
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, February 02, 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, Q.C., LL.B. (Hons.) (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, Economic Affairs and Development, Labour, Civil Service and Energy)

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., LL.M (Leic.)LL.B. (Hons.)

B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.,(Lond.)

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, M.Sc. (C. Eng.) (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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning Honourable Members, this Sitting of the Honourable the House of Assembly is now in session.

First let me acknowledge the presence of the members of the Literary and Debating Society of the Combermere School. Of course, it is always good to see school children interested in this aspect of our work, but this morning it is particularly pleasant as the President of the Club is my son Michael Walton. We give them a special welcome in the hope that they benefit from the occasion. We welcome the teachers and the staff members as well.

We also have with us some special guests of the Honourable Member for St. James North and we welcome you as well.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, January 19, 2010.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its Meeting of Tuesday, January 19, 2010, be confirmed subject to any omissions, corrections and/or observations.

Hon. F. J. STUART: I beg to second that, Sir. Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections or observations, then let those Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I have with me some greetings from the National Assembly State of Kuwait. They were sent in acknowledgement of our Independence, but for whatever reason they arrived late and then they had to be translated, but I think that since that Assembly would have gone to the trouble to greet us in this way, we should still acknowledge it. The greetings read as follow:

“His Excellency, Mr. Michael Carrington

President of the House of Assembly

Bridgetown - Barbados

Dear Mr. President,

On the occasion of the National Day of Barbados I would like to express, on behalf of my colleagues, members of the Kuwait National Assembly and myself, our sincere congratulations.

I have the pleasure to extend our best regards to Your Excellency, wishing the friendly people of Barbados more progress and prosperity.

Kindly accept Your Excellency the assurances of our highest consideration.

Yours sincerely

Jassim Mohammad Al-Kharaf

Speaker of the National Assembly of Kuwait.

PAPERS

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Defence (Rate of Pay, Loans and Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations, 2010;
2. Report of the Public Enterprise Investment Fund for the year ended March 31, 2009.

a. Hon. P. M. T. TODD: I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Annual Report of the Operations of the Barbados Drug Service for the fiscal year April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008; and
2. Health Services (Protection from Minors from Tobacco Products) (Regulations) 2010.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. S. D. BLACKETT, seconded by Hon. R. D. JONES, the Archives (Amendment) Bill, 2010 was read a first time.

On the motion of Hon. F. J. STUART, seconded by Hon. R. D. JONES, the Penal System Reform (Amendment) Bill, 2010 was read a first time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

House A54 Sequence 3

10.30 a.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 2 – SECOND READING OF THE ARCHIVES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2010.

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

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the Second Reading of the Archives (Amendment) Bill, 2010, which would increase the membership of the Archives Advisory Committee with the addition of the Assistant Registrar, the Archives and Records Department,

Cave Hill Campus, University of the West Indies. She is Mrs. Sharon Alexander-Gooding as ex officio member.

Mr. Speaker, this addition would further concretise the relationship between the University of the West Indies Campus and the Archives Department. It will also provide the environment for the collaboration of six professionally-trained archivists in Barbados, namely Mrs. Ingrid Cumberbatch, Sherryann Beckles, Mrs. Marion Griffith-Neil, Ms. E. Christine Matthews, Mr. David Williams, Chief Archivist, and Miss Alexander-Gooding, who will better prepare the White Paper on the Archives (Amendment) Bill, which I will speak to later in my presentation.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Archives is one of these agencies that is neither sexy nor glamorous. As a matter of fact, some may refer to it as a little jejune and therefore leaving it with little appeal to the average Barbadian.

Sir, the role of the Department of Archives is to:

- a. ensure the organisation's efficiency and accountability;
- b. identify, collect, process and preserve public and private records of Barbados that are of permanent and enduring legal, cultural and historical value;
- c. make information from them available, within legal limits; and
- d. support the understanding of Barbadian life.

Mr. Speaker, the long-term objectives of the Department of Archives is to support the objectives of the parent ministry, by providing an effective records management service for agencies of the Public Service. It will ensure that:

- 1. records and archives services meet public demand and professional standards;
- 2. the records and archives services meet legislative requirements and are responsive to social change;
- 3. department staff and resources are deployed and developed in the most effective ways;
- 4. facilities are sufficiently flexible to take account of future needs, including changes in matters of record-keeping and the use of different storage media due to advances in technology.

Mr. Speaker, some of the short-term objectives from the Department of Archives are:

a. to provide the best possible atmospheric conditions for the storage of records selected for permanent preservation;

b. to process records of central and local government, with emphasis on appraisal for permanent preservation and destruction;

c. to implement procedures for systematic transfer of non-current records from Government Departments under records management regulations;

d. to process private deposits to make them available for public reference and to conserve them where necessary;

e. to expand the repair programme to facilitate the repair of outside documents and series of records.

Mr. Speaker, we planned, between 2010 and 2011, the continuous development of the library and archives holdings, to include the acquisition of new deposits of records and published material, and the upgrading of automated systems and further development of the archival database.

Mr. Speaker, to this end, the technical support services and training provided by the Tropical Computers Limited and Eloquent Systems Limited are of crucial importance to this plan. We also plan the continuous repair and conservation of the archives holdings.

Sir, the importance of conservation programmes cannot be understated in this regard and it is vital that it receives all the necessary support in the form of materials, equipment, trained and skilled staff.

Mr. Speaker, regarding some of our record acquisitions, in 2009, the Department acquired records from a number of agencies, as well as from Churches and other private institutions. Sir, Government records are usually deposited on official transfer, while private records are received on indefinite loans, or as gifts. The Records Management Department continues to work on formulating a national records management programme for the Public Service of Barbados while, at the same time, providing assistance in training in records management in various Government agencies, as well as private entities.

Mr. Speaker, records management is an essential part of the Department's work. The Archives Act, Cap. 19B, gives the Department the responsibility for the public sector records management. The passage of the Archives Management (Regulations) 2000, involves the development and implementation of a strategic plan to address the records management needs and requirements of the Government of this country.

Mr. Speaker, a project proposal and plan is being developed, which will be implemented in stages. The first stage is to implement an Electronic Records Management Programme, referred to as ERM, at the Department in the area of its administration. Sir, all documents will be captured and stored electronically, and some activities now being done manually will no longer be necessary.

The Department is represented in a number of agencies and committees worldwide, some of which include the Panama Monument Committee, the National Oral History Programmes Committee, the University of the West Indies Archives and Records Management Committee, the Smithsonian Folklife Festival Committee and the Federal Archives Advisory Committee.

Mr. Speaker, the non-financial performance of the Department of Archives for the year 2009-2010, has been a good one so far. We have fulfilled the aims and objectives of our Mission Statement, by continuing to maintain a viable and efficient archival facility, which is ranked by its peers as one of the finest in the Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, the Archives Department remains committed to the permanent preservation of records, and by ensuring that those records are stored in accordance with Section 52.C, viii, xiv, 1.A, and 1.D of the Archives Act, which outlines how various categories of records are to be preserved in a suitable manner. The Department also endeavours to store these records in the best possible atmospheric conditions.

Mr. Speaker, the Archives Department also plans to continue to develop the archives holdings, in terms of the ongoing acquisition of "Barbadiana" in the form of pamphlets, books, periodicals, as well as records of enduring legal, cultural and historical value. This Department also intends to refurbish the archives and repositories, and continuously repair and upkeep the archives buildings. These are among other plans in the coming years.

Mr. Speaker, prior to the formulation of the current Archives Bill to amend the Archives Act, the Archives Department had proposed two additions to the legislation in recent times. The Archives Records Management (Regulations) 2008, were accordingly made by me on August 27, 2008, to provide further direction of the management of records by addressing records management needs and the requirements of the Government of this island.

Mr. Speaker, as record management is an essential part of the Department's work, the Archives Department is in the process of formulating a national records management programme for the Public Service of Barbados, by providing assistance and training in records

management for various Government agencies, as well as for private entities. A project proposal and plan is being developed and will be implemented in stages.

10.40 a.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Sir, the first stage is to implement an electronic records management programme at the Department in the area of its administration. Sir, all Documents will be captured and stored electronically and some activities, now performed manually, will no longer be necessary.

Mr. Speaker, the Archives Department is consulting with the Archives Advisory Committee and the University of the West Indies is currently considering a White Paper, as I have alluded to earlier, on the development of archives in Barbados and would further improve the operation of the Archives Department.

Mr. Speaker, the activities in the Archives Department are not limited to the preservation and conservation of archival records and related matters. The Archives Department is now patronised by post-graduate students, professional researchers and the public alike, all seeking to attain archival material. Sir, orientation courses were conducted for history students of the Barbados Community College and the students of the college's library assistants in Caribbean Heritage courses.

Mr. Speaker, both residents and visitors frequent the Archives Department to conduct genealogical research, an increasing popular area of study and activity. Sir, some figures came before us regarding how well the Archives Department is used. The number of persons who actually enquired by letter, fax or e-mail for the year 2008/2009 stood at 2, 694. For the current period 2009/2010 to date 1, 729 people actually made enquiries and it is projected that between the year 2010 to 2011, that some 2 550 people would actually make enquires, either by letter, fax or e-mail.

Mr. Speaker, the number of tours conducted were 216 in the year 2008/2009, and between last year and this year, 63 people to date have conducted tours and we have projected that some 190 will visit the Archives Department between 2010 and 2011.

Mr. Speaker, Section 3 of the Archives Act makes provision for the establishment of an Archives Advisory Committee and Section 4 also indicates that this Committee would advise the Minister on matters relating to the location, preservation and use of public archives, the custody and transfer of public records, the condition and restriction on which public records available for research of

any of them may be inspected and published, the inspection and preservation of documents and manuscripts of historical and cultural or literary value in private possession, inspection by members of the public archives and public records, editing and publishing of public archives and public manuscripts.

Mr. Speaker, consideration was also given to the repatriation of barbadiana in overseas repositories, for example, the British Government documentation dealing with the grant of independence to Barbados and also the Government consultation is needed for this repatriation.

The permanent address of the Sir Hugh Springer Papers is still to be determined and the possibility of the existence of some of these papers in other territories is to be explored to ensure that there are no gaps in any part of Sir Hugh Springer's life in the collection.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to skills development, the Archives Advisory Committee seeks to ensure that the skills and qualification of technical and professional staff are further developed and upgraded in the areas of conservation, records management, library and archives management.

We are also endeavouring that the Archives Advisory Committee is considering recommendations, and that some members of the Archives Department receive training to facilitate development of that Department.

Sir, information is being sought by the National Archives of the College of Park Maryland in the United States of America of the programmes, cost and duration of these courses proposed for the Archives Department by the Chief Archivist and the Assistant Registrar of Archives and Records of the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Speaker, my Ministry intends to pursue the recommendations for this training and skills development, upon receipt of the relevant information on these matters.

Mr. Speaker, the White Paper on Development of Archives in Barbados will be revised by the Archives Department with consultation with the Archives Advisory Committee and the University of the West Indies. With respect to the physical upgrade of the Archives Department, the Committee recognises that, given the current economic situation, this proposal is not feasible and cannot be realised in the near future.

Mr. Speaker, on May 8, 2008, the Cabinet approved a proposal for the Assistant Registrar of Archives and Records, the professional archivist employed by the University of the West Indies, to attend meetings of the Archives Advisory Committee by invitation, until such time as the Archives Act is amended to formally make

inclusion for the provision of that officer to the Archives Advisory Committee.

Mr. Speaker, appointment required amendment to the Schedule of Section 3 of the Archives Act to provide the Assistant Registrar, Archives Records ex officio, to be a member of the Archives Advisory Committee. The Assistant Registrar, Archives and Records, University of the West Indies currently collaborates with the Archives Department and attends the Archives Advisory Committee meetings by invitation.

Members of the Archives Advisory Committee would further cement this relationship and ensure that the perspectives of the private sector are also incorporated in the decision reached by the Archives Advisory Committee.

Mr. Speaker, the Archives Advisory Committee had its inaugural meeting on September 17, 2008 and since then, the Assistant Registrar, Archives and Records, University of the West Indies, has been in attendance at those meetings and Cabinet subsequently agreed that she should be included, and this is what we are actually doing here today.

Mr. Speaker, there is synergistic relationship between the Department of Archives and the National Library Service that is continuously being nurtured by my Ministry.

The Department of Archives facilitates the reading and deciphering of microfilms that are on loan between libraries across the island, both in the public sector and also in the private sector. They also accommodate researchers in collaboration with the National Library Service, who use both facilities in their research, enquiries and probes and also they facilitate the documentation of archival materials, for example, newspapers for the National Library Service.

Mr. Speaker, the microfilming lab is also located at the Lazaretto on that compound. As a matter of fact, the microfilming lab really belongs to the National Library Service, but is accommodated on the compound and is really the home of the Department of Archives.

Mr. Speaker, to further encourage this relationship we are endeavouring to establish a culture of reading by our population, young and old, to extricate them from the grasp of television and other enticing modes of technology, and to transfer them into what I would describe as voracious readers of books.

Mr. Speaker, books and information are at the heart of the library services. The library needs funding to provide a variety of reading materials in quantities that satisfy its customer demands, and based on the size of the potential service population, the library should acquire a minimum

of at least 55 000 books per year. Sir, rebuilding a culture of literacy demands greater focus on early intervention to produce a positive influence on the development, especially in our children.

Mr. Speaker, the experts argue that children who are exposed to reading at a young age are more likely to become lifelong readers developing strong reading abilities that grow with them, taking them from learning to read to a stage where they actually read to learn.

H/A54/10.50 a.m. Sequence 5

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Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: However, in order for our children to read and be hooked on reading, they must have something to read. It is imperative that the National Library Service acquire all publications written by Barbadians, or about Barbados, whether the periodicals are published locally, or internationally, since these are an integral part of the heritage collections.

Sir, publications are available in diverse forms. The National Library Service is an information provider and must be able to supply information in any format described, or so desired by the user. The emphasis therefore, will be to enhance the print collection by purchasing non-print publications and these are more expensive, for example, e-books and online journals which will be added to the collection as time progresses.

Sir, we have been seeing some performance indicators as we attempt to reconfigure the priorities of interest of Barbadians. We have actually brought in 1 000 new books to be added to the heritage collection. Approximately 7 000 new books have been added to the general collection. There are four annotated book lists released on heritage materials; eight book lists on titles in the general collection release. There are several new titles added to the non-print collection.

We are presently doing some refurbishment work at the Oistins Branch that has been reopened and the technology is in place. This week we have started work at the Valley Branch where we are completely refurbishing that building to make it more accommodating to people in the general area. I am sure that the Honourable Member for St. George North and the Honourable Member for St. George South will be pleased.

Asides.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: I am sure it will redound to the benefit of both Honourable Members of Parliament. I am sure they will be happy and also their constituents. We have several Summer Reading Competitions implemented

by all Branches and also, electronic patron files and other areas like those.

Sir, because of these initiatives we believe that we have aroused a new interest in reading resulting in some statistical performance indicators up to 2009. These indicators, for instance, adults who have actually borrowed books from the National Library Service last year, 106 000, while 105 562 children borrowed books.

The adult membership with the National Library Service stands at 23 000; school membership, 13 000; children's membership, 15 388; new members, Adult Lending Services, 2 589, new members for children, 1 500, and new members for schools, 1 058. Sir, we have actually added 3 587 books to the Adult Lending Services, for the Children Services we added 2 879 books and the School Library Services, 2 557 books.

Sir, we are moving assiduously to encourage a wider cross section of Barbadians to read, presenting that reading material to them so that they would have a wider selection to choose from.

Mr. Speaker, I want to implore Barbadians to make full use of both the Department of Archives and the Barbados Library Service. We are fortunate to have two well-established institutions with well-trained and dedicated staff who are willing to assist them at every turn, who actually go beyond the call of duty to help Barbadians with their archival and scholastic interests and inquiries. I take this opportunity to congratulate the staff members of both institutions, the Department of Archives and the Barbados Library Service. I think that Barbadians should take advantage of these opportunities.

Sir, with those few words, I am obliged to you, and beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

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

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister was clear enough to indicate that the primary objective behind this legislation is to strengthen the hand of those that have oversight of how the Archives Department should be run. The Advisory Committee to which he referred is to be strengthened and enlarged, and the type of personnel it would have in the future, as indicated by the Minister, will be able to position the Archives Department where it can be more beneficial to Barbadians and indeed the Caribbean community.

Sir, prior to 1980, there were those who used the Archives at a time when technology was scarce and whose

major complaint was the poor condition of many records. I take it that in recent times, efforts have been made to upgrade the technology and to ensure that important documents are not tattered and in a poor state, and that important documents can be located. To its credit, the professional staff who work on a daily basis in the Archives, do their utmost, not only to help those who go to the Archives for research purposes, but also to help them to develop an awareness of the importance of archives.

Sir, a cynical person who sees himself as forward-looking, would want to question why we are looking backward, but it has been said that those of us oblivious to our history, or indifferent to it are likely, if you do not learn from the lessons of history, to repeat the same errors that would have got us in trouble. I, therefore, strongly urge that Barbadians understand the importance of institutions like the Archives, and it is very important that Barbadians understand the importance of history. History is in all of this.

I believe that as time progresses, those involved in relooking our history, would not have to rely on Richard Lebron, but will be able to locate source material that can further show what Barbados went through prior to 1966.

I want to say to this Honourable House that I have a friend who had the opportunity to go to England and to visit libraries and archives in England. He told me that the British have an enormous amount of material, not only on Barbados, but also on the Caribbean, lying on shelves. He proposed that we in the Caribbean approach the English and invite the English to show us information going back to the colonial period.

H A54 11.00 a.m. Sequence 6

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

House A54, Sequence 07, 11.00 a.m.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I mention that, Mr. Speaker, because the Windward Islands, the Leeward Islands and Barbados, can lawfully complain that there are gaps, lacunae, in the history of our Region. Sir, while I am urging that the English be brought on board in this as our colonizing power, I am also suggesting that a new era could be approaching, certainly as far as the relationship between the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill and the Archives is concerned.

Within the last four weeks, the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill had a symposium type activity that was urging on people the importance of research. Scientists involved in research, believe in search and research, believe in finding core data and subjecting that core data to particular tests, before coming to conclusions.

There are Honourable Members of this House who are wide enough read, to have turned down so-called elements of our history that prevailed between the 1950s and 1960. There are those of us who started to read West Indian historians who were careful with their research.

This Parliament does not consist of men and women of advanced years, does not consist of geriatrics, but it consists of people who are aware that the way West Indian history was first written before the 1960s, we were indoctrinated with particular dogmas which people like that late Eric Williams had to correct for us, based on the investigations he had done. Those investigations, Sir, would have resulted from a prudent use of archival information.

We are fortunate these days that it has all of a sudden become possible, for a more diligent and careful preservation of old documents. Sir, going back 30 years, there were times when notwithstanding efforts to put material under microfilm, the material was so poor in quality that even with microfilm and enlargement of documentation, the final product was disappointing. There are people in this Honourable House who are aware of this. Now we are into an era where parchment paper and other hard paper can be used to record information on, while 150 to 250 years ago saw perishable paper was the norm and we may well have missed out on a lot of important information.

This country, Sir, is ripe and ready for more and more research, and as I speak, I recognise upstairs this Honourable House, a core of students from a place nicknamed, "The University of Waterford".

Asides.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I welcome them, Sir, and I want to tell them that their future is not just at the "University of Waterford", but at the "University of Life" must be a future in which they develop a range of skills. They have to be multi-skilled and based on the signals coming from the University of the West Indies, they have to learn to do research.

Sir, one of the distinguishing defining characteristics of the training in the Law Faculty of the University of the West Indies is the availability of a course called, "Legal Writing and Legal Research." The typical graduate in Law from the University of the West Indies who has mastered legal writing and legal research, makes a very good lawyer and can locate all kinds of Law, whether in the United States of America, or in the Dominion of Canada, at short notice, and can use such research to prepare cases.

Another thing about research, Sir, is that research properly done can correct misinformation out there.

Research properly done can be quite revealing from the perspective that we may have come along at accepting particular pieces of information as normative truth and then when research is done, the bubble is burst and there is an uncovering of evidence that contradicts long held views.

I was looking at a book this morning, Sir, and the book has in a number of Barbadian expressions from the days of yore. The book was also suggesting what the Honourable Minister referred to, by that cultural component of the research that results from the careful use of archives. In an era where Both Sides of this Honourable House are cognizant of the need to promote cultural activity and the need to get more people involved as entrepreneurs in the arts, poetry, music, culture and history, then we have to strengthen the arms of the Archives.

One of the amazing things about research too, Sir, is that research can lead to development and in a situation where the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central and Minister of Community Development and Culture, has highlighted a relationship between the library and the archives, and also spoke to a relationship between the University of the West Indies and the Archives, then if we can be persuasive enough in our interaction with the University of the West Indies, we can get them to come around to a policy by which they work with interested stakeholders, to promote this country as a place that matters, as far as research and development are concerned.

We do need that as a matter of urgency, Sir, because in circumstances where some Caribbean countries in doing their research, had been able to come up with final products that have been useful, we in Barbados should also ensure that we go back in time, study what is there, cross-check what is there with what is known and venture out to ensure that the range of information in the archives really is brought to light.

I said, Sir, that England has a lot of information, yet untouched by us in Barbados, but the very archives to which we refer in Barbados have information untouched too. The users of the archives are not that numerous yet. No doubt in the future when the Archives Department raises its profile and when the White Paper to which the Honourable Minister referred comes, there will be a greater interest in what happens at the Archives, but let me tell you something, Sir, and I want to single out Churches in Barbados.

When I was a youngster, Sir, the Baptism Certificate from the Church was the proof of birth. I believe around 1981, under the Vital Statistics Act, the Birth Certificate is now the best evidence of birth. When the Registry cannot locate a birth now, they do either of two things, or both. They either check the Church, or check the Archives. Now, one of the curiosities about checking the Church, is that

some Churches pass their own records away from their small village locus, to a central authority in the Church.

House A54, Sequence 07, 11.10 a.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: For sure the Methodist Church does that, so a child who was christened at the Methodist Church, Holetown, would have his records brought to the office of the Methodist Church at James Street.

Sir, we have a culture where, notwithstanding the birth certificate as the best evidence, when the birth certificate cannot be obtained, we look to find the baptism certificate. Sir, as I said, some Churches have been able to hold on to them, but a lot of baptism and birth certificates end up in the Archives as well.

Mr. Speaker, I want to suggest that we put systems in place to ensure that the retrieval of information out of the Archives Department is done in a timely way. I would not want to go down there to do research that should take me five hours and then have to go back five different days because of the fact that they have not been able to retrieve what I am looking for. I would like to be able to fast-track matters and get the information that is necessary for what I am proposing to research.

My friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central and Minister of Community Development and Culture, maintained a relationship between the Library and the Archives. Sir, there is no question of the fact that there must be a relationship between the Library and the Archives Department. There is also no question of the fact that some of our libraries, including branch libraries, still have information and books, luckily done in hard cover, that go back 60 years. Sir, on that basis, where there is a strong nexus between the Libraries and the Archives Department, then we can be satisfied that our objectives in managing archival information are achieved. Sir, I want to add to all of this that, I believe that there is a strong case to be made out between the Archives Department and our Museum. I am speaking now from a perspective of ignorance. I do not normally speak from a perspective of ignorance nor, according to the words of Job, do I exercise myself in matters which are too great for me. However, in my ignorance, I seem to know that in the 1970s, there were exhibits, displays, artifacts, historical materials and the like at the Museum. When I go to the Museum now, whether on my own or to take those loving visitors from Canada who adore Barbados and, who want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central for his successful negotiation with Westjet, which is offering very good rates to Barbados at this time....

Asides.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, certain things matter in life. An experienced politician walking around with little fear can speak truthfully and, can speak his mind without fear of worrying about getting votes. An experienced politician who is surefooted would not come to this Parliament to score cheap political points. An experienced politician who has been to the Museum, and who appears to have missed the artifacts, the stuff and the information there, would naturally want to know what would have become of some of the things that were stored in 1974, and where they are today, for our visitors to see them today.

Mr. Speaker, there is some possibility that out of a sense of panic, the authorities at the Museum, because of the sensitive nature, and because of the vulnerability, to use a personification, of some of the information, may have that in special storage.

Mr. Speaker, even though I said that I am speaking from a perspective of ignorance, for 35 years it is highly probable that the Museum decided deliberately not to put everything on exhibit for fear of destruction.

Sir, the Honourable Minister, quoting from Chapter 19B of the Laws of Barbados, will, as a Government Minister, performing a Government function, be reforming things and has promised a White Paper. Sir, in the context of a proposed White Paper, we have now to survey all of Barbados, the reason being that many a private sector organisation is claiming to have its own archive.

Mr. Speaker, in a situation where a private sector agency can have an archive department with materials that impact positively on Barbados' image and national development, we may have to use this Parliament and the Law to persuade those private sector archivists, who hold information to themselves that can benefit Barbados to get on board with the plans to expand archival services and to improve them.

Sir, I am, therefore, saying that in circumstances where there could be as many as 10 agencies in Barbados doing archival work, that they show the Government enough courtesy by coming on board and availing themselves of any questions they may have on the White Paper that the Minister has raised, to ensure that eventually we will all function, not in the interest of a private sector institution alone, but in the interest of national development.

Mr. Speaker, we must bear in mind that we have a changing Barbados. Young people in Barbados tend to be very bright and very resourceful. Many young people do good research and sometimes the research they do definitely puts an end to certain matters.

Let me go off point for one minute, Sir. Sir, I am satisfied that one of the reasons the H1N1 Virus never gained a strong foothold in Barbados, is because the young people use particular complementary medicines which strengthened their immunity and helped them not to be susceptible to the H1N1 Virus.

Our young people are very resourceful. Our young people, many of whom at age 15 can tell you what career or careers they intend to pursue, have to be encouraged to get more and more involved in raising questions of where this country came from, where it is and where it wants to go. The young people who will take over may themselves have already developed ideas of where they want to take the country when their time comes.

Sir, we heard of a proposal for a national records management programme for public officers. It is well-known, Mr. Speaker, that the Ministry of the Civil Service, headed by the Personnel Administration Division, has its own localized archives, some of which present a little problem in respect of locating information. Happily, a lot of the persons in the Public Service working for the Personnel Administration Division, are able to get into the archives and to advise people on things like pensions, gratuities and such like.

Sir, I heard the Minister proposed a programme for public officers, that is quite very much in order. Underlying the purposes of this Bill is a proposal to implement improvisations at various stages. I cannot quarrel with the Minister because resources are necessary, and very often 100 per cent of the resources are not available on a given day at a given date and, therefore, we have to do things in phases.

House A54 Sequence 8

11.20 a.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I am happy that we have come to a stage where there can be electronic preservation of documents. Sir, in the days when there was no electronic preservation of documents, documents did not only become crumbly, some documents met their death, they just faded away. Therefore, this proposal to store documents electronically is very much in order.

Mr. Speaker, the free public library has had its challenges in the last five or so years. I would hope that the original free library in Coleridge Street can be cleaned and put back to perfection, because it is part of our culture. It brings nostalgia to a lot of us who used to go there. Sir, we have to get the type of expertise that can restore that free library to its former glory.

Mr. Speaker, historians, history students and people interested in culture, can combine the two, they can work from our national library and from our Archives Department. Sir, in doing research, especially in history, very often when you encounter a source, that source actually invites you to find a supportive source. You may go to the library, curious and enthusiastic, to locate information, then to be told that your task would be complete when you top it up by going to the Archives Department, Black Rock. Sir, this would augment and increase what you have from the library.

Mr. Speaker, today's researchers must know that a lot of what is in the air, in either newspapers or textbooks, derives from secondary sources. I would like to sensitise our young people, including our special visitors, to do what lawyers do in accordance with what is called: "The best evidence rule." They must get to the primary source.

Sir, that is why people like Eric Williams and others following in his tradition, have been able to put a picture on events and movements in the world, in a situation where prior to Eric William's work, we would have been, as colonial children, treated to the idea that Mr. William Wilberforce did it all, along with Thomas Powell Buxton. We would have been treated to the idea that those guys did it all for us, out of a feeling of humanity.

Mr. Speaker, Eric William came and showed us how wasteful and uneconomic slavery was, how it was driven by economic factors where, as they declined, saw a decline in the sugar industry. He was able to do that from research. In his research, he located primary documents. Therefore, whenever you are doing research, even if a secondary document such as a textbook is helpful, you should seek to see if they can get the research.

Mr. Speaker, to those present here today, even if the newspapers, television or radio tapes any part of what I am saying, ultimately I would want those who are here now, especially students, to go to Hansard as the primary source of what I am submitting to this distinguished and Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, This Side is not going to object to this legislation. One of the reasons is that we heard the Minister say that as far as the proposed improvements for the Archives Department go, there is going to be a stronger emphasis on culture. Sir, I endorse that.

Mr. Speaker, the reason there must be a stronger emphasis on culture is manifold, one purpose is to help us understand the evolution of this Barbados. Another purpose is to locate our rich folklore, whether historical or otherwise. Another area in which we are justified in promoting culture is that there are those who have the skills

of a singer, a poet, a short-story writer, who should be encouraged to make a living out of their talent.

Mr. Speaker, in reading what is happening worldwide, we are hearing that in an economic recession or depression, entertainment hardly suffers, and that entertainers do better in a recession or depression than other sectors in the economy. Mr. Speaker, the British Broadcasting Corporation has brought that over at least 10 times, even before Britain slipped into a favourable position of a small percentage growth in their economy.

Mr. Speaker, we are saying that when some of our Barbadian entertainers, whether calypsonians, rhythm-and-blues and certainly spooze, become involved in cultural industries, they can generate income for themselves and can place Barbados' national image at a higher level. Sir, at the same time, they can prove themselves to be entrepreneurs in developing economic activities that can only redound to the benefit of this country in the future.

Mr. Speaker, it would be good, in a situation where many people say that you can find a Barbadian everywhere, if in all this we can get some information from the Archives of that great exodus of Barbadians to Panama and to Cuba. There was a time, way back in history, in the Cuban economy where Cuba had a labour shortage and where under right-wing dictatorships, Cuba has never known anything other than systematic dictatorship. Some Cubans will tell you that some of the dictatorships were benign and some were not so benign. Sir, there was a time in our history when Barbadians went to Cuba to be involved in the sugar fields, some of whose descendants still live in Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, I would want up-to-date information, well-researched, coming out of that migration to Cuba, but more particularly, notwithstanding the excellent work of a Member of the Other Place, Professor Senator Velma Newton, I would want us to locate some additional information in the Archives on that exodus to Panama, not just in looking at the push, or pull factors, but by way of locating how some of those persons who went to Panama and sent back remittances. Sir, I would want us to do research on the effects that those remittances had on their family's welfare.

Sir, there is a core of Barbadians who, before the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, were able to get hold of freehold titles out of the benevolence of relatives living abroad. Sir, all these things matter in the context of the discussion which we are having here and which the Minister has invited us to look at from a wide perspective.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude this modest contribution with a few questions I want to put before Honourable Members. I would want to raise the question, what of

relationships with overseas archives, such as St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, which can help us understand the Caribbean way of life, especially efforts at integration? There must be federal records around which speak to the Federation experiment between 1958 and 1962, which, incidentally, was a federation which was led by a Barbadian who had the distinction and honour to lead Honourable Members who constitute the Opposition of this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, I would like them to find out from other Caribbean countries, what they have by way of information- sharing on archival material. Mr. Speaker, what of trying to locate the most up-to-date and most efficient technology imaginable, in the context of the need to make sure that old documents do not wither, perish or vanish.

11.30 a.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: We also need to look to new developments, how can we get publishers, authors, and persons involved in writing to appreciate that they must deal ultimately, with the reality of the demand in Barbados for their work, but they must first start by going to the library.

Mr. Speaker, under the Law when you write a book you go to the library. Sir, in credit to the library, the library here is actually equipped, not only to accept the works of novel writers, but to issue the ISBN number. Sir, that is an amazing thing. Imagine 145 countries on earth producing 15 writers a month and little Barbados has the technology where 145 countries with 15 writers per month are looking for an ISBN number all over the place and Barbados can grant you an ISBN number in a few minutes on condition that you obey the Law and leave copies of the recently published there.

Mr. Speaker, I close by saying that when the Honourable Minister really stresses reading, as it has been stressed by our most distinguished writer in recent weeks, all Barbadians should take this thing call reading to heart. Sir, too many people scorn reading, too many people frown on reading, and too many people want to go down the fast lane and see if there is any way, by which they can gain information without the sacrifice of reading.

Sir, reading is often sacrificial because it requires time, and you might have something else to do when you really want to read, but you should give up that thing and read, or you would find, sometimes, you have something else to do, but you want to read. You go and do that something else, then do something else and you never get back to reading the thing.

Mr. Speaker, anybody who urges that reading is necessary has to be commended. Indeed, anybody who says that reading is like feeding the mind has to be complimented and so, George Lamming would have to be complimented for urging the children at the school named after him to develop the habit of reading.

Mr. Speaker, I have been a Member of this Honourable House with the blessing of the people from St. James North and I have heard many Members speak over time. Sir, better speakers in this Parliament are also the speakers who read the most widely. The better speakers are not only those who have read the most widely, but they also combine excellent research skills with their reading.

Mr. Speaker, the cynic will say that this is a small amendment to enlarge and strengthen the advisory body but, at the end of the day, this debate is really inviting us to look at where we are in this field called research, where we are in this field called record-keeping, where we are in an era, where we can improve things at the Archives Department, improve our research methods and, in the process, develop the self-confidence based on a healthy mirror image that will help us to become developers of this country. Sir, this country craves development and development does not come in house, or many cars, or motor cycles on the road, but development comes from the east, from the west, from the north and from the south, when the people are developed.

Sir, developed people are not necessarily people who drive BMWs and Mercedes Benz, or even better cars like Toyota and Nissan. A truly developed person is a person who is educated, trained and who is unselfish, who is bright, who is hard-working and who loves this country. Therefore, my closing remarks would be that this legislation is managed and the resources to follow bear potential to develop us in here, beginning here and to so develop us that we can go the world over and prove that Barbados has the type of educational system, supported by institutions beyond secondary school that can really position Barbadians to be world leaders.

Mr. Speaker, with those modest remarks, I am deeply obliged to you. Thank you very much.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am obliged.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to support this Bill before the Honourable House and to say that I have listened very carefully to the last speaker, the

Honourable Member for St. James North and, as usual, he spoke eloquently. I heard the Honourable Member for St. James North in relation to the redevelopment of the Carnegie Free Library, within my Constituency in the City of Bridgetown at Coleridge Street, spoke about the nostalgic importance of that historic building and the need to rehabilitate it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would wish at this juncture to bring a little balance to the presentation of the Honourable Member for St. James North and to remind him and the public of Barbados that it was the Party to which the Honourable Member for St. James North subscribes that ruled this country, that formed the Government in the 14 years from 1994 to 2008, and in the last few years of the Barbados Labour Party Administration.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the same, said, Carnegie Free Library that the Honourable Member for St. James North speaks so passionately about was woefully neglected by his Barbados Labour Party Administration to the extent that valuable archival materials and priceless publications that were housed in the main library of our country was threatened in terms of termites, rodents, cockroaches, bookworms and other vectors. Sir, these books are priceless because many of them are out of print.

The main reference library, upstairs at the back of that library houses documents and books which are so precious that they could not be taken out of the library and these were threatened and the Barbados Labour Party sat idly by to the extent that workers of the National Library Service had to threaten industrial action to force that Administration to take action.

Sir, they closed the main library for years and that would have compromised the academic performance of students from the same "Waterford University", Harrison College, Lodge School, the University of the West Indies and all the schools on the island that would have used that main library for reference and research.

Asides.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Sir, of course, the residents of the City, who would use that Carnegie Library to engage in academic studies, be it research or even doing their homework, because in many of the houses in working-class districts, in the heart of Bridgetown next to the library building at Coleridge Street, the houses may be crowded. You have simple cardboard partitions that do not go up to the ceiling so they are not sound proof, so how could a young person be able to do their homework effectively if the television is going, or if the stereo is going and other members of the household are engaging in activities creating noise, it is not conducive to studying.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these persons would look forward to going into the public library where there is peace and quiet and where they could engage in their academic development.

H/A54/11.40 a.m. Sequence 10

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: The Barbados Labour Party Administration, let me reiterate adamantly, did not care about these people. They allowed the main library to remain closed for a number of years and this Democratic Labour Party Administration, headed by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, took the bull by the horns and made sure that the current location at Independence Square was properly retrofitted and is now open to the public. Thanks to the Democratic Labour Party and the foresight of the electorate of our country, to kick the Barbados Labour Party out of office. Sir, do not be fooled by that rhetoric. The record speaks for itself. I am very happy that we are now progressing in the right direction.

I remember as a student at the University of the West Indies, His Honour working very hard as a law student, actually employed on a part-time basis at the Front Desk of the Main Library at the University of the West Indies. I am no stranger to the Main Library, at Coleridge Street, as I worked for a number of years in that Library and the members of staff know me very well. I congratulate them for their dedicated service over the years.

Sir, I remember the late Chief Justice of our country, Sir William Douglas, at the time when he was Chief Justice attended to legal matters in the Supreme Court, in the Building next door, would come over to the main library and actually borrow books. I therefore congratulate that example and encourage Barbadians in general, young people and adults alike, to utilise the services of the Public Library more effectively. Not enough persons are actually reading.

I agree with those who say that knowledge is power and reading is not irrelevant, notwithstanding the current development in terms of technology. Many of these periodicals and other publications, as I said, are out of print and priceless. The knowledge captured within the pages of those periodicals are very critical to national development.

Sir, I remember touring the main library at Independence Square, at the Official Opening, and seeing the members of staff guarding carefully the West Indian collection stored in a special secured section of the library. There are encased in special cupboards that are under lock and key to ensure that they are not stolen.

Sir, in developed countries there are situations where callous members of the public go into public libraries and deface precious publication by tearing out pages and stealing books. Even at academic institutions there is this selfish greed to out-manoeuvre their competitors, so the security of this material is very important. Therefore, I support the legislation which seeks to strengthen the capacity of the Archives Department to secure these very precious archival documents.

Sir, the whole issue of the environment, the physical condition in which these documents are stored is very important, because we live in a tropical climate where there are high humidity and high temperatures and such combinations are very stressful to the longevity of the paper material on which these publications are made. It is important that the members of the Archives Department are properly trained to apply state-of-the-art best practices, in terms of the preservation of this very precious material. We really welcome this initiative to strengthen their ability in terms of accessing training internationally. The Advisory Committee is charged among other things with propelling this aspect of training.

I support the need for the mandate of the Archives Department to be not just limited to the location at Black Rock, but also to interface with other agencies and locations throughout the country, where very important archives may be located, be it academic libraries, Branch Libraries, the Main Library or private libraries, for example, in law offices, even Government's precious Cabinet Papers and other very sensitive public documents, which under the last Administration, would have been burnt, when they should be properly stored in the archives, at least recorded, photographed or microfilmed so that the information contained therein is not lost for future generations.

Sir, in the Pentagon, in the United States of America, in those developed countries, millions of dollars are spent in preserving the history, culture and legacy of those countries for future generations. We live in a reality today and take for granted that this information will be passed on to future generations, but the preservation of this archival material is a science and must be properly preserved. As I understand it, in those countries millions of dollars are spent to keep those archives as a national treasure and we in Barbados must not take it for granted.

In fact, we would have learnt that recent historians, people like Professor Sir Hillary Beckles publicly stated that a lot of his very outstanding research work and historical publications, which even challenged traditional perspectives that his predecessors would have made public and was accepted publicly, he was able to justify his research by reference to the Archives Department. That is very important.

Sir, I welcome the fact that within this legislation, the need to interface with the various public agencies, in terms of the review of the Freedom of Information Bill and so on is being considered seriously. Sir, even the issue of medical records, these are documents that are vital and important to preserve them in terms of the use of modern technology to ensure that the paper does not disintegrate and that information lost.

Sir, I will take this opportunity to encourage the public to become a little more conscious and aware of the need to really consider what material they may have in their families' possessions, to the extent that they may have archival value. I would encourage the Archives Department to engage in a public awareness programme so that members of the public would think twice before throwing away very important documents, be they old photographs, newspapers, magazines, letters or diaries. This is archival material that would be invaluable in years to come, that historians can rely on to really document the history of our country throughout the years.

Sir, when someone in the family expires and goes to the Great Beyond, their loved ones should not just throw away the contents of the house willy nilly, but invite the Archives Department to pay a visit and take what is necessary in a mutually agreeable manner.

Sir, we have private collections. For example, within the Headquarters of the Democratic Labour Party we have a very exciting Errol Barrow Memorial Gallery, with a host of photographs displaying the life and times of the late great Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, National Hero. I invite school children and other interested visitors to pay a visit to such an important historical institution, in terms of the library contents therein.

Sir, we as a public must seek to be more aware of the importance of preserving these archives.

Let me just take the opportunity to say that we, within the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, support the call for more persons to engage in reading.

H A54 11.50 a.m. Sequence 11

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

House A54, Sequence 12, 11.50 a.m.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: We celebrated Literacy Day with a very expansive programme at Queen's Park last year, where we had hundreds of school children coming and focussing on the importance of reading. I support and salute those schools that have taken the initiative, with their

limited resources, to open libraries within their respective schools.

I take this opportunity to invite the business sector and benevolent organisations, charities and so on, local and international, to adopt these schools and make donations of books or money to purchase books and other periodicals, that can really improve the stock of such material within these libraries.

Many of these libraries can even be expanded as reading rooms, in collaboration with their staff and their Parent Teachers' Association. I envisage that these rooms may be quiet, where students after school can have a quiet environment in which they can do their homework and research, and engender the real love for reading and research.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for example at Wesley Hall School within my Constituency, the staff there got an old bus specially redesigned with air-conditioning, and now it is their Library. The St. Ambrose School has a library, but it needs material. These schools are in the heart of Bridgetown where we have the big businesses, banks, insurance companies and the retail conglomerates. I call upon them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to plough back some of the profits, which the parents of these children would have given them through their patronage into the community and invest in the future of our children.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in closing, I would congratulate this Administration for taking this very important aspect of our archives seriously, and I, therefore, take this opportunity to fully support this Bill.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I rise to support this Amendment to the Archives Act Cap. 19B, and while the Amendment is in simulation to the Schedule to that Act, I believe that this amendment is of significant value. In reaching to formalise the relationship between the University of the West Indies and the Archives Department, is a very important move by the Government and for that, I wish to applaud the Government.

It is important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Archives Department obtains the benefit of existing institutions in Barbados such as the University of the West Indies, in relation to attaining its goal and obtaining its objectives. Certainly the inclusion of the Assistant Registrar of Archives and Records of the University of the

West Indies on the Advisory Committee of the Archives Department, can only redound to the benefit of that institution. I believe at this point that we also should look very carefully at widening that collaborative effort. We have existing in Barbados, a number of very irreplaceable documents.

If we look, for example, at the Supreme Court Library, unfortunately we have had to say in This Place, that because of the poor environmental conditions at the Old Supreme Court Library, we have actually lost a number of invaluable volumes of Law. I do not know that we would ever be able to place a dollar value on those materials that have been lost, but what we need to do to avoid calamities of that kind, is to foster better synergies and formalise them between the Archives Department, the Supreme Court Library and indeed, the University of the West Indies. Perhaps, if that relationship had existed, in relation to the archiving and the retention of appropriate duplicates and copies of manuals and volumes, this particular loss would not have been so excruciating.

Sir, this is my call and I expect that the Minister would consider my call and look very carefully at this, because I think the issue of preserving our heritage and history needs to be moved beyond just looking at the Archives Department. Indeed, we have to look a bit wider to ensure that when we empower the Advisory Committee of the Archives Department, that we create the appropriate environment by which the work the Department has to do, can be done to the benefit of all concerned.

The Honourable Member for St. James North made the point in his contribution, in relation to private institutions that themselves would have Archives Departments, and he made the call that we need to bring these private institutions on board to ensure that material of an historic, national or cultural nature, is brought under the actual remit of the Archives Department.

I believe that the legislative framework is already there for that, certainly in Section 10 of the Archives Act, there is provision already for the Chief Archivist to make calls also on private institutions, where it is believed that those institutions are keeping material of historic, cultural or literary value. I think the call by the Honourable Member is well put. It is just that we need to enforce the appropriate legislation which is there. Section 10 is very clear in terms of what it requires.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that in any amendment to the Archives Act and, indeed any look at our archival history and our archival management in Barbados, cannot be complete until we can, with some surety get a feel to the extent of the material in that Archives Department and, even in terms of both private and public

institutions, to which we are aware of the kind of archival material that is stored in the public and private sectors.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heard the Minister say that they are looking at evolving an appropriate Records Management Plan, but certainly part of that plan must be appropriate audits and inventory management across the public and private sector. The history of Barbados is far too important for us not to know what is out there, what departments of Government are using, or have in their custody, and what private institutions have in their custody. I believe that we need to have appropriate audits. We need to have appropriate inventory counts to ensure that public records and records of public importance are known and are preserved.

Certainly, if we were to have this kind of approach, which is crucial, even as it relates to the transition from one Government to another, we often hear of documents disappearing and documents being shredded and so on, as one Administration changes to the other and it is not known what is the extent of the importance of these documents and, whether or not there should be appropriate archival copies of documents.

Sir, if we have proper inventories, audits and even archiving of public documents, when certain persons known or unknown attempt to destroy documents, then in fact they will not be destroying the archival copies, but they would be destroying only the physical copies that are available to them.

Sir, today we are only dealing with an amendment of the Schedule to include the representation from the University of the West Indies.

House A54, Sequence 12, 12:00 noon

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: In reviewing the Act in its entirety, I believe that not many Barbadians have been fully educated in relation to the provisions of the Archives Act. I feel that in order for persons to really get a gist of the importance of the role of the Archives Department, the role of the Chief Archivist, for example, that we need to expose members of the public to the provisions of the Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the provision at Section 11 of the Act, which before I look at it, I was not aware of, requires persons to obtain licences issued by the Minister to export, take, send or cause to be exported, taken or sent out of Barbados any record, document or manuscript, or any printed matter of a historical, cultural or literary value.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is important because persons who may, without knowing, take materials out of

Barbados of that value may do so to the detriment of our heritage, therefore, it is important that these provisions of the Act are brought to the attention of persons.

The Act also makes provisions for the Chief Archivist to make known to the Minister a list of documents and materials that are of essential value. In other words, we should know as a Government of those very crucial materials that ought to be preserved. Perhaps, those very important archival materials which are kept at the Archives Department should become part of a Schedule to the Act.

I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we need to engage in that essential public awareness. I do not get the sense, the pulse and feel of the Archives Department and the Library Services. I feel that they need to do a bit more to let their presence be felt in Barbados because of the invaluable role they play. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that can only be done by public awareness so that Barbadians, particularly younger Barbadian persons in the primary and secondary schools, are aware of the importance of the Archives Department and by extension, the library.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the powers of the Chief Archivist under Section 5 of the Act are immense. The powers are such, that I am satisfied that once they are properly executed, we are in no danger of losing important materials and, we can move very confidently forward in terms of evolving an appropriate record management plan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, once we have done our task in terms of the proper outfitting of the Archives Department and the Library Services, we have to have in place appropriate systems to preserve the materials stored in those departments. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I need to be assured of this because I am not sure that is the case.

Across the world, countries that have important heritage, cultural and other materials in storage, by necessity, also have fire detection systems in place to ensure that in the event of a fire, it is detected quickly. I would like to know that our Archives Department is not destroyed and that a fire, once started, is detected quickly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my relationship with Cable and Wireless, I know that they have installed gas systems which are capable of not only detecting, but obliterating a fire.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in our approach to records management at the Archives Department and in our Library Services, we have to factor in fire and disaster prevention systems. I am aware that some of the materials from the Archives Department are stored, I believe, or was stored, in the vault of the Supreme Court. I think that as a matter of urgency we should ensure that the conditions under which

those materials are kept are such, that generations to come would not be deprived of valuable parts of our heritage.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this debate must be important because we cannot discuss archival information or archival management without linking that discussion to our culture, our communities and our histories. If we could get that relationship right, we would be engaging in an exercise that not only deals with the enlargement of the Advisory Committee, but one that would be relevant to Barbadians across communities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that we need to pay some attention to getting our communities more involved in what is the work of the Archives Department. If our culture is to be rich and to be further enriched, we have to take the Archives Department and the Library Services into our communities so that our people can better relate to what is happening at that Department.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we must also be engaged in data storage and data retention. The management plan in terms of our records must take into account the whole question of offsite storage. Maybe this is the case, but maybe the Minister needs to assure us that the Archives Department has in place appropriate and effective backup and offsite storage facility, so that in the event of disasters, we would not be at a sad loss. We should not put all of our eggs in one basket, therefore, we have to have materials preserved at different locations which is duplicated so that if one area is destroyed, we would not be at a sad loss.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, by extension, although somewhat outside of the ambit of this legislation, there is also the preservation of our buildings. Certainly, archival management cannot ignore our historic buildings in Barbados, some of which are not, in my view, being preserved in a manner that they should. There are communities across Barbados which, by virtue of their peculiar history, would have a number of historic buildings that we are not paying enough attention to.

There are many Government buildings as well that are of an historic nature that need to be preserved. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not convinced that we are paying enough attention to ensuring that they are preserved. That has to be done because it would redound, not only to the preservation of our heritage, but to evolving generations. Those to come must be able to connect with the past and where we came from as a people. We also have to do it because we are talking a lot about heritage tourism and so on these days.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister also made the point that there is a natural linkage between archives departments and library services, and I certainly agree with that. I believe that we have to spread the gospel of the

importance of reading. I agree that many of our young and senior persons are not reading enough. The question is: How do we get them to start reading again? It is not a problem that is constrained to our young people. There are many young people who I know who are very avid readers and then there are some who do not read enough. There are also older persons who believe that once they have gone past school age and university age, that they should no longer engage in reading. That myth, Mr. Deputy Speaker, needs to be removed from our psyche. Our challenge in terms of reading must not only extend to our younger persons, we must have a national awareness agenda, that engages older persons as well as the importance of reading.

House A54 Sequence 13

12.10 p.m.

Tuesday, February 01, 2010

Mr. S. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, for example, if Honourable Members of Parliament do not engage in reading, then the output of this Honourable Chamber becomes the weaker for it, and certainly the content of Hansard would also be weakened by our not engaging in reading.

Sir, the dynamics of a national programme to reignite interest in reading, must not be based on naive standards and so on. We have a number of libraries across Barbados. My knowledge of those libraries is that they have remained the same over the many years.

Sir, in relation to the question of computerising the libraries, therefore, creating interesting outreach programmes to engage persons to utilise our libraries, we need to do more of that. We need to deploy more mobile libraries across Barbados. In my Constituency, for example, there is no library, the closest, I believe, is in Oistins. Therefore, we certainly are in need of more mobile library facilities across Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that our approach in 2010, to the issue of reading cannot be the same approach as would have obtained in 1970 or 1980. We cannot ignore, for example, that we are in the era of fast technology. We are in the era of the Internet. We are in the era of the ipod and all the various electronic gadgets, therefore, we have to find interesting ways to use these gadgets.

We have to find interesting ways of using the Internet to attract persons back to reading, whether by means of promotion, by using appropriate electronic means of capturing important elements of reading material and repeating it on programmes that can be used on ipods and other gadgets. These are ways in which we can start to rekindle interest in reading across Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the objectives of the National Library Service is to ensure that the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the community can have equitable access to information resources. Sir, if I may say, it is perhaps the most important objective of the National Library Service in Barbados. Therefore, my question is, how far are we in terms of pursuing that objective?

Sir, there are many private Barbadians who have their libraries, they are sufficiently well-off to have their own libraries. There are many Barbadians who have enough cash available to them to purchase their own books as they travel to and from Barbados. There are also many Barbadians, who because of their impoverished situation, are unable to purchase books and periodicals, sometimes even unable to purchase newspapers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the challenge, therefore, which is before us in terms of the National Library Service, is that it has to fill that void. My question is how has the library service been filling that void?

Sir, we need to brain storm and to look at fresh ideas in relation to how we can actually get to communities, how we can get to schools, both primary and secondary schools, in relation to ensuring that we can provide appropriate reading material. Sir, I stress the word appropriate because very often there may be reading material, but in my view, far too much of the reading available to under-aged persons is inappropriate material, and we have to find a way to manage that as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, inviting our younger people to read more on their own is futile, if we leave out the responsibility of the parents. If parents in our homes are not engaged in reading, if parents are not seen by their charges to be reading, then their children will not be interested in reading.

Sir, that is important. Therefore, if we are going to engage in an awareness programme in relation to reading exercises, we cannot only do it by targetting our youngsters, we have to find ways in which we can target both our youngsters and their parents. We can perhaps evolve programmes by which we have reading sessions, or reading conventions, where both parents and children are involved in that exercise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in our Outreach Programme to our primary schools, for example, some of our primary schools do not have the kind of reading materials that they should have. In fact, I do not know of many primary schools that have libraries. I know that several secondary schools have libraries, but I think we are making a very crucial mistake if we are not going to focus our attention in relation to the creation of libraries at our primary schools. I believe, in fact, that should be where we should focus our

priorities in relation to the development of libraries across Barbados.

We need to have libraries at our primary school level. We need to find the collaborative funding for it, whether that funding comes from the public purse or from collaborative private sector and international agency funding, but we have to place some priority on equipping our primary schools with libraries. We may also have to find ways of using our Internet online systems to create the kind of catalogues in relation to what we have in our libraries.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, regarding our National Library services, I believe you should be able to go online, even within your own home setting and choose books which are appropriately catalogued online. There can be a system where those books may even be delivered to your home, at a nominal fee, of course. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are talking of finding ways of generating income and revenue, that is a way that the library services can make money by providing books by virtue of online ordering and delivering books to homes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we certainly have to do a bit more in terms of the public awareness of our Archives Department and our library services. We cannot ignore the need to automate our branch libraries and find ways in which they can speak electronically to each other. Those branch libraries I believe need to be more modernised, to ensure that they can deliver what we are saying they should deliver.

Sir, regarding the materials in those libraries, we have to seek to continue to refresh the reading materials in our branch libraries, the ones that we are seeing our youngsters, particularly from these communities going into, to get those materials.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, from time to time, I still go into some branch libraries, but I still see some of the same books in there. Some youngsters tell me they have already read those books. Therefore, we have to find some way of refreshing the materials in our libraries, so that they can remain relevant and interesting to our youngsters.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in conclusion, I voice my support for this Amendment. I believe that the debate must capture the imagination of our youngsters in particular, because I believe there is a wealth of historical data which they need to connect with, but that they cannot do so if the Archives Department remains a partly-secretive department somewhere beyond their reach. We have to find a way of bringing the Archives Department and what it has in there to the attention of our youngsters.

As we know, our youngsters are attracted by things that are appropriately packaged, so the challenge for us is to appropriately package the Archives Department and the library services, in a manner that they will become more attractive and interesting, so that they become part of what our people require to achieve full developmental status.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

12.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

SUSPENSION

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

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

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

H/A54/12.24 p.m. Sequence 15

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would be remiss of me if I did not get involved in this very important matter, a subject that is before this Honourable Chamber today. I really believe that the essence of this debate borders significantly on the cultural realm. It is against that background that I find this debate to be a very significant and interesting one.

Sir, I want to say that the Department of Archives must be commended for the safe keeping of our cultural and historical records, since that Department is responsible for the storage of records. This information, over a period of time, would have impacted on the lives of our citizens. The remit of the Department is that it will continue to do so.

Sir, I want to really take this debate without going out of the confines and realms of what the debate is cast in, against a background of an examination of what culture is, as we see it. This Dictionary purports that culture could be defined as a people's way of life, which in my view must be properly and accurately documented and kept for safe and important use after a period of time. It must also serve

from generation to generation. It is against that background that I would want to use this occasion to certainly commend the University of the West Indies for implementing a memory bank.

All the historical records in Barbados and the great historical developments in this country, the cultural norms, as we know it, have been stored in a memory bank at the University of the West Indies. I really want to commend Professor Carl Watson and the University of the West Indies, for implementing this memory bank.

Sir, significantly to note also is, the National Assistance Board has also implemented a Senior Citizens Memory Bank. That is to preserve the memories and to give an accurate historical account of activities that took place in Barbados, the 1937 Riots, Hurricane Janet, the infamous "little Riot", as I call it, that took place in November 1966, when the Supremes came up the Shallow Draft and then a mini riot happened in Barbados. Sir, who else, in my view, that we could turn to in terms of the preservation of those kinds of historical records. Those persons who are currently alive, rather than waiting until they are deceased, because these persons have actually experienced these great historical happenings that occurred in this country. Therefore, I really want to commend the National Assistance Board for implementing this memory bank that actually taps in on the memories of our senior citizens and preserve them for posterity.

H A54 1.40 p.m. Sequence 16

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

House A54, Sequence 17, 1.40 p.m.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, we come to this Honourable Chamber every Tuesday and depending on the level of debate, sometimes we come two days a week. Sometimes in one month, we attend Sittings six or seven times, particularly during the Estimates Debates and, Sir, one of the most wonderful archival storage is right here in this Honourable Parliament. Our library staff should certainly be commended for the work that they are doing, in terms of the storage of the information and having it accurately documented in the most important book in Barbados called, Hansard.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if any of us have a difficulty in finding out what we have said, or if any of us want to research a particular area, or possibly some of the greatest statesmen that we in this country have ever witnessed, who would have sat in this Honourable Chamber, we could refer to Hansard. As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at any time that we have any doubts about what actually occurred in this Chamber then we could refer to the book of Hansard, which is the parliamentary Bible.

I am saying, Sir, that over the years, those persons who have documented, kept and researched everything that has been done for this Honourable Chamber that we too, must use this occasion to commend them and congratulate them because our keeping of records - and I have gone to a number of Parliaments in the Caribbean - is certainly of the very highest standard in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to support the idea of the implementation of a National Records Management System, where all of these records are feeding into one national system, and then at anytime, based on your respective discipline, you go to this one central location and get the information that you need.

More important, Sir, it is critical that we start updating the technology because a lot of the technology, in terms of the storage of information, could very well be outdated. Mr. Deputy Speaker, CBC is a classic example of this and, certainly, the storage of information, the keeping and improving of the technology is critical. Sir, I am saying that against a background that Barbadians my age and over, as some of them my age and younger and my age would be the equation where a question mark would be put against it. I leave it just as a hypothesis.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that you will remember the Brathwaites of Black Rock. Sir, that series should be stored and kept for posterity forever and ever. The Brathwaites of Black Rock was a classic on Rediffusion at the time, and on CBC in its early days, when thousands of Barbadians used to tune into the Brathwaites of Black Rock. Perhaps, Sir, the preservation of our archival cultural material, particularly in the area of drama is very critical.

Sir, I remember Earl Loveless' production of "The Wine of Astonishment," which primarily researched and documented the shouters, what we call the Spiritual Baptist Movement, then in Trinidad and to a point, Sir, it was done in Barbados, under the aegis of the Pinelands Creative Workshop.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of our great artistic directors and certainly a writer of tremendous merit, was part of that production team. I am speaking of no less than the late Earl Warner. The production was written by another Earl, Earl Loveless. He was a Trinidadian. He is still living and is still writing great works. Sir, that production, "The Wine of Astonishment," was done at the Parkinson Secondary School, under the Pinelands Creative Workshop, which transformed the centre of that school into a dramatic theatre setting.

Sir, that masterpiece of work was done there, and all of the schools from across Barbados were invited because that year, it was the classic piece on stage for the CXC

Examination, so the children who came and watched the theatrical production of "The Wine of Astonishment," were better able to understand what the production and the works of Earl Loveless were about. Sir, certainly, we have to use drama as that kind of educational medium.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, last night our CBC television showed the production of, "Snakes and Grasshoppers."

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central watched it last night.

I am sure that if the Honourable Member watched it last night, he would have seen a familiar figure in this Honourable Chamber also practising the craft and playing a very pivotal role, in terms of the dramatic presentation. Sir, that Honourable Member is currently on his feet, speaking in this Honourable Chamber.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was a very serious production that dealt with the whole problem of HIV/AIDS in Barbados. It was very critically acclaimed throughout the Caribbean. Sir, that production was written by Mr. Anthony Hinkson and directed by Darcy Boyce. Mr. Anthony Hinkson is probably the most underrated writer in the Caribbean.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: He was a teacher at the Garrison Secondary School. He worked tirelessly in Barbados and at some point in time, we must honour Mr. Anthony Hinkson for the work that he has done. I could call a whole set of work that he has done, from "Bulldozer," which won the Esso Arts Festival, and we could go down the line to the production "Snakes and Grasshoppers." The next one I am going to talk about he also wrote, called, "Of Age and Innocence." I consider this to be a masterpiece. Sir, that production in the 1990s dealt with the current problem of youth violence and gang violence in Barbados.

I remembered when Mr. Anthony Hinkson wrote it, we were sent on a schedule to research if what the writer says is really occurring in our society. Sir, when the research came back and the Pinelands Creative Workshop adopted the production for stage in 1991, Lil Rick at the time had a song called, "Me Don't Know, Me Don't Know How the Youth Get So." People at that time were amazed to find out what was really happening. They wondered if this is a factitious piece of work, or this is actually what is happening in Barbados. We were challenged by the Royal Barbados Police Force at the time. We were challenged by

the teachers at the time. We were challenged by the nurses at the time.

Do you know what? Every single account of that production “Of Age and Innocence,” which is still being kept in the CBC Archives, is proof over the years what we concluded to be correct and what would have happened, “Of Age and Innocence.” In fact, Kevin Hinds who is now at STARCOM Network Sports, was the main actor in it and I played a smaller role at the time but it was a fantastic production. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am speaking within the context of storing this information so that future generations would be able to see what was happening and occurred in Barbados at that time.

In addition to that, Sir, there is a wonderful group of old people in Barbados whose average life span is around 82 years old and they are still into performing dramatic productions. I think a production that they did, which was well-directed and written by Mr. Winston Farrell, using the medium of popular theatre turned out to be a masterpiece. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was adopted by the BBC as a critical piece of work on ageing in the Caribbean. This production was known as “Golden Towers.”

Sir, Golden Towers reflected the problems of ageing in a Caribbean Society. This also could be preserved as a piece for study, particularly for students in the area of gerontology.

House A54, Sequence 17, 1.50 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Barbados must never be made to forget the works in terms of archival pieces of the late “Eggie” Clarke who was one of our pioneer actors in Barbados. Marvo Manning also did a lot of dramatic work, “Dumplings in the Stew” and “Pampalam”. There is also Andrea Gollop.

Right now, Sir, there is no actor in Barbados that has a more impressive stage record in terms of performances and the interpretation of the character than Tony Thompson. In fact, Tony Thompson is considered to be the greatest person, not only to interpret a line, but to ad-lib at any point in time and still keep within context of the character that he is portraying.

It is against that background, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am saying that the works of these great Barbadians, such as Jeanette Layne-Clarke with “Pampalam” must be preserved. Jeanette Layne-Clarke was my friend up until the last day she died. We actually shared the same birthday, not birth date. Mr. Deputy Speaker, whenever we sat down to talk, it used to be always confrontational until she found out that she had the same birthday as me and I

said, “All you doing is quarrelling wid yuhself all de time”. We had that kind of exchange, but she was a brilliant woman.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I read also Austin “Tom” Clarke. I have a distinct fear of flying, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was very afraid to fly from here going to London, but someone gave me a book and told me to read it and that they were sure that I was going to read it out twice before I land in London. It was a book called “Growing Up Stupid Under the Union Jack” by Austin “Tom” Clarke.

When you are reading that book, people would feel that you are a mad man because you would be laughing uncontrollably to yourself, having lived through that colonial period and living now and understanding what happened then. The way that he put over the characters in the book, it was so real and so living, that by the time the plane landed at Gatwick Airport I was a happy man. That was one flight that I enjoyed.

Austin “Tom” Clarke’s works should be preserved for all Barbadians because they are classic works. He was just honoured by the Canadian Government. He produced a marvelous book called “The Polish Hope” that we all should read. These are Barbadians. Mr. Deputy Speaker, these writers, particularly Austin “Tom” Clarke, depict the Barbadian society as we know it and promote Barbados through their works in a very fashionable way that meets the marketplace in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a new author in Parliament in the form of the Honourable Member for St. James North, the Honourable Rawle Eastmond. He has a classic book out called “Yard Fowl”. It is a political satire, if there is such a thing as a political satire. I have read the book.

I am not using this as a commercial, I am in the process of adapting and directing that production for stage, but before it comes on stage, I am just asking everybody to come and view the production. I am working along with Mr. Tony Thompson on the production. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a wonderful piece of work because in the opening chapters of the book the characters are very, very familiar. When you read it, it is going to be very, very interesting.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a programme on radio that is really archival material called “Looking Back”. “Looking Back” goes way back. It taps on the memories of the seniors. It really takes you through a journey of past Barbados. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is amazing the number of stories, items, relics and things that are exposed to Barbadians that refreshes the memories of Barbadians.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really believe that Mr. Mark Williams is a resource person in a sense unequal presently in Barbados, simply because of this programme, and that is his life. I am saying that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation should improve the technology and preserve and reserve these tapes, because after a time, these tapes get worn, they catch fungi, et cetera. Sir, these are persons whose work we must look at and preserve.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the area of senior citizens drama, at some point in time, we would have to look at Beryl Bridgeman, who is 86 years old, who sees good, has a fantastic memory and retains 25 pages of lines like if it is a recitation. She is a fantastic woman and a fantastic actress.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: There are also persons like Sylvia Rogers who is now a patient of the District Hospital, but she was a wonderful actress. These persons are all averaging around 86 years old.

I would like, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the good Lord preserves my life to reach that age, that I too would have that kind of memory, that I would be able to recall lines and events like they do. It is a fascinating thing sitting among them and recounting stories.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also have a young man at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation named Sherwood McCaskie. His productions on television are well watched and well liked by all Barbadians. Whether it is a Government Information Service, or a Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation production, Barbadians are totally impressed with this young man's work, his voice, his presentation and the way he does it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a resource person in the area of information that we must tap into his work and preserve.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, against that background, as I am about to conclude, I think it is critical at this point in time that Barbados develops a writers' workshop again. We have a lot of writers. Importantly enough and significantly enough, there are many Barbadians who are writing and producing their own works now.

Every month you could go to Cave Shepherd and there is a book signing going on. The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation has a wonderful programme called "Book Talk", where they highlight some of Barbados' best writers. In fact, if you are a writer, your work is highlighted on CBC television.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that we should get our young people interested in writing plays and short stories for stage and cinema. A recent report in the Times

Magazine highlighted that last year the entertainment business in the United States of America alone grossed more than \$14 billion. There is a new production called "Avatar" on which \$320 million was spent and it is grossing at this point, and still counting, over \$3 billion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Jamaica's film and cultural industries every year gross well over \$50 million, which is the latest figure coming out of Jamaica. We are not talking about Jamaican dollars, we are talking the equivalent to Barbados dollars.

Every major American production when there is a scene that comes by the sand or by the Caribbean, whether it is for television or the big screen, goes to Montego Bay. Next to them is Barbados. However, because Barbados is a little expensive, they are only referring to Barbados in script writing, "Why not let us go to Barbados" "You know where Bridgetown is", et cetera.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we now have to develop a very serious film industry in Barbados. Barbadians have so much talent and so much creativity now, in my mind, more than ever, that we could put those skills to work and develop a very serious film industry.

House A54 Sequence 18

2.00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, a young Barbadian lady that used to work in the Civil Service just did a marvelous production. Sir, without hearing or seeing the production, one would think it is an ordinary production, but when I view the production, it was an extraordinary production.

Sir, it is a very, very serious thing. I am thinking that the time has come now that we start investing outside of the box, into extraordinary things that could impact seriously on Barbadians and bring not only jobs, but improve, significantly, our tourist product by using these kinds of approaches, methodologies and interventions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I was a young boy, some people would say young rebel, in the Pine, there was a time when you had a drama festival in Barbados. It was a serious drama festival in the communities across Barbados and the best productions were carried to the Steel Shed in Queen's Park. It used to be called the "Esso Arts Festival".

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, the fact is that we should develop a drama festival in Barbados. This is critical

because it provides not only work for the actor or actress, but for the writer and the director.

Sir, a lot of people may know Darcy Boyce and I want to use this occasion to speak about Darcy Boyce. He is gifted technically, but he is also a wonderful director and that is where his real craft lies. His real craft lies in direction, in my view. Sir, it provides work for back stage groups, the technical people in terms of lighting and sound, and this is an area we must develop, the whole area of technical theatre.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Barbados, we should have a technical theatre school or a vocational school in the arts programme, or a general technical arts programme introduced at the University of the West Indies, or at any of the tertiary institutions, or sixth form level in Barbados. Sir, drama and culture is a people's way, as itemised within the dictionary.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like very much to see us introduce something called the "Prime Minister's Best Community Competition", Sir, the best community competition in the area of drama and dance coming together and poetry and calligraphy. Sir, you are bringing these art forms together and you are doing them at the community level. Let us say that if Pinelands is in a particular zone, you compete, you send your judges to the various communities, you judge them in the communities, you extract the best work and bring them to the finals.

The winner of that particular competition would be given the Minister's or Prime Minister's trophy for the best community in Barbados. Sir, that could be expanded in all realms and all disciplines. Sir, you could look at a number of other things. It could be expanded to include the disciplines of agriculture and the disciplines of sports. You could spread it right across, but the most popular medium now among young people in Barbados is the artistic form. Sir, almost 90 per cent of Barbadian young people believe they are artistes.

If we set up recording studios across Barbados in the resource centres in Barbados and give young people the opportunity to sing "Ba, Ba, Black Sheep, Have You Any Wool", then put a rhythm to it in a reggae beat or a dub beat, you would be surprised. We are living in a time when we have the most talented young people in the Caribbean. I have no problem in saying that and it keeps emerging day after day, the fantastic talents of our young people and not only of performance, production, et cetera.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just brought this before this Honourable Chamber because I found this debate as introduced by the Honourable Minister of Culture who, in my view, is doing a fantastic job. I really do not think that we could find someone that would do the job like him.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: I am getting too old. My thing is to tell the truth and nothing but the truth. Sir, I am saying that not only is this Minister of Culture doing a good job, but he is accessible. If there is a cock fight in a community this Minister is there. Sir, not only that, but this Minister tries to help you. If you have a good idea and he thinks it is workable, he would assist you. He would throw the weight of his Ministry behind you. Sir, I could talk about it because I know.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am saying that if the development of the arts, if the whole notion of the reformation of the culture arts in Barbados, the reformation of the development and storage of archival information, therefore, these items that I put forward before, should also be examined.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I am about to take my seat, I just want to say that there are two artistes in Barbados that I believe their material should be stored. Sir, every calypso that is written by these two men border on another abstract art form that we have in Barbados. Sir, I am talking about the "Mighty Gabby" and "Plastic Bag".

Sir, at any time, you could take their calypso and transform it easily into folk music. You just change a rhythm from 6/8 and bring it down a little bit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was a time in the history of Barbados where, between the 1960s and the 1970s, Barbados had about 200 bands practising. Sir, I have every one of them documented.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two more minutes.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, I have every one of them documented. Sir, a lot of people do not know that the Honourable Member for St. Philip West is a good musician and that the Honourable Member for St. Philip North is a very good musician. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also see the Speaker, for whom you are deputising, in the paper with the bass drums. Sir, against that background we all have the right to develop from in Parliament. I cannot say this because the newspapers might take it out of context, but together we can come up with a parliamentary band, if necessary.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will conclude by saying thanks for giving me the time. This is an interesting debate that has been brought before this Honourable Chamber by the Minister of Culture. I want to commend him for it and hope that some of these measures would seriously be taken into consideration.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you.

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

Dr. the Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to speak as today we debate this Bill amending the Archives Act. We have heard much today on the significance of the Archives and we have heard of its impact on culture, and we have also touched on the library.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would just like to use this opportunity afforded me to add a few thoughts, especially about the Archives. I want to start by encouraging more Barbadians to visit the Archives and to use the Archives.

Sir, hopefully our debate here today and any coverage coming out of this debate would increase the awareness of the Archives, the significance of the Archives and the work they are doing there and encourage more Barbadians to go and avail themselves of the information there.

H/A54/2.10 p.m. Sequence 19

Tuesday, February 01, 2010

Dr. The Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think one of the benefits of the Department of Archives is certainly the strengthening of families and by extension, communities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I visit in my Constituency and at funerals, I have been noticing that many people are now trying to connect with other family members. As people go to funerals, they are now establishing that perhaps you and they might be connected. Sir, more and more people are becoming interested in these family connections, many people are now trying to establish family trees.

Sir, whenever I go to a funeral, I recognise that there are people I had not noticed who were my family. Certainly over the past few years my family connections have certainly grown. Indeed, a lot of that happens when we go to funerals, we recognise that you and somebody may be connected.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I was saying to someone at lunch today that as we all start to do our family trees, we might realise that we are all connected in some way or the other. I know, for example, in St. George, there are a lot of interconnections in families. Sir, people are trying to establish family trees by putting out information on the Internet, so that members of their families living overseas,

the United States of America or the United Kingdom, can establish links.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, people are doing that without the benefit of the Department of Archives, many have not actually gone to the Archives to trace their family trees, and that is something I want to encourage more Barbadians to do. In fact, a lot of the information is repositied in the elderly. We had a family reunion last year where I met with members of my family. As we tried to sit back and trace our family tree, too often we would hear somebody saying: "Do you know who would know? Auntie this," but sadly she has gone to her grave.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we hear things like that coming up a lot. That information has been repositied in the elderly, without a lot of it being passed on and so, it is lost. Sir, I want to encourage, not only the use of the Department of Archives, but also that passing on of family stories, history and information. That certainly will help us to establish stronger family ties.

We speak of the demise of the extended family and of the breakdown of families, not just in Barbados, but beyond, but one of the things that will keep us bound is when we can share that information, when we can pass on that information. We have tools such as the Internet, we have Face Book, we need to be able to use that technology to establish family ties.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I put my name on the Internet and found connections overseas. People whom I did not even know or saw the name and corresponded and we realised there is family connection there. Sir, we need to use what information and technology we have to establish family connections. As I said, there are people of my generation who are now establishing family connections.

Sir, establishing family connections is also important for our youths. Many of our young people are growing up and for them their family maybe mummy, daddy, one or two siblings and perhaps grandparents, but it is very nuclear. Not enough of them are realising the extended family, so that as we are now reaching the stage where we want to reach out and find other members of our family, we need to bring our children in as well. We need to let them know that they belong to a family.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, we had a reunion in my family, the Belle family, where my children also went. I thought it was important for them to do that. Certainly I talk to my children, especially with a name like Suckoo, for them to know that even though their name differ, that they belong to a family, that they realise they have family connections that are strong and solid. It is important for our young people to know that they belong. It is a cultural identity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think when we lament some of the issues that we have with our young people, even when we talk to our young people about some of the things they want to see, they want employment and recognition, but a lot of them also cannot identify with our culture, they cannot identify the Bajanness. Sir, when they cannot do that, other cultural forces can draw them. Therefore, many of our young people may find it easier to be attracted to North American culture, because that is something to which they better connect. They identify with that culture, that culture means more to them than our own Bajan culture. Therefore, we need to use opportunity such as this to ensure that our children know that they belong, that they have solid roots, that they did not just spring up out of nowhere, that they belong to a community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also need to use some of the stories that our foreparents would have gone through. In many of our families, we have some incredible stories of what our foreparents would have gone through, perhaps only to establish something for themselves, like a small plot of land or securing a job. There might have been some incredible stories that have not been passed on to the young people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of these stories may have stayed on with the older folks and some of it may have died, but I want to encourage us to start talking more about families, to start connecting. We often do not connect with what we would call the outside family and so, there are a lot of families that we do not know we have because we have not connected with them. I dare say if we do that, we would realise that we are even more of a family because the family tree roots are spread very widely.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to recognise that our young people are assets to our culture, therefore, we need to encourage them to recognise their cultural identity. When we talk in this Region about the youth, when we talk about culture, we have to realise that some of the people who make a statement as far as culture goes, would have done so when they were very young. We talk of some of our writers, singers or spokesmen, when they made their mark, many of them were very young. Sir, for example, Dereck Walcott and George Lamming were in their 20s when they did their novel and play respectively.

Sir, our young people are right at the peak of being able to express themselves. We see young people like Rihanna and Hal Linton, who are making a cultural break for themselves. Indeed, the criticism has been made that as they do so, there is nothing Bajan to their stamp. They are going out there making a mark, but nothing that they do says Barbados. Sir, that is another debate. Indeed, as our young people are now poised to be able to make their mark on the world, it is important that they identify with

Barbadianness. They need to understand and identify with that, so that it comes across in whatever they do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know that Rihanna always speaks of being a Barbadian and she always wants rotis from Chefette, but we need to ensure that our children understand daily what it is to be Barbadian. Therefore, for that to happen, many of our generation needs to appreciate that as well. Sir, this is where the Department of Archives comes in.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South just spoke of some of the other expressions of culture that can portray for us what it was and what it is to be Barbadian. Sir, some time in 2008, the Government Information Service did a mobile cinema. That touched a lot of people because it brought back memories. That is something I would like to see again.

Sir, having done that, a lot of people missed it, but having heard about it, created a lot of excitement. That is something we would like, we would like our young people to become involved.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when our young people saw it, many of them were intrigued, they could not believe this is what we did in place of going to a cinema. This is not something that they would relate to. Sir, not only the art form and that old mobile aspect of it, but also the images that were portrayed are images that we need to get across to our young people. We need to use other opportunities to portray that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these things may come on the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation television, but we have to realise that our young people may not always watch channel 8; they may have their movies and music on their ipods and so, they can be very selective to what they want to listen to or watch. Therefore, we have to find ways of appealing to them and ways of getting this information across to them.

2.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Dr. The Hon. E. R. BYER-SUCKOO: That is where the Library comes in as well. The whole purpose of reading and the importance of reading that was mentioned before, but I would just like to support some of the comments made.

It was mentioned that the Valley Library in St. George is being repaired. It is not in my Constituency, but it serves St. George, and I am a proud member, a cardholder. I still have my tickets for the Valley Library. My children grew up using that library and I am pleased to

see that it is being repaired. It has been a long time in coming. Ever since the Post Office moved out, we knew that was earmarked for repair. So yesterday they were busy boxing up the books to move down to the Valley Resource Centre where I gather, that from tomorrow, they would be open for business again. Sir, other libraries are in need of maintenance.

Sir, when I was little we had a Mobile Library. The Mobile Library came to the Ellerton Playing Field every other Tuesday and that created some excitement for us. I remember that on those Tuesdays my Mom and other parents would meet their children outside the school. We would walk across from Ellerton Primary School, it was then called St. Lukes/Ellerton Primary School. We would walk across with our parents as we crossed the busy main road and go to the playing field to meet the Mobile Library. That was a time of excitement. You carried your books. You returned them. You searched through all the books, you got new ones and as you graduated from two tickets to three tickets and so on, you got these books and went home.

Sir, the Library was not only exciting, it was not only the books, but it was for many of us what our parents made it. My mother would come with us and help us select books and we would look for exciting and interesting-looking books. We would go home and Mummy would read with us as we were little. I want to encourage parents.

Too many of us use reading as a punishment for our children. When our children are making too much noise, or they are fighting a bit too much, we say to them, go and read a book. When they are squabbling over the DVD or the PSP or whatever it is, we say, turn it off, go and read a book. So we use the book as a form of punishment and that sends the wrong signal to our children.

Sir, those of us here know the value of reading. We know the words that have been unlocked in the pages of books, but for our children, we use it as a form of punishment. They could never enjoy it like that. Indeed, we need to create a different setting for reading.

I want to encourage parents, from the time your children are little, before they can even read, introduce them to the world of books. The books need not have words. There are age-appropriate ways of introducing books. You take your new born and you have a book at that time, the child does not even understand, but being in your lap and hearing you read, that is the connection.

There is a positive connection with that book. They identify positive images with reading. As they grow, a few months to a year or two years, you get books that may have one word. You buy colourful books that may say Dog, House or whatever, and you encourage them. Just read the

words and show them the pretty pictures. As they grow up you let them turn the pages, just introducing them to what a book is, the colour of the book. Make up stories because it may be just a picture book.

The child may not be able to read a thing yet. It does not cost you a lot. Many parents say they do not buy books because they are expensive. It does not have to cost a lot. Borrow a book from the Library. It costs absolutely nothing unless you are over due and even then, the over due fee at the Library is very minimal.

Sir, I would know, because I do not get to the Library nowadays on time to return my books, so I am constantly paying over due fees. Thankfully the fee has not been revised upwards so I still get away with only having to pay a few pennies.

Sir, I said all that to encourage parents to open the world of reading for their children. Do not let it be an arduous task. Let there be a time when they can sit with a brother, sister, mummy, daddy or granny, and just read. Even if you as a parent cannot read very well, first of all we do have opportunities for adult learning, and parents I want you to take advantage of those opportunities as well.

Sir, as I said, just showing them a book with a pretty picture, getting them involved in turning the pages of a book, seeing the colours and the pages come alive, just do that for our children to learn to appreciate books. Take them to the Library. Make that a family trip.

As I said, I learn my love for books was every other Tuesday, crossing the busy highway to go to Ellerton Playing Field to meet the Mobile Library. That opened the world of books for me because, as I said, my Mom would sit with me and read those books. Sir, we need to encourage people to avail themselves of the Library. I want to commend the Ministry of Community Development and Culture for the attention to our libraries. The National Library was mentioned, the Valley Library, the Glebe, St. George, and other libraries across this country that are in need of attention.

I am glad to see that many schools and Churches have started little libraries. Very often, with the help of the PTAs and other members of the community, people bringing, perhaps their used books and donating them to the libraries. Communities are starting libraries as well. That is a good sign to encourage parents even if you are not an avid reader, encourage your children to read because it really then speaks to their education. As we talk about our young people identifying with our culture, that is where they can get the West Indian literature.

Again, many of our children may read, but they will read novels written by very popular American Authors, but

there are some wonderful West Indian books. As I said, you can get them at the library. You do not have to buy them. Expose them to our Region through that culture. Some of it is being made into film, but we always know that what you see on film, and what you read in the book is never quite the same thing.

Sir, I would, again, like to support this amendment to the Bill. We heard about the amendment, but we also support the work of the Ministry in the Archives, Libraries, through culture, in its various forms, for the strengthening of our families, by extension the strengthening of our communities and certainly, what is dear to me is the strengthening of our youth, helping them to identify with our local as well as our Regional culture and heritage, helping them to identify with their family heritage, with whom they are, letting them know that they belong. Our youth need today to establish their identity, who they are and where they belong, they belong to something bigger than themselves, they belong to a community.

Sir, we have heard Sociologists and Psychologists say that one of the reasons gangs may be so attractive to our young people is because this group accepts them. This is a group which gives them a sense of belonging. We need in our families and communities to establish for our young people that sense of belonging and identity from which they can grow. When they know they belong to something, when they know that it is bigger than themselves, it was before them and it will go on long after them. When they appreciate that, then they would look at what they do and who they are in a bigger context, that would help our youth.

Sir, a lot of challenges we are facing today as a Government, social practitioners, community groups, Churches, schools, teachers and everyone who has a contact with our youth. We understand that if our youth appreciated more the culture in which they operate, the society to which they belong, then we would be able to influence them. The drug culture may not be as attractive, the gang culture may not be as attractive because they appreciate a sense of identity and a sense of belonging.

Sir, with those few words I would like again to add my support to this Bill. Thank you.

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

Mr. J.D. PAUL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a few comments on this Bill which is to amend the Archives Act. One of the things that is very important, I believe in a debate like this, is to probably put it in perspective because very often the whole question of archiving in Barbados is something that we can easily forget and underestimate its own importance.

H A54 2.30 p.m. Sequence 21

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

House A54, Sequence 22, 2.30 p.m.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: In that regard, I would want to say that the archivists should be given much credit, in terms of trying to preserve Barbados, and helping those persons who might want to research whom we are as a nation.

Sir, very often we have the question being asked, who are we as a nation, by what we would call social practitioners in some cases, when something tragic happens in our nation's history. Very often, Sir, when that happens, we have to turn to the archives in terms of understanding who we are as a nation.

The other point too, Sir, I would wish to make in terms of trying to emphasise the importance of archiving is that very often, if we do not look back at our past and understand what has happened, the mistakes that we made in the past, if we do not understand why we made them, we could also commit them in the future. In that respect, Sir, I would want to emphasise that we have to give great importance to the whole question of archiving.

Sir, we spoke about reading and our institution of the library is where we have been documenting a lot of things that happened in the past. I remember as a boy from Wesley Hall going to join the Bridgetown library. Sometimes you grow up and you do not understand the role that is actually being part of the library, having access to the documentation that is there and the role that it played, in terms of shaping your character and shaping your understanding of the society in general.

Sir, when you look at the section where you have a lot of important documents archived, sometimes a young person going inside there does not form a true appreciation of its importance. In that regard, I also want to make a plug, because one of the things that we as a society have been criticised for and a lot has been said, is that we are not a reading society.

As a matter of fact, one of the things I did when I first entered politics, Sir, is that going around within St. Michael West Central and speaking generally to parents and to young people, I really got the sense that in our Barbadian society, there seems to be a lack of appreciation for the importance of reading.

I would just go to the reference made by the Honourable Member for St. George South in relation to the fact that in some households, reading is being taken as a punishment, rather than trying to help youngsters to understand that very often you can actually travel to far-off

places, and understand varying cultures through reading a book.

I want to go back to my experience in the Constituency because in travelling through St. Michael West Central, I began to understand that in this society, we need to have a kind of movement to encourage young people to get back to reading, because even as a people, we are noted for not really embracing reading in itself.

Sir, one of the things I would want to encourage the staff within the library to do is that maybe we need to get out in the community and form reading clubs. I did that within my own Constituency and that is working well because it has helped some young people. I think that because we have had some changes in our society, and we have a situation where there are other distractions for younger people, maybe the library needs to go to the community and try to see if it can help to inculcate the whole practice of reading more around young people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also think that we need to look at more innovative ways, whether we call them reading clubs, reading groups, or whatever, where we can form special groups in communities that actually interest young people more in the art of reading.

I also want to say, Sir, that in respect of the amendments, one of the things I found important when I looked at the actual Bill itself, is the inclusion of the University of the West Indies' representative as a part of the Advisory Committee.

I think that very often the University of the West Indies has stood out, and we know that as a centre of learning, it is important in our community because it helps to shape us. Sir, the fact that we had the foresight to actually put them on that Advisory Committee is instructive because in the whole question of preserving who we are, in terms of our archives, we cannot leave out any institution in society, in our attempt to ensure that we do not lose our history and the many things that are in our history.

Beyond that, and we do not remember, but we seem to think that some of the things that happen within a particular circle of our society are deserving of being archived. I remember going to St. Leonard's Boys' School, which at the time, in association with the St. Leonard's Girls' School produced whole dramatic presentations. Sir, other people may not know this, but one of my classmates at the time, Ronald Reid, actually produced a play which won many NIFCA awards.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I heard the Independent Member of the House speaking, these are things that are there and sometimes I wonder whether or not, we actually

documented and put them away for safekeeping. Sir, we forget that we need not only concentrate on archiving official things, in terms of what has happened in Government or certain institutions, but we also need to look deeper into our society and seek to extract those things that happened at the local level, and of local groups to document them at the same time. In this way, one of the things that I believe would happen as a result of this, is that we would help to enrich community life in Barbados, Sir, and people would feel a closer connection with the library as a source of knowledge of the things that happened in the past.

Sir, the other thing I want to say is this. While the Archives section helps us to understand who we are, I also think one of the important things that we learn from it, is that there are many things that happen even in terms of small inventions in society that ordinary people actually do. I wonder if sometimes, Sir, that in a sense - I am just getting that clarification from the Minister himself - whether or not a lot of the things that ordinary people do in our society, if they had an opportunity to interface with the Archives Department to have those things documented.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes a lot of the things that we take for granted, which those ordinary people do, need to be mentioned. Sometimes, we have people in our community who provide valuable services and innovations that we do not actually take on board and seek to see if we can take them to a particular stage, but then someone would be able to pick it up later, years after, go into the archives and see if they can actually carry it forward. Sir, in a way it can also help to document the contributions of ordinary Barbadians.

Sir, with those brief words, I think that the Bill, in terms of the fact it is actually bringing in the University of the West Indies' representative, is going to help to enrich the whole Committee in itself.

I also think that the library itself as an institution should seek for ways, Sir, of trying to be more involved in the community, in a much more innovative way, so that we can address the problem that too many of our young people do not seem keen on trying to engage in reading, because the distractions in society at the moment are proving more attractive. Sir, as a result of that, I think that the library needs to take a new approach.

Thank you very much, Sir.

House A54, Sequence 22, 2.40 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in supporting this amendment to the Archives Act, I want to join Honourable Members on Both Sides of the House in some of the commentary that has been made today. Certainly, Sir, I think that in all walks of our lives in Barbados we encounter events, which sort of tug our minds and make us think about how much are we really doing and how much are we making sure that the history we create today is being made available for those who come after us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even in my experience at the Ministry of Transport and Works, we recognise that the approaches over time have been to utilise facilities for our depots, which really are treasures in a lot of respects to the architectural history of Barbados. I speak of areas like the Bath depot in St. John, which occupies a very pristine area on top of Bath Hill, just before we enter Bath beach.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is also Haggatts in St. Andrew. These are prime properties, which might have been for a very good reason, but as you reflect on what value they might have been in retaining these properties, even at the cost it might have been, then you can recognise where a stronger contribution from those in charge of archiving and retaining our history would have been appreciated.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the Constituency of Christ Church South, on top of Atlantic Shores brow, is another old property, which has been utilised as a facility for the South Point Depot which serves the designated area very well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you enter this depot, on the left side is the South Point Lighthouse, which is one of two steel lighthouses built in the world and is of extremely important archeological significance, which therefore, has to be treasured. Indeed, we are actively pursuing the mandate, which will see the depot at South Point move to an area in Coverley, and the area in South Point would then be utilised, I envisage, as an opportunity for the development of some kind of tourist attraction. I think it is specially suited to the retaining of some of our important archeological history.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Christ Church South, the town of Oistin is extremely significant in the history of Barbados since 1652. I have heard it said here many times, and it is worth repeating, that the Charter of Barbados was signed at Yeung Ye Mermaid Tavern, which is somewhere located very close to where now resides the former ESSO Petrol Station and the tanks for the distribution of oil. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a lot of history to be recovered and to be remembered in this area.

Indeed, I would want to include as one of my ambitions to see some remembrance to this very important

occasion mounted at Oistins in the very near future. It had been called for before. The recently honoured Mr. Robert Morris, C.H.B., a former member of this Chamber, has often called for this memorial, and I want to join him in this regard. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have started in that direction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I certainly believe in creating monuments, if you want memories and memorials to great Barbadians. We are proud of the fact that we have honoured our matriarch of Oistin, the late Berinda Cox, by renaming the Fish Market after her.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have also recently renamed the Dover facility after Mr. Jammie Lashley and Mr. Kenneth Williams, both of whom have contributed, and are still contributing, to the development of sports, not only at Dover, but all over Barbados. These are important memorials that we have to build up.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am working with some private sector groups towards erecting a lasting memorial to the fishermen from the Oistin area who have been lost at sea. This is something that is well advanced in terms of the thinking, but of course the implementation would have to await the appropriate kind of funding.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these kinds of memorials would create greater attractions for visitors to Barbados. There already exist things like the Chase Vault at the Christ Church Cemetery. The history of the Chase Vault is well chronicled, and we can read about it. It still remains a mystery and intrigue for visitors and persons who skim through the Archives of Barbados or indeed who visit the Internet sites and read about the history of countries that they are about to travel to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point is being made all the time that tourism is not only about coming to a country and being able to have a dip in the sea, but the need to take away part of that country with you. I think our Minister of Tourism makes this point all the time, hence we are building our sports tourism.

We must look at our history. We must recreate our towns like Speightstown. Sir, I do not believe there is a quainter town than Speightstown anywhere at all to be found. The eventual redevelopment of Speightstown would be a treasure to Barbados as a tourist destination, and we could go all over our island.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would have to take our hats off to those who went before us. I heard names mentioned already in here this evening of persons like Dr. Karl Watson who contributes selflessly to the retaining of this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to let Barbadians be aware of a couple of things because sometimes these things go on around us and we think that there are systems in place. In the recent demolition at Oistins when we demolished the old hospital we came across three cannons and before you could say the proverbial "Jack Robinson" all of the officers from the Archives Department were in place. They took up those cannons and secured them at the Barbados Defence Force and went about the business of chronicling the details of this information because this is like a DNA cell in the history of our nation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we come across these treasures, we need to have ...

House A54 Sequence 23

2.50 p.m.

Tuesday, February 01, 2010

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a culture, even the workers who are doing the demolition have been treating these items with respect. They have immediately recognised that here was something which was not to be dumped randomly, but that it should be dealt with in a process. We need to congratulate those who are a part of the Barbadian archeological architecture, if you want to put it that way. Kudos go out to them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in our work we get requests to widen roads and to move walls and very often these are walls such as cemetery walls. Again, there is a protocol which has to be observed as we go through this process, so that requests to remove walls around cemeteries and areas of this kind cannot be treated randomly, or cannot be treated in the same way as one may make a request to move walls outside of a modern home.

Sir, these are the kinds of things I want to reflect upon at this time, and to assure Barbadians who are not working in the Ministry of Culture and Community Development, but who are working out there in the Ministry of Transport and Works, that the experience is there, that the retention of that aspect of our culture is in very good hands in the existing arrangements. This amendment today, as has been pointed out to include the contribution of the University of the West Indies as a permanent member of this Advisory Committee is, indeed, commendable. It would even add more bite to the Archives Advisory Committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I made the point earlier that in everything we do today, we need to remember that we too must be careful that we leave a footprint, not a random footprint, but a deliberate footprint. We need to engrave that footprint at important times of our activities. We need

to engrave it into our current history. We need to engrave the importance, achievements and acts, so that when time is spent, those who look back on the history of Barbados could have something to look back on. We cannot just expect it to happen, it has to be a deliberate act. Sir, this system has been practised all over the world, that is why people take the time to build up time capsules.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, without bringing up the controversial discussion, I will never forget the morning when I came upon the time capsule at Lord Nelson Statue. That capsule was immediately taken to the Museum and treated with the urgency, importance and discretion it deserved. I do believe that a new capsule was placed when the permanent shifting of the Lord Nelson statue was finally completed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is these kinds of important aspects of which we need to be aware. Sir, we speak to the question of the use of the library and there is one at Oistins. Sir, how effectively it is being used, I often asked myself the question, but without imperial data, I would hasten not to comment. I would merely suggest that in today's world, the library has to be able to compete with the electronic age. It has to be able to compete with the worldwide web, with the ease and access that it has. It does not even take a computer setup in full nowadays, a decent cellular and a subscription to one of the Internet providers is sufficient to give one access to all the information on the worldwide web.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are, therefore, forced to recognise that the development of our National Library Service needs to keep in step with the technological realities and with the provision of other facilities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a fast world, we want the answers quickly. I like to get answers quickly too. Whenever I do research, I go to the worldwide web before I go to the books. If the worldwide web sends me to a book, I will find my way there, but if I can get information from that first source, rest assured it would be my first order of business. The worldwide web also builds appetite. Once you have done this, it opens a whole panacea of enthusiasm to help to fulfil the search that has been led.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to commend a lot of what I have heard. Sir, few people would know that I have a history in drama in Barbados. It was not a long career, but I had a short career at my alma mater where I took part. I enjoyed it. It was something in which we participated a lot. It was part of the curriculum. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that if the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central is so minded, he may well want to touch on what is the current position because sometimes we think these things no longer exist.

I have the good fortune of hearing of the education system pretty often, outside of the formal position taken by the Minister, so I know that a lot of the activities in terms of the drama at schools and the kind of character-building exercises are still there. Therefore, any calls by the Minister for strengthening or reinforcement are certainly supported. Sir, this is very important as we try to guide our children.

I want too to associate myself with the comments of the Honourable Member for St. George South. We should not use reading as a punishment, I do not think it works. It did not work for me, so I do not think it will work. You can sit and pretend to read, you can even turn the pages. Therefore, if you start punishing children by threats of reading, they will find a way around that. It should be a culture which is nurtured. The importance of reading should be clearly demonstrated, practised and taught in the home and in the school and so, it would become an easy part of the activities of our children.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with a feeling that we are going in the right direction, but that even more work needs to be done. I believe, no doubt, that there is even greater value than may meet the eye at this time, in terms of preserving all that is “Barbadiana” and negotiating to recapture, repatriate those items of “Barbadiana” which may rest in the Archives in the United Kingdom, where the original settlers...

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do research, we read about these things, the question of settlers is even not one which is clear. As the Honourable Member for St. James South said, the modern history that we learned is being challenged now by the facts.

3.00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, the facts say that the early settlers of Barbados date way back to 15 B.C. Sir, first there was the Caribs, then the Arawaks and these are occurrences that sometimes we cannot even contemplate the era in which we live but, Sir, we can see in the character of our people in the Caribbean that there is no question about our likeness to the physical features of the pictures painted of the original inhabitants, the Arawaks and the Caribs so our history is firm.

Sir, I was making a point about the Powell brothers, - John and Henry Powell in 1624 and 1627- I believe, who would have come to Barbados. They may not be able to actually boast of being the original settlers of Barbados, but would have to give way to many centuries before and the activities that occurred then.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know that now and we know that because of search and research and, therefore, we are fortified in these views. They are not views we have taken because of any force, but because of the natural information that has been made available. Sir, it is these kinds of works which must be supported and must be encouraged.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I sit, just let me make a call too for the reinstatement of the Carnegie Building as some form of research facility. I think that is more or less the consensus, but when that will occur is not important as being sure that it is part of the programme going forward.

I am sure that once we have identified it, that whole area, the Cenotaph, the Carnegie Building and what would now be the old courts, must be ideally placed for creating another historic area in Barbados. It should be an attraction for tourists, creation of areas for shopping because people like this quaintness when they move around a country, creation of bars, little mini restaurants for an evening drink, outdoor sipping of good Banks Beer, Mount Gay rum and shopping in Barbadian selective items of tapestry and what's not.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can see that whole area becoming a very important part of our history and development as we take our tourism to that next level. Sir, one can immediately see the opportunity for our Archives Department to make a meaningful role in this exercise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those few words, I want to support the amendment to the Archives (Amendment) Bill, 2010.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to join for a very brief moment with the debate, very rich as it is, on the matter pertaining to the amendment to the Archives Act for the protection, preservation and recording of various aspects of Barbadian history. I think that the call by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, as he prepared to take his seat, was critical because it is something that I have paid some attention to in relation to the restoration and preservation of the function of the Carnegie Building which, of course, was first constructed and, certainly, the beginning of the Public Library in that space with a grant from the Carnegie family, back in those days.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is absolutely critical that we get that particular building back into service and restored in a way that presents for us, certainly not only in terms of our

architectural history, but clearly for the role it has played down through the years in helping to contribute to the education of so many young people in Barbados and, indeed, for older persons as well, who have had to avail themselves of the services which were once provided there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want in this debate to look at it from a slightly different perspective even though it is critical to what we have discussed here on two points. I have heard Honourable Members speak eloquently and with some degree of information about the need for the preservation of our history and recording of our history.

I make the observation that it is said, certainly, in Barbadian and West Indian parlance, that we are a society drawn from our African heritage that has tended to be more oral than literal. In other words, over the years, we have tended to speak more about our experience that we have recorded, either through writing or otherwise, our history. Sir, if that is, in fact, true, and to some extent I agree with that, then I believe that it is important that we examine all aspects of recording and registering our own history.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make this point because only last week, or the week before the last one, we had occasion to celebrate a few weeks of activities in celebration of the life and time of the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow, our National Hero. There was a lecture organised by the Democratic Labour Party at the Frank Collymore Hall and delivered by the Professor Emeritus, Dr. Woodville Marshall.

Sir, in the preparation for that lecture, it is my understanding that Professor Marshall had to draw on a significant part of the oral recollections of what had transpired in the very contentious months and years leading up to the eventual achievement of Independence for Barbados and in that entire period. Indeed, it is not only the first time I have heard it.

I have heard it on several other occasions where there are some significant gaps in the written recorded history about what transpired during that time and the contributions which various people would have made to various movements in the history of Barbados at that particular time. Indeed, one of my constituents, who is very well known to several of us, was asked to contribute to helping Professor Marshall arrive - in this regard I speak about one of our colleagues who worked in that time and who has recalled and continues to recall the contributions which several people would have made, quite a bit of which is not now recorded in the work, and I hope that over time we can do so.

Sir, as we reflect about the fact that we have a very strong oral tradition and that many of the things which would have happened in our time, either by Sir Grantley,

the Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow and all of the pantheon of heroes and very outstanding individuals in that period of time, who would have contributed to the development of Barbados. Quite a bit of what transpired needs to be captured, recorded and put there for our own generations to come and for those of us who are not participating in the process to understand what we went through, as a country, to achieve that Independence.

H/A54/3.10 p.m. Sequence 25

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: The second point I want to make is to look at this issue of recording our history from the perspective of intellectual property. I think this is important in the context of what we are speaking. When we talk about reducing things to microfilm and whatever else we do with it and where we place it in the Archives, this is actual people's intellectual property that has a tremendous value.

I am not entirely always convinced that even in spite of the Laws that we have in relation to the protection of person's intellectual property that sufficient protocol exists in the practical applications of persons utilising those pieces of information, wherever they may be, to ensure that the integrity of that intellectual property is always protected and preserved.

Sir, too many times I have seen, and I am sure that you have seen, even in your own practice as an Attorney-at-Law, very critical pieces of information used and misused by individuals, some who do not know better, but unfortunately, by some who know a lot better in terms of how they handle and utilise information. I think as a country we have to begin to ensure that all those pieces of information, whether it be in the written word, whether it be in the spoken word, or whether it be a physical piece of information as in the artifact or whatever the case may be, in the Museum or wherever, that these pieces of information are properly protected under Law, and that the appropriate protocols are put in place for the handling of that information and who can access it. It is absolutely critical for that to take place.

Sir, I think certainly as well, is the point that we have heard from a lot of other Honourable Members about utilising and building up our tradition for reading in Barbados. I think that is an important call and I want to agree with a lot of our Members, but I want to make this point in relation to reading.

We have in Barbados a situation in which we are very slowly, but surely turning into a society that is far more visual in terms of information that is received and put through the cognitive process than we are about people

who we - this may be a difficult thing to deal with, but it is true nevertheless, we have a working population of, they say, about 140 000 people in Barbados. We claim to have a literacy rate upwards of 95 per cent, some say as much as 99 per cent, but we only print or sell on average no more than 20 000 newspapers, 40 000 if you stretch it to the limit, now that must tell you something about what is happening in this society.

Therefore, while we might want to romanticize ourselves on these points, we have to find innovative ways, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was saying, to get our young people to read. They are not going to read because we tell them about the glories of reading and how you can travel the world by reading a book. That sounds good, but it's easier for a child to sit down in front of Cartoon Network all day and watch TV than read a book, or play a video game.

Therefore, we have to find ways, both in our schools, communities and elsewhere, innovative ways, to introduce people to the concept of reading not just for children, but also for many in our adult population who after learning to read at school and go through the process and leave university, college or secondary school, and barely ever read a complete book again in their lives. That is a very serious indictment on a society that claims upwards of 90 per cent literacy rate. I feel that it is incumbent on all of us to look at how we can address this issue in a more sensitive, but also sensible way that will give us the results which we want to achieve.

Sir, generally speaking, in relation to culture, I want to again join with Honourable Members in congratulating the Honourable Minister of Culture for his outstanding work, and the Ministry of Culture, the staff, who we know the numbers are limited, we know the resources are small, but who try from year to year, to ensure that they continue to promote and enhance Barbados' culture.

I think that it would be remiss of me if I did not make this point, not just because he is one of my constituents, but because I feel it is important that we get to this stage in Barbados. I know the Minister shares this view with me. If he has not yet said it publicly I know he shares this view.

Sir, we have, I think, celebrated the 35th Anniversary of the Richard Stoute Teen Talent Competition in Barbados. Richard Stoute does not need anybody to promote his cause at this stage because he has done exceedingly well over the years. He has received a National Honour, I believe the Barbados Service Star, from his Excellency the Governor-General, and it has been said on more than one occasion, that the Teen Talent Contest has been the bedrock or platform, whatever term you want to use, on which many young entertainers have launched

their successful careers in music and other areas of the performing arts.

I think the time has come in Barbados for Government to look very seriously at elevating the Richard Stoute Teen Talent Competition to a national institution in this country, and that Richard Stoute be given the opportunity, not to be scrambling around looking for sponsorship, as the case may be after 35 years - even the fact that we recognise that we are in a recession and we have to contain our levels of expenditure, but a serious partnership between the private sector and the public sector, because I do not think it is only a private sector matter - it is the public and private sectors to come together in a symbiotic partnership to ensure that we take this national institution of the Teen Talent and put it on a completely different footing, to ensure that the work which has been done over the last 35 years can be expanded, if that is still possible, and enhanced to some significant degree so that we can harness even greater talent.

I know the Honourable Minister and staff are working on the Cultural Industries Bill, which is going to come to Parliament shortly, as we look at new incentives to ensuring that we create this new exciting aspect of our cultural culture. I think that we can begin in a very tangible way to work with that national institution to be able to use that as a breeding ground for new talent in the country.

H A54 3.20 p.m. Sequence 26

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

House A54, Sequence 27, 3.20 p.m.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East made the point about talent coming from the community. I know the Minister feels very strongly about it because he said it only last week in the aftermath of an exceedingly successful dance festival at the Sir Garfield Sobers Gymnasium, one of the few events local or international that has sold out the Gymnasium.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: We bring a lot of international acts here and very few of them have been able to get that type of crowd there, but that Dance Festival was able to fill the Gymnasium because of a lot of young people in communities who have talent and need exposure. I am saying that we can use these opportunities to harness the cultural talent of the country and push it to a new plane in a new direction, so that not only can we allow young people to express themselves, but maybe in the process, earn themselves some much needed resources to assist them in life.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am making the call this evening for the Richard Stoute Teen Talent Competition to be transformed into a national institution, in which various types of the performing arts can be taught and contribute. I know that one of the reasons we are going to work on the restoration of the old Empire Cinema is to help with that particular process.

I want to, therefore, encourage my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, the Minister of Community Development and Culture to continue because, I think, as Honourable Members have said in here, he is on the right path. He is certainly extremely focussed and has been working to ensure that we have something in this country that we can be proud of, and that visitors can come to Barbados and when they leave, understand that there is something, which we refer to in our Manifesto, but which we believe in innately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there is really a concept of first world island living and a particular type of island living in an island like Barbados that is distinctly different from anywhere else in the world.

Sir, not first world living that is similar to what you get in New York, Toronto or London, but first world island life, where there is a leisurely way to life, but yet a seriousness that allows people to achieve their goals and to build pathways to progress as they seek, not only to advance themselves personally and individually, but also collectively as a community and as a nation.

With those few words, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to give my wholehearted support to this Bill.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I join this debate somewhat reluctantly. I did not want to speak on this Bill. However, sometimes you see Honourable Members speaking and you cannot be left out. I have to also speak on this Bill.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West said in his opening remarks that he was joining the debate for a brief moment and he said that it was a rich debate so far. I have not been able to detect the richness of this debate. When he spoke about rich, I ask myself, rich for whom.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you look at this amendment, it is a very small amendment and the public must not be alarmed that this is a fantastic and rich debate. It simply states:

“This Bill would amend the Archives Act, Cap. 19B to increase the membership of the Archives Advisory Committee, and provide for related matters.”

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central said, its only aim is to amend paragraph 1 of the Schedule to the principal Act and it seeks to appoint a committee, or to increase the numbers of the Committee, I think from five to nine.

The Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the members of the public, is only amending the Schedule and it seeks to provide space for three members of the Democratic Labour Party, three members of the public, a public officer other than the person to whom paragraph (b) refers, a member of the academic committee, a member of the public with an interest in the preservation and storage of cultural and historical events.

The Minister will now have the right to appoint three new members in his own right. The Board comprises of six members. Three will be appointed by the Minister. He can take them from, not necessarily the academic community or technical staff, but a member of the public with an interest in the preservation - which is quite vague - and storage of cultural and historical records. I do not understand that, Sir.

Anyway, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill only seeks to increase the membership of the Board. That is all it does. In the past, when we brought those small amendments to Parliament, in two to ten minutes we were finished. Sir, we have now taken the entire day to debate an increase in membership, when there are so many pressing needs and I can talk about new direction. The Bill does not talk about any new initiative although the Minister spoke about some and the public must not be fooled by the present Government.

The Bill does not speak about any new initiatives. It only seeks to appoint three members to the Board. However, the Minister spoke about reading and I will speak about reading too. The Minister spoke about library services and I will speak about that too because there is nothing in the Bill to suggest that there is any new direction for the Archives.

The Minister has been hardworking, I must say. He has tried to promote culture, but this Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, does not speak to any new direction so the Government could speak all day long. It reminds me of a monkey who saw people working and he decided to work too, and he ran up and down with a roller, all day long, saying he is working. Sir, not a single work was done today and the public has seen that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say that we spent the entire morning session and part of the afternoon session on this debate. As I said, I want to join it too. We never heard about how the Minister is going to get children to read. He said that children will be asked to read. I want to know from the Minister of Education when he gets up to speak, what new initiative will be done to increase the reading capacity, to promote reading in the country and if it is something new, because we know that reading is now on the back burner of many students. They are still some who read, but the vast majority of students are not reading and the Government needs to tell us if there is anything in this Bill to show how we are going to get people down in the Archives Department to read.

House A54, Sequence 27, 3.30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want the Minister to tell us these things.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was listening to this debate and when my Secretary came to me, I sent her down to the Archives Department to find out if ever there was a Government that increased the price of water by 60 per cent and electricity by 40 per cent. Mr. Deputy Speaker, my Secretary came back and told me that the Archives Department said that there was no Government in the history of Barbados that has ever increased water rates by 60 per cent and electricity by 40 per cent.

Traffic on the road ...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. George North, you are fully aware with respect to relevance. Can you stick to the...

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am talking about the Archives Department. Do you want more relevance than that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been a teacher for the last 40 years and I know what is relevance.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I am obeying the rules. I am saying that we sent a team to the Archives Department to find out if ever there was a Government that increased the price of water by 60 per cent, and the answer we received was never.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: It was the same thing for road taxes which were increased by 60 per cent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Archives Department was established before I was born. It was not established by this Government, so it is nothing new.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I first went to the Archives Department as an adult student preparing for my undergraduate degree at the University of the West Indies. At that time I was doing a study on the Barbados Water Authority, and I wanted to find out when running water was introduced to this country. In those days, you could not find the information, but today you can find that information at the Archives Department because we were able, as a Government, to provide 30 acres of land to the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, so that they now have that new development down there. We did this when I was Minister of Housing and Lands.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown was parading today that we did nothing for the Archives Department, or the Library Services, he came in and he is now able to bat on a good wicket. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we did a lot of work with the Archives Department of the University of the West Indies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, every inch of land on the right-hand side going down was donated by the Government of Barbados to the University of the West Indies to help improve research in this country, and the Archives Department has benefitted tremendously.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what the Minister needs to tell us is if the Archives Department is going to be online, if persons would be able to do more research and what funding is he going to get from the private/public sector partnership, because this is where the United Kingdom is. The Governments of the United Kingdom and other first world countries are now looking at private partnership because Government cannot do it all, although I hear Honourable Members saying that the Archives Department and the Government could do it all.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that it is the intention of Government to show to the public that the Democratic Labour Party would do all, but they cannot. In these hard economic times the Government needs to look at what is happening in the first world developed countries where archives and other industries, because it is an industry today and the Minister better understand this... Families pay to get research in relation to families done. Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are the things I expected to hear in this rich debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to find out if these things are being done. The Minister spoke about these things, but there is nothing in the Act. Mr. Deputy Speaker, one therefore has to wonder if it is only talk, because I have heard that there is a new direction, but I have not seen it

with the naked eye. I know that the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown talked about rats and vermin and all sorts of things at the public library. When he came to office, the movement had started from Coleridge Street to Independence Square.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Honourable Members on That Side do not like to read their history, but research would show that the building was identified and movement had started to Independence Square. Furthermore, I am very happy to hear the Minister say that he would continue the work that was started at the Valley in St. George, which is good. After the Post Office had been relocated to its present location, the Ministry of Housing and Lands decided that the additional space would go to the library, so I know the history of it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to hear from the Minister if he is going to incorporate the new technology at the library, so that people could go online and research some of the interesting books they have and what new books are coming.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: When I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West saying that it is a rich debate, I got up and said I cannot find the rich debate at all, I want to hear the policy from the Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we support the amendment. The point I am making is that the public out there is asking why the long debate. We want to hear about other things, therefore, I join the debate mainly to say to the Government that this is not a rich debate, that it is a debate that is very brief in nature.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to talk about reading and about culture. If the Government wants to talk culture, let us talk about culture. If the Government does not want to do any work, let us talk about culture and reading which are important. The Government needs to read what the public is saying. The Government needs to read and research what the Government is saying.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am a reader by nature. I did my first degree in History and Economics at Cave Hill and I had to do a lot of reading.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: The Government has to read what is happening in the country at this time. Yes, the public is asking for more debate, but they want to know

what and how it is happening, and how it is affecting, not only their lives, but the lives of their children.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk about archives, we want to find out if the Archives Department would some day record the things that are happening in this country at this time.

House A54 Sequence 28

3.40 p.m.

Tuesday, February 01, 2010

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: When does the Government understand that there is a need for contact? Sir, I think that Government needs to look at more contact with the people. The Government boasts... Sir, I heard Honourable Members saying there were these large numbers of people at their Constituency Council meetings, which is good.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to know if Government is really listening and doing their research properly, to understand that the time has come for them to look at how they are going to get the vast numbers of Bajans back to work. Sir, research must be done. Sir, this whole notion that Government must do all, they must do research to find out that in most developed countries in the world, a Government goes hand-in-hand with the private sector. Sir, Government trying to appoint everybody and everything is not the way forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, This Side supports the increase in membership because as the Minister said, it will help to move the process further.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member said that the increased numbers will help Government. He said that it will help Government to do the things he wants to do in his Ministry. We would hope that now the Minister gets these additional members, that it could reach...

Sir, additional members now mean that the quorum would have to be increased. Additional members would mean that more committee members would have to be elected, since there would now be more committees to do the work of the Minister. We hope and would be watching carefully to find out if within a year or two, if there is any movement within the Archives Department, because we understand there are still a number of persons who have been working in the 1950s and 1960s, who have sent in to Government to get their pensions, or whatever, and there

are no records there for those persons. I hope that the Archives Department or the Ministry could give these people an answer within the very shortest possible time because of the fact that the Honourable Member now has an increase in staff.

Sir, this concerns those persons who worked either in the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Education, or the Ministry of Housing, who have worked in the 1950s and 1960s, who are now returning nationals, who would have worked for 10 and 20 years in Barbados, where their records cannot be adequately found. Would the new members be able to identify this problem? Would they be able to bring in additional staff to help that Department to identify whether these people would have worked at the time? Mr. Deputy Speaker, we support this Bill because we believe, as the Minister said, it will help the workload become easier for the Department.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, my research has proved that this Government needs to do its research carefully instead of coming here with these three-lined amendments and taking up an entire day, when we could have been debating housing or some other Head.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I came here strictly to debate housing.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say that even though This Side supports this Bill, this Bill could have been debated within three minutes, as there is no division on this matter. Sir, we want to move into top gear because this is a serious year and as we start off a new year, the Government must set the tone right. The public is watching this Government, the public is watching the Opposition, the public is watching what we do and what we say in this Parliament.

Sir, for example, there are a number of substantial matters on the Order Paper, such as the Penal Bill. I hope that when the Minister of Education gets up, he would tell us what programmes are there to improve reading in the public schools of Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member said last year, when he talked about the Common Entrance, how the boys were not reading and how the boys were now at a disadvantage. I want to hear how he is going to encourage the boys to read, especially at the primary level.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the amendment before this Honourable House, as stated by the Honourable Member, the Minister of Community Development and Culture, might be a small amendment, but in fact small amendments can generate such profound debate as being seen on This Side.

Sir, there is a recognition that the whole area of the development of archives, history, archeology, social anthropology, are all important areas for the development of any society. Therefore, a country cannot shut its eyes to the preservation of its history through the archival format, through the development or research of archeological sites or through looking through the lens of social anthropology.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, like the last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. George North, I too dispatched an individual to the Department of Archives to see if they too had captured the cost over-runs which were done by the last Government to the tune of some \$750 million. Since we are using the Department of Archives for the capture of that history, I too want to venture there. Nevertheless, I am not going to be persuaded to continue that particular line of argument, because this is a serious debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, albeit that it had at its departure point a simple amendment to the Archives Advisory Committee, it is good that the Honourable Member who led off the debate on This Side, followed by the Honourable Member for St. James North, set an extremely high standard in this particular debate. Its denigration, of course, was highly unwarranted, but that is in keeping with both the nature and name of the particular individual who spoke last. We have always asked him not to take speeches from that individual, that they would run him into trouble.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had the opportunity some 20 years ago, to go to the Archives Department, where I believe it is still currently located at the Lazaretto, part of the Paradise site. At that site, I had the opportunity to do some research into the historical aspect of the Credit Union Movement of Barbados. I was quite pleased to have been able to find a lot of the material which I needed to do some writing on at the time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, time has evolved and one believes that as more and more archival materials from both the public sector, where voluminous amounts are, in fact, produced every day, and from the private sector, there might be need to expand or to build new facilities for the Archives Department. Sir, it can be incorporated with Government still maintaining, to some extent, a common space as the preserver of the records of Barbados, into the work of the University of the West Indies.

3.50 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Hon. R. D. JONES: There might not be any need to separate the work of the students and the various lecturers and professors of the University of the West Indies and the continuing development of the archival resources at the Archives Department in that particular facility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has been a lot of work conducted by Barbadians who are caught up with their ancestral roots. Therefore, there are many genealogical studies being conducted by many families and some persons are expressing surprise how the branches of their families developed and emerged. In truth and in fact, giving reflection to the very mixed ancestry of most Barbadians.

In the 1640s, we brought together a group of people, even from the beginning of the settlement of this country, from Africa principally and from Europe, and out of the merging of those two particular cultures came the Barbadian, as we know the Barbadian today. It was not a particularly pleasant relationship because even though the historical records speak to Caucasians coming over from Europe on their journey, they were able to rescue 14 Africans off a ship that was floundering in the Atlantic Ocean, but the records do not continue to say what happened to those 14 Africans who came over in a very early period. Of course, one would like to find out what happened to those Africans, but our history based on genealogical research, based on ancestral research has shown that it is quite an interesting and coloured one.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that research could only have developed as a result of a collection of the Archives Department, of the gathering of the material from Churches, particularly the Anglican Church, which was the dominant Church within the Barbadian environment. Sir, from the parish Churches of Barbados, the gathering of that material and the storage of that material was based on births, marriages, deaths and other records of the time collected by the local Churches, which stood at the center of governance in this country, in all of the parishes of Barbados - the whole parochial structure of governance in Barbados. Sir, as I have said before, the births, the deaths, the marriage and maybe even to some extent, the passage of wills and other testaments of that type across the length and breadth of Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that the Churches themselves are still treasure stores of archival information for persons who want to continue this level of research. The movement of lands through families and out of families to those who purchased lands from traditional owners. Sir, all of those records unfold. You can trace this

projectory over time as a result of the work of the Archives Department.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 1964, just three years after the Democratic Labour Party came to power, a Department of Archives was established by the then Government. Sir, if you really start to think about it, the 1960s was an important period in the development of this society, as we now know it.

Sir, not only the development of the University College of Barbados, not only the granting of Independence in 1966, but under a Premier, at the time, in 1964, you had established the Archives Department of Barbados because of the deep recognition that the collective history of a people should be preserved.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West spoke earlier about the oral tradition. Sir, Africa had a dual tradition, strong script writing, but also the stories being told from generation to generation and, Sir, it is still very much present in Barbados. A lot of the material in relation to the genealogical research and the filling in of gaps that might be left out of the Archives Department are, in fact, filled in by older people within our society, sometimes not even from your family tree, but persons who know of your family tree, who would tell you who your great great-grandmother was and what she used to do and if it was your great-grandfather, what he did. Was he a wheelwright, or was he a fisherman. Sir, you get that history emerging out of that strong oral tradition.

Sir, it can become coloured as it is transferred over time, but the records in the form of documents, papers, letters, the traditional method that we use for storing such information, you can gain valuable information from that particular source.

Sir, we are not getting rid of the oral tradition because it is a beautiful tradition of story telling and story relating by a people conscious that history and knowledge of their own history, is important to the evolution of that particular society. Sir, that should be continued, but the record in their various forms, the modern record-keeping on your jump drives, your CDS, your DVDs and use of other storage media are now, in fact, important.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we spoke earlier of microfiche and all these other pieces of storage information that is being used across the length and breadth of Barbados. There are places in Barbados, old plantations, where there are important records still being kept by the traditional families down through time, who have never given up the plantation house to anybody else. If we venture into the cemeteries, or Barbados, particularly the Church cemeteries or the parish cemeteries and you take time to read the

headstones, there is so much information one can garner from that.

I remember some 15 years or so ago, a young lady reading for her Master's degree, who is currently a principal in Barbados, had started this project as part of her thesis looking at that information and giving it new life from headstones and going into Churches and reading the walls. It was about who donated what. Sir, if you donated a 1 000 pounds sterling at that time, you would have to come from a reasonably rich family. Sir, you can create from those records, from those images and from those headstones that are inscribed, such a rich history of Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Archives Department, whose mission is to ensure the organisational efficiency and accountability by identifying, collecting, processing and preserving public records and private records of Barbados that are permanent, enduring legal, cultural and historical value, and to make information from them available, within legal limits, is playing an extremely important role in Barbados. Of course, giving it the kind of technical and knowledge support by the addition of the new member is absolutely important for that quest and for that journey.

H/A54/4.00 p.m. Sequence 30

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Hon. R. D. JONES: It is not a matter to be poohed poohed at all. It is a matter to be heard. I am sure the Honourable Minister would use, along with his technical people, those who are charged with the preservation of our cultural heritage, those who are charged with the preservation of our book heritage, those who are charged with the preservation of our industrial and agricultural heritage, will use whatever opportunities there are to ensure that future generations, even those now, will be able to see the evolution. or the emergence of a society - starting from the take-off point, because I do not want to go further back - that is captured in the work of the Museum and Historical Society, and may be other private collections of the relics of the past, that can be displayed, by using 1625/1627 as the departure point where there is so much that took place in this country that we should not pooh- pooh.

Sir, therefore, I am disappointed in the Honourable Member for St. George North, who believes that we should just get up, and the Honourable Member should say that we are placing only one Member on this Advisory body, sit down, get it seconded and then go into Committee and that is finished, but this House is charged with a greater responsibility. There must be a wider vision. That is why the people of Barbados voted for the Democratic Labour Party. We have to plan deeply in the bosoms of our people.

It is not just a simple view, but a deeply imbedded vision, and this is still relative to the heritage of Barbados, to the heritage of our people. Therefore that disappointment must be reflected in the words which I use to the Honourable Member.

We know that we do not have complete records, not even the Churches have complete records of births, deaths, marriages, baptisms or whatever you have, but a significant amount of work has been done by the Archives Department and private individuals in restoring the collections of the gathering of information of words that allows us to do our research.

The Archives Department is not for leisure reading. You will really be good to just go to the Archives Department for recreation or leisure reading. It is for fundamental and serious research to be done by individuals or teachers. Sir, the records of course do not reflect a significant contribution of the Honourable Member for St. George North, on the minds of the children of Grantley Adams Secondary School. I really take that from him.

I applaud all teachers in the past and in the future, but I know they would express severe dissatisfaction this evening in relation to the stance which he took. Rather than he flogging them, they should now be flogging him for the particular stance which he took in this particular matter.

There is some contradiction with some of the things that persons have. It has to do with reading. I think what has declined in Barbados is the leisure and recreational reading. That is what has declined. We heard Honourable Member for St. James North speak of going to the Library in St. James, Speightstown or Bridgetown, as a secondary student to read in relation to academic pursuits. A significant part of that was leisure, or recreational reading. The call must go out for more Barbadian students, more Barbadian young people, to once again re-immense themselves into leisure and recreational reading.

I remember as a youngster leaving Wilcox, Christ Church - you would not know unless you were out on your nocturnal pursuits - getting on a bicycle, going through Gibbon and into Oistins, not at the new and refurbished library which was done by the Ministry of Development and Culture, but now the old library at Oistins where you the Member Minister of Home Affairs - that used to be part of the old library. A beautiful job has been done on the construction of the Post Office. The Post Office and the Library shared space - borrowed from that library nine books per week. It was because I had nine tickets, or because you were issued with three, but I had the three for myself, the three from my mother and three from my father. Those nine books I collected every week were used for recreational reading.

Asides.

Hon. R.D. JONES: I remember reading books such as Angry Waters, by Walter Morey.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: You would not know the title of the book neither. There is nothing wrong with that. That is recreational reading. Again, this demonstrates the capacity of the mind to understand recreational reading. There is nothing wrong with reading Enid Blyton by either male, or female, because there is a representation of men captured by novelists, but there is also the work of Mickey Spillane, John Squeeze, Mark Twain and J.T. Edson, for young boys who wanted to have an appreciation of the West in the United States, also Louis L'Mour, "Second Brothers". That is what we did as youngsters growing up and that is what we have to call for among the young people of Barbados, recreational reading.

Sir, the other misunderstanding is, with the use of technology, persons believe you do not read. The screen is only a medium for text, so you have to read to understand it. When you call up an e-book you have to read what is there. Let us understand that there are some people who are, in fact, utilising that medium for reading. Sometimes I am concerned, but it is happening. You have left school so long ago that you have no understanding of what is taking place in the world, that is the problem. These things are happening within the context of Barbados.

I do not understand that a previous Government that introduced massive amounts of technology - they were not the first - into the school system do not understand that kind of pursuit where you are using technology to fill in gaps where students are not reading the hard physical text anymore. I believe that everything must be balanced in life.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Sir, he is to teach. When you are young you loose your baby teeth and you get your more mature teeth. So the Honourable Member is too old to teeth, so do not worry about that. I am saying we have to mesh both worlds.

A lot of young people spend time using their ears because of the high prevalence of wave and sound. The technology today, you can take anything that is written, do text to speech conversion and just listen. You can shut your eyes and listen to it.

Only yesterday I listened to the Mirror Image speech, not by using my eyes but using my ears, using text to speech conversion. This is technology. What we need to do is to encourage young people to use all available media

to gain knowledge, to get information, to do their research to guide throughout life.

H A54 4.10 p.m. Sequence 31

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

House A54, Sequence 32, 4.20 p.m.

Hon. R. D. JONES: We know that basic reading is the foundation of all learning, and the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development continues through whatever mechanism, the teachers, the Reading Association of Barbados, and the encouragement of libraries in our primary schools, where there are still library sessions organised by teachers and schools. There is a library at Milton Lynch, Deacons, Hillaby Turner's Hall, St. Martin's/Mangrove and Eagle Hall but, as usual, we have to encourage students, sit and read to students and let students read to us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a lot of the reading which was done over the years in the 1940s to 1970s, was as a direct result of seeing parents in our homes read. That is what it was. We learnt through the example of our parents reading, so when you saw your parents reading books, you developed the curiosity. I want to read as soon as they put down, once it was not in what you call the realm of mature reading. Those were kept hidden from the prying eyes of Honourable Members on This Side. The Honourable Members on That Side cannot see the difference because sometimes the behaviour shows that they were exposed to mature material from an early age.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: They were your parents, particularly the persons who were characterised as "Wuk or Wukkers". They would be part of that mature clan of individuals, but we need again to have parents reading to children. I know they are going to say that they do not have the time, but they must find the time.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has three more minutes to conclude.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Thank you, Sir.

Sir, a time must be there to read to our young people to give them the joy of words. Alan Patton in "Pride of Beloved Country," a beautiful book about South Africa caught up in the throes of apartheid and he is a Caucasian writer. Sir, the beauty of the language, so it is not only the television, movie or the film because they cannot capture such. In fact, the beauty of the written word, either on the television screen or in the printed text has to be recreated in your mind, where the imagination blossoms and where the

vistas spoken about, can become alive in the hearts and bosoms of young people.

Sir, let us get them reading and out of reading would emerge writings and as part of that, I want to compliment all writers in Barbados. I know the Honourable Member for St. George North is not aware that persons like Herbert Reifer is writing excellent material. He is not aware because he sees him as an opponent.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Herbert Reifer has been writing for the last 10 years. He did his Masters Degree in Language and he had been writing long before.

The Minister has failed in 30 minutes. He has not addressed how he is going to get the vast majority of Barbadians to start reading. Has he inherited a situation? Because what he is saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that they have been reading all along. The question to ask the Minister, since the majority of people are not reading, what new directions are you going to encourage people to read? Sir, that was the question.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I see no point of order.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Honourable Members must stop, like the Honourable Member for St. George North, listening to themselves. I never made the claim that people are not reading. Within the school system, people are reading for the academic pursuit. Sir, we have to move them now from the academic pursuit into the reading for leisure, the recreational pursuit so that they could have a wider coverage of material impacting on them.

Sir, the families have some responsibilities to their children as well to lead them towards reading, along with the teachers of this country. There is material being developed, each and every day, within the Ministry of Education and within our schools to assist in the pursuit of reading.

I can invite the Honourable Member for St. George North to visit the Media Resource Department of the Ministry of Education, to see the text being produced, and the CDs with animation being produced. All that is being done in the Human Resource Department to facilitate reading in our schools.

Again, you are so far removed from reality.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: You should know. You said you were a teacher. Lord! Have mercy, Honourable Member.

I am saying that much is happening, but more has to be done. We have to continue the strong literacy tradition of this country. We have to encourage our young people to read excellent work.

I was recently speaking to the Honourable Member for St. Philip South. I saw him walking up the steps of his Constituency office with many books in his hands in launching his Reading Club. This Honourable Member is interested in his constituents and the young people, relative to reading. This is what we are doing and it must not be done by a single individual, a single department of Government or a single Ministry, but it must be a collective exercise by our entire nation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this amendment to the Archives Bill is an important one because it allows us to delve deeper into what we know is happening and what more we have to do. We have to share ideas and we come to this Parliament to also get ideas from the Other Side, but alas, outside of the Honourable Member for St. James North, there was an emptiness of ideas and almost a clownish behaviour by the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will support this Amendment to the Archives Bill, 2010.

Thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Deputy Speaker, just a very brief intervention in the debate. I want to begin by congratulating the Minister of Community Development and Culture for the insight which would have inspired the amendment now before the House.

Asides.

Hon. F. J. STUART: The need to forge a formal relationship between the Archives Department and the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, is an obvious need and that the Minister has moved with such swiftness to affect that formalisation, is to his credit and is deserving of this House's applause.

Archives are very important. Again, it is a matter for regret that a debate on archiving and reading in Barbados could be dismissed by the Honourable Member for St. George North as a waste of time.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I never said such. I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that

it is an important debate, but it has taken a whole day to get through a short matter and that is all I said. It is an important debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I am of the view that it could have lasted only 10 minutes.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the finest speeches in the debate today was made by the Honourable Member for St. James North who spoke first for the Opposition and who understands the importance of elevated thinking. I would not level such an accusation at the Honourable Member for St. George North because unless you are discussing pudding and souse, pork chop or chicken leg, he considers everything else unimportant and therefore, a debate on archiving and reading, the Honourable Member would regard as a waste of time in this House in the year 2010.

House A54, Sequence 32, 4.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Hon. F. J. STUART: This after, or in the midst of, the apocalyptic disclosure that he reads and has a degree in history.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the archives of a society really are the soul of that society. There is a famous Guyanese Professor George G. M. James who was educated at the University of Durham after leaving Georgetown, who wrote a book in the 1950s called "Stolen Legacy", which created quite a stir when it was written, because it proffered the view that the philosophy attributed by the Greeks to Aristotle and Plato were really stolen from the Libraries of Alexandria in Egypt. All of this arising out of the Persian invasions of that part of the world first and then the exploits of Alexandra the Great.

Professor James argued that what the Greeks have claimed for themselves and claimed originality for, is really Egyptian scholarship. Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of their access to the Archives and the Libraries of Egypt, the Greeks were able to appropriate these materials at times of conquest.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a similar argument has now been raised, arising out of the invasion of Iraq. If the networks are to be believed, one of the biggest concerns arising out of that invasion has been the view that a lot of the archives of Iraq have disappeared because invaders always understand the importance of archives. Archives get at the very soul of a society. Even here in our sister Caribbean island of Haiti, those concerns are being raised at the present time as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a Government in Barbados in the year 2010, that is concerning itself with cementing its archival arrangements and making sure that its archives are

protected, and that the best interpretation and the best care are bestowed on its archiving activities, is a Government to be applauded, not to be ridiculed as the Honourable Member for St. George North is doing. This is important business and should not be treated with the lightheartedness evident in the speech delivered by the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West referred in his speech to the Errol Barrow Memorial Lecture, and well might he do so because that lecture, which was delivered by Professor Woodville Marshall was delivered on the subject "The Reconstruction of the Debate for Barbados' Independence 43 Years Later". What was discovered is that there was nothing written anywhere in any coherent way on the debate for Barbados' Independence. The information had to be found through newspapers that date back to the 1960s and all of those newspapers were not even available.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the Honourable Member quite correctly said, Professor Marshall then had to rely on oral history, persons who were actually involved in the Under 40s, one of the movements that were active during the Independence period.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, interestingly enough, most of the members involved in the Under 40s are now dead, so were we to deal with that debate perhaps five years from now, all of the members might be gone. Fortunately, an employee from the Urban Development Commission was able to help Professor Marshall with the names of many of the persons who were active with the underprivileged during that period.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, storage of information is very important. In fact, I was discussing with the Minister of Education and Human Resource Development today, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, that since that debate over Barbados' Independence has not been captured anywhere in a coherent form - in fact, Professor Marshall's lecture is the first reconstruction of it - that it is now the Party's duty to have that debate published some time later on this year, hopefully to coincide with the 55th Anniversary of the Party sometime in April this year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that kind of archiving is extremely important, because no history book in Barbados, or no history book on Barbados, can tell you anything today about the debate for Barbados' Independence, who were the actors, what were the arguments, nothing of the sort. True, the debate on the White Paper is accounted for in the records of Parliament, but that was only one aspect of the debate. Professor Marshall's lecture has made an important intellectual contribution to the historiography of Barbados during that period.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the formal linking of the Archives Department to the University of the West Indies and the Archivist at the University of the West Indies is very important. This has given rise to some thoughts being shared with the House, not only by Members on This Side, but also by the Honourable Member for St. James North who spoke this morning of the importance of reading.

The Honourable Member was kind enough to refer to two recent public statements made by the Honourable George Lamming here in Barbados. The Honourable George Lamming continues to put Barbados enduringly in his debt by the quality of his insight and the quality of his public utterances.

Dr. Lamming reminded this society and the children at the school, which has been renamed after him, that reading is a kind of food for the mind, that just as the body needs food for its nourishment, so too does the mind. That he encouraged the students to read and to broaden their perspectives is an important contribution to the public discourse of Barbados at this time. I think that the society owes a debt of gratitude to Dr. Lamming for not only the message itself, but the way he framed it and how easily digestible it would have been for the young students at the George Lamming Primary School whom he addressed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I consider this debate a very important debate. In fact, I think it was one of the better debates I have heard in this House over the last two years. I consider it one of the better debates because, unlike what the Honourable Member for St. George North would have preferred us to do, that is, to discuss only food for the body, the debate sought to provide food for the mind.

House A54 Sequence 33

4.30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 01, 2010

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that it would have been meat far too strong for his personal digestion, but we cannot universalise the Honourable Member's inadequacies and assume that because he is not interested in these matters, that no other Barbadian is interested. His is a case that turns on his own facts and he must so turn.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to conclude by congratulating the Honourable Minister of Community Development and Culture for the amendment before this Honourable House. It is an important amendment and of course, we look forward to hearing more about archiving and library services in Barbados.

Sir, while talking about libraries, I need to mention that there are still some of our outlying libraries that are in need of proper marketing, I would say. There is a library at Six Roads, which I am given to understand is being grossly underutilised. I used to use that library when I was a youngster growing up, but I am not aware that it has been modernised over a long number of years, while the character of the environment in which that library is located has changed over time. I think it now has to be modernised, properly equipped and properly marketed to the people in the St. Philip areas. I believe that the schools, the Reynold Weekes Primary School and the Princess Margaret School, which is next door to the library, can make more effective use of it, once it is made 21st Century compliant.

The Post Office also used to be housed in that building, but it has vacated that building and has gone over on the other side of the road, on the Emerald City Compound. Sir, there is scope for expanding the facilities of the Six Roads Library and, making it a modern facility for use of the people of St. Philip, many of whom are many young persons interested in academic pursuits.

Sir, St. Philip is one of the fastest-growing, if not the fastest-growing parish in Barbados and, it is my view that it should have a good modern library facility. Sir, the infrastructure at Six Roads provides a good background on the basis of which that facility can be produced. Sir, this is just a thought for the Minister on the question, and for all the other persons who are interested in these matters, and who are responsible for libraries across the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those few words, I want to give my full support to this amendment. I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to wrap up this debate and generally, to thank all Honourable Members for their contributions.

Sir, the debate generally was of a high standard, it was complimentary for the most part. Honourable Members were extremely supportive of the amendments and generous in their encomiums for the staff members of the Archives Department, and the Barbados Library Service.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, generally the debate went well, just only for that one aberration, but I believe if I were to inflict another single blow on the Honourable Member for St. George North, I would be found at the scene of the crime with bloodied hands and with a charge of murder hanging over my head.

Asides.

(Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. George North were ordered to be expunged from the records by Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George North, this is an Honourable Chamber. Surely, when you rose, you did not indicate your reason for your rising. When you were speaking, it was not an Honourable Chamber then because you did not say exactly why you were standing. Be that as it may...

(Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. George North were ordered to be expunged from the records by Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, please continue.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is obvious that the licks were so hot that the Honourable Member is still punch-drunk and obviously is not in any mood to defend himself.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, I do not drink.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you may rule however you may want to, but I am still an Honourable Member of this House. I have said that the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member did not drink on his own volition, he was forced-fed, and so he is forgiven.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the amendment is for the addition of a single member to the Committee and that was for the Assistant Registrar of Archives and Records for the Cave Hill Campus, the University of the West Indies. That was to establish some nexus between the University of the West Indies Campus and the Archives Department.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the principal spokesperson for the Opposition, I deem his contribution to be stellar and scholarly. The Honourable Member dealt with several areas and I do agree with him that there is a dearth, or a paucity of imperial data in Barbados in several areas of endeavour. We in the Ministry of Community Development and Culture are suffering from that dearth, especially when it comes to the cultural statistics, and we are moving assiduously to correct that situation.

I also agree with the collaboration between the private sector and the public sector in relation to the

sharing of archival material. Sir, on the question of the space at the museum displaying several artifacts, I would want to say that we are being confronted with constraints of space at that location. We are anxiously awaiting for the erection of the building to accommodate the Headquarters of the Caribbean Examinations Council on a site outside of the Garrison area. When that block is vacated, we will be accommodated in that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the question of the Carnegie Building, we have plans to refurbish that building to its original glory. We will be speaking with the Cubans and the Americans in that regard, to the restoration of that building. We all know that the Cubans are legendary, when it comes to the restoration of buildings of that type. We are sure that restoration will be done in the shortest possible time, because that building is important in the context of the nomination of Bridgetown, with our listing the Bridgetown Garrison on the World Heritage list.

One of the other concerns raised by the Honourable Member for St. James North was that of the Department of Archives being associated with any affiliate bodies in the Caribbean. I want to assure the Honourable Member that the local Archives Department is associated with the Caribbean Archives Association. Of course, all Caribbean archives are members of that association.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there were some concerns raised about the library service. Sir, regarding some of the features of that library service, I would want to inform the Honourable House that some of those services being offered are:

- a. a literacy programme for children in day nurseries to encourage reading;
- b. reading programmes for toddlers, which is aimed at working with parents to introduce reading from the age of six weeks, with print and read material;
- c. a programme supporting the promotion of Library Week in schools by visiting schools, talking about reading and doing story-telling; and
- d. story-telling at several of the branch libraries.

In the case of technology, the Internet service is available at all branches, with the exception of the Oistin's Branch, where, I am sure, we are working assiduously in getting the Internet service there.

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Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Sir, Internet access is available at all branches with the exception of the Oistins branch, and I am sure that we are working assiduously in getting the Internet service there. There is full text database available at the branches and computers are available at all branches with the exception of Oistins, again, which will be dealt with in the shortest possible time. There is also the introduction of e-books and audio books.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the case of the Archives Department, there is a new Gencap software and this will assist them to better organise, store and retrieve records, not only for themselves, but for the general public at large.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think we have covered most of the bases. Sir, some concerns were also raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central regarding the Public Relations for the National Library Service and also for the Department of Archives. I agree with this and that we should better publicise what we do at those agencies. I am in general agreement with that.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East will soon be providing the enabling, through the Cultural Industries Bill, which will be brought shortly to Parliament as long as it clears the hurdles at Cabinet and, of course, that would provide the enabling environment for the film industry, film production and related matters.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe the overall debate went well, and 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 motion of Hon. S. D. BLACKETT, seconded by Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. S.A. LASHLEY in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive, were called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. S. D. BLACKETT, seconded by Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Archives (Amendment) Act, 2010.

ORDER NO. 4 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT, CAP. 228, THE COMPULSORY – ACQUISITION BY THE CROWN OF THE PARCEL OF LAND – SITUATE AT APPLEWHAITES IN THE PARISH OF SAINT – GEORGE, BLACKMANS AND EASY HALL, IN THE PARISH – OF SAINT JOSEPH, FORTY ACRES IN THE PARISH OF SAINT THOMAS AND VINEYARD IN THE PARISH OF SAINT PHILIP IN THIS ISLAND FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES

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

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Resolution before this Honourable House seeks permission to compulsorily acquire the parcels of land as outlined in the Resolution. There are two parcels of land at Applewhaites in St. George, Blackmans in St. Joseph, Easy Hall in St. Joseph, Forty Acres in St. Thomas and Vineyard in St. Philip.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you have noticed, Government has committed itself and, as mandated in the Manifesto, we intend to provide lots to Barbadians at \$5.00 per square foot for first-time homeowners. Indeed, we have identified a number of lots throughout this country and let me say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have already acquired lands under the Land Acquisition Act, by way of private treaty.

Sir, in terms of lands at Branchbury in St. Joseph, that land has already been vested in the National Housing Corporation, Clifton Hill in St. Philip, that parcel of land has been vested in the National Housing Corporation, Guinea in St. John and Woodbourne in St. Philip, with remaining lands for further development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are other lands that have been acquired, and hopefully those lands will come next week for vesting in the National Housing Corporation, lands at Henley, St. John; Cherry Grove in St. John and Todds in St. John.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in relation to these lots, we recognise that we had to provide additional water mains, and the Barbados Water Authority has worked in collaboration with the National Housing Corporation.

Sir, in relation to the provision of water for the housing programme, I have received a report that Guinea in the parish of St. John, in terms of the progress, 100 per cent of the total services have been completed.

H/A54/4.50 p.m. Sequence 35

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: In Woodbourne, St. Philip, a 100 per cent of the total services have been completed and in Henley and Cherry Grove, St. John, 100 per cent of the total services have been completed.

I have been instructed that a Barbados Water Authority crew has been mobilised to commence the installation of mains at Branchbury, St. Joseph, and I am very informed that the Barbados Water Authority started the work there, and intend to start work very soon at Clifton Hill, St. Philip. I want to congratulate the Barbados Water Authority for moving very swiftly in assisting this Government's programme.

Sir, we recognise Applewhaites, St. George, is what we call a ribbon development. These are lands where some already have services installed and form part of an existing tenantry. It would be easier for this Government, and indeed the agency of the National Housing Corporation, to move swiftly to place these lands into the hands of first time homeowners in this country.

Sir, the fact is, a lot of persons in the low income bracket cannot purchase a piece of land on the private open market, so this policy is geared towards ensuring that those persons own a piece of this rock. That is indeed the philosophy behind this policy.

Sir, there are other lands that we are looking at. In fact, only yesterday we received a letter from a landowner who wants to partner with Government relative to providing house spots for Barbadians.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Some of these lands are for further development. We have virtually satisfied some of our Manifesto commitments with regard to house spots.

Sir, with reference to the Tenancies Programme, we have started a process to allow Barbadians to access their rights under the Tenancies Freehold Act. In fact, there are some tenants who are eligible to secure their title to their lots, but some have not taken the steps to accomplish the goal of owning a piece of land under the Tenancies Freehold Act.

Sir, the Ministry of Housing and Lands intends to go directly to those persons to inform them of their rights, to encourage them to come forward and participate in the process.

Recently, in the area of Wiltshire Avenue, St. Philip, tenants have been living for over 30 years and are not in possession of title deeds. In fact, some people from the

Ministry of Housing and Lands were shocked that living there for years, after being moved by Wiltshire Plantation into that area, they are not in possession of any sort of title deeds saying that they own the land.

We intend to go to the residents, directly, to hold a meeting, and I urge all other Parliamentarians whether they are in receipt of the facts of tenancies in their area, to meet with the Ministry of Housing and Lands officials, to formulate a direct approach of informing them of their rights, and to move this Tenancies Programme forward.

Sir, I want to inform this Honourable House that this programme will be launched very soon. In fact, we have had a very good response to this programme, which is the \$5.00 per square foot programme. Many Parliamentarians, when they do their clinics, recognise that the two major concerns of their constituents, or people from outside of their Constituency, basically are jobs, houses or land. We intend to ensure that those Barbadians could now grasp the opportunity of owning a piece of this rock.

Sir, the fact that we now have the Barbados Water Authority on board, before we had discussions with them, and now I am very pleased with their approach to meeting with us, sitting down and setting target dates so that there will be no more delays in accessing these lots by Barbadians.

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

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

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, I rise to support this Resolution. In fact, it seems to me that no Member of the Government wants to second this Resolution.

I support this acquisition. I must say it represents the very first time in two years that the Government's housing programme is truly theirs. I made the point that these acquisitions of lands at Blackmans, Easy Hall, Forty Acres, however the Minister has pointed out that he has acquired under private treaty land at Branchbury, Clifton, Guinea, Woodbourne, Henley and Todds. These would have started, and if you look at the Surveyor's Plan, they would have started in July 2009. In the case of Blackmans, the Surveyor's Plan shows that these truly started in July 2009. The one at Forty Acres started under the Democratic Labour Party.

Sir, I have said in this Honourable House before, that developments usually take between one-and-a-half and two years. These developments truly represent what the

Democratic Labour Party have brought since they became the Government, and that is what we have been seeing.

I believe that with the acquisition of these lands under private treaty, the Honourable Minister said he is going to bring them to be vested in the National Housing Corporation, which would take a couple of days. He said next week.

H A54 5.00 p.m. Sequence 36

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

House A54, Sequence 37, 5.00 p.m.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: We are looking forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the vesting process, because the vesting process is where the National Housing Corporation can truly convey to the tenants at \$5 00 per square foot.

In the parish of St. George we recognise the urgency of this development, especially in that area of Applewhaites. In the last 10 years a lot of development has gone on at Applewhaites. We have put in all the roads. We have put in new water mains and of course, utilities, and it has a bus service. The only thing left to be done is for the Minister to look at the Second Acquisition, where there is land for an additional playing field.

I believe that when you have developments with more than 100 houses, there should be some form of recreation, and I am calling on the Government to look speedily at an acquisition of just a small area to the west of the second parcel, so that you can provide some form of recreation for this development, because it is a tenantry.

Applewhaites Tenantry is surrounded by lands at Market Hill, Flat Rock and of course Proute, so it is a known district. I want to compliment the Government for moving on these acquisitions. However, I believe that it has taken some time, but I knew that it would have taken this time for the Government's programme to get off the ground.

I must use this opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to single out, as the Minister said, the Plantation Tenancies. The Plantation Tenancies Act was passed in the 1980s. It was amended in the 1990s by the Democratic Labour Party and what constituted a tenantry was moved from five to two, and it meant that a number of persons were disenfranchised and lots had to be found for persons who were disqualified under the Act. Since 1990, both Governments have bought parcels of land across Barbados to give these people the opportunity to be rehoused.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not satisfied with the process. Sir, when I say I am not satisfied, I am not

targetting the Government. I am targetting the process, because Honourable Members sometimes misunderstand what you are saying and then you have ad hominem attacks. It seems to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you are not protected, but the point I am making is this.

Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I think the Honourable Member for St. George North might, inadvertently, have been misleading the House. He said earlier that the Democratic Labour Party amended the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act in the 1990s to move a tenantry from five to two. It is really from two to five.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was a slip. It really is from two to five and it meant that many persons were disenfranchised. In this regard, lots were purchased, but a number of persons since then have been given a lot, but I do not think the conveyance process has been completed. We definitely need the Department to do some back tracking and look at those persons who are still awaiting their conveyance, who cannot go at the Mortgage Company to get a mortgage and cannot do anything. Sir, some of them are not paying rent, some of them have not paid to purchase the land and you still have problems.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can speak about tenancies across Barbados, for example, Lead Vale in Christ Church, where we had such problems. Sir, people have been living on the land for more than 10 years and yet they do not own the land.

Another category of people, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would be the single lot tenants. Those are persons who are not qualified, but they have some form of rights. When I left the Ministry of Housing, we were looking at a way to see how we can help those persons who for some reason, the court said that they have to move. Sometimes the landlord wants his spot and we know that this is a case. Sir, you cannot do anything about that because you cannot fight a man who wants his only spot and this is where the National Housing Corporation comes in.

The Opposition Barbados Labour Party would encourage the Government to look favourably at those persons who have lost, not necessary their right, but who have lost their lot and give them the purchase price of \$5.00 per square foot. The present Government says that first-time homeowners, regardless of whether or not they have lost their lots, would get the lots now at \$5 00 per square foot and the National Housing Corporation would bear the development cost. I would urge the Government to look carefully at this, because they are persons who have lost their homes, because of the court process. It is not their fault and they are looking for house spots.

Another category is the persons who have had fires. I can speak about persons in Bank Hall who have lost their homes because of fires, but have not got a replacement unit because there are no houses available. The National Housing Corporation does not have units, but there are people who were promised lots and homes after the fire in King George Road. They have approached me and are trying their best, despite the fact that they got no help from Government. The National Housing Corporation does not have lots and houses but they are trying.

I would urge the Minister to make a note of those persons across St. Michael whom the court have said that they have to move. Persons have approached me who are not from my Constituency. They have approached National Housing Corporation, but they cannot get a lot because there are none. Now that the National Housing Corporation has lots here, I would hope that these persons who have lost their homes by fire, would be given an opportunity to be first on the list. Sir, persons have lost their homes by fire, not only in this term, but from long ago in our term, but there were no lots available, because they cannot buy on the open market.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are still persons who cannot buy because their income does not allow them to buy, who are depending on rental lots and lease lots. I have urged the Government, because a White Paper was done a couple of years ago, that called on the National Housing Corporation to provide opportunities for persons at the lowest end by leasing them their lots.

I know that the acquisition process takes time but now that we have the acquisition before us, we hope that the vesting process can continue with speed, so that we can get the lots into the hands of those persons who really need them at the lower end. I hope that the need for the rent-to-own units will continue at a fast pace.

The other process, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I need to address is the process of the Town Planning Department. I think that the Town Planning Department needs to be equipped with staff, who can really look at development in a big way. Sometimes we know that there is a fine line with agricultural land. The people who own agricultural land do not want to give up land and even though we know that they are surrounded by tenancies. I can speak about Hamblin's land in St. George, which was acquired by this Parliament in December 2002. I have approached the Town Planning Department, I have approached the Prime Ministers, both on Our Side and That Side and we have not had any resolution to Hamblin's land in St. George. Yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can see development that has been approved by the Town Planning Department on the next side.

House A54, Sequence 37, 5.10 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not attacking the development at Applewhaites. I have to be very clear on this. I am very supportive of the development at Applewhaites, but I cannot in all conscience support the development at Applewhaites and not Market Hill because Market Hill is in a more residential district.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you apply equal weight to A, you must apply it to B, that is why we are saying that the Town Planning Department must be consistent.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: This Parliament acquired the land already, it is Government land.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I am of the view that the Town Planning Department and the present Minister who is responsible for town planning, I am not sure who, should look carefully...

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I went on a site visit already with the Minister. We have seen the land and we have agreed that it is land that is really needed for Barbadians.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you look at Groves Tenantry, you could get tenantry lots, rental lots and lots for sale. It travels between a middle income development and a low income development, so you could get both in this development, so I think we need to look at that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, many persons have asked me to speak about what is happening in terms of value. Of course, I have always maintained that what is value for you is not value for me. The valuation of a sale is different from land that is bought and vice versa.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am of the view that you would have people complaining about what is the value and sizes of the various houses, but I have not been one of those persons who would come out and attack them. Even persons in my Constituency call me and tell me that the house and land are too small. A starter house is generally a small house.

When I was in that Ministry, I know that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy complained over and over again about the sizes of the lots and houses at Bakers in St. James. Today, people are adding on to those houses all the time. I believe that persons could accept a starter house and then they could move on and improve on the property, especially if the houses are built up.

I do believe that the houses at Constant is a step in the right direction, even though members have complained of their size. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that one has to look at the value, and I am urging the National Housing Corporation to look at the value because sometimes one has to discount...

We have been talking about research today. Research at the National Housing Corporation shows that there was a time when you had to take into consideration the level of labour input as against materials and discount one against the other so that you would have a proper valuation. Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes if you include all of the labour cost in a project, especially if it has to do with the National Housing Corporation, you may very well come up with a skewed appraisal of the whole property, so I would want them to look at that very carefully.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think we have to do something about the banking institutions in this country. I am not one to believe that they are helping us at all. The banks do not take any risk. The banks treat those persons in North America different from how they treat us. In North America, you could get mortgages at 4 and 5 per cent. Today, the banks in Barbados are charging 8 and 9 per cent, and we need to look at that carefully.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have said before, if this Government truly wants to move construction forward, whether or not the Government thinks that I am frivolous, I will continue to call on the Government to move the construction sector forward. Mr. Deputy Speaker, without construction, you would have a situation in this country where you would have lots of unemployment. Construction has always been the one element that will move the country forward, because so many people are employed in the construction sector.

The Government does not want me to talk about the bread and butter issues. This is the debate that should have come this morning at 10:00 o'clock, because the banks in this country are unfairing Barbadians.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: I am the one who brought the 100 per cent mortgages at 6 per cent to this country. I felt that was necessary because the banks are unfairing poor people in this country. It takes too long to access a mortgage. Even when the National Housing Corporation has the loan there, it might try its best but then it takes too long for you to access the mortgages.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government does not have much control of the banking institutions. They have control of the Town Planning Department, so you could bring the Town Planning Department online, but we definitely need

to urge the banking institutions to look favourably at the construction industry, because if the Government wants to get employment going, they must put a lot of money...

This is land that the Government would have purchased. As we used to say, this is land that will be given to the National Housing Corporation. This is the taxpayers' money. This is land that will be paid for by the Treasury of Barbados and given to the National Housing Corporation. This is nothing new. The National Housing Corporation would have to put in funds in order to turn this into a development and when that happens, the National Housing Corporation must recover some of this money and, therefore, you need a proper and enlightened banking institution. In our day, we had the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company Limited that was able to swiftly move people into properties, and we want to see that happen again.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we support these ventures. Of course, with all of this development, lots would have to be created, there must be a mixture. I do not support the need for all lots or all houses. I think that in all developments, there must be a mixture of houses and lots.

In our time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we were able to provide lots for persons with the HIVAIDS virus and for persons on welfare. Mr. Deputy Speaker, even though it is hard, we should have two or three lots in every development for welfare cases. I did that at Constant and at Lower Burney.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: We did that at Constant, Lower Burney, Bakers and some others. The point I am making to the Minister is that at every development there must be opportunities for those persons who are on welfare. In those days, the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission used to build a few houses for the HIVAIDS Commission. I think that some money was earmarked to build houses for those patients. I do not know what is happening now, but recently one such person came to me and we could not find a lot for him.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would urge the Government to look favourably at those persons who are still on welfare who needs a spot and at those persons who cannot pay for a spot, but could rent a spot to build their homes, those persons who had fires, and those persons who are really in need. We have a situation of a number of poor people around us still.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I agree with the Minister that at every Constituency meeting, we get hundreds of people who come asking for a house first and then for

employment, because once they have employment they would need a house.

House A54 Sequence 38

5.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as long as Government provides the mechanism for employment, then the people will need housing and land solutions. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to be very careful though, because there are still a number of persons who want to put down house spots for their families, even though they have houses. You have to watch that very carefully. You have to do your research to ensure that they are truly first-time homeowners.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a lot of land in the Christ Church area. Government owns the entire Coverley Estate. There is a lot of land there to be acquired, but it takes money and time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes I hear the Minister criticising our Joint Venture Programme. Sir, the aim of that Joint Venture Programme was to push the housing sector forward. Sir, Government alone cannot do it. Sir, sometimes the intention is good, but not necessarily the application, you have to put a mechanism behind the intention. Sir, what is important is that you can have a Joint Venture Programme but, you have to put a system in place to control and to assist the private sector.

Sir, in the most developed world, it is the private sector that drives housing solutions. Therefore, we would want this Government to go hand-in-hand, which I noticed is happening here, to push housing solutions. I hope we could have lots turning out as swiftly as possible within the next year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

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

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my short intervention I would want to begin by complimenting the Honourable Member for St. George North for a pretty tidy presentation. I would encourage him to keep his presentation to the area of housing where obviously he has some expertise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable Member said a number of things that I would want to endorse, particularly in the area of construction. The Honourable Member said that its growth is essential for our continued development

and, certainly towards bringing employment to our young people in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, having said that, there is one area that concerns me. I have noticed, and I am sure that we have all noticed, that many contractors have been asking for a Police Certificate of Character. This automatically means that many of our young people within our constituencies, who may have a slight infraction with the Law, automatically believe that they would be ruled out and, therefore, would not apply for these jobs. It is something to which we have to find some way of addressing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I have been doing personally is that I have been calling and asking what exactly is that person looking for. Sir, if you have a young man who, when he was 20 years, was caught with a bit of marijuana and has a police conviction, there is no reason four years later in his life, why he should feel that he cannot get a job in construction, because of the fact that job requires him to have a Police Certificate of Character, because the particular employer may not be interested in employing him because he might have had an infraction with the Law. This concerns me in that sector.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that even in one of yesterday's papers you would have seen where it says masons, carpenters and labourers wanted but, that they must bring a Police Certificate of Character. As I said, lots of our young people who may have had an infraction with the Law are not going to go forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to support the call that we should look at ensuring that lots are available for persons, who have been displaced because their landlords or owners, want the land immediately for family members, or because these family members are returning to Barbados.

Sir, I have such a matter in my Constituency that pains me. The owner of a plot of land has said to the family that they can have the land, but the cost of the land is about \$200 000. Sir, that family has nowhere else to go. Sir, this is an area that we have to look at. I want to endorse what the Honourable Member for St. George North said, in terms of the Minister of Housing and Lands having to look at these individuals, and ensure that we can find somewhere to accommodate them. Of course, there are cases that are merited.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that on previous occasions the Minister has said - and I thought that I would use this opportunity to remind him - that we need to think outside the box. We need to ensure that in making housing available, we should also enfranchise more of our contractors. I want to remind the Honourable Member of

our responsibility to the small contractors in this country, to ensure that more and more of the pie is given to the small contractors.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a role for large contractors, there is no doubt about that, but I have small contractors in the Crane, Gemswick, Four Roads and throughout my Constituency, where there is no reason the National Housing Corporation should not be trying to utilise their services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to remind the Honourable Member of our responsibility to small contractors in this country, to ensure that we spread the pie as far as possible, because of the fact that these small contractors would employ more and more of our young people. Sir, I encourage the Minister to move with haste, as he is doing, towards bringing lots to Barbadians. I also want to remind him that we need to ensure that more and more of our people are employed, that the pie is spread as wide as possible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in looking at a holistic approach, I noted that the Minister has said that his Ministry is working closer with the Barbados Water Authority. Sir, I am happy to hear that because as we hear more and more about the fast development of St. Philip, there is a bit of disquiet among the residents with respect to the provision of water. It seems as though more and more in areas of St. Martin, Foul Bay, Mangrove, where the infrequency of water seems to be the issue.

We want to ensure that in bringing developments to St. Philip, that there is a partnership with our people, including both the existing and new residents, so that, they would, in fact, have readily access to water. Sir, I am glad to hear that the Barbados Water Authority is on board immediately because this is an area that concerns me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, we have to look at housing holistically in terms of all the partners and all the actors. In this regard also, I have noticed that in terms of evening classes in St. Philip, given our size, there is a legacy in terms of not having classes in carpentry, masonry and tiling, being accessible in St. Philip.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our young people, men in particular, are reluctant to take a bus and travel down to Sayes Court and other places where these classes are being held. Therefore, I would want that the Minister speak to our colleague in the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports and would ensure that we could have some of these classes in St. Philip, so that we could have more of our young people trained in these various areas.

Sir, our young people just do not want to be labourers, some of them want to be artisans in the true

sense of the word. Therefore, we need to take education closer to our young men in particular, as they are less reluctant to travel the miles to Sayes Court, or to some other place where evening classes are taught.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in an earlier debate, one of the things that was said was the fact that we need to take more things to our young people. I am saying particularly in the area of masonry, carpentry and tiling, I would like to see training being offered in St. Philip, so that we could have more of our young men being available to provide construction services to Barbadians as would be required.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is another area I have noticed where there is an issue, and I believe that as a Government, we are looking at it. Sir, it is the issue of ownership of land in terms of title deeds. Sir, that process now takes sometimes up to two or three years. I believe that we are looking to find a way to have that fast-tracked. I have noticed in my Constituency, that where there is an issue in terms of the quality of housing, that issue is because there is an issue in terms of ownership of the land.

Sir, in circumstances where I have discovered this, I am working with my constituents to find some way of ensuring that we could, in fact, bring ownership to them for the land, because that is the impediment to them being able to develop their houses of a style they would want.

5.30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Again, Sir, as the Minister said earlier - which I have looked at and I am doing a tour of a couple of areas where I believe we have tenancies - we, as a Government, have responsibility where there are tenancies and where constituents are not aware of their rights, we need to bring that to their attention.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in St. Philip South, and I am sure it obtains in the other Constituencies where these individuals have been on these lands for a number of years, they have not improved their housing lots to the quality they would like because of the question of ownership, but once we give them ownership, I am sure they will then proceed to improve their conditions to the type and standard that they would require.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the Minister has said, it is an easy thing for us to support this acquisition, because it is part of our 5 000 lot programme. I am glad to see that we are moving with haste even though there are times when I wish we could go faster, but I recognise, as we all do, that there is a process and that sometimes it takes a bit longer than is required. Sir, as the young people would say, I want to encourage him to keep on keeping on so that we can get

more lots into the hands of first-time home owners and into the hands of Barbadians as a whole.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those few words, I thank you and look forward to more acquisitions of this type so that we could house every last person in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you.

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

Dr. the Hon. D. S. LOWE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a brief intervention on this debate. First of all, I would like to openly express my support and appreciation for the work being done by the Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands. There can be no doubt in this country that there is a very serious commitment on the part of the Minister, to reflect the policy of Government and that there is very strong leadership in the Ministry of Housing and Lands, as is reflected in the dedication of the staff of that Ministry, in allowing Government to see come to fruition a very important plank of its Manifesto.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, whenever a debate on housing occurs in this House, I ask myself why is it appearing as though the delivery of housing to Barbadians is such an achievable task under this Government, and under the last Administration, all we have to remind ourselves of their hapless effort to house Barbadians is a collection of bugs, bumble bees and the like.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I search my own mind to try to come up with a substantive analysis to why that could be, I have to go back to creeds of the Democratic Labour Party that have become the threads of this Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, housing Barbadians for us is not just a programme. It is a major tenet of the philosophy of the Democratic Labour Party and its Government. It is not just our programme, but it is the demonstration of a philosophy that gives rise to the social development of the nation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have said before that we do not measure progress by erecting buildings and establishing monuments. Sir, we measure social development, social transformation and social progress by enabling ordinary citizens to achieve the kind of achievements like housing, employment and other measurable social indices of progress that become extremely important in the building of a nation.

I believe that we are demonstrating, not only a fundamental belief that regardless of the difficulties of the time, and in spite of the fact that we do not have the money to toss around as would have been back in the last

Administration, we have now entered a new kind of relationship with the private sector. We have not entered a new kind of relationship with our public sector workers. We are saying that at all cost, we must continue to press ahead because this is a worthy endeavour that would help to further transform the lives of the people of ordinary Barbadians.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for my part, I am very happy that the Barbados Water Authority is strongly supporting the efforts of the Ministry of Housing. It has been a long journey to get there.

H/A54/5.40 p.m. Sequence 40

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

Dr. the Hon. D.S. LOWE: I know from time to time, Barbados Water Authority has been beaten up all over the country for things that it has not been able to achieve, but I am pleased to say, today, that in support of the Government's programme, the Barbados Water Authority is now working hand in hand with the Ministry of Housing to achieve these programmes. That is why it is also trying to achieve the Mains Replacement Programme. It is also trying to ensure that the kind of water outages and shortages that one of my Honourable colleagues spoke about will be corrected.

We are exploring new water augmentation programme options. We are exploring our new desalination water options. Sir, we are exploring a number of situations where we will not only be able to furnish, or to supply adequate water to accommodate the development that is going on, but where those persons who have traditionally suffered, particularly in the high elevation areas in the country, suffered from low water pressure, we are seeking also to make sure that those issues are addressed and that there is sustained progress in the Barbados Water Authority.

Sir, I will say here today for the record that I am confident that as we continue to provide strong leadership and to motivate our workers to achieve the things that have to be achieved, we would continue to partner not only with the Ministry of Housing, but any other Ministry that requires us to partner with them, we will partner with them to make sure that the Government's agenda is fulfilled.

Sir, we understand that the Honourable Minister of Housing would have concerns about ensuring that water is supplied, mains are laid, connections are made and with a significant measure of rapidity, the workers of the Barbados Water Authority have come on board and all of the incumbrances and obstacles that would have stood in their way before, we were able to remove and now there is a sustained programme in place to ensure that the

Government's agenda on housing, is completely achieved by the end of the period stated in our Manifesto.

Sir, housing people is not a programme. Housing citizens is not just the pursuit of a programme. I should say again it is the fulfilment of a belief that social development and social progress is best demonstrated by how people's lives move from one level of quality to a higher level.

I have many constituents in my Constituency who are looking for housing. I am pleased that the Minister has been extremely responsive. I know that his job is sometimes extremely strenuous because of the demands. We are searching for ourselves. We are looking to see where we can identify land, so that he does not have to do the search. We do the search and then we invite him and the other officials to come look, and see whether they will be able to do anything to assist the constituents in the Constituency of Christ Church East.

Sir, I am encouraged that as long as we continue to see this as a partnership and not just as the responsibility of the National Housing Corporation, or the Ministry of Housing, as long as every Ministry sees housing Barbadians as an important part of social development, then I am of the view that all those agencies that have to be a part of the process will come on board and be a part of the process.

Sir, our vision is that when all is said and done, we are able to fulfill a commitment that allows ordinary people who perhaps never thought they would own their own home, to have the option of owning a piece of Barbados.

Sir, look what the Ministry has done. It is not only looking to housing for first time homeowners, it has not only brought the cost of housing to a level where it makes working-class Barbadians able to achieve a loan, but it has gone a step further and has introduced a rent-to-own concept where, if initially you are unable to meet the burden of ownership, you can start your journey by renting with the assurance that you will eventually own your home. It is not just a programme, it is a belief, and Government has a moral responsibility to ensure that these basic qualities of life services are brought within the reach of every single Barbadian.

Sir, what housing does? It not only provides shelter, but it creates an environment where it enhances educational opportunities. It enhances children's ability to learn. It enhances children's ability to spend more quality time with their families and so on. Therefore, I say again, for them it was a programme, for us it is a philosophy. It must be sustained. It will be sustained and at the end of the day, I know that this Minister of Housing will go down as one of the greatest Ministers of Housing this country has ever seen because he is committed, he is dedicated and he has the full

support of the Ministry of the Environment, Water Resources and Drainage. Whatever we can do to ensure that this programme is fully realised, we are prepared to do.

Thank you very much.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a few comments to support the efforts of the Minister of Housing to house every last person. First of all, I want to make a special appeal on behalf of the residents within St. Michael West Central, in relation to the fact that I know that from time to time I do have requests from residents of St. Michael West Central for lots. I believe that as a result, at least I believe and would hope, that the acquisition of these lots by the Ministry of Housing, it would at least help to assist some constituents of St. Michael West Central in terms of finding some place to own.

I also want to say, in respect of an artisan, I want to repeat the appeal by the Honourable Member for St. Philip, in relation to artisans because we have a lot of young men today who sometimes find it difficult to find jobs on some of the established construction sites. One of the benefits of this whole housing initiative is to facilitate the expansion of small businesses in Barbados.

We need to recognise that jobs in housing offers an opportunity for small businesses. In that regard, again, I would want to make an appeal to the Minister that in terms of the construction of houses in the programme, special consideration be given to Barbadians, especially small businesses, who have the ability and skills to execute these projects in a successful manner. I think that is very important when it comes to the whole question, of at least helping to solve some of the employers' problems we are seeing as a result of the current economic conditions we are facing in this country.

Sir, the other point I wish to make when it comes to the whole question of housing, I think, again, I want to go back to the Constituency of St. Michael West Central. In congratulating the Minister of Housing in his success in these areas, I know he has been working very closely to identify certain areas within the Constituency of St. Michael West Central which are suitable for housing projects.

One of these areas include Eckstien Village. We have also identified an area in Melville Avenue, which we believe would be suitable for those purposes. I want, therefore, to encourage the Minister that in the same way, and I am putting some pressure on him now, that he was able to at least identify suitable areas in St. Philip, and St.

Thomas in some cases, I would want him to at least address those areas in St. Michael which we have identified.

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House A54, Sequence 42, 5.50 p.m.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Sir, I hope that the landowners would cooperate with the Ministry of Housing, in terms of making them available to the residents so that this Government can get on with its housing programme.

Sir, with those few words, I want to again indicate my support and I thank you very much for the opportunity to say so.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to wrap up this debate. I want to thank all Honourable Members for contributing to this debate. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central made a very impassioned speech. In fact, he touched the nail on the head when he basically spoke to the fact that it is just not a programme, but really a pursuit of a philosophy. Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to congratulate all other Honourable Members who contributed to this debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say to the Barbadian public that keys will be handed over for the houses at Marchfield very shortly. Indeed, I want to congratulate those small contractors who worked at Marchfield, the first project by this Government.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: They brought in the houses on time and there were no cost over-runs.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I now beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government's Business for today's Sitting and I beg to move that this House be now adjourned until Tuesday, February 09, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that this House be now adjourned until Tuesday, February 09, 2010 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

House A54, Sequence 42, 5.53 p.m.

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SINCKLER, Hon. C. P. (St. Michael North West)

STUART, Hon. F. J. (St. Michael South)

TODD, Hon. P. M. T. (City of Bridgetown)

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EDITORIAL NOTES — NOT PART OF THE REPORT

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

EDITORIAL QUERIES

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

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

Q2. Minutes. Mr. Speaker's confirmation of the Minutes is run into the seconder's speech in the source ('I beg to second that, Sir. Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no corrections ...'). Printed as in the source.

Q3. Papers, Hon. P. M. T. Todd, item 2. The title reads 'Health Services (Protection from Minors from Tobacco Products) (Regulations) 2010'; 'from Minors' is presumably 'of Minors'. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Take-slips. Several take-slips are dated 'Tuesday, February 01, 2010' although the sitting was on Tuesday, 2nd February, 2010; Sequence 27 is given for slips at both 3.20 p.m. and 3.30 p.m., and Sequence 32 appears twice at 4.20 p.m. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Order No. 2, call of Hon. R. D. Jones. Hon. R. D. Jones is called by 'Mr. SPEAKER', although Mr. Deputy Speaker had taken the Chair and is addressed throughout that speech. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Order No. 2, Hon. S. D. Blackett's reply. The source records that certain remarks of the Member for St. George North were ordered to be expunged by Mr. Deputy Speaker; the remarks do not appear. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Order No. 2, Mr. G. A. Clarke. Mr. Clarke describes the Bill as providing for three new members appointed by the Minister, while the Minister says that it adds a single ex officio member, the Assistant Registrar of Archives and Records, Cave Hill. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 2nd February, 2010 at 10.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair. Mr. Speaker welcomed members of the Literary and Debating Society of the Combermere School and read greetings from the Speaker of the National Assembly of Kuwait on Barbados' Independence. The Minutes of Tuesday, 19th January, 2010 were confirmed. Hon. F. J. Stuart laid the Defence

(Rate of Pay, Loans and Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations, 2010 and the Report of the Public Enterprise Investment Fund for the year ended 31st March, 2009, and Hon. P. M. T. Todd laid the Annual Report of the Barbados Drug Service for 2007-2008 and tobacco regulations under the Health Services Act. The Archives (Amendment) Bill, 2010 and the Penal System Reform (Amendment) Bill, 2010 were read a first time, and Standing Orders were suspended.

Under Order No. 2, Hon. S. D. Blackett moved the second reading of the Archives (Amendment) Bill, 2010, which adds the Assistant Registrar of the Archives and Records Department, Cave Hill Campus, Mrs. Sharon Alexander-Gooding, to the Archives Advisory Committee as an ex officio member. He set out the Department's objectives, an Electronic Records Management Programme to be introduced in stages, a White Paper on archives being prepared, and the work of the National Library Service. Mr. R. C. Eastmond, speaking first for the Opposition, supported the Bill and spoke of gaps in the region's history, the use of church records and the need for reading. Hon. P. M. T. Todd spoke of the closure of the main public library under the previous Administration, and Mr. S. A. Lashley of the powers of the Chief Archivist, export licences under section 11 of the Act and fire and disaster prevention.

After a suspension, with Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair, Mr. H. F. Lashley called for the archiving of Barbadian drama and for a drama festival, naming several actors and producers. Dr. the Hon. E. R. Byer-Suckoo, Mr. J. D. Paul, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, who spoke of artefacts found during demolition work, and Hon. C. P. Sinckler, who raised intellectual property, also supported the Bill. Mr. G. A. Clarke said the amendment was small and could have been debated in minutes, was called to relevance by Mr. Deputy Speaker when he raised increases in water rates and road taxes, and asked about online access and funding. Hon. R. D. Jones and Hon. F. J. Stuart replied to him; Mr. Clarke rose on points of order, and Mr. Deputy Speaker found no point of order in one case and had certain of his remarks expunged. In reply Mr. Blackett said that internet access was available at all library branches except Oistins. The Bill passed through Committee without amendment, with Mr. S. A. Lashley in the Chair, and was read a third time and passed.

Under Order No. 4, Hon. M. A. Lashley moved a Resolution under section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228, for the compulsory acquisition of land at Applewhaites, St. George, Blackmans and Easy Hall, St. Joseph, Forty Acres, St. Thomas and Vineyard, St. Philip for residential purposes. He said the Government intended to provide lots at \$5.00 per square foot for first-time

homeowners, reported progress by the Barbados Water Authority on services at Guinea, Woodbourne, Henley and Cherry Grove, and announced an approach to tenants entitled to title under the tenancies legislation.

Mr. G. A. Clarke supported the Resolution, called for recreation space at Applewhaites and raised tenants without conveyances; on a point of order from Mr. Stuart he corrected his statement about the amendment of the

tenancies law. Mr. A. D. Brathwaite raised contractors requiring police certificates of character and the place of small contractors; Dr. the Hon. D. S. Lowe spoke of the Barbados Water Authority's support for the housing programme; and Mr. J. D. Paul spoke for residents of St. Michael West Central. Hon. M. A. Lashley replied and the Resolution was agreed to. On the motion of Hon. R. D. Jones, the House was adjourned until Tuesday, 9th February, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.