidate for the Barbados Labour Party but I do not think he will last for the next three years. I felt for him and I offered him a drink and sandwiches.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Yes, he ate them and he congratulated us again for the housing programme. Sir, I am not here to attack anybody. I am just putting it to this House and putting it in the record that a candidate was in St. Philip congratulating this Government and congratulating the Minister of Housing for the fact that he was able to provide housing for ordinary people and he said to me that he saw it before his own eyes now, that poor people are getting the houses. He was going ahead and listening to the propaganda but now he has a full picture and a real picture of what is going on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not want to belabour the point that the programme of the Barbados Labour Party failed because it is a known fact that it failed. Again, it is evident by another supporter of the Barbados Labour Party who said he did not know why his Opposition Leader or the members on the other side were criticising housing. I told them it was a lost case because the Opposition did not build cheap houses or it did not build expensive houses. He said the Opposition built no houses. He said, "Minister Lashley, I told them not to waste their time because even if a house is expensive, we did not build any expensive houses either."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I said to him that people have qualified and that they are in the houses. He told me, yes, that he remembers Mr. So-and-so, a butcher and Mr. So-and-so, a security guard, who are in the houses. Sir, we do not have to put our case because their supporters are putting our case for us, that is the whole irony about the situation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to assure colleagues on this side that we are looking at areas of land in other constituencies like Lancaster, St. James, Vauxhall in Christ Church and that we are starting the acquisition process. We have started the acquisition in Christ Church and we have started the process in Exmouth in Deacons to construct high-rise housing units in that particular area. We commit ourselves to this programme of providing access to decent, affordable housing. Of course, the fact that we have started the acquisition and we have vested some of the lots in St. Philip, in terms of Clifton Hill that we have acquired..

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, never before have we seen housing in the area of St. Philip by the State and housing proposals by the State in St.

Philip. Sir, at River, Vineyard, Clifton Hill in St. Philip and there is some residual land in Riches St. Philip, that is also available for housing and we have committed ourselves to providing decent and affordable housing and also to ensure that Barbadians own a piece of this rock and we have to move these proposals and bring them into fruition. It is not bare talk as has happened before but we have to provide action.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to say to this House that we inherited an IADB Programme and the first part of that programme is the provision of subsidies for persons who we engage in incremental construction and very shortly the Ministry of Housing and Lands will be engaging in a public campaign sensitising Barbadians as to how they can qualify for a grant of \$10 000 because we have done all our programmes, the programme is actually ready and we are getting ready, hopefully by the end of May to launch this programme to assist some 400 families to 600 families in Barbados...

H/A61A/15:10

Sequence 9

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: ...actually ready, and we are getting ready hopefully by the end of May to launch this programme to assist some 400 to 600 families in Barbados to get a \$10 000 grant or subsidy so that they can improve their standard of living, improve their homes and improve their living conditions.

Sir, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe I have covered most of what I wanted to say to you. When we look at the housing development in Barbados we have to work hand in hand with other agencies, as I outlined before, particularly the Barbados Water Authority. I have full confidence in the Minister that the Barbados Water Authority will step up to the plate, to ensure that developments in St. Philip and throughout the corridor of Christ Church come true. Of course, we have to look at the water supply and we have to ensure that not only the Government but also the private sector can provide additional housing for all Barbadians.

Finally, it is also the proposal of this Minister to engage the National Housing Corporation workers along with agencies like Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission to utilise the National Housing Corporation workers in terms of repairs, particularly pensioners' houses. Some pensioners obviously would have material, but there might some length of time in terms of the Corporation or other agencies preparing the contractual documents, but I believe that a relationship can be worked out between Urban Development Commission, for Rural Development

Commission and the National Housing Corporation workers, to establish a programme where the National Housing Corporation workers, can assist in repairing and even constructing some of those houses, particularly pensioners and those in need, and particularly those persons who have materials already, that will take some of the pressure off Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission. We must not utilise the programme in such a way that we are not cognizant of the fact that we also have to provide the small contractors with work. Obviously we have to balance it and we still have to protect the interest of the small contractors.

In relation to needy cases and urgent cases, the National Housing Corporation has the staff that could supplement and complement the programme of Urban Development Commission and Rural Development Commission so that we can fast-track repairs to houses, particularly pensioners and those in need.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to present this Resolution, not only as Minister of Housing and Lands, but also as Parliamentary Representative for St. Philip North to bring the acquisition to this Chamber to ensure and provide opportunities for the people of St. Philip to provide housing opportunities, to provide employment opportunities, and, of course, ensure that St. Philip remains on the map of Barbados as an emerging and one of the fastest growing and developing parishes in Barbados.

Sir, as I said, the record of the Barbados Labour Party, and the Honourable Member for St. James South, who originated from St. Philip North, can tell you what was done by the Barbados Labour Party in St. Philip North.

Sir, a stadium was promised by the Barbados Labour Party for St. Philip North. I can remember going to the Minister at the time, Rudolph Greenidge, who went to St. Catherine to take measurements, along with the media, wearing hard hats and boots, and told the people that there would be a football and cricket stadium at St. Catherine's.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: They put pegs in the ground but it was a Zone 1 area.

Sir, the fact is, we have recognised that this Government can provide and also bring the private sector players... I also want to thank the motor racing group. They have shown and expressed an interest in Bushy Park. I believe that the Minister of Sports and myself will sit down, meet with them and come up with a plan. I am saying that the proposal is, we redevelop the Bushy Park Racing circuit, with a modern sporting facility, and, of course, people have positive views that the new Minister of

Sports is speaking about the new stadium, and that other Ministers of Sport had promised new stadia and they have never done it. I know that the present Minister of Sport will provide and will assist us in bringing a new stadium in Barbados at Busy Park.

Sir, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Hon. R.L. SEALY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I start, of course, by seconding the Resolution that has been brought by the Honourable Member for St. Philip North. I do so with a strong sense of pride because this is no ordinary application of Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, which we use in here quite often for acquiring land for public purposes, but this is a very significant development. I am going to start by doing something which I have done before, but it is appropriate that I do it again. I have to commend the Honourable Member for St. Philip North because he has actually outdone himself.

We all know that he has blazed an incredible trail up and down the lengths and breadths of this country trying to deal with the housing crisis that we inherited from the last Government, but what we have here is an attempt to plan an entire community, and a very large community. I believe that it is certainly the largest effort at anything like this in this country's history. If you look at the number of houses involved and the number of activities to be covered.

In fact, there is a plan for not only covering the spiritual side of things with the church but, of course, the various open spaces, play park, et cetera, that we can develop the physical side for young people. There is obviously plans for commercial facilities dealing with increasing the economic activity, in a parish that is rapidly growing in terms of the economic impact that it is having on the entire country. There is, of course, blazing a new trail with improved motor sports facilities. I am going to get to that because it impacts on my portfolio in a very direct way, which I will deal with a little later. Also the effort to create the Town Centre, the post office and, of course, the primary school, all aimed at trying to plan a complete community, not just dealing with the housing aspect of things but dealing with all of those other things, the ontological needs of man. You have to cover the full ambit, the spirit realm, the physical realm.

15.20 p.m.

Sequence 10

HA61A

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

House A61A, Sequence 11, 3.20 p.m.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: I really do think that the Honourable Member for St. Philip North should be commended because it shows the sort of visionary thinking that we have on board. It just happens to be in his constituency in St. Philip North but the truth is, we do not really have many other parts of the island with that sort of vast areas of land to be developed. I think he is magnanimous enough to realise that this is really a national initiative about which we have to be proud.

Sir, I think that the other impressive side of it is that we are not looking at creating a wall. When we talk about planned communities, too often we speak of a walled area and people being given lots, and all of those considerations. Rather, what we are looking at in Bushy Park is the full gamut, where all of the income ranges can be covered. This is one of the things that has always strengthened Barbados' communities, as you know.

Traditionally, this has happened more on an ad hoc basis, where you would have someone building a million-dollar residence next to a chattel house, particularly on the west coast you will see quite a bit of that but what we are doing here is planning a community that covers the entire range of the needs of the Barbadian society. I think it is a step in the right direction.

I note that there is the determination where we can look to the commercial potential in the area and in addition to the 2 500 houses, we will have a number of commercial activities, including commercial activity that will have a tourism component and, Sir, I will speak to that in a very direct way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we speak of sports tourism in Barbados, obviously we are usually speaking of cricket, which appropriately given our strong history and legacy in that sport leads the way, with about 60-odd other disciplines coming on stream. You know the sports. They are water sports, hockey with the hockey festival, the road running with run Barbados, golf, et cetera.

The truth is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you are talking sports tourism in the international sense of the word, there really is no sport that compares to motor sport. Therefore, we are going in the right direction, if we are talking about sports tourism and where we ultimately want to take Barbados, there is nothing that impacts a jurisdiction, quite like motor sports internationally. Sir, outside of World Cups, Olympics and those extra ordinary events, it is something to see.

In fact, Honourable Members here who probably have been to Miami would know that when the Miami Grand Prix is on or there is a NASCAR event at the

Homestead Speedway, you cannot get a hotel room anywhere in south Florida. It is as simple as that. It is incredible how entire cities and communities can be transformed by a motor sport event. The numbers that they bring in and the incredible spend that comes along with it. Sir, I think that an improved and an appropriate home for motor sport in Barbados has very real economic potential from a foreign exchange earning capacity. Therefore, it is the right direction in which to go.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is not a case of a few people of privilege making a lot of racket with loud cars. It is not that at all. This is serious business. Sir, to begin with, it is the number one spectator sport in Barbados, in terms of what it can attract so there is a captive local market. In addition to that, we have so much that we can offer already as a destination, if on top of that, you have a world class motor sporting facility, it is actually quite exciting what possibilities obtain.

The Formula One Circuit, for example, is highly sought after. You will find that countries and, I mean, Governments, Municipalities and so on, spending millions, just trying to attract Formula One events because they know the benefit they can gain from them. The same thing obtains in the USA with the Indy Circuit and NASCAR and so on. This is big business and we can have a community of motor sports. It is actually an umbrella body, the federation, but all sorts of activity including the off-road fellows that do the Four by Four. There are, of course, the motor cyclists, the Dragsters, the rallying and the go-cart. The full gamut is here so I think we can develop them.

I remember when I was in Opposition sometime ago, I made a call for motor cycles of a certain size to be banned from off the roads in Barbados and that, of course, was carried in the media in very short measure. The other part of my statement is that why I do not believe that some of those motor cycles should be allowed on our roads. They are not appropriate for our roads.

Sir, when you have cycles with 1 500 ccs that can get from zero to 60 in less than three seconds, where are you going to use that in Barbados? On the ABC Highway, before you can do so, you are at another roundabout. Sir, what I am afraid of and what I have no difficulty with is, if you have a proper facility and that is your hobby so be it, and you can experience the speed thrill or whatever at that facility. Then, you can invest in however many ccs you want to and enjoy your hobby, your high-powered motorcycle in a proper environment, where safety considerations are there, and the professionals to train you, so that you can enjoy your motorcycle. It happens in north Atlantic countries.

Sir, many of these racetracks that you see on television once a year hosting a major event, when they are

not hosting that event, there are hobbyists that go there on weekends, take their vehicles and just go and get a little thrill. There are amateur events and all of those possibilities, so it is not only the big events that we are looking at, but the amateur enthusiasts themselves and what they will bring. Naturally, they would have to hire mechanics and they are going to have to buy supplies. They have to do all of those things, so it is a sport that has a good spend coming with it and it has good numbers.

I would urge the Honourable Member for St. Philip North and, of course, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, whom you have already ensnared, saying that you all will be meeting to pursue this Bushy Park project, to move ahead with haste because there are tremendous benefits to be had from a world class motor facility in Barbados.

We can once again have something to blaze the trail and leave the rest of the Caribbean behind. Some will try to catch up with it but the others are always bench marking themselves to us. I saw an ad in the Financial Times with Tobago saying, "Not only Barbados has tourism Tobago does too." I could not believe it but I said, thanks for the free ad because if you are going to tell me that, not only Barbados has tourism, the only obvious thing for someone reading that, they would say, "well, okay, what is so special about Barbados if that is the standard people are using?"

Asides.

Hon. R.L. SEALY: This is very good advertisement.

I think that motor sporting facility is something that we can use as a fine example at blazing a trail in a sports tourism initiative that is replete with potential and is just there waiting to be properly exploited and taken advantage of, so I want to encourage that effort. I would hasten to add that I am in no way deprecating the importance of the other sports that are involved as well.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip North spoke about a stadium. The truth is, the land is large enough that we can still have a stadium. There is a lack of good sporting facilities for many sporting disciplines. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central will tell you the challenges that the Barbados Football Association has, in finding venues to host their organised football in Barbados, even the Premier League. Sir, now that they are shortening the season because of World Cup, they are playing football matches all over the place and in some grounds that are frankly not up to standard.

Sir, I do not want anyone to say that I am just saying all this about motor sports, I recognise the facility is big enough that you can create an opportunity for those other

sports and, of course, the Amphitheatre and so on to have cultural events.

House A61A, Sequence 11, 15:30:14

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. R. L. SEALY: This thing is actually exciting and that is why I really do believe that this is really an historic Resolution in terms of what it can do for that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I could speak to that as well. We have seen some fairly impressive things happening in the parish of St. Philip as far as developments are concerned. The Six Roads area is a legitimate city by Barbadian standards. If you look into the Physical Development Plan of 2003, in meshing the commercial and industrial components, the housing and everything therein, it is actually still growing. Six Roads is sort of in the middle of the parish.

We all know what is happening in the Crane, which would soon be the single largest accommodation property in Barbados. The rate it is going, as a stand-alone property, it will in fact have more rooms than any other hotel in Barbados. They are there on the western part of the parish going into Christ Church. There is a planned development for Fowl Bay and another one for Merricks so we are coming around. We are seeing that South-east quadric really start to emerge as a real tourism centre and an economic centre for Barbados. I know that the master investment plan that the Barbados Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. is looking at is ultimately going to look at these quadrics as well; how can we decentralise a little bit from all of the concentration of activity in the south coast and the west coast and what we can do?

At the same time we do not want to go too far east because we all know that we have already said that the East Coast is not to be over developed but at the same time we can have careful development that is low impact, that is eco-sensitive and that kind of thing, so we are really doing something extremely significant here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is that sort of farreaching development that we have always associated with the Democratic Labour Party. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South would tell you that it was the Democratic Labour Party Government that in 1961 identified Needhams Point as well as the Heywoods Estate in St. Peter for tourism development. The Hilton was supposed to go to Needhams Point, which they did and they are still there now in 2010. Sheraton was supposed to go to Heywoods Estate but it never came to Heywoods Estate but eventually a future Government, not a Democratic Labour Party Government, did a tourism project there, the Heywoods Hotel, which is now Almond.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk about major tourism development, even in the accommodation sector, historically, the State has had to come and play a role and so it is not inappropriate that in something like this, the State has to decide this is the direction we want to go in, this is where we believe the development of Barbados should go for the benefit of everyone and we as a Democratic Labour Party Government are prepared to do that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that in a couple of previous incarnations of developments that were identified for this area, a golf course was discussed and for that matter so was a hotel. I do not think we could probably accommodate the golf course with everything else that we have in store but certainly the hotel is something that, in my view, can still be looked at. There should still be potential to have some accommodation arrangements as part of this overall development plan.

We are moving away, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from the idea that a hotel has to be beachfront. In fact, people come to a destination for various reasons. I am not saying we do not have lovely beaches, very attractive sand and all of the activities that our visitors like, but I believe that we have to start to see our tourism differently, therefore, the whole idea of having a hotel in this entire development is a worthy idea and is something that can be looked at. In fact, it would fit right in with all of the other plans as I mentioned for St. Philip and the South-west of Barbados as we move across and I would hope that would be considered. As I said, we have the Crane expanding so fast and the plans for Merricks and Fowl Bay. I think that the Bushy Park activity would fit right in with that whole idea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us understand that people come to Barbados and they enjoy everything. They enjoy not only the marine environment but the environment generally. They also enjoy the people and the cultural heritage and all that we have to offer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that the whole shift away from the traditional centres of tourism activity is again very much in keeping with the Government's desire that the stakeholdership in the sector should be broadened and that more people should be involved. We talked about community tourism. The ultimate community tourism initiative is one in which you are forcing tourism development in the community itself. We already heard the Honourable Member St. Philip North talked about people from Well House Corner and so on getting involved in the whole culinary end of things and such like.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had the experience this morning as well as yesterday interacting with some of the distressed passengers who are unable to get back home due to the unfortunate happenings in Iceland with the volcano.

We have about 3 000 persons here right now who are trying to get back to the United Kingdom or Europe or to make connections to go elsewhere.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is interesting is that everyone that I met with said that they could not think of a better place to be stuck and people volunteered to be put on the last flight, they are so happy.

Interestingly enough, what really moved them is the way in which people have just rallied around them. The staff at the hotel, even the gardeners, said they were sorry about what has happened and told them to make themselves comfortable. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are seeing on television people sleeping in airports in European capitals but the staff at the hotels told them to go and lie on the beach and wait until the aeroplane is ready for them and be comfortable. You would have to spend an extra week with us but that is all we are looking at doing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the benefit of the House and by extension the listening public, the major airlines, Virgin Atlantic and British Airways, have been very good in dealing with the situation. They have a number of people they need to move but in the meantime they are providing accommodation and meals while they wait to be allocated a spot on another airline. We have airlines take off today so we are happy that flights have resumed. I took the decision as Minister not to spectate and allow the airlines to struggle. Their call centres are being inundated with calls. I told them that we do not own any aeroplanes so we cannot fly 3 000 people back across the Atlantic but we can empathise with them and work with them and do an information gathering exercise and we have done that.

We have set up a makeshift call centre through the Corporate Communications Department of the Barbados Tourism Authority to gather information, to assess specific needs and to make sure that they are addressed. To that extent, one gentleman told me that he was about to run out of medication and we were able to facilitate arrangement where he was rapidly consulted by a physician and then a pharmacist was able to deal with his situation. We have obviously other scenarios. Yes, one or two people did run out of money and had to go to the British High Commission and have those arrangements settled and sorted out but generally speaking we have been able to empathise with everyone and to make sure that we made the temporary situation as comfortable as possible.

Again, the number one thing we kept hearing about is the way the staff at the hotels, the personnel from the airline associations and the tour operators, that have sort of come around, have been working with them.

House A61A Sequence 12 3.40 p.m. Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. RICHARD L. SEALY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, a few people have been were lucky, I think it was Thomas Cook Tours that were able to redirect some people through Portugal, put them on a train and get them back to the United Kingdom but we understand, generally- speaking, that it has not been that smooth or easy. Sir, the numbers are there but it is really very reassuring to see the way in which Barbadians in the sector have been able to work with making life a lot easier for all individuals.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do urge any one out there who is wondering what to do to do, what I certainly do not want them to do, is to go by the airport simply because flights have resumed. We have crowds up there who are uncomfortable and are bunking out, et cetera. We are working to facilitate where everyone could get back home and we are doing that to the best of our capacity. Again the airlines are working over time in that respect.

We have the World Fireball event, we have the 20/20 cricket and so there is not much space but there is enough that, hopefully, within two weeks, we can have everyone back in place. Sir, I may add that 20/20 cricket is not in jeopardy, the International Cricket Council has, in fact, chartered an aircraft from Dubai that will arrive on 27th with some of the team, instead of the 22nd, so the practice match against Bangladesh, I am not sure when that will be, that might have to be rescheduled but generally-speaking, the 20/20 cricket will not be impacted upon by the volcano. As it is right now, I believe that there has been no more activity and we hope that the seismic activities will work in our favour and that we would not have anymore challenges. We sincerely hope that is the case.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have two minutes more in which to conclude.

Hon. RICHARD L. SEALY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will end on the very same note on which I had started, once again to commend the Government and the Honourable Member for St. Philip North for this far-reaching Resolution that he has brought here. I also think that the Honourable Member has demonstrated a great capacity to think outside the box, to break the back of this housing situation with which we are dealing in Barbados. I have to end on a note of gratitude because he spoke about the two six-storeyed towers proposed at Vallery, I appreciate that. I know there are some people who do not support urbanisation, they do not feel we should go the route of tall buildings but I am a strong believer in that. I think if we are going to deal with the problems of housing in Barbados, particularly urban areas like the one I represent, we have to go up in the air. I believe that we could do that in a progressive way. What the Honourable Member did not mention was that there are some interesting plans to recycle water, maybe to use photo voltaic on the roof. There are a number of very interesting initiatives. I am proud that the

Honourable Member has chosen St. Michael South Central to also do something creative because those two six-storeyed buildings will also set a standard for future highrise-type developments. Sir, there will also be two blocks of bedsitter, the studio type of apartments for elderly people, so that we are not only having the family units in the two towers but we will have bedsitters as well. Sir, I am very happy that is happening, that it is happening in a very urbanised area. It is not a very large spot but we could still find 78 housing solutions, we are doing it in a way that it does not offend the environment. I think that is good Government, it is good work by the Honourable Member for St. Philip North and the people of St. Michael South Central are grateful. The Honourable Member of Parliament is very grateful and I only can say keep up the good work and all the best, as the Honourable Member transforms not only the constituency of St. Philip North but of the whole of Barbados as we know it, as a place to live, to visit and to play. All of those things are important for developing the entire being. I am obliged to you.

Hon. STEPHEN A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise in support of this Resolution to acquire two parcels of land at Bushy Park, St. Philip. Sir, I would immediately like to register my approval in relation to this development. I believe that this acquisition is a very important one for the Government of Barbados and I would like to join with the Minister of Tourism and the mover of this Resolution, in signaling that once properly and appropriately developed, this particular acquisition will go down in history as one in which there has been a turnaround in terms of the development, particularly in the eastern part of Barbados. Sir, not only does this have the potential for housing and sport combined but certainly once this development is approached in the way that I envision it would be approached, it has the potential for changing the landscape in that particular area of Bushy Park.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the importance of recreational facilities cannot be underscored. We are very aware that this particular location has been utilised for years for motor racing. Sir, recently as I opened the motoring season at Bushy Park, I was very happy also to give the assurance that any future development of Bushy Park would not be conducted to the detriment of motor racing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in fact, this signals the commitment of the Government to development that accords with a proactive kind of focus in relation to sports and sports tourism. The motor racing fraternity certainly are very encouraged and should be encouraged by this acquisition because it assures them an opportunity to join with the Government to put recommendations in terms of the future development of motor racing. As it stands now, it is clear that the popularity and public support for motor racing cannot be doubted in Barbados. What I do believe is that in the past, motor racing has lacked the kind of

strategic focus that is required in relation to where international sports is going. Certainly this acquisition and the focus of the Government to ensure that we maximise our potential in relation to the area of diversified sports, is an opportunity for us to move beyond what I consider to be the current phase at which motor racing has kind of leveled out into a much more international pull factor, in relation to how we transform the existing management of the sport in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my vision, as I indicated at the opening of the racing meet, is that this is not only an opportunity the development of motor racing in Barbados but that I envisage, and I would certainly want in any discussion to be held with the various players, that we would have before us a very detailed and structured plan for the development of a multipurpose facility which would not only encompass motor racing but would speak to ... I believe the Honourable Member for St. Philip North alluded to this, but we have to develop facilities such as this in a manner that gives us maximum benefit. Therefore, the multipurpose facility that I envisage would also include some provision for athletic sports and certainly if we could get a track constructed at Bushy Park, not in a manner that detracts from motor racing, but an athletic track that can be available to not only the schools in the east but can be of an international standard.

3.50 p.m.

Friday, April 20, 2010

HON. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no secret about it. We are positioned in a very serious way to take maximum advantage of sports tourism. Certainly, in my own view, the development of Bushy Park offers an opportunity to focus Barbados as a nation in relation to the gains that could be obtained by ensuring that when we plan this development that this development is not only planned for the next two years or three years but is well-poised towards looking at how we can maximise a multipurpose facility to ensure that we can actually get the maximum benefit as a country. You would have heard too that a number of sporting organisations over the years have been complaining about the lack of facilities to operate in terms of their own association. We have the Netball association, we have the Polo association and a variety of organisations that over the years have not had the benefit of administrative facilities from which to conduct their varying sporting activities. I believe that we have an opportunity at Bushy Park, once we conceptualise it in a proper manner to provide the kind of administrative facility for our varying sporting organisations.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in addition to this, in terms of football, we know that the current facilities, in terms of our National Stadium, have been overused and, certainly, we

have to plan an agenda that can provide some diversification in relation to international football facilities. Sir, that is why this facility we are having eyeing at this time has so much importance in terms of our strategic focus in relation to sports. Therefore, when I convene the various meetings I propose to convene with the various parties I would certainly want to pick the discussion at that level where we can sit and involve a facility that would certainly give us that kind of advantageous outlook once we are looking at the future development of sports in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the other point is that Bushy Park offers an excellent venue because of the kind of space that is around Bushy Park. The location there is extremely conducive to development. It is very flat and certainly the area around it affords the opportunity to conduct the kind of seating facility and parking that could give us the kind of facility that I believe we need.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also have the opportunity to have Bushy Park so developed that we can stage major international entertainment activity there. Already the Minister of Community Development and Culture Ministry of Community Development and Culture has indicated that Bushy Park would be the venue for the Party Monarch for this year. Sir, that is only an indication that the facility has the potential to be used as an entertainment facility unlike the Kensington Oval which is constrained in an area of an already fixed network. We would obviously have to plan Bushy Park in a manner that gives it the kind of accessibility from other part of Barbados in a way that you do not have that kind of accessibility now and because we can lay out the road network in a manner that is not constrained by either existing road network, commercial building and so on, that we can, certainly, look towards a future where we can have even future expansion of an existing facility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Bushy Park development, therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is very welcomed. Sir, sports continue to undermine the development of emerging societies in terms of emerging developed nations because sports have the potential of significantly adding to the GDP and, certainly, in terms of the foreign exchange earning capacity of Barbados. We cannot ignore it because it offers us the opportunity to further diversify our economic base. We have emerging in Barbados a cadre of sportsmen and being managed and led by extremely talented managers and, of course, supported by organisations that are continuing to evolve. The approach to sports must be factored in and ensure that their future must be incorporated into anything that we are planning. We also have an obligation to ensure that where we are going to be providing facilities of this kind that we do it in a manner that does not offend persons who actually live in the area. I am happy to know that in the initial plans for Bushy Park that those factors have been taken into account by the Chief

Town Planner to ensure that the facility gels into the existing neighbourhood.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the potential for employment cannot be underscored in the Bushy Park development. Certainly, in the eastern part of Barbados we know that in terms of the demographics, there has been a significant movement from different parts of Barbados into the east, particularly into St. Philip. Therefore, the population growth has surged in a manner that causes us as planner and those in the planning department to think afresh about the whole approach to the development of St. Philip. Certainly, the only commercial area that feeds St. Philip is Six Roads and the importance of approaching Bushy Park can be seen just from the perspective that we will have to factor into the development of a Bushy Park scenario a commercial component that could actually take some of the burden off Six Cross Roads.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, from my vantage point and certainly in terms of the sporting component of Bushy Park, there is much more to it than just a narrow focus on sports. I believe that the development of the facility must feed off an approach that is at the heart of the future development of both sports and recreation in Barbados. It offers us an opportunity to really significantly impact on the extent to which we can have a prime facility that can generate the kind of attraction, internationally and, certainly that would give us the kind of edge when we compare it to other facilities across the Caribbean.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can never ignore the fact that going forward we have to be able to earn the kind of foreign exchange that would ensure we can develop at the pace that it is going to be required for us to do going into the future. Certainly, this facility must be developed in a manner that gives us that edge and create a facility that could be marketed internationally to the benefit of us. I endorse the need for a master plan which has been mentioned by the Minister of Tourism. We, certainly, would not be going into this facility without first sitting down and developing a master plan for Bushy Park and its environs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am also pleased that this acquisition comes with the blessing with the Ministry of Housing in relation to the acceleration of housing development. I also hope there is some avenue by which, when we develop Bushy Park that they can also include as part of the development some kind of residential accommodations for teams that maybe visiting Barbados in the future, whether by means of hotels or other accommodations in the immediate Bushy Park area to accommodate visiting sporting teams and so on, who come to Barbados. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is my vision for Bushy Park.

H/A61A/16:00

Sequence 14

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. S.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I was there a couple of weeks ago, I did indicate that I wanted to see the motor racing facility begin to attract more young people. The current cadre of motor racing drivers who will have to, at some point in time, go off the scene must be able to impart their skills to younger Barbadians. I believe that this particular sport is not only the fastest growing sport in Barbados but certainly as a TV sport it is the most exciting and the most energised international television sport in the world. We cannot ignore that.

I have appealed already to the persons involved in the sport to begin to attract young people. We have many youngsters who obviously like the art of driving fast. They are sufficiently skilled that we can begin to attract them in an organised manner into being members of the two sporting organisations in terms of motor racing. Of course, we do have the need of moving into a programme of defensive driving. I have asked the motor racing fraternity to include that as a part of their social responsibility with programmes of defensive training courses which can be conducted from Bushy Park for our drivers, so that we can begin to create safer roads and an avenue by which persons can be better trained in the art of defensive driving.

Sir, there is also the potential - We have many of our very essential services vehicles plying our roads from time to time. We have our ambulance drivers. An ambulance driver cannot be the same type of driver than a regular driver of a delivery truck. An ambulance driver has to be able to drive that vehicle at a speed and with sufficient skill to take patients from one point to another hopefully safely and not end up in accidents and that kind of stuff. So, both in relation to the Ambulance Service and the Fire Service, there is a potential service to be offered to them in a safe facility where they can be trained in the art of the fast maneuvering of those essential service vehicles, in a manner that obviously can redound to the safety of persons who have to be in that vehicle and also the public.

Sir, so far I am not aware that is a service being offered. It is something that certainly in the evolution of Bushy Park, and the persons who are into motor racing must see that they have a public duty to offer a social service that redounds to the benefit of all Barbadians.

Sir, those are some of my very quick thoughts on this particular matter. This Resolution comes at a very good time, because it comes at a time where we in the Ministry of Sports are involved in the very serious business of

finalising the National Sports Plan for Barbados, one that will be dovetailed very closely in relation to where sports tourism is going and working very closely with all of the players who have to come onboard to ensure we recognise that sport has to emerge as a serious sector in Barbados. Joining hand in hand with tourism in terms of being a revenue earner for Barbados, and it has to be pitched at that level.

The development of sports cannot be looked at in the standard traditional way. We have to begin to look at sports in a way that is linked to our economic goals as a country. Certainly we are aware of the Medium-term Economic Development Strategy for Barbados, and my position is, that strategy cannot remain on paper. It must become a living document. Certainly the approach in my Ministry will be that in all the areas, whether it is sports, family or youth development, the economic medium-term strategy for Barbados must be incorporated into that strategy.

Sir, one of the biggest challenges that we have, and this is the last thing I am going to say on it is, we are in the middle of a very difficult period where our economy has to be transformed into a multi-sectorial economy which is truly diversified. Therefore, the area of sports in all of its genre has to be seen as perhaps one of the most focal points at which we will begin the task of diversifying our economy.

Sir, this development, as I said, in the Ministry of Sports, our approach will be to meet all of the players involved in this particular development at a very early stage, so that we can together fashion a development that meets certainly the kind of requirements of the Government, the kind of requirements that this country requires, but also takes into account the needs of the various vested interest, all of them who are interested in the future development of Bushy Park. That would be my approach.

I do not plan to leave anyone out of that consultation process. I am aware of several persons who are interested and who over the years have used their skills, their resources, to ensure that Bushy Park as a racing circuit can continue to provide the entertainment to thousands of Barbadians who have become so enamoured and so committed to the sport of racing. My intention and the intention of the Government is that these persons will be incorporated with a say in the future development of Bushy Park.

I would end by saying that the opportunity to also involve not only the players directly, but certainly the residents in the area of Bushy Park. They would like to know also that the Government, and we certainly will factor in their views and ensure that there is no discomfort to them. I think the development will be to the benefit of all

Barbadians, particularly those who live in St. Philip. More important, it gives us that cutting edge in terms of further diversifying what we offer as an emerging developed nation.

Sir, it is at that point that I think it has to be put in terms of signaling to Barbados the importance of this acquisition.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East.

Hon. D.S. Lowe: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a brief intervention in this debate on this particular Resolution. I should like to start by complimenting the Honourable Minister for Housing and Lands on the wonderful job he is doing, in continuing to push the Government's housing programme with a level of success not seen in this country for many years. In spite of the unfounded criticisms leveled at the Honourable Minister and Honourable Member for St. Philip North, I have learned a long time ago that you cannot out-argue results. Once the Minister continues to push the level of development relative to housing, then Barbadians can rest assured that they will be in good stead relative to their housing needs.

Sir, if you understand the development of people, if you understand the development of a society, one would understand that the ultimate measure of the progress of a society is in that society's ability to find shelter for its people. Indeed, Barbadians today are feeling more comfortable, more optimistic and more hopeful of being able to own a piece of this rock. Sir, it is a quest that all of us share. It is a desire that all of us are...

16.10 p.m.

Sequence 15

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

House A61A, Sequence 16, 4.10 p.m.

Dr. Hon. D.S. LOWE: It is a quest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that all of us share. It is a desire that all of us have. It is a desire that drives how we see ourselves. It is a desire that drives how we measure ourselves, relative to personal success. It is a desire that helps us to understand when we have achieved a certain measure of success as it relates to our own personal development.

This Government Sir, has distinguished itself so far, as a Government that is not prepared to see the success of this country only along economic terms but a Government

that is prepared to define success in the life quality of its people and that is why housing is so important, and that is why this Government is committed to housing, and that is why when you look at this Government's journey so far, and you recognise that in the midst of these difficult economic times, it is still making a great headway in achieving its housing policy. The Honourable Minister of Housing has to be applauded for his success in this regard, so far.

Asides.

Dr. Hon. D.S. LOWE: The purpose of this acquisition as it is laid out in the Resolution is to allow for the achievement of mixed housing, is to allow for the achievement of the construction of recreational facilities, and it is to allow for the development of commercial enterprise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, none of these things can happen unless there is an understanding of the link between development and water supply. I was summoned into the debate by the Honourable Minister, who indicated that the Barbados Water Authority is a key partner in this process, and a key component in allowing for the achievement of these objectives. Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me say that of the 2 500 houses and the recreational facilities that are believed to be part of this plan at Bushy Park, as well as the commercial development that is necessary in such a context, the Barbados Water Authority gives the Minister of Housing full assurance that we will do whatever is necessary to allow for the rapid development of this particular project. It is a must. It is a commitment that we have made so far and, as the Minister has indicated, we have had a very cordial and effective partnership between the National Housing Corporation, the Ministry of Housing and, of course, the Barbados Water Authority.

Asides.

Dr. Hon. D.S. LOWE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me go further to indicate that this is not just about building houses, and this is not just about creating recreational facilities, neither it is just about creating commercial entities. Sir, this is really about what our Manifesto spoke to, which is the creation of communities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this community has the capacity to transform how we conceive and how we achieve the construction of housing in this country. No longer are we only interested in planting houses, but we are also interested in ensuring that those who would occupy those houses have the kinds of amenities necessary to be able to conduct their lives very, very safely and at the highest quality within the very community.

Sir, if you are talking about building communities, you are not just looking at the physical infrastructure but if you are talking about building communities, you are looking at families, you are looking at values and you are looking at social services. The Government of Barbados so far, has been able to demonstrate that in conceiving these projects, it has the holistic needs and well-beings of individuals in mind. Mr. Deputy Speaker, therefore what it brings to bear, is not just the construction of houses but the construction of services, as well, within the context of these projects.

The Resolution talks about what is part of this community. It talks about 2 500 low and middle income houses. It talks about the creation of day care services. It talks about the creation of play areas, community centres, church, open spaces, town square, post office, primary school and office space and well as commercial and medical facilities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, where before, in the last 14 years, would we have heard any of the previous housing ministers talk about creating such a comprehensive and holistic kind of housing community project? Never before in the last 14 years and all they are doing now is setting about to distract from everything that this Government is seeking to achieve.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you cannot argue with results. When a Barbadian gets a key and moves into his or her home, this is a result that the Barbados Labour Party cannot erase.

Asides.

Dr. Hon. D.S. LOWE: Sir, I therefore anticipate that they will talk until the cows come home, along with some goats. I suspect that they will continue to criticise as much as they can, but I want to say to this housing Minister, you are on the right path, stay focussed and get the Government's agenda achieved. This is what is important in all of this.

We are not the kind of political institution that is just interested in winning elections because if that was our focus, we would not be housing Barbadians. The history and the legacy of the Democratic Labour Party to date are about ensuring that Barbadians get a better deal out of this country. We made that commitment coming into office and we intend to continue to work towards the fulfillment of that goal.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is our goal and that is why I argue most strenuously that when we discuss Barbados we are simply not discussing the economy, we are discussing the society because that is the essence of the definition of what Barbados is, and what Barbados will be in the future.

I am pleased and proud to be a part of this particular administration, as we move towards the achievement of those objectives. Sir, the facilities are important, the church and the town square and the post office.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a wonderful thing, when you do not have to travel too far to achieve some of the essential services you need and since our society is fast becoming an older society, it is important that even those at the evening of their days are able to move freely within their community and have access to all the services that are required to have a decent quality of life, and that is the essence of the conceptualisation of this particular project. I believe that it is going to be a transformative project when it comes to what Barbados would look like in the next 25 years, while this Government is still in office I might add, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so we want to have these things in place.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to have these things in place, the Government's Water Resources Management Plan is important. We cannot achieve the level of sustained and sustainable development unless that plan is not only carefully articulated and well designed but strategically delivered.

Sir, in the eastern corridor there has always been a struggle with water supply. It is one of the fastest growing areas in Barbados, there is no contention about that, therefore the demand on water continues to grow. Sir, it is not just in the eastern corridor. The whole matter of water resources management in this country is important and it has never been given the kind of attention that it deserves.

Asides.

Dr. Hon. D.S. LOWE: Sir, that is why our Prime Minister should be complimented and applauded for being the first Prime Minister to create a water resource arm of a Ministry.

Asides.

House A61A, Sequence 16, 16:20:14

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: It made sense. It was not just a whim or a fancy, it is nestled within the Ministry of the Environment.

When you deal with environmental matters, you must of necessity deal with water issues. When we think of water today it is not just the Barbados Water Authority. The Barbados Water Authority has had its challenges, everyone knows that. The Barbados Water Authority has

not been able to deliver as it wishes to deliver over the last several years.

I keep saying that when this country had money to throw about, if they had spent some of it on creating a water resources management plan, the Barbados Water Authority would have been in a much better position today than it is in now.

The planners of this Government understand that in order for us to sustain our development and to achieve those developmental milestones that we have to look at water resources management as one of the key domains of our Government's efforts, and therefore we have set about on a path and this path is to ensure that this Barbados for the next 100 years would be in good stead relative to its water resources management and water resources.

We insist that fixing water resources in Barbados is not just about fixing the Barbados Water Authority. The Barbados Water Authority has to be fixed and we have started working on those issues that are necessary. At present, we are looking at our resources issues, at our workers culture, at our work culture and all of those things that work towards the delivery of a sustainable water programme and have started to make some of the remedial efforts to ensure that those things are done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, yes, times are hard but Barbadians must never stand at peril of not being able to have a constant flow of water at the highest quality and therefore we are working on our mains replacement programme and our mains placement programme. The Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands would tell you that several of the projects that have just come on stream are now retrofitted with the necessary water supply instruments that they need. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is important because some people sometimes think that you are not doing anything relative to the Barbados Water Authority, that the Barbados Water Authority is just sitting there waiting for Jesus to come but that is not the case.

I applaud every single employee at the Barbados Water Authority for taking the Prime Minister's message seriously and working hard to ensure that those targets that have been set are being met and is happening every single day. Yes, there are still things that we need to fix, and yes, there are still systems that we need to change but you cannot fix it all in one month or in one year particularly when this is the toughest economic times that this country has ever gone through.

The previous Administration had money running out of its ears and rather than taking care of these critical infrastructural needs of the country, it chose to spend money in other places, like Eastry House and on a chain of hotels that are of no material or economic benefit to the

country and to build a state-of-the-art Prison. The prisoners have better housing than some Barbadians who have worked all their lives for an honest dollar. That is why they have done and therefore this Government is insisting that we stay on a path where ordinary citizens in this country get a better deal out of their country and a better deal out of their Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we have realised is that in order for the Bushy Park development project to take off, there are some things that we need to do as the water resources management ministry relative to dealing with issues of low water pressure and water outage and putting in place a plan where we can fully explore and exploit any water resources that exist in the eastern corridor particularly in the St. Philip area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is known that there is a lot of water untapped in St. Philip. Not enough exploration has been done so we have now commissioned that a study be done. That study involves the actual drilling to discover the level of water available and how we can best tap that water and get it to point of source.

We have also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, looked at the option of desalination. We are assured that we are going to have to construct at least one desalination plant in the St. Philip area. I must say that the private sector has been extremely willing to partner with the Government to achieve these objectives. That is what we have to do because this Barbados is for all of us and therefore we are willing to work with those who have the capital and the funding and are willing to come forward and partner with the Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also intend, and this should be done in very short dispatch, to ensure that the water at the Ionics Plant on the Harbour Road is racked up to full capacity and that the excess capacity is piped all the way up to The Belle and to Providence to give relief to Christ Church and areas on the border of St. Philip because we believe that if we decrease the demand on the water up there and allow it to stay in the St. Philip area, we would have a better arrangement in terms in supplying the water needs of that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is also the Three Houses area where there is a continuous spring but legislation prohibits the Barbados Water Authority from taking over the management of that water supply which is in excess of 300 000 gallons. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are going to amend the legislation and directives have been given to the Barbados Water Authority to begin looking at the amendment of that legislation so that we could have that particular supply of water put into our supply.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are the things we are doing to ensure that we increase our capacity to supply water not only for day to day consumption but to address the issues of development. If we are building schools, we need water. Improving the hospital requires water. Building commercial buildings require water. Diversifying the economy requires a lot of water. Even the existing tourism industry requires a constant supply of water or it cannot work and therefore water resources management stands as one of the key platforms in assisting the Government to be able to achieve its objectives.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are prepared to find the resources, we are prepared to work with the private sector and we are prepared to do whatever it takes to ensure that we have our water needs met on a consistent basis.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, service and delivery are the other issues we are working on consistently. We now have the Executive Chairman in place and to date he has been doing an exceptional job in trying to understand what is happening and putting the necessary personnel in place to assist in achieving the vision and the objective.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am positively sure that the Bushy Park project would be successful and will be done on time. It has been languishing there since the 1990s and the last Administration did nothing. This Administration, through its Minister of Housing and Lands, will assure the public of Barbados that the project will be achieved and we will continue to work on the transformation of the St. Philip area.

In closing, I should like to tell the Minister though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that as he pursues this aggressive programme to transform the St. Philip corridor, to please do not forget Christ Church. Since we have our hands on the valve, I think that should be taken as an important lesson that he needs to work with us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must give him credit. The Honourable Minister has been working in the Christ church area as well. He has been able to furnish us with some additional units in Sayers Court. We just look at some land in the area and they are moving towards the acquisition of that land.

House A61A Sequence 17 4.30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. Dr. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would say to all Barbadians that this Minister is looking out for Barbados and not just for his constituency only and I believe that is important.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER vacated the Chair. MR. SPEAKER assumed the Chair.

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

Mr. ADRIEL D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I just thought that I would make a brief intervention on this matter. I will try not to regurgitate much of what was said earlier but as the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, a resident of St. Philip, Six Roads in particular, there a few comments which I would like to make about this development. Sir, first, without doubt, it receives my fullest support because we recognise that St. Philip, like St. Lucy, offers the greatest potential in terms of space for us to have housing, for ordinary Barbadians. In fact, it automatically receives my support.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that a development, the nature of this size, needs and would have had lots of thoughts and lots of planning but I thought nevertheless that from a layman's perspective just mention a few issues as I see them and as I take a drive home this afternoon and as I picture what would happen two years from now when Bushy Park is on the go. Sir, already we recognise that what has happened at Six Road is that I believe Six Roads was constructed around Six Roads as opposed to a visionary development of Six Roads. Therefore, what we have at the point in time is that on afternoons there is a lot of congestions on Six Roads, certainly on mornings. Sir, I fear that if Bushy Park does not have the requisite vision in terms of its infrastructure, that could only make matters much worse in terms of going to and from St. Philip.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of area at which this would happen, when I think, for example, coming into Marchfield, there is a road that goes to Sunbury, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North knows that no doubt we will have to develop that road; no doubt we will have to develop Padmore Village as an entre into Bushy Park. I can see the roads in Padmore Village being widened significantly, with a lot of those corners being taken out. Sir, no doubt, we will have to ensure that all the various entrances leading to Bushy Park would be enhanced considerably. I believe this is a significant task that would have to be undertaken. I believe that the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East and all players will have to get together to ensure that this huge development is accomplished but not only that the houses and commercial areas would be constructed but that they would ensure that the whole area still ensures that as best as possible, we could have free movement to and from St. Philip. As I said that is one area that still poses a bit of a challenge and that we would have to ensure that from now, we not only do the requisite planning but that we start in terms of doing the construction o the various

road. Mr. Speaker, it maybe that we may have to identify other roads from Six Roads to Bushy Park. We may have to consider taking a road through Marchfield, directly through to Bushy Park. We may have to think out of the box in terms of finding other solutions.

Mr. Speaker, when I think in terms of Bushy Park, and I know that the Minister mentioned in terms of us having a village. Sir, one area the Honourable Member did not touch was Bushy Park cemetery itself. I would like to call, even from now, for Bushy Park cemetery to receive attention and upgrading. When I was growing up, Bushy Park cemetery was a place that you went when you did not go to church. That is what I was led to believe when I was growing up as a child. I was told that Bushy Park was always a place that was not well-looked after and was pretty well unkept and I am not sure that even in 2010 if the building there has the requisite facilities in terms of electricity, telephone, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, I believe and I would urge the Minister with responsibility for cemeteries, which I believe would be the Minister with responsibility for the Sanitation Service Authority, that we can immediately have something done about Bushy Park cemetery. I believe, for example, that if there is a funeral at Bushy Park cemetery, you are more or less told that you needed to be out of the gate by 4.00 p.m. because the cemetery workers needed to be out the gates by 4.00 p.m. Therefore, the whole ambience and experience of going to Bushy Park needs to be righted. Sir, there is no reason, because it is a Government cemetery and particularly because it is a Government cemetery in St. Philip, that it should not have the attention that I would want it to have in terms of when you drive past Bushy Park, you should be able to have that pleasant view, just like when you drive past Coral Ridge Cemetery, you have can a pretty decent experience by looking at the well-manicured lawns. When we think in terms of the development of Bushy Park, when we think in terms of developing a race track, I am saying that even from now, there is no reason we should see some urgent attention being done to the cemetery itself.

Mr. Speaker, there was one area that has been touched on briefly by the Honourable Member, which I would like to endorse. Sir, not only would I like to support the Honourable Member in this regard but also to let Barbadians know that, in fact, there is no doubt that the National Housing Corporation has had a fiscal challenge. There is no doubt that in order for us to provide rental units as a whole, that they have to be subsidised. Sir, what we are trying to do as a Government and I believe as a vision of the National Housing Corporation is that wherever possible they can make a profits in other developments, these profits are ploughed back into the National Housing Corporation, not to build other buildings for the National

Housing Corporation but to building rent-to-own units for the ordinary Barbadians.

Mr. Speaker, when I heard Opposition Members, who are now silent today, criticising the Government and saying that Government is only building houses for middle income Barbadians, that the National Housing Corporation is not looking after the poor, it is unfair and uncharacterable. Sir, I thought I would put the record right in ensuring that Barbadians understand that unless the National Housing Corporation puts itself in a position where it can make a profit, unless it puts itself in a position where it has cash available, then it would not be able to provide the rent-to-own units that we want to do for ordinary Barbadians. Sir, it is as simple as that.

Mr. Speaker, there is no need to give the public the impression that we are only catering to one sector. This is, in fact, not true. We have a path, we understand where we are going, we understand how we will get there. We understand that we cannot get there unless we have the finances and we know how we are going to receive those finances to ensure that we not only touch the bottom but that we touch the middle and the top.

Mr. Speaker, I am heartened to note that we are going to receive \$40 million, which will be used mostly to target whom I would call the ordinary contractor. I want to support the Minister in that and also to let him know that I will be watching him very closely from St. Philip South to make sure that many of my small contractors would also be engaged. Sir, that is exactly what we need to do, we need to ensure that this national pie is divided in such a way so that as many small contractors as possible are engaged. Sir, I want to support the Minister in that regard, and to endorse this initiative.

H:No.A61A (18)

Friday, April 20, 2010

MR. A.D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have said before and I just want to say that there is no reason why we cannot develop King George V Memorial Park. If we are bringing 2 000 houses to Bushy Park, 2 000 houses probably means 10 000 souls and on behalf of Stedson Wiltshire, Adrian Clarke, John King, TC, Ann Forde, Mac Fingall and the other artistes from St. Philip, who presently come down to town and other places, I want to urge the Government to let us look at transforming King George V Memorial Park into a centre for the arts, calypso, dance, where we can have 5 000 people go to attend an event in surrounding that you can be proud of.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am saying that in our vision to develop Bushy Park, let it occur according to my vision in terms of developing King George V Memorial Park. I

know that the Minister of Housing shares that vision with me and I am calling again to ensure that this vision is realised.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heard the Minister mentioned about possibly having a school at Bushy Park. Again, this might be a case where we have to think out of the box. There is reason why we could not have staggered hours at Princess Margaret by way of an example because for some reason we believe that the school day should be from nine o'clock to three o'clock. I believe St. Michael Girls School started at eight o'clock and had eight o'clock to two o'clock. My point is that there is no reason why we could not use the plant in such a way that we could have more students at Princess Margaret while still having the same plant by staggering the hours. Whilst recognising that we would have more young people in St. Philip, I am saying, let us not bury our heads in the sand and believe that there would be a significant burden in terms of finding a solution for sending to school these young people because all we need do, is think outside the box and there are solutions ready for us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to close by mentioning that there are still some infrastructural difficulties in Six Roads. Sir, various administrations have promised us that we would have by now a fire station. Sir, as we move more people to St. Philip, we must recognise that having a fire station goes without saying and, Sir, I know there are plans on the way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I believe that part of the Constituency Councils was not only to bring faster relief but to ensure that we bring Government closer to our people but there is no reason in the electronic day and age where we should not be seriously considering that developing Six Roads and its immediate environs as a significant town centre where we no longer have to come to Bridgetown for many of the service that we now have to come to Bridgetown.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in supporting this Resolution, I am saying that we need to have a holistic look at St. Philip, not just Bushy Park, and ensure that we are on the right track. I have reservations in terms of our present infrastructure in Six Roads in particular, given what happens on afternoon and given what happens on morning. I am saying that if necessary we should go back to the drawing board and look at where we are going and at what we have and ensure that we do not end up in a situation where there is longer the peace, joy and tranquility of taking my usual drive through St. Philip.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Minister to continue with his development. I look forward to the start of this development and I am sure that many people in St. Philip look forward to this development.

Sir, in closing, as usual I want to make the case for many of my constituents who have a challenge of ownership of land and who cannot afford to purchase a piece of land in Barbados and urge the Minister to continue working with me so that we can find solutions for those particular individuals in St. Philip South.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks and with your kind permission, Sri, I thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognise the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

HIS EXCELLENCY D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I enter this debate to give some support the Minister on this particular project. I think it is rather interesting that at this time we would be coming to the public with such a substantial project. It is the kind of project that if administered in the right could create significant economic activity in the country of Barbados and could solve many of our unemployment problems. As we speak today, one has to consider that if this structure is done correctly, there is a possibility that we can have over 25 000 lots available to the public of Barbados. Sir, with this substantial amount of lots, this can nearly satisfy every single request that has ever been placed because I am told that it is over one million square feet and when you multiply it by ten, it is over one million square feet and when you divide it by four, it gives you 25 000 lots, if all of it has been used for building purposes.

Mr. Speaker, I am also aware that the Minister has mentioned that there is other infrastructure that would be needed. I want to say that the Bushy Park Cemetery is not something that has now been discussed but that it has been discussed since 1986 and if permission was given at the time, Bushy Park Cemetery would have been the first crematorium in Barbados. Sir, I remember well when I was on the Sanitation Board, we were pushing to utilise that area for a crematorium in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I am also happy to see that we are going towards having a church and a town square at Bushy Park. I believe these two things are very important because if you go back to the stretch and understand the Democratic Labour Party you will recognise that as far back as the early 1990s we were pushing that wherever we have a substantial development that a church would be involved and also a town square. Sir, that is why the town square might not have been delivered but if you go to Six Mens you would see that a church was allowed there and if you go to Hope Road and Oxnards, you will see a church was allowed there. Sir, those are only a few because the church has always been a pivotal part of the Democratic Labour Party policy because they understood that where people congregate it was important to have some religious place, so that you are not just moving people and putting

houses but there was a structure to it. Mr. Speaker, people must understand that this is not by accident. They must understand that we understood the importance of having churches in our society and this is why I can speak to this matter the way I have spoken to it.

Mr. Speaker, it is also important to note that if we are going to St. Philip that there must be a water plan. I was very glad to hear that before this project has been implemented that there is a water plan being put in place. Sir, I was in this Parliament when Honourable Members on the other side refused to put a water plan for the prison at Dodds. When I told them that you could not build a prison, having over 1 000 people and the Opposition refused to listen to me. Sir, when the prison was completed, they had bare problems in St. Philip, there was no water for the residents of St. Philip because all the water was used for the prison at Dodds.

Sequence 19

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

His Excellency D. St. E. KELLMAN: ..for the residents of St. Philip but all the water was used for the Dodds Prison. Sir, when you hear that Dodds is a problem, do not believe that we just waking up and there was a problem. It has always been a problem.

Sir, I remember also speaking about Dodds in St. Peter. I told them, because we are dealing with housing people and we are going to house prisoners too, that anytime you entered an arrangement without knowing the final cost, you are looking for trouble.

Sir, nobody would build a house for themselves with no knowledge of the final cost. Is it because you are dealing with taxpayers' money that you agreed to an open-end contract? I am saying I hope that we never experience these problems.

I also told them that they should not enter joint arrangements with contractors. Every single joint arrangement that the National Housing Corporation entered, instead of the National Housing Corporation making money, they lost money. That is why I have always said that the present Minister of Housing is very fortunate because he has been able to get some good advice. I have always said to the present Minister, which I believe he will accept, to keep away from building houses but sell lots. If he does not want to do it in St. Philip, he is free to do it in St. Lucy, because the Government owns a lot of land in St. Lucy. He can sell the land, give my people the lots and use the money to develop this project. If he wants to build houses he is going to need money to do so.

I am saying to the Government and to the Minister of Finance that we need to put the \$40 million we have just received to help small contractors in a fund, not to build houses, but to be available. Allocate a sum of how much you are going to lend a particular person, and you will be able to work out whether you can help 4 000 people or more with that \$40 million. If it is given to the National Housing Corporation to build houses, I am going to assure you that 4 000 people will not benefit from that \$40 million, but if you put it in a fund where they can draw to build houses, you will end up satisfying and helping a lot more people. Sir, I said 4 000 but if persons are allowed to build or buy land, et cetera, the multiplying effect will kick in and there will be a far greater benefit. We have to understand the power of land in this country. Sir, I have said on many occasions that the problem facing Barbados has nothing to do with housing. Sir, it has to do with the availability of land.

Sir, there are too many houses in Barbados where people have been able to improve their living stock to produce better houses, but cannot do anything with them because there is no land to place that displaced house. Many people in Barbados receive these houses and the termites kick in. Those of green heart are propped up next to somebody's house somewhere, with no place for those houses.

I am saying that if we understand the society of Barbados, we need to create the availability of lots for the house and the lot to match each other for the erection of a home.

I am saying that the National Housing Corporation needs no money to deal with what I am speaking about unless there is a problem with money for infrastructure, like putting in roads and other amenities. I have already proffered to this Honourable House that if Government was to go into Carrington Village to build a road nobody is billed for it. When they have completed the road, they do not send a bill to the people who have improved their lot. Not that I am picking on Carrington Village, but I am saying that may be they need some roads up there to be fixed.

Sir, if people who already have houses can get good roads, why can we not give people who are now seeking to get houses a road too? I have said it. You can look in Hansard and you will see it. There is nothing wrong with MTW putting some roads on land that belongs to Government to sell to people at a reasonable rate. We have to understand that if we do not do it now, we will never get the opportunity to do it. That is why I compliment the Prime Minister on the \$5 lots. I thought it was a master stroke and I believe it must be extended. The Prime Minister understood the social problem as it relates to land, not housing. He understood that if you give a man a cheap

piece of land, he has a negotiable instrument to take to the bank to get the house, but if you give him the house and he does not have any land, he has nowhere to live.

He might go and ask and somebody might promise him that he can put that house on a house spot, the next thing you hear is, the person has some second or third cousin who is asking for the return of the lot. The next thing you know, the Marshall moves in, bulldozing that person's house or removing it somewhere. It is a serious situation that we are dealing with. Sir, it cannot be the house. It has to be the land.

Do you know what is amazing in this country? We who sometimes call ourselves middle class do not go about renting land. We look to get land first to put a house, but then we expect poor people to rent land and take their money to build the house, then when there is a dispute the house is put alongside the road. We are a creative Party, a Party with foresight cannot continue to behave in the way they behaved. They had 14 years of plenty and we still have this problem to deal with today.

I am saying that they could keep their mouths shut in here, but I do not care. We have to deal with them because they had 14 years of opportunity, and they refused to look after the greatest social problem that this country has ever had after free secondary education. Those who do not believe that land is the social problem now, I am very sorry for them.

I have already said, sometime at Six Roads, it is very interesting that we kept some meetings prior to coming to office, that after free secondary education we have to find a way to compensate the people of Barbados, especially civil servants, for what occurred in the 1990s when we asked them to make a sacrifice, which they did. I am saying that the best way to compensate the people of Barbados and the civil servants of Barbados is by providing land at a reasonable cost so that they too can get something substantial, and to feel that they have been compensated for what occurred in the early 1990s. It is all about social planning. It is all about thinking outside of the box.

I am saying we have to recognise that we have an obligation to the people of Barbados and there is a golden opportunity now.

I want to thank the Minister of Housing and Lands for having the capacity at this stage to make a meaningful contribution and to relieve a large number of persons from being land-starved in this country.

Sir, do you know what an opportunity it is to have over 10 million square feet available at any one point in time in one location? If I were the Minister of Housing and Land nobody could come around me talking about building

a house. I would be telling everybody to let me sell some house spots and get money quickly. All you have to do is to multiply that, evenly by 5, and you will see the amount of money that you are talking about. If you decide to multiply it by 10, it is even worse. I am saying that this is not a project for any private contractor to put roads in. This is a project for MTW to put some roads in. We have to get out the block and understand that a project like this, if we are going to be meaningful and we want to maximise what we are doing, the roads have to be put in by MTW. If we really want to create a social climate in Barbados that will be impactful, we need to send in MTW's equipment on this particular one, because the other contractors have too much work to do at this point in time, and we need to fast-track this one and to ensure that the Minister of Housing has some money, and to get it quickly. If he needs some more, he has a lot of land belonging to the Crown in St. Lucy. He is free to come once he does not interfere with the land near the airport site.

I have already warned him that it looks good and I know that his tongue and mouth sharpened when he saw it, but it is not for housing. That has been designated a long time before me.

17.00 p.m.

Sequence 20

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

House A61A, Sequence 21, 5.00 p.m.

His Ex. D.St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, as you know, there is some type of loyalty and support for plans, especially when it came from the late Rt. Ex. Errol W. Barrow. Sir, all I am doing is carrying out the vision of that great man. Sir, if the Honourable Member for St. Philip believes that he could come because we have some similarities and the parish, and believes that he is in St. Philip, I want to warn him now, you might be likable in St. Lucy but you are from St. Philip and you do not understand the networking of the people of St. Lucy, and how we look at the bigger picture and we do not interfere. We always think about the opportunity cost of these things. If they had only listened, like you are doing, to the advice that I was giving them when they were in Government, they would not have fouled up.

Sir, we have a golden opportunity and I am happy for him that we are here today, without interference, acquiring this substantial piece of land because we would have heard a lot of ignorance on this matter, and people would not have been able to see the foresight and vision of the Democratic Labour Party but today, Sir, we are bringing to the people of Barbados more than ten million square feet of land to be available to the poor and everyone

else. Sir, let me say that even though I support the poor in this country, there are people who believe that we should be a Government only for the poor. Utter foolishness.

When the late Rt. Ex. Errol W. Barrow brought free secondary education, he did not say it was only for the poor. He brought it for everybody because he understood that if he had only brought it for the poor, the first people who would curse him would have been the poor. This is why whenever we brought social policy, Sir, we brought social policy for everyone but the most important thing that those whom we wanted to benefit from them, got it. I am saying, Sir, we are now at the stage where land has to be a social policy.

I heard the Minister saying when he thought I was sleeping that Bushy Park has the opportunity of taking over from North Stars. I want the Minister to know that Bushy Park would be a good project, and we in the north welcome Bushy Park to be another good project. We would never see North Stars taking over from Windwards or anything in St. Philip but we believe that they can coexist. There is no need for him to leave the file on North Stars on his desk as a land acquisition and believe that he should not acquire the land in a timely fashion because he wants Bushy Park to be ahead of North Stars.

Sir, the Honourable Member does not have to worry. He already has the second that he wanted. He got the second most votes, a position that I used to have, now I am in third position, so he needs not punish North Stars. If there is any punishment, he should punish me but do not punish North Stars.

I am begging the Minister to clean up the files and ensure that the land that has to be acquired for North Stars now for nearly 14 years, which has been sitting on the Minister's desk - and I am not talking about this Minister - I am talking about all others - that they can now clear the table, let North Stars get the land and let them proceed with the project that is also needed.

Mr. Speaker, Bushy Park is needed. North Stars is needed. There is no reason for either one of us to be jealous of each other. We have to coexist and we have to understand that it is all about the development of Barbados and one is in the north and one is in the east. The Minister needs not worry about St. Lucy because it is the only female parish, and I know he respects women, and it is the only parish that has one neighbour so there is some uniqueness about the parish. Sir, anytime you try to fight with the parish you can only fail and I do not want the Minister to fail. All I want him to do is to ensure that the great Lady is given what she needs, and we have some progress in Barbados.

I have always said and I maintain this, Sir, until St. Lucy is developed, Barbados will not be developed. Until St. Lucy is allowed to show its true economic value, the economy of Barbados would not improve at the rate it should because there is some openness about St. Lucy. This is why I have said earlier that we need to ensure that the great run, especially the silver, Sir, is given some capacity to help us with our foreign exchange problem because we have housed the project called the Mount Gay project in St. Lucy and we know how to deal with housing.

Mr. Speaker, I am also saying that we have to recognise and I want to tell the Minister of Housing that there are some officers operating within his ministry who must understand that the development of Barbados cannot be held back by vexatious or other moods, and when things are to be done, they must expedite them and stop dragging their feet.

I am not happy, Sir, at some of the networking that has occurred when we seek to put up important projects in Barbados, especially as it relates to the security of Barbados and as it relates to housing, especially when those projects are in the north of Barbados.

I will say no more on the matter but I hope all those who have ears to hear will hear. Those officers who believe that they can frustrate the arm of Government need to understand that they need to get up. There are people who are willing to cooperate with Government but when they realise that they are trying to cooperate with Government and they are officers of Government - and I am not talking about Ministers - who are frustrating the effort, sometimes they are frustrated too, and might want to pull back the generous offer that has been proffered.

I want to say to the Minister of Housing today, Sir, you have ten million square feet of land and you need to utilise it to the maximum and take advantage of this opportunity. I am happy for the hand given to you and I know that you will play it well, you are a good listener and I know, Sir, if given the right opportunity, the old people living in Barbados too, will get the day from you. Something is happening.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Mr. J.D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, first of all let me just say that I rise in support of this Resolution. I was in St. Michael West Central, to be more specific, Sir, I was in Spooners Hill on Sunday at the bottom of Woodstock Road and there was a chap whom I would prefer to call, Barber. I

had just parked to do some business with one of the residents in the constituency and he called me over because he wanted to have a discussion with me.

One of the issues that he raised was what we are doing for the people, in terms of housing. He was making the point that we have a situation where people are crying out for housing and looking for housing solutions. I just want to say that this particular initiative by the Minister of Housing is an answer to that young man, I am sure, and to many of the residents in St. Michael West Central who have, what I would call, legitimate aspirations in terms of housing solutions to meet their needs, and will at least help to ensure that their life here on earth is bearable.

Sir, when I hear the parochial sentiments coming in terms of this particular debate I also want to remind the Minister that St. Michael, especially St. Michael West Central also has legitimate aspirations for housing similar to what is contemplated for Bushy Park and its environs.

House A61A, Sequence 21, 17:10:11

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Sir, when we speak about development, it must be what we would call total development. I would remind the Minister that he has a commitment to ensure that we uplift the quality of housing that is available to residents in urban Barbados, it must not just be rural Barbados. We have to identify opportunities within urban Barbados to ensure that we also give them the kind of housing for which they can be proud.

Sir, I note that the Minister of Housing and Lands in his presentation referred to the fact that small contractors would get job opportunities in terms of being able to provide services to Barbadians. In that regard, I want to praise him for the fact that he recognises that we need to at least spread...

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

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: On a point of order. I just want to say to the...

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the point of order? Please say the point of order briefly.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: The Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is misleading the House. Yes, let us hear it please.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: The Honourable Member alluded to the fact that the Minister of Housing and Lands is only... That inference can be drawn that the Minister of Housing and Lands is mainly looking at rural Barbados in terms of housing. Of course, in my address I outlined the areas, particularly in urban Barbados, which the Ministry of Housing and Lands would be developing for housing.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I am having difficulty finding your point of order so unless you come home very quickly I would have to ask you to take your seat, please.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: With respect, Mr. Speaker, I did mentioned the fact...

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please, let us hear it quickly, please.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I did mentioned the fact that he is misleading the House. I also said that inference could be drawn, so there are two things, he is misleading the House and the inference that could be drawn, but all is the same, and that the housing is indeed geared towards urban Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are not on sound ground with respect to inference drawn. I mean, he is entitled to interpret the statements by you and I must rule that there is no point of order, please. Thank you. Honourable Member, please continue.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: But, Mr. Speaker, you could have assisted me and also said that you would be a beneficiary of Country Park Towers.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the rules are the rules, Honourable Member.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the Honourable Minister because he toured with me some areas within St. Michael West Central, which we have identified as possible areas in which we can have housing solutions. Sir, I understand that one of those areas is Eckstein Village. The road is going inside there although...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you are now making me believe that I should reverse my earlier ruling, please.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I am being distracted.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well Honourable Member.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Sir, I just want to emphasise that I am congratulating the Minister but I am also reminding him that in terms of the initiative that is there in St. Philip that there are opportunities within St. Michael West Central and the St. Michael area generally for similar housing developments that would benefit the residents within St. Michael West Central. Sir, when I hear of development, one of the issues we need to address is the fact that we need also to pay attention... I note that in one of the presentations, it was indicated that there would be consultation with the current residents in the area to ensure that it does not basically undermine what is happening in the area.

Sir, because of the contribution that St. Philip is making in terms of the whole agricultural production within Barbados, I also want to remind the Honourable Minister that whatever we do we should try to ensure that the developments that are taking place does not undermine the rich heritage of that parish or the contribution that is currently taking place within St. Philip, which I know the Minister is already aware of.

Sir, again, when we talk about development, it must be total development. I just want to look at it in terms of the component of that development. Sir, I just want to revert to the whole question of churches. We hear that there is a going to be the provision of churches or at least the provision that if a church needs to be established within that development that it would be established.

Mr. Speaker, a church cannot be planned. We in Barbados seem to think that religion is something that you could tell a fellow that he should be religious and he is religious. As a matter of the fact, one of the views that we have in Barbados is that you name a fellow a priest and he is a priest. Mr. Speaker, that is not strictly correct because as I understand it in terms of religious principles unless you have the calling in that particular direction - even in terms of being a representative of the people - you do not really have any right to be there so somebody cannot christened you a priest and say that you are a priest because sometimes you do not have the calling. In that respect, churches are not something we can implant in a community, churches are something that the community must want and it must be developed.

Sir, I want to support the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West in a recent statement that he made in terms of the attempt on the part of the University of the West Indies to locate a certain facility there because sometimes in trying to do things we forget that we need to

do it in the right way. In that regard, I want to say to the Minister of Housing and Lands to let us not now make the same mistake of thinking that because we decide that a church should be placed there... We need to listen to the residents in the area and find out what they need because when we talk about development and housing developments and we are actually going to be holistic about it, we have to understand really what are the needs of the residents in the area.

Sir, I make the point that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West made that Barbados is only 166 square miles. On a clear day, it takes you less than 30 minutes to go from Point A to Point B in Barbados. As a matter of fact, I found that the statements that we make we try to expand Barbados and sometimes we forget that when we are talking about the country Barbados that we are not talking about Japan versus Barbados or Russia, it is not a situation like that. We have to be careful sometimes when we are discussing it, that we do not introduce artificial divisions in situations where they need not be.

Mr. Speaker, it is the same point that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West made in respect of the university and the need for students to be part of the community. As a matter of fact, when you look at universities in other jurisdictions, that is the reason why some of them are experiencing problems in the wider communities because the universities have removed themselves from the community and that is why sometimes they do not find the support in the community that they need to find. This is one of the things that we need to recognise.

House A61A Sequence 22 5.20 p.m.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Mr. JAMES D. PAUL: Mr. Speaker, going back to the whole question of the importance of making sure that this particular development, which I believe we have to give kudos and that we have to recognise this is an initiative for which this Government must be given praise.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to ask the Minister to ensure that in doing so, that when we implant it on the St. Philip landscape, that basically we can say that it would represent a model development that developing countries could afford to emulate in the context of Barbados. Sir, one of the things is that we have the opportunity from learning from past mistakes of other developments and ensuring that we can now improve upon those past mistakes. As a matter of fact, one of the things I noticed that we continually talk about is the fact that Barbados is a water-scarce country, therefore, any future developments that we have in this country must recognise that water is simply a finite resource. The fact of the matter is that is that even in

respect of the question of desalination, the point is that the ability of a country to draw on its water resources is finite, we could only be patient and let nature, through its many processes, help to create that water in time. Therefore, the points made in terms of recognising that for that particular development, if we can actually use that as a model to show to Barbadians the importance of water harvesting practices, to show Barbadians how when we do our construction of buildings or developments, we must ensure that we do it in such a way that Barbadians can harvest water. All it means that you collect water as a means of ensuring that you do not lose too much water.

Sir, one of the things I find in Barbados is that we have a tendency to put down concrete everywhere we go but we forget that there are consequences for putting down concrete. Sir, I am sure that we can develop ways, even in that particular development, of ensuring that we are channeling the rain water that falls, from time to time, in a manner that I can be collected in a central depository. As a matter of fact, if you remember, when we looked at the old wells that were placed in some plantations, you would see that what they used to do, was to ensure that the rain water that was falling was collected, they made sure that it went into a well. That water, of course, filtered down into the underground water resources. I think these are the kinds of initiatives that I would hope that we would see in this development that we are going to undertake.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the time given to me. Again, I would want to express my support on the project to the Minister of Housing and Lands and to compliment him for his initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Hon. Patrick M. T. TODD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a brief intervention in support of this matter before this Honourable Chamber to say that I congratulate the Minister of Housing and Lands, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, for forging ahead to bring housing solutions, in a tangible way, to the masses of our country as well as the growing middle classes. Sir, I want to congratulate him further, as he has explained in his presentation, for ensuring that in this thrust to provide housing solutions to the masses of our country, that indeed the urban corridor is properly serviced in this regard. The Honourable Member mentioned the proposed six-storeyed highrise apartment housing solutions at Vallery and I congratulate him because this is next door the to constituency which I am privileged to represent, the City of Bridgetown.

Mr. Speaker, I would wish to invite and to encourage the Honourable Minister and the Ministry of Housing and Lands to treat areas such as the City of Bridgetown with urgency, in terms of capturing the very limited acreage of

land which is currently available for housing solutions in the urban corridor.

Sir, when I look at the City of Bridgetown, for example, I can only identify no more than three or four plots of land, that are either owned by Government or privately, that are currently vacant and available for housing solution. Sir, the area is so densely populated with both dwelling houses and apartments, as well as commercial enterprises, that there is really a very limited amount of land available. Sir, I am saying this is an urgent matter because these three or four plots can, in the twinkling of an eye, become occupy with large commercial structures, thereby making them unavailable for the provision of housing solutions, which are urgently needed by the masses of working-class persons who live in the City and other urban districts in our society.

Mr. Speaker, it is argued, and I support this view, that a town centre can only thrive if you have a very important combination mixture of both commercial and residential activities. We have seen, in recent years, that the legitimate nocturnal entertainment offerings within the City being reduced. As you may remember in our days as lads, we would have had the Plaza Theatre at Probyn Street, next to the Headquarters of the Barbados fire Service. That is no longer there. The Empire Theatre also has been unoccupied for a number of years and this administration, of course, is committed to rehabilitating that very important landmark in our city centre. The Barbarees Plaza on Barbarees Hill, which was a little before my time and the Roxy Cinema, with the infamous rufus and other pea chinks that people who went there used to talk about. The Roxy Cinema is now a supermarket. Sir, the list goes on so. Mr. Speaker, the last Government left the Steel Shed to run to ruin and so that area of nocturnal entertainment, in terms of pageants, calypso tents and even conference facilities were no longer available but this Government is committed to rehabilitating the Queens Park Steel Shed.

Mr. Speaker, I am making the point that a city will die if you do not have human beings residing and traversing its streets, both by day and by night. Sir, Baxters Road and other part of Bridgetown, in the early parts of the last century leading up the latter half of that century, we had sometimes an upstairs structure where persons lived upstairs and downstairs there was commercial activity, so there was a combination of housing and commerce in a symbiotic relationship.

Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is that we cannot afford to have people move out of the city, to the extent that it is just a commercial concrete jungle without persons actually residing there on a daily basis. This keeps the interest and even the ready clientele of commercial enterprises, be they shops, restaurants or bars, because when others go home to their rural places of abode the city

dwellers can just walk from New Orleans or Kensington Lodge, Baxters Road or Green Park Lane over to the bars or fish fry establishments on Baxters road at night, because it is within walking distance, to patronise those small entrepreneurs. Similarly, the residents in King William Street, Vine Street, Bay Street, Dunlow Lane, can go over to support the businesses on Bay Street and Nelson Street.

Mr. Speaker, I must congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, the Minister of Housing and Lands because he has always made himself available to myself and to other colleagues, and so he was able to tour with me and see for himself, for example, a lovely plot of land at the corner of White Park Road and Kings Village, which is a few acres, it is flat land, well-drained, with the accompanying road and water facilities.

5.30 p.m.

Friday, April 20, 2010

Hon. P.M. TODD: He was able to tour with me and see a lovely plot of land at the corner of White Park Road and Kings Village which is a couple of areas, no encumbrances. It is flat land, well drained with the adjoining road and water facility. I have just been able to do my research and identify this plot of land which I submit is prime land for a six-storey apartment building that could house dozens of constituents. Mr. Speaker, you are fortunate to benefit from the initiatives of this administration and this Ministry of Housing and Lands in terms of the Country Park Towers, which was left abandoned and the steel rotting by the last administration and this Minister of Housing has really escalated its development to the extent that within a few weeks that housing solution would be available to scores of Barbadians. Sir, unfortunately, for me the boundary of Country Road puts that area within St. Michael West. Sir, I am saying to create that balance, we could utilise that plot of land at White Park Road and Kings Village to accommodate persons who currently live in the City and do not have any desire of voting in any other constituency because of their strong support for the candidate of the Democratic Labour Party in this area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, apart from this, residents of the City and the general urban corridor feel comfortable and a sense of convenience of residing in the heart of the nation's capital because they do not have the issues of having to worry about transportation, if they live in the City and they wish to shop and do other business in Bridgetown. Sir, when you actually live in the City, like your humble servant, it is a very exciting and convenient reality. We can just wake up in the morning, take a bath, go into town, buy some stuff and actually walk back with your luggage, take a break, refresh yourself and you are back out to paint the

town and enjoy yourself. It is very convenient living in the heart of the City.

Mr. Speaker, for example, the last Government had promised the residents of Murphy's Pasture for decades to resite them because that area is seriously flood prone and as the rainy season approaches, we have to hold our breath to hope that these persons do not risk their lives in terms of being flooded out. In recent years, up to a few years ago, children had to be rescued by adults putting them on their backs and wading through the flood waters. Of course, the Honourable Member Christ Church East and his team in the Ministry of Environment Water Resources and Drainage are definitely looking seriously at seeking to mitigate these issues but the reality is that in some areas, we must accept that housing is not viable and if some of these persons had to be resited, they would wish to be resited within the vicinity where their relatives and friends of many years reside where there is this community spirit and they would not wish to break up this community spirit. You have heard the song "Emmertown", which came out of the experience of the relocation of persons from Emmertown to Clapham a few decades ago. Sir, sociologists have done academic analyses and studies in terms of the impact and the dislocation communities resulting from such relocations. (17:34:24)

(17:39) We have to plan our urban development in an organised way. I am confident that the town planners and the relevant technocrats within the Government are cognisant of this need, at the same ensuring that the pressing urgent need for housing solutions would be addressed in an urgent manner.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

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

HIS HONOUR K. St. C. BEST: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this Resolutions. For some years now there were all sorts of talk about the uses of Bushy Park. We first heard that it would be a casino but I am glad to hear that with this new Minister, we are looking at housing for persons in Barbados. Sir, I am also glad to hear that we are having all the necessary facilities within Bushy Park but I am calling on the Minister, within his plans, to look at a cinema at Bushy Park for the St. Philip area.

H/A63A/17:40

Sequence 24

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Honour K.St.C.BEST: ...to look at a cinema for the St. Philip area. Persons who are coming from St. John and

parts of Christ Church to traverse with the lovely breeze of St. Philip on their way to the cinema.

Sir, with this new development, I hope that all the players would seriously look at the question of waste disposal. It is okay to set up all of these facilities around but we must take into consideration the whole question of waste disposal.

I also hope that we are fully aware of the whole question of global warming, and this development will start a model of green development. I believe this is the way forward for this particular development. It is in the country and the vegetation is there. I say that we should start thinking green in this particular development.

I must say that we are fully aware that for years housing developments have gone up all over Barbados, but no consideration has been given to the supply of water for the residents. I am glad the Honourable Member for Christ Church East is indicating that he would do all in his power with the resources he has to ensure that the problem that existed before would be one of the past. I am very happy to hear that because often persons spend so much money building houses, but then early in the morning and late at night when the usage is great, they cannot access water.

Sir, I would hope that in addition to this development, somewhere within this development the use of solar energy should be seriously considered. I believe this is the way forward in these developments because it would allow Barbadians to see that the Government is taking the lead when it comes to solar energy in these sort of developments.

I want to leave St. Philip and come to St. Michael East. I must say that I am happy to report that the residents of Ivy Housing Area, very shortly more than 20 of them will be receiving their conveyances. The process has been started but we have one or two small problems. I have discussed them with the Honourable Minister of Housing. I believe that very shortly those small problems will be resolved and all persons who qualify will be able to receive their conveyances for their properties which will allow them to make the necessary improvement to their properties.

Sir, one of the challenges we have in this particular area where persons would have probably constructed a shed to make room for their washing machine, which is considered under Town and Country Planning's law as a structure. There is that delay in respect of not receiving a certificate of compliance. So we now have to find a way to write the Chief Town Planner to see how best we can solve this problem, so that these persons who would have qualified under the Government's initiative, to give them the houses where they would have spent 20 years will to

benefit. I will leave no stone unturned to make sure that these persons who qualify receive their houses in a timely manner.

Sir, I heard the Minister speaks about all other areas but I recall that some land was purchased in Barkers Land, Haggatt Hall. I understand from the Minister that tenders have gone out for persons to come onboard to assist in alleviating the housing problem within St. Michael East. I want to thank him very much for that initiative.

Sir, there are other problems. At Clarke's Land pasture it is my understanding that property belongs to the National Housing Corporation. It is a big area. It is my understanding that when the zoning is completed by the Barbados Water Authority about 200 metres away from the pumping station you will have, which was originally in Zone 1, they will be removed from that area. If that is so, Clarke's Land surely would be a prime place for some of these high-rise houses within the St. Michael East area. If that is not possible, we can have a park with a facility for farmers to come on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday and ply their trade within that particular area.

Sir, a lot of traffic travel on My Lords Hill and I am sure that if the farmers from within the constituency have a temporary location where they can leave their homes to come on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday and sell their produce, they would be extremely happy. The residents from within the area would be aware that they would not have to go too far. Even farmers outside of the area can come to area to sell their produce. I am sure that will build a better community.

While we are on this whole question of housing and the acquisition of land, there are some problems in St. Barnabas where residents want to purchase the land from National Housing Corporation but the greatest problem is, according to my understanding since 2003, the question of surveying those lots in square feet which will allow persons to calculate how much money they have to pay to acquire the land. I am calling on the Minister to carry out an urgent investigation to see what is the problem and why it is taking so long, since 2003 when I traversed the area, to have those properties surveyed so that the persons who have the money, will and want to improve their lives. They want to go from chattel to wall.

Sir, within Licorish Village, it is my understanding that there is some land that belongs to the National Housing Corporation, but there seem to be some difficulties and problems. Persons are living there. They are not squatters but they are willing to purchase this land from the National Housing Corporation. There is the whole question of surveying the land. The surveying problems creep up again within the Licorish Village area, and persons have told me

to ask the Minister to look into this, so that they can improve their lot.

I am saying that it is good to see houses going up all across Barbados. I believe that some of the constituents of St. Michael East will benefit from some of those houses in the Bushy Park area. I believe that those houses are for the lower, middle and upper income earners. So you will have persons from all walks of life in Barbados who will benefit from the initiative of the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

I want to compliment him for the excellent work that he is doing. I am telling him not to be distracted, if the Barbados Labour Party wants to say that they had all these ideas. It is like a science. If you have an idea and nobody knows about it, it is no good. That is exactly the position when it comes to the whole question of housing, that the Barbados Labour Party would be saying we had this in mind. We were going to do this and have done nothing. I am calling on the Minister to stop nowhere, continue. Not only the Minister of housing and Lands, I want all the other ministers to work...

17.70 p.m.

Sequence 25

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

House A61A, Sequence 26, 5.50 p.m.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: We had this in mind. We were going to do this but did nothing and calling on the Minister to stop? No way. Continue. Sir, not only the Minister of Housing, I want all the other Ministers to work in hand and in tandem to ensure the proper development of Barbados, which will redound to every citizen of Barbados.

With those few remarks, I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House on for St. Philip North.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to conclude this debate. First I want to thank all Honourable Member Sir, who contributed to this debate and also to congratulate them for their outstanding contributions. Mr. Speaker, the contribution by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is noteworthy. He did mention that this acquisition is historic. Indeed, it is a historic acquisition based on the acreage of land that we are acquiring, and the amount of housing solutions that will be done at Bushy Park in St. Philip and further, the fact that we will be building what we call a community or village with the amenities that I mentioned earlier.

Obviously, Honourable Members have called and at least acknowledged the fact that we have to build a community, based on the fact that we will be having a number of people living in that area and, of course, we have to take the pressure off the existing Six Roads area.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell Barbadians again what vision the former administration had for St. Philip because this administration could come in two years and acquire this land, and now we are about to put a plan together and to meet with the various stakeholders to ensure that we have a modern facility, a modern sporting facility and we have a relationship between sports and tourism and we improve and consolidate our housing policy and, obviously, stick to our Manifesto pledge.

Mr. Speaker, there are always stumbling blocks in place. People do not want to see progress, people do not want to see development and very shortly, we would know the name of the law firm which decided that it wants to pull all the legal procedures, in fact, to use Section 7 of the Acquisition Act to ask the Ministry of Housing and Lands to get on with the acquisition or abandon the process of acquisition, thereby, if we had abandoned the process, the original plan was to build a golf course, not to do any housing but to build a golf course and to build hotels.

Mr. Speaker, very shortly we will know of the law firm that wanted us to abandon the process, by virtue of the Land Acquisition Act. The person is not here today, Mr. Speaker, and there would be another time to deal with that because it is on record. Sir, we would know very shortly what pain they intended to cause on the residents of St. Philip and Barbados and the wider Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, this acquisition will transform the landscape of St. Philip and Barbados as a whole. We have a duty to consult with the existing residents of Bushy Park, and the wider St. Philip area. I believe that when the master plan is completed, the plan will be exhibited in areas of St. Philip and in other parts of Barbados so that the residents in St. Philip and the wider Barbados could know what is the plan for Bushy Park and how this will impact on their lives and basically their standard of living.

Mr. Speaker, the assurance has been given by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East about the Barbados Water Authority. In fact, I know the Minister is working hard with the Barbados Water Authority. I know that deadlines have been set. I also know that they are doing a study and they are actually in the St. Philip area looking to see where they can get the better water supply or the most adequate water supply to the developments in St. Philip and Christ Church.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central uttered the remark about development being carried out only in rural Barbados but then he corrected himself indirectly, or let me say confessed to his wrongdoing, by obviously saying that we visited areas in St. Michael West Central. Yes, that was done and of course, there is an area in Eckstein Village where I know that during the campaign, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central called for the development of housing and house lots in Eckstein village. I know at this very moment that the UDC, is building a road so that we can access the land. I want to say to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central that the Ministry of Housing and Lands is currently working on proposals to develop housing in that area for the constituents of St. Michael West Central.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Further, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South actually supported the acquisition and we recognise that in the area of St. Philip, Kings

Park needs to be developed. We also recognise that there is a need for a cultural facility. Obviously, if we develop the Bushy Park racing track, provision will be made for entertainment.

Asides.

Hon. M.A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am hearing rumblings about a cinema, a mobile cinema and a Drive-in. I believe that is a good idea but in order of priorities, what we need is a cultural activity facility before we get to a cinema or a drive-in. Sir, we need a cultural facility to facilitate and expose the talents of persons

in St. Philip and of course persons who are making a contribution to the music industry and the entertainment industry in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I support the call from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South. I also support the call from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who in his enthusiastic support to this acquisition, mentioned that we have now the opportunity to provide house spots. I want to say to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who is very consistent in his pleas to provide house lots that quite recently, we have discovered Crown lands in Cluffs in St. Lucy and all we need to do is to put in a road. We have now discovered an additional 30 house spots for cluffs in St. Lucy. I want to assure the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that we would make sure that he benefits and his constituents benefit from those lots in Cluffs, St. Lucy.

Asides.

House A61A, sequence 26, 6.00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Speaker, I always say that if this Government was in existence when money and revenue were aplenty, we would have done wonders. I believe that if we had access to the \$700 million that was spent on the Prison that we could have provided a lot of housing solutions. In fact, I am of the belief that the Prison could have been built for less money. In fact, very shortly we would know what the cost is in relation to the persons who provided the buildings for the Prison but that is not my area to get into, I would leave that to the appropriate Minister.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we had access to the close to \$60 million that we have to pay out for the National Housing Corporation building, instead of channeling it toward a building, we would have channeled it toward housing to assist poor people and housing and house lots for Barbadians, and we certainly would not be embroiled in a court matter that is going on all like now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all I can say is that this Minister was approached through a letter on April 1, 2010, All Fool's Day, I would not get into the details of the letter, from Barrack's lawyers asking us to use our good offices to resolve this matter because the protracted court action would severely disrupt and dislocate the Corporation's operations. I am not reading from the letter, Sir, but I can recall... If I refer to that, I do not believe that I would touch and concern the substantive court matter because obviously this would not touch and concern really and truly the substance of the case.

Mr. Speaker, I can certainly say for a fact that this Minister has been approached through a letter by lawyers asking to meet to have conversation to settle this matter. Sir, I referred the matter to the attorneys responsible for this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate all of the Honourable Members who contributed to this debate and beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

The question that this Resolution do now passed was put and resolved in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, April 27, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that the House do now adjourned until Tuesday, April 27, 2010, was put and resolved in the affirmative and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the Sitting accordingly.

House A61A Sequence 27 6.10 p.m.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER.....1

Hon. R. D. Jones, 1.

PAPERS

Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON.....2

1. Land Development Duty (Special Development Area) (Hastings to Rockley Area) Order, 2010;
2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Mayfield Cardiology Inc.) Order, 2010;
3. Annual Reports and Financial Statements of Hotels and Resorts Limited, for the years ended December 31, 2006 and December 31, 2007;
4. Annual Report of the Barbados International Business Promotion Corporation (Invest Barbados) for the year ended March 31, 2009;
5. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Barbados and CLICO Holdings (Barbados) Limited;

Hon. R. D. Jones, 2.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER.....2

1. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill, 2010;
 2. District Auctioneers (Validation) Bill, 2010.
1. Hon. R. D. JONES: I beg to second that, Sir.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK.....2

BRIDGETOWN.

HAB61

Hon. D.J.H. THOMPSON.....6

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. SINCKLER.....6

Hon. F.J. Stuart, 6.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY YOUR HONOUR THE
SPEAKER

BRIDGETOWN

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 6 – A RESOLUTION TO RESCIND THE RESOLUTION PASSED IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON THE 15TH DECEMBER, 2009 AND THE SENATE ON THE 22ND DECEMBER, 2009.....7

Hon. D.J.H. Thompson, 7; Hon. F.J. Stuart, 7.

ORDER NO. 7 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LAND DEVELOPMENT DUTY (SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT AREA) (HASTINGS TO ROCKLEY AREA) ORDER, 2010.....8

Hon. D.J.H. Thompson, 8; Hon. F.J. Stuart, 8.

ORDER NO. 8 – THE TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COUNCIL BILL, 2010.....8

Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo, 8, 10, 11; His Honour K. St. C. Best, 11; Hon. J.D.E. Boyce, 12; His Excellency D. St. E. Kellman, 14; His Ex. D.St.E. Kellman, 14, 15; Hon. R. D. Jones, 15, 16, 17; Hon. Stephen A. Lashley, 18; Hon. P.M. Todd, 19, 20, 21; Hon. D.J.H. Thompson; Hon. Christopher P. Sinckler; Mr. J. D. Paul; Hon. F.J. Stuart.

RESUMPTION

ORDER NO. 8 (resumed)

Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo, 22, 24.

ORDER NO. 11.....26

Hon. M.A. Lashley, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 48, 53, 54; Hon. R.L. Sealy, 32, 33, 34, 35, 54; Hon. Stephen A. Lashley, 36, 38; Dr. Hon. D.S. Lowe, 39, 40, 42; Mr. Adriel D. Brathwaite, 42, 43; His Excellency D. St. E. Kellman, 44, 45; His Ex. D.St.E. Kellman, 46; Mr. J. D. Paul, 47, 48, 49; Hon. P.M. Todd, 50, 51; His Honour K. St. C. Best, 51, 53; Honour K.St.C.BEST, 51.

SUSPENSION.....22

ADJOURNMENT.....54

Hon. Christopher P. Sinckler, 54; Hon. F.J. Stuart, 55.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BEST, HIS HONOUR K. St. C. (St. Michael East)
BOYCE, HON. J.D.E. (Christ Church South)
BRATHWAITE, Mr. ADRIEL D. (St. Philip South)
BYER-SUCKOO, Dr. the Hon. E. R. (St. George South)
ESTWICK, Dr. D. C. (St. Philip West)
JONES, Hon. R. D. (Christ Church East Central)

K.St.C.BEST, Honour
KELLMAN, His Ex. D.St.E.
KELLMAN, His Excellency D. St. E. (St. Lucy)
LASHLEY, Hon. M.A. (St. Philip North)
LASHLEY, Hon. STEPHEN A. (Christ Church West Central)
LOWE, Dr. Hon. D.S. (Christ Church East)
PAUL, Mr. J. D. (St. Michael West Central)
SEALY, Hon. R.L. (St. Michael South Central)
SINCKLER, Hon. CHRISTOPHER P. (St. Michael North West)
STUART, Hon. F.J. (St. Michael South)
THOMPSON, Hon. D.J.H. (St. John)
TODD, Hon. P.M. (City of Bridgetown)

DISCLAIMER. *This transcript was prepared with the assistance of artificial intelligence tools and is provided for reference only. It has not been reviewed, verified or approved by the Hansard Department of the Parliament of Barbados and does not constitute an official parliamentary record. It may contain errors or omissions, including inaccuracies in wording or speaker identification. For authoritative quotations or confirmation of proceedings, consult the official Hansard record when available.*

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. Papers and First Reading. Hon. D. J. H. Thompson says he is commanded to lay ‘the following Bills’, but the items are an Order, reports and a Memorandum of Understanding; after the First Reading the seconder’s words are numbered as if part of the list (‘1. Hon. R. D. JONES: I beg to second that, Sir.’). Printed as in the source.

Q3. Headings and take-slips. The word ‘BRIDGETOWN’ in the addresses of two letters, and the take-slip reference ‘HAB61’, are set as headings. Several take-slips are dated ‘Friday, April 20, 2010’ (once ‘April 20,,’); the Sitting was on a Tuesday. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Order No. 8. The Order is headed ‘THE TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COUNCIL BILL, 2010’, but the Minister and other Members speak of an amendment to the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Act and the Bill is cited as the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council (Amendment) Act, 2010. The Committee stage is headed ‘COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY’. Printed as in the source.

Q5. District Auctioneers (Validation) Bill. No Order number or heading is given for the Bill. Hon. F. J. Stuart refers to it as the ‘District Auctioneer’s Validation 2010’ and the ‘District Auctioneers Bill, 2010’; it is cited as the District Auctioneers (Validation) Act, 2010. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Announcements by the Speaker. The letter of resignation from the Public Accounts Committee read by Mr. Speaker is addressed to ‘His Honour D.A. Carrington’; the PRESENT list and the Speaker’s own letters give M. A. Carrington. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 20th April, 2010 at 10.15 a.m., with His Honour M. A. Carrington, the Speaker, presiding, and welcomed Members back from the

recess. The Opposition was not present. The Minutes of 15th March were confirmed. The Prime Minister, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, laid the Land Development Duty (Special Development Area) (Hastings to Rockley Area) Order, 2010, the Annual Report of Invest Barbados for the year ended 31st March, 2009 and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Barbados and CLICO Holdings (Barbados) Limited, among other papers, and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill, 2010 and the District Auctioneers (Validation) Bill, 2010 were read a first time.

In a personal explanation, Dr. D. C. Estwick referred to the incident within the precincts of Parliament on the last day of the Estimates debate, said he had not started the confrontation and had not brandished or threatened any Member with a weapon,. Mr. Speaker then read the correspondence: Mr. Dale D. Marshall’s letter of 22nd March asking that the matter be sent to the Committee of Privileges, his own replies granting leave to raise it under Standing Order 76, and the Leader of the Opposition’s letter of 8th April asking for a policy on firearms in Parliament. He noted that neither Member was in the House to raise the matter, quoted press reports that the Opposition would not attend because of his alleged failure to act, called this a slap in the face of Parliament bordering on contempt, and said a firearms policy would be considered carefully but would not be imposed on the insistence of a few Members. He also read Dr. Estwick’s resignation from the Public Accounts Committee. Replies to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 8 and 9 were later laid because the Member who asked them was absent.

Under Orders Nos. 6 and 7, on the motion of Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, the House rescinded the Resolution of 15th December, 2009 and approved a replacement Land Development Duty (Special Development Area) Order, explaining that only the description of the land at Hastings and Rockley, the area of the south coast Boardwalk, had changed.

On Order No. 8, Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo moved the second reading of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council Bill, saying it would expand the TVET Council’s role, including a Standards Approval Committee and a Quality Assurance Committee for National Vocational Qualifications, and linking it to decent work and the CARICOM summit on youth development in Suriname. His Honour K. St.C. Best, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, His Excellency D. St.E. Kellman, who noted that the Council had been accepted among the CSME countries, Hon. R. D. Jones, Mr. S. A. Lashley and Hon. P. M. T. Todd supported it. The Bill passed all stages without division.

Hon. F. J. Stuart moved the District Auctioneers (Validation) Bill, explaining that since the District Auctioneers Act of 1904 was amended in 1992 auctioneers had continued to be appointed by the old method and that their acts since then needed to be validated. It passed all stages.

On Order No. 11, the Minister of Housing and Lands, Hon. M. A. Lashley, moved the Resolution for the compulsory acquisition of two parcels of land at Bushy Park, St. Philip, for housing and recreation, describing 2

000 houses to be built in phases with a town centre and assuring residents that the motor racing facility would be kept. Hon. R. L. Sealy seconded, and Mr. S. A. Lashley, Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe, Mr. A. D. Brathwaite, His Excellency D. St.E. Kellman, Mr. J. D. Paul, Hon. P. M. T. Todd and His Honour K. St.C. Best spoke in support; Mr. Speaker ruled that a point of order by Hon. M. A. Lashley during Mr. Paul's speech was not a point of order. The Resolution was agreed to, and on the motion of Hon. C. P. Sinckler the House was adjourned until Tuesday, 27th April, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.