
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, February 09, 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)

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR M.Sc. (Econ.) 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.) (Lond.), B.A. (Hons.), Dip.Ed.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. E. G. HUTSON, F.C.C.A., C.A. (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. PATRICK M. T. TODD, B.Sc. (Minister of State, Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Urban Development)

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

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

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

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, February 02,

2010.

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

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

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

PAPERS

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

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

1. Annual Reports of the Anti-Money Laundering Authority for the periods 2003-2008.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44, be suspended for the rest 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.

10.20 a.m.

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

On the motion of Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. S. A. LASHLEY in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$23 347 806 FROM THE

CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO PLACE IT AT THE DISPOSAL OF

THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES
2009-2010

AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 7,

2009-2010 WHICH FORMS THE SCHEDULE TO THIS

RESOLUTION AND THAT THE EXPLANATORY NOTES
TO

HEADS 19, 38 AND 65 BE AMENDED AS SET OUT

IN SCHEDULE II TO THE RESOLUTION

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HEAD 38 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - \$11,255,479.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Supplementary before the House is required under the Ministry of Housing and Lands, particularly for the following reasons:

Sir, under Subprogramme 7090, in relation to General Management and Coordination Services, I want to state to this Honourable House that the post of Project coordinator has been assigned to the HELP Programme. Sir, you know that the HELP Programme is part of our housing programme to ensure that every Barbadian has access to affordable housing and to a comfortable living.

Mr. Chairman, the duties of the Project Coordinator basically, are to oversee the project and work closely with the National Housing Corporation, the Land Tax Department and the Town & Country Planning Department.

Mr. Chairman, the funds were not budgetted for this post and respectfully, the Ministry is, therefore,

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seeking \$71 026 and \$9 044 to cover the cost of Other Personal Emoluments and Employers Contributions, respectively.

Mr. Chairman, I want to laud the persons who work closely with this Project, in particular the 500 lots programme. Sir, I could single out one person, but I do not want to mention his name, but that particular person worked, sometimes single-handedly and most of the time, he worked with the team to ensure that some of our Manifesto pledges become a reality.

Further, Mr. Chairman, with respect to Subprogramme 0533: National Housing Corporation, the National Housing Corporation requires a Supplementary in the amount of \$3 million to cover its operation deficit. In addition, Supplementary funds in the amount of \$1 566 954 are also needed to cover the cost of street lighting, water mains upgrade and tree planting for the HELP Programme.

Sir, in relation to the 500 lots programme, we have acquired lands as you would recognise, up to the last time we met in Parliament which we call a 'ribbon'

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development.

Sir, in some of the cases, we have to provide a buffer zone, which is one of the conditions of Town & Country Planning. Sir, that involved tree planting and also we have to upgrade some of the mains in the particular area so that we can service these lots.

Mr. Chairman, this cost is necessary so that we can fulfill the mandate of this Government.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to state that landowners have been paid compensation for lands acquired at Branchbury, St. Joseph, Clifden, St. Philip, Guinea, St. John and Woodbourne, St. Philip. Indeed, these lands have been vested in the National Housing Corporation.

Sir, in relation to the Manifesto pledges, and the fact that we have promised to sell these lands at \$5 00 per square foot, we already have some of those lands vested in the National Housing Corporation to be conveyed very shortly to those Barbadians that are first-time homeowners, and who never have the opportunity to own a piece of this rock.

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Mr. Chairman, Subprogramme 0536 is in relation to utilities at the Land Registry. Sir, the average monthly expenditure is \$11 000. Therefore, it is projected that \$10 000 is required to cover the cost of utilities for the remainder of the financial year.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the Land Registry is basically the engine room of the Ministry of Housing and

Lands. Indeed, we have to make sure that it is properly serviced and that we have the necessary funds to cover the monthly expenditure.

Further, Mr. Chairman, in relation to Property Management, as you know, the Property Department at the Ministry of Housing and Lands is responsible for securing satisfactory accommodation for civil servants, for Government Ministries, for regional and international agencies, for the insurance and repairs of Government buildings and for maintenance of selected properties.

Mr. Chairman, there were numerous requests for new accommodation, rate increases, as well as the amount of

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office space allocated. Sir, additional funds totalling \$798 000, would be needed as a result of the following new rentals and rent reviews: The Productivity Council, the Pan African Affairs, CXC, Caribbean Tourism Organisation, Corporate Affairs, the Customs Department, CID, Eden Lodge, the Post Office, Six Roads, Police Complaints, and the Ministry of Health.

Mr. Chairman, obviously, this manifests our commitment to ensuring that civil servants have suitable accommodation, and that Ministers have enough space for their staff so that we will not relive what occurred in the past, in relation to civil servants having to take, at some time, extreme measures to bring notice to the then Administration, at the time, that they need proper accommodation.

Mr. Chairman, it is also recognised, under this Supplementary, that due to recent request, we have to outfit certain accommodation, the Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports, CARICOM, the Prime Minister's Office, the Director of Prosecution of Crime, Investigation

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Department.

Sir, we have to outfit these offices at Mall International, 5th Avenue, Belleville, to the tune of \$250 000 which is required to pay for these works.

H/A55/10.30 a.m. Sequence 3

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Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, as you know, this Government inherited the IDB's Housing Subsidy and Neighbourhood Development Programme, and Cat's Castle and Greenfield are pilot projects, for

which we have to commence the land surveying very shortly. The estimated cost of the land surveying of these areas is \$400 000. This amount would be required to supplement the 2009/2010 Estimates of Expenditure under this Head.

Sir, the proposed starting date for this project - in fact, we launched the project officially sometime last year and we have given the start date for Cat's Castle to commence in July 2010, for a period of 18 months, all things being equal. The purpose of this project is, obviously, to enhance the living conditions, road network and to ensure that the people in those areas have proper facilities and amenities.

Sir, Garden Land project is scheduled to commence in 2010, for a period of nine months. At Allen View we are at this moment doing preliminary works to get this project off the ground too. Sir, further, the Supplementary provision of \$9 million is required for the acquisition of lands at Walkers, St. Andrew, and Six Men's, St. Peter.

In keeping with the Government's mandate, the Government requires 34 acres of land at Walkers, St. Andrew, the estate of Edna Bourne, and the Ministry of Housing and Lands has commenced acquisition procedure by way of private treaty. Sir, it must be noted that this acquisition will be done by way of private treaty, which means that once a settlement is reached by all concerned, the compensation has to be paid promptly.

Mr. Chairman, it appears that all the relevant documents and title deeds are available, therefore, funds must be available in order to complete the acquisition. It is anticipated that this acquisition will be completed before the end of the financial year.

In relation to Six Men's, St. Peter, the Cabinet will make a decision regarding this parcel of land and the Crown should not abandon the acquisition. In fact, the matter is subject to negotiation and we hope that an amicable settlement can be reached very shortly. All I can say is that the Crown was asked to pay a sum of money into the Court. Obviously, that does not mean that it is a done deal.

The Judge at the time ordered that they reach an amicable agreement, and if the Crown can take the first step by paying some monies into the court, then they could negotiate thereafter. I do not want to go into details, because the agent has made certain representations. Indeed, I do not want to prejudice the negotiations.

Sir, that is my respectful submission under this Head and ask that this Head stand part.

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

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, just a simple question for the Minister. What is the split between the two allocations, reported as \$9 million? How much is for Walker's and how much is for Six Men's, and just to clarify the amount for Six Men's, is that to be paid into the court, or is that for private treaty? I will come back if necessary.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, first of all I think that this Supplementary, obviously, I will be supporting it. Let me say that the Minister of Housing must be complimented for the number of housing development programmes that have sprung up across Barbados. In fact, I will want to refer to this as a housing revolution in Barbados, because there are a considerable number of social approaches being initiated by Government.

When we talk about the Infilling Programme, the HELP Programme, the Right to Own Programme, I believe that any Supplementary that comes here for housing the people of Barbados, particularly poor people in Barbados, it should not be passed through this Honourable Chamber, without any doubt.

In mentioning some of those projects, because I visited some, soon to be completed, for instance, Constant, Greens, Land Castle and Coverley, certainly, I am very heartened by the fact there will be an Infilling Programme in the Pine and Wildey Housing areas, to be started in the not too distant future, and certainly within this term.

Sir, I have an issue of concern as it relates to the Land Tax Department when persons are indebted to them, the majority of poor people owning the Land Tax Department large sums of money over a period of time. I think that the action taken by them really, is to put these lands for sale for auction on the open market. I am asking that this practice by the Land Tax Department be stopped and the land be made available to the National Housing Corporation so that poor people could get the chance.

Sir, I remember the last time, two or three years ago, when such lands were placed on the open market, the kind of people that I see who showed up to purchase these lands at any price, prices poor people in Barbados could not purchase. The danger of that is, sometime in the future you may very well see that a lot of these lands in the communities across Barbados being owned by people, certainly, that are not Barbadians, but have been living here in Barbados for a while. I want to put it that way.

There must be that kind of synergy between the Land Tax Department and, certainly, the Ministry of Housing, as it relates to the sale of lots from private persons who would have owed the Land Tax Department considerable sums of money.

Sir, I also happen to know that the IDB Project for Cat's Castle and Greenfield will be starting some time later this year. In my view, Cat's Castle and Greenfield is a disaster waiting to happen. Similarly, the New Orleans. All of these communities are within the ambit of the City. I am very glad that this project will be started, simply because it is a very closely knitted community. Also, in my view, everybody knows each other and if something is not done about it now, and a fire occurs, it is just a disaster waiting to happen.

There are many other communities around the City, even Hall's Road, these are disasters waiting to happen. Hence the IDB Programme, the development programme, Cat's Castle and Greenfield are critically necessary at this time.

H A55 10.40 a.m. Sequence 4

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House A55, Sequence 05, 10.40 a.m.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I want to say also that I heard the Minister speak about the critical need to have some kind of control and bringing a policy to this Honourable Chamber, as it relates to the rental of privately-owned houses, Sir, and that there must be some synergy and relationship between landlord and tenant because you have some landlords who are charging exceptionally exorbitant fees to the ordinary poor person and these people, Sir, must be brought under control.

I am not only on the tenants' side, but I am also speaking to the landlord because it has to be that kind of synergistic relationship. I believe whatever is necessary to have that aspect of Law amended, so that these unscrupulous landlords cannot take advantage of tenants, is one that is critically necessary at this time.

In addition, Sir, we know for a fact that you have people renting one small room and have to go down the corridor to the toilet at \$300 and \$400 per week. Then, you have about 12 persons inside this room. If you do the arithmetic, you would see what kind of money they are making out of what I call, dreaded and uncomfortable situations. Sir, housing is of a pressing need to Barbadians and you would find that persons are willing to pay almost anything for housing.

Sir, while I am on this vein, I must compliment the social intervention programme by the Welfare Department, which now has a policy where persons who are finding it very difficult to get a house and are homeless, once they can identify an accommodation that is reasonable, the Welfare Department is prepared to help them by paying half the rent and sometimes if they are not working, will pay the full fee for a limited period of three months, which in my view, is sufficient time for them to find alternative accommodation and particularly, if they could find a job.

Sir, I am sure that none of us in here are blind, then again, there is none so blind as those who do not want to see and if you do not want to see, then you cannot see what is happening in Barbados in relation to the housing revolution that is taking place.

Sir, I represent the three biggest housing areas in Barbados, Wildey, Parkinson Field and Pinelands, possibly the oldest housing estate, but once I travel across Barbados and I could see this kind of development, I am saying that within a period of just over two years, you could see this kind of housing development in Barbados. Sir, I believe that Government must be fully complimented.

Luckily for us today in tangentially, what we are going to have later, is a debate later on Penal Reform that obviously would touch on some of the social factors that emanate out of housing areas, that lead some young people to a life of crime. I am only saying that to let the Chairman know that I am fully prepared for this debate later on today. Again, I want to compliment the Minister of Housing.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I feel duty bound to join this debate, though be it for a short while, just to reiterate the comments of the Minister of Housing and indeed, those that were subsequently supported by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. The Votes which the Minister seeks today in this Supplementary are part of the completion programme of what we in the Democratic Labour Party envisage as the housing programme for Barbadians, a social philosophy to which we cling, without an apology.

Sir, we intend to make sure that the issues which we raise as need issues in our campaign for 2007/2008 are fulfilled within the constraints of the finances available, and I want to join in congratulating the Minister of Housing in the progress made so far.

Sir, unlike the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, I want to remind Barbadians and urge them to

look and see what is happening in respect of the solutions that we physically visit and put our hands around, the solutions are at Work Hall, Marchfield, Constant, Greens and Coverley, where complete villages are being created under the Ministry of Housing, to make sure that the housing needs of Barbadians are not talked about, are not paraded around in display yards, parks, car parks and in Queen's Park, but are actually made available for Barbadians to turn the key, open the door and turn to their spouses and children and say, this is our place and it is not free.

Mr. Chairman, it has to be paid for and that is the other admirable aspect of this programme because it seeks in its entirety to make sure the full gamut is dealt with. You have those who can afford to buy \$200 000 properties completed and their wishes are being fulfilled. Those who will buy lots at \$5 00 per square foot, constantly we are in here vesting lands for this very purpose. Sir, lands at \$2 50 per square foot and \$10 00 per square foot are being made available, by going through the correct legal procedures to enable these ambitions to be fulfilled.

Sir, even more excitedly for ordinary Barbadian folks are things like the in-filling programme. We are not only talking about it, but I invite you to go to Sayes Court and see it with your own eyes, the programme living itself out on a daily basis with Barbadians, not promises, not in times of plenty when money was lush or flush, but the point is we are delivering. Sir, the in-filling programmes are earmarked for the Pine and a number of other housing developments in Barbados, occupied by ordinary working class Barbadians, whom we are in here to serve.

The Honourable Members on That Side can chuckle, grin, and shout at the top of their voices every Sunday night, but Barbadians are touching, feeling and living in the houses, in the housing solutions provided by the Democratic Labour Party and the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, undeniably an excellent programme.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, it sticks in their craws because they were unable to deliver on any of the housing promises that they so brandished around Barbados during their term of office. Their interest was different and we will bet to that because Barbadians must be constantly reminded of the programmes which the Barbados Labour Party concentrated on, as against the programmes, which we stand for on This Side.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Acting Leader of the House is speaking, I believe, under Head 19. Unless the Rules of the House have changed, this subprogramme is entitled, Treasury and Asset Management. It is not about a housing programme. If

I am correct, there is also a supplementary here under Head 38 for the National Housing Corporation. I am sure that he would want to set the example as the Acting Leader of the Housing of the House for all the rest to follow.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, we are indeed speaking under Head 38.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I really appreciate your bringing the Honourable Member into the real world.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order then, Mr. Chairman, the Minister is asking for the funds under the wrong Head. You cannot have it both ways. The funds for the acquisition of land at Six Men's St Peter, and Walkers St. Andrew is Head 19, Programme 109: Asset Management, Subprogramme 0537. The Minister cannot come in here and disregard the Law because the Estimates of Expenditure are in fact the Schedule to the Appropriation Act so he cannot do that, Sir.

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Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Honourable Member, I heard you, but as far as I am aware, we are considering Head 38, and therefore, all Honourable Members are guided accordingly. Please proceed, Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful that you brought the Honourable Leader of the Opposition into the real world of what is happening this morning. She needs to pay attention to her notes.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I go further. The Minister, therefore, has not appropriately introduced this Head, because under Head 38, are sums of \$3 million and \$1.5 million for the National Housing Corporation Housing Programme, \$10 000 for Land Use, \$5.9 million ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, let me just say this so that we can move on. Whether you believe that the Minister has inappropriately introduced the Head, is really a matter of your opinion, which of course you can have. As far as I am aware, we are still dealing with Head 38, and I would ask the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to proceed.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for your ruling. It is amazing how the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East gets so fidgety over the truth.

She needs to be able to hear the truth and live with the truth. The truth is that we are providing the solutions that they talked about. They can shout from the top of their voices and curse people as much as they want, we are providing the solutions we promised Barbadians we will deliver, and we will quietly go about that business.

Mr. Chairman, I spoke about infilling and the land lots that we constantly vest. We spoke to the exciting programmes at Coverley, Constant and Lancaster. Sir, we then come to what is nearest and dearest to my heart, the Rent-to-Own Programme, where Barbadians, who do not earn large sums of money, who cannot necessarily face the banking system, the lending agencies, or indeed the same National Housing Corporation to get mortgages because of their earnings, are able to access solutions by way of rental of the property, where the rent paid will contribute towards the final ownership of the property. Mr. Chairman, this is a most exciting programme, which I want to encourage the Minister to make a priority wherever possible. It is a solution long in coming and juxtaposed against the options that they offered Barbadians, because when we said that we would give Barbadians the houses that they were renting from the National Housing Corporation free, or for only the cost of the conveyance, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East jumped around Barbados telling Barbadians no, they must buy those houses.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. I do not mind the attacks from the Honourable Member because attacks from him is like being savaged by a dead sheep. What I do mind is the misleading of the House on facts. Neither this Barbados Labour Party, nor myself, objected to the free houses from the National Housing Corporation. What we objected to was the discrimination that people who had paid deposits, in some instances as much as \$20 000, still today do not have the benefit of the refund of those deposits, and people who paid nothing, have a free house while those who are entitled with the 20 years but who paid money are out there languishing. Sir, there are as many as 600 to 700 Barbadian families who are being discriminated against.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is going to be up and down the entire day because she obviously is trying to defend an undefendable position by the Barbados Labour Party in this whole housing solution.

Sir, Barbadians have got to listen and observe what is happening. We are not pushing anything down their throats. We are inviting the Barbadian public to watch the programme of housing unfold by this Democratic Labour Party Government and this Minister of Housing and Lands,

the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, and appreciate what good is being done for them.

Sir, even those persons whom they took money from, now own the properties, if they qualify to own them, under our programme. Sir, that is the point and that is what is worrying them. They took this money from Barbadians in times of plenty. We came into Government at the height of the world's deepest recession and said that the social needs of Barbadians are a priority, and this is one of the things which we would make sure they have, and we delivered on that promise, so they can live with that.

Sir, every debate on housing in this Chamber will hear us and this Honourable Member echo the successes of our housing programme. I am not here to worry about their problems. I am not here to worry about the problems of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, she will deal with that herself, or others will deal with it for her.

Sir, I want to merely support the Minister of Housing and Lands this morning in this Supplementary, and congratulate him on what he has been able to achieve and I look forward to more solutions for more Barbadians of all walks of life in housing.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have carefully scrutinised this Supplementary and I have observed, listening to this debate, that we will be looking after the housing needs of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I was very happy to hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East regurgitating the point that there was a time in this House when two pieces of land went up for auction and permission was sought by this House to take a process for these lands to be sold.

I was sitting on the Other Side, Sir, and I advised the Government not to use that option because if you went out to auction the only persons who could have benefitted from that auction were the land speculators of Barbados, who were going around with fat pockets and buying up and outbidding every single soul in this country.

Mr. Chairman, the advice given was not heeded and what I saw, when these two parcels of land were auctioned, is that the same thing that I warned this House about occurred. Mr. Chairman, I want to support the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East...

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Those were the days when people with fat pockets were able to buy everything they wanted in this country. Sir, I am saying that we as a new Government have to recognise that we cannot go and continue on the same path left by the Barbados Labour Party, or else we would be dealt with in the same way the Barbados Labour Party was dealt with a couple years ago. Sir, we have to appreciate as a Cabinet, and a new Government, what is foreshore land. We cannot agree with the Barbados Labour Party to treat foreshore land as if it is normal plantation tenantry land. Sir, I stand by the point that in 1981, there was a differentiation between foreshore land and normal tenantry land.

Mr. Chairman, we also have to recognise that in the same way fat pockets know how to develop land that poor people must have the opportunity either to develop land or to have the right to sell that land at the true market price.

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His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I want to repeat the point that poor people should have a right to develop the land, just like fat pockets, or that poor persons must have a right to sell the land at the fair market price. Sir, Barbadians judge governments based on how they treat poor people and how they reflect on other persons.

In this country, we have a way of being able to relate to people who have money and believe that because you are poor, you do not have rights too. Sir, my warning to this Government is not to follow the policies of the Barbados Labour Party and treat poor people the same way. Sir, I have no doubt we will not do that.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying, if you want to create fat, then you would follow the Barbados Labour Party but if you want to have a straight and lean government, you would take the advice coming from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. Chairman, so far I am happy with the housing programme of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North. Sir, in a place called Mount Poyer in St. Lucy, one of the many spots that I have shown to the Barbados Labour Party - and I have also shown it to the present Minister of Housing - that is suitable for housing, without interfering with agriculture, if you go there today, you would see why I will continue to say that any good National Housing Corporation would concentrate on house spots and rental units and leave the other developments to

the private sector and allow people who own land to have a choice of contractors.

Sir, if you were to look back between the period, 1994 - 2007, you would see there is a history to that Joint Venture Programme, about which this Honourable House was warned. Sir, I do not know any that was successful, all I know and heard about were cost over-runs.

Mr. Chairman, I have already said in this Honourable House that in Joint Venture Programmes, the National Housing Corporation wants a piece on the land, the contractor wants a piece on the land, and when it comes to building the house, the contractor wants a piece and the National Housing Corporation wants a piece too. I am saying that when the lot is sold, if you really want to develop that small person, you should give that person the lot. If you go to Mount Poyer in St. Lucy, you can see how that \$5 00 per square foot can be transformed into something that is material and that it looks like something.

Sir, if you allow a Joint Venture Programme, what you would get would be half the value of what is being constructed in Mount Poyer and persons would still have to find money to finance those projects.

Mr. Chairman, it is going to be a rather interesting case when Phase 2 in Mount Poyer is completed and it is compared to Phase 1. People would then be able to appreciate the point that was argued on the Floor of the Honourable House why poor people should be given lots and not houses. Sir, what we saw in Phase 1 were houses that rotted, even before they were completed.

Sir, up to today, the National Housing Corporation is still having to complete those houses in Phase 1, while persons in Phase 2, who were able to structure the houses as they would want, are about to complete their houses, which are substantially larger and better.

Sir, I want to tell the Minister of Housing that I support him 100 per cent once he continues to allow poor people to have the right to own land in Barbados. Sir, there is no better way to do that than by that \$5 00 per square foot programme that is now being implemented. Sir, I cannot even say implemented, I should really say completed, because people will soon be living in some of those houses, and I support it.

Mr. Chairman, I am also saying that we have to be very careful how we unleash contractors on poor people in this country. It is not for us to enrich contractors at the expense of poor people, while pushing a housing programme for low income earners. It is impossible, Sir, to unleash contractors on poor people and expect to get a low income house. I am saying that arrangement has to be made between the purchaser and the contractor.

Sir, the National Housing Corporation cannot brag of any expertise that would allow them to intervene on the behalf of a house builder in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the National Housing Corporation has a role to play, but that it needs to know its role. The National Housing Corporation cannot build houses for poor people. Sir, whenever the National Housing Corporation sets about to build houses for poor people, those houses end up being built for the middle-class in this country. Sir, we have to recognise this. Sir, poor people must be allowed to build houses for themselves, if they get some other kind of help, so be it.

Mr. Chairman, we as a Government have a good example to follow, that is the sale of lots at \$5 00 per square foot. Sir, if you watch the community spirit that has been brought back into societies in this country, we as a Government would have to be proud. We should be proud to see that on Saturdays and Sundays, because of the \$5 00 per square foot programme, persons are now coming back and helping each other, by turning and lifting concrete, in order to help build those houses. Sir, even the plumbers are assisting, and all that is needed is a good pot of food and some drinks.

Mr. Chairman, that is what I am proud about. I am proud to see that this Government has been able to bring back that process to building.

Mr. Chairman, I built my house in Welches like that, so why should I deprive poor people of that opportunity? I am not like certain people who could go into Cane Garden and get a contractor. I am saying, Sir, that I have brought that culture to St. Thomas and that my friend has not caught on to it, but again, some of us will take time to learn that process.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas says that she does not follow idiots. I do not know if she is talking about the ones who voted for her, and I would never call them that. Sir, I know of no idiots in Barbados.

Sir, I know that you cannot hear asides, but I can, so do not think that they can get in here and talk foolishness and then beg you for mercy, Sir.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am saying that we have to get to a stage where we have to recognise that renewable energy is exactly what it is. Renewable energy is a process that was used previously that we are now using again. What I am saying to the

Minister of Housing is that we need renewable housing in this country and that renewable housing can be seen at Mount Poyer.

I thank you, Sir. I will be back.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Head which is before this Honourable House has a request for a sum of money for the National Housing Corporation for another \$4.56 million, on top of \$11.8 million which was provided earlier this year. The last speaker who spoke indicated that it was not the policy of this Government, and it must not be, to build houses for poor people at the National Housing Corporation.

Mr. Chairman, I am dumbfounded today because one of the key roles of the National Housing Corporation is to build houses for people in this country, who are most vulnerable.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is putting some fat into my speech that I did not put in, and I am not qualified to put fat in my speech.

The Honourable Member knows quite well that I never said that housing should not be provided by the National Housing Corporation. I said quite clearly that it is the role of the National Housing Corporation to provide units but when it comes to the normal housing, National Housing Corporation should give them the land and allow them to build the houses themselves. If the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East wants to reverse that, the Honourable Member is free to say that is the Honourable Member's policy.

11.10 a.m.

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His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: I will not differ with her on that because I saw that clearly coming from That Side. I want the Honourable Member to know that the Honourable Member could come to Mount Poyer and see the \$5 00 programme where people are building their own houses.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy stood in this Chamber 15 minutes ago, or less, and said that the National Housing Corporation should not build houses for poor people in Barbados. He said that he wanted to see people build for themselves and a return to the community spirit. He said that the National Housing Corporation should not build houses for people in this country.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. Sir, seeing that this statement is coming from the Leader of the Opposition that does not know how to use fat or cost overruns, that we call for the record to get clarity on this matter. Sir, I have repeated what I have said and the Honourable Member continues to misquote and put some fat in my speech. Sir, I said, and I will repeat again that they should not build houses but units, and Sir, units are houses too.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, if you call for the record, I would be happy to see it. He said that National Housing Corporation should not build houses for poor people and, Sir, those are the facts.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is misleading the House. Sir, I do not need to defend the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, but the Honourable Member for St. Lucy made it abundantly clear in his speech that the National Housing Corporation cannot build houses for poor people because by the time they are finished building the house it ends up being a lower middle-class or middle class by the nature and the cost of the construction, but that they should build units. Sir, that is the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not going to necessarily continue with who said what. If there is a call for the record, then we will ask for the record to be brought, so that we can actually get to the truth of what is in the record. I will order that the record be produced in relation to the point in issue. Now, let us proceed with the debate. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I maintain the point that the issue of the building of houses for poor people in this country goes beyond the statement of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. Let us deal with the facts, Sir. There is no house being built by the Ministry of Housing or the National Housing Corporation, that any gas station worker, that any maid, that any clerical officer can afford at \$200 000. Let us look at it because the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is only reflecting the reality of this Government's performance. What are the facts? Sir, to purchase a house at \$200 000, you have to be earning \$3 000 or more as the income.

Mr. Chairman, you are an attorney-at-Law and you know of the equation that is applied by banks and mortgage companies in this country, that the mortgage payment should be no more than 40 per cent of the revenue which is being earned.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression to this House that the only thing in housing that this Government has done is to build houses for over \$200 000, when the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East knows that there is also a \$5 00 per square foot programme and also a rent-to-own programme. Sir, obviously, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East would have to know these facts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: What is the Government so nervous about? I am coming to the Rent-to-Own. I am coming to the \$5 00 per square foot and I am going to show that under the \$5 00 per square foot, that the Honourable Member for St. Philip North got in here in March 2008, in the Estimates and said all the lots were ready to be conveyed and two years later, cannot provide the evidence of 500 lots conveyed to poor people at \$5 00 per square foot.

Mr. Chairman, I go further. The Rent-to-Own Programme did not start with the Democratic Labour Party.

His Excellency Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Sir, something would have to be wrong. Sir, I just said in this House for the whole world to hear that in Mount Poyer, which forms part of the \$5 00 per square foot programme that there are houses and that at least one is about to be completed. Sir, you know that in order for a house to be completed that the conveyance would have to be passed. Sir, that cannot be true.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the Government is too sensitive and nervous on this issue because they know better than we do that they have not been able to satisfy the low income workers of this country. Sir, gas station workers, maids, people working under \$2 000 and even under \$2 500 collectively and 70 per cent of the household in this country are single-owned parents.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression that for 14 years they have provided things for the poor in Barbados and now we are depriving them. Sir, that is the impression that is being given to this Honourable House.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, he asked me for the facts and they are in my hands. Sir, between 1991 and 1994, the Democratic Labour Party Government lent \$23 million only under the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation. Sir, between 1994 and 2003, and I have not even got to 2007, we lent over \$150 million. Who borrows from the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point of Order.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House by giving the impression to the House ...

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have been in both Houses of Parliament for almost 20 years and the right to object has never been buttressed by the right to knowledge. Therefore, I understand the jack-in-the-box nature of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who believes that his role is a person, either to create comedy, or to give an opportunity to be able to confuse people. Mr. Chairman, it does not change the facts.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I will not allow the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East to reflect on you. Sir, those statements could only be true if the Honourable Member is saying that you are entertaining the two of us in comedy. I know that this House is a serious place and if the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East does not take it to be a serious place, I do. Sir, that is why I am always very careful to be a friend of the House.

Sir, I think the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East knows better. The Honourable Member has been in this Lower House just as long as I have been. The Honourable Member knows the rules and I would ask the Honourable Member, on your behalf, to apologise to the House for making that comment to the House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am going to ask that the remarks be struck from the record.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, you are free to ask that those remarks be struck from the records and I abide by that. I am saying to you, Mr. Chairman, that it does not stop the fact that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy believes that it is his role to try and deflect people. Sir, when he is deflecting, he is not deflecting the fact that poor people in this country do not believe that this Government has satisfied a single interest of them in getting housing.

H/A55/11.20 a.m. Sequence 8

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What I am going to say now, a point of order in relation to matters, you can make that in Committee of Supply, or in general Committee. Members are free to stand up and to give their own perspectives on matters. Raising points of order in the manner that I have heard, sometimes you do have the opportunity to come back and raise your point. I really do not want to continue on that line because it could have the effect of granting either Member the opportunity of getting in a speech under the guise of a point of order.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you. I go back to the point. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy cannot hide behind the Rent-to-Own Programme, or the \$5 00 lot programme. There are more than 500 families in Barbados that earn less than \$3 000 a month, so what is he saying, that poor people in this country must now fight a lottery for 500 lots which are not yet available, and furthermore, the Rent-to-Own Programme, depends on people already being allocated lots on which they are living.

Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church South talk, but he obviously forgot, or maybe he is choosing to forget, that the Sites and Services Programme was essentially, as far back as the days of Lionel Craig, L. B. Brathwaite and DeLisle Bradshaw, was established to put in place a framework where people can rent land in this country, in circumstances where they could not otherwise get housing solutions. So I do not know. The Government seems extraordinarily sensitive when the truth comes out.

Sir, let us deal with what they are doing. Half the houses that they say are built, the ones, I believe in the Constituency of St. George South, let the Minister tell us how many have been doomed. Let the Minister tell us how many people are in there. Let the Minister tell us whether the people in the communities are not worried about the grass being overgrown on all of the houses that he said he has built. Whenever you are done, you cannot get to 500 houses. This is a Government that promised 2 500 housing solutions a year that is 'times two.' That is 5 000 housing solutions. If we were to mark them, they would not even get a 10 per cent pass rate, 500 is less than 5 000.

Mr. Chairman, let me go further. What have they completed? The lots in relation to Work Hall, the lots in relation to St. Peter, the lots in relation to Constant, all of those are programmes that were left in train. Sir, I will call them out again, Coverley, Grazettes, Buckley Meadows, Hoytes Village, Marchfield, French Village, Four Hill, the same Work Hall that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South called first, Mount Poyer, that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was just referring to, Deane Town and Rices. All of these were not only in progress, but substantial progress.

Sir, I would not expect that a new Government comes in and stop the works, but does not tell the country that those things which are being completed, now, were the subject of the brain of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North. All he has done was to complete a work programme.

Sir, now I go further. In relation to the \$4.5 million that is being asked today, you are effectively giving the National Housing Corporation \$15 million. The truth is, and it is our understanding, and the Minister needs to tell us how many additional employees have been brought into the National Housing Corporation since January 2008? Were there funds available for those persons when they were brought in to work? How many persons have been dismissed from the National Housing Corporation since January 2008? This is the Committee of Supply and we are entitled to ask a question.

Sir, I will go further. What is the low income housing solution, such that the Government of Barbados needs to subsidise to the tune of \$15 million a year? If you are going to subsidise middle income, that is the more reason why you have to subsidise low income.

Sir, we took a decision in relation to a number of the projects. Let us start with the 100 per cent mortgages. When we introduced 100 per cent mortgages in 1999, there was some level of administrative cost that would have to be subsidised by the Government, and who was the 100 per cent mortgages for? It was for persons whose incomes were at the bottom, such that they could borrow \$100 000 with a mortgage payment of \$600 a month, but they may not have been able to borrow at the 6 per cent with a sufficient spread to be able to do that.

Now, we have checked the National Housing Corporation and the cheapest house there is \$135 000, which means - more than \$92 000 is the example that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South gave. The \$135 000 means that you have to be earning \$2 000 or more. That excludes the gas station workers and that excludes the maids. In order to earn and buy at \$300 000 you have to be earning at least \$3 000 a month. The majority of the houses are \$200 000 plus.

Sir, no amount of debate in this House changes the factual reality of what people face, when they go to National Housing Corporation, and are told that they cannot qualify to buy any of these houses that were left there, at Work Hall, Rices, Marchfield, Coverley or French Village. Sir, those were the projects that were started for which acquisitions had been completed. Sir, at Greens, the same Country Park Towers that are being completed now; Hanson Phase 2, Stuarts Land, Lancaster, Fairly Valley Phase 2 and Spring Garden.

Sir, we can get into a back and forth.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY: Sir, Bushy Park, we acknowledge that, but we have not seen anything finished at Bushy Park yet.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: When we, therefore talk, our position is, if the Central Government is going to subsidise the National Housing Corporation to the tune of \$15 million, it cannot do so without assuring low income, genuine low income workers in this country, that they would have access to housing solutions, and that has not been the case.

The Government has promised 500 lots, we have not seen the 500 lots. The Government has promised 2 500 housing solutions a year, we have not seen the 2 500 housing solutions, and to the extent that they have been able to provide any at all, we say that it has come out of a work in progress. We do not dispute that you have to complete that, but do not make it seem as though that manna has come from Heaven in the form of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, because it has not.

The reality is, we are still getting people - there is a lady in Bridgetown, she has been to the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, she has been to the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, she has two children, she is now being forced to live on the streets for the last year and to rent a room in Kensington New Road, for which the Government Welfare Department is now paying \$500 and for which she is occupying a house with one bathroom and one toilet for everybody.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order for trying to give the public the impression that the first time we are now hearing about a rent-a-room is now. I want to say to this Honourable House, this is something that has been discussed for many years, and I am now getting the impression that housing, this is now being judged by a rent-a-room. It has been judged.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I was not making that point and I will continue to finish.

The reality is, that young lady and her two children are living in a roach and rat infested room. In a next room is a crack addict. In a next room is an illegal immigrant. In a next room is a person who is in and out of the mental, and in the next room is a person who is in fact convicted of manslaughter, having been originally charged with murder.

Sir, this person went to the Minister of Housing. She is known to him.

H A55 11.30 a.m. Sequence 9

Tuesday, February 09, 2010

House A55, Sequence 10, 11.30 a.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, the reality is that there are other people like this young lady with two young children, who either are not working, or working for less than \$1 000 to \$1 500 a month, whose needs are not being met. My simple point is this. If Central Government is going to subsidise, it must provide a solution for those who are at the bottom end and who do not have any other place to turn.

Sir, we therefore, cannot support the Supplementary unless we get the assurance from the Minister of Housing, especially since the Government is saying that it does not have funds to pay public servants' wage increases, that we cannot be applying funds here unless it is going to the most needed.

Those who can pay at \$200 000, to \$300 000 can more seek to afford for themselves, but not somebody earning \$ 1 000 a month, who then has to buy food and pay increased water, light and everything. It is not conscionable and that is our position. I will come back on that matter, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, before you proceed, I have to make this point in relation to the gentleman in the Gallery, because this is not the first time I have had to warn him about the kind of laughter that I am seeing in relation to speeches. I am speaking about the person in the back, and while I am in this Chair, it will not be tolerated.

This House is not a circus and members who are in the Gallery are here at the pleasure of this House and because I have warned you before, I am going to ask you now to leave this Chamber. You know whom I am talking about, please leave.

I have warned you before about your laughter in relation to speeches in this House, please leave. I can see. It is totally abusive and while I am in this Chair, it will not be tolerated. Gentleman, please leave the Chamber or I will have you evicted. I have had enough of it. You. Yes. You can laugh on your way out, please.

Members of the Gallery are here as strangers. You are here at the pleasure of this House and while I am here, decorum will be respected.

Now, let us proceed. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, I really feel it is incumbent on me to rise to lend support to the Minister of Housing and indeed, to the Resolution which the Honourable Member has brought before this House.

Asides.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, since the new Session of this House of Assembly, we have had probably about five or six major debates on housing in this Chamber, either the House in its full Sitting, or in this Committee. It really is nothing short of remarkable, but you would have thought that by now Members of the Opposition would have at least gotten comfortable enough in their skins, not to be as agitated about the Democratic Labour Party's housing policy, as clearly the presentation of the last Honourable Member for St. Michael North East who just spoke, demonstrated.

Mr. Chairman, one would wonder why the Honourable Member would be as agitated about what is happening in a housing programme, which is performing by leaps and bounds, and trying to compare it with a housing record that does not exist. It is absolutely incredible and unbelievable.

Sir, the argument today that the Honourable Member is leading is that the Other Side cannot support the Government's housing programme, because apparently there is no guarantee that the houses are going to be built for poor people in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, if the Opposition wants to determine that they are not going to support a Resolution the Government has brought to put money in the National Housing Corporation to provide housing for Barbadians, then the Honourable Member should be bold enough to say so. Say, we do not want to support the building of houses for Barbadians.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, not for the benefit of the Honourable Member, but for the purpose of the record because you will have, Mr. Chairman, to recognise that the Honourable Member is misleading the House. We have never said that we will not support a Resolution for building houses for Barbadians. In fact, we said that we would want to be assured in supporting this Resolution, if we are to support it that there is a provision for low income Barbadians as well, and I ask that the record reflect that.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I am not dressing it up.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member. I am trying to guide the debate in Committee in relation to points of order. This Committee, as you know, each Honourable Member could get up at any time and speak, ad nauseam, and therefore, points of order should be restricted to really correcting points in relation to the record, as opposed to going on to raise a speech.

Thank you, Honourable Member, please proceed.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East cannot, as much as the Honourable Member would like to, in vigour her way into my brain sufficiently as to assume my powers of cognition.

Mr. Chairman, I listened very clearly to what the Honourable Member said, and I will repeat it, that if we cannot show that the money is going towards building houses for poor people, or low income people, then the other side cannot support the Resolution, and will not support the Resolution.

Sir, my understanding of that is to call on the Honourable Member to declare bold-facedly, that the Barbados Labour Party does not support this Government's programme to build houses for Barbadians because, Mr. Chairman, it would not be a strange bedfellow from the facts.

Could you imagine a former Government that constituted a land bank into which deposits were made, but never withdrawn, could come today, in the personification of the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East and lecture this Government about providing houses for poor people in Barbados?

A former Government in times of plenty, when money was flowing like honey, thought that the role of the National Housing Corporation, was not to build houses for low income earners as the Honourable Member is calling for, but to build high-rise buildings over open caves. Sir, that former Government saddled the people of Barbados with near \$63 million in debt, which the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East in a fit said, that the Government should pay the \$63 million. Sir, that is \$63 million that should be spent on low income housing.

House A55, Sequence 10, 11.40 a.m.

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Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Sir, every person in Barbados who cannot get a low-income house today,

should blame the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East and the entire Opposition Barbados Labour Party, because money was frittered away, badly spent and inappropriately spent too.

This is the former Government, now in Opposition, thank God for small mercies, that constructed a house on lands belonging to the Anglican Church, which one was it, the bumble bee, the centipede, the tweedle bug, the lady bird, whatever it was called, and paraded low income earners who all had papers that they are still carrying around - ask any of the Members of Parliament on This Side here, or any of them out there - saying that they were getting a ladybird house, a cockroach house, a pea chink house and all kinds of names, and not one of them could say that they got one of these houses.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North who day and night is up and down this country trying to produce housing solutions for poor people is to be dragged over the coals by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that we have not built houses, and how many houses we built, and that nobody is up in Greens. Mr. Chairman, at least there is a Greens and a Marchfield that can be allocated.

The only houses that seem to have been built during the time of the Barbados Labour Party is a house of horror, horrors for the poor, horrors for the weak and horrors for the low income earners, who like Nomads had to walk up and down this country looking for housing solutions, but you pluck out somebody and say that we have put them in a house in Fontabelle to give this feeling of righteous indignation about it.

I say to you, Mr. Chairman, let us get serious about this housing issue in Barbados. I think the approach of the current Minister is a serious approach. Mr. Minister, do not just talk about building houses, build them because that will continue to irk the Opposition. In the face of their lack of ability to produce solutions for people who matter, they believe that they could come and criticise this Government, declaring that an Election is on. Well, bring it on. If that is what you want, bring it on, but we have work to do and we will continue to do that work in the name of the people of Barbados. I tell the Minister to march on and we would continue to see progress in this country, even in spite of the difficult times that we face.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make my contribution to this Supplementary debate, and to concur with the comments made by the Honourable

Member for St. Michael North East in relation to the Barbados Labour Party's record of housing development in Barbados. It was not anyone on the side of the Barbados Labour Party who in August 2000, at George Street, criticised the then Barbados Labour Party Government of building 2 x 4 slave huts in Briar Hall and Apes Hill.

Mr. Chairman, the developments in Briar Hall and Apes Hill, and to even extend the trip to Deanes Town, gives a clear vision of the Barbados Labour Party's role in helping to house not only working-class people, but indeed Barbadians on the whole, despite what level they are at.

Sir, I believe that at that time the General Workers' Loan Fund was extremely effective in empowering ordinary Barbadians, who own a house, or who sought to build a new house having had a spot, to have a shelter over their heads today. Perhaps the Minister may wish to tell us what is the status of the General Workers' Loan Fund in the National Housing Corporation, for us to get an understanding how other persons, who do not want to buy a house through Government, but wish to improve their living standards, would be able to access those loans.

Mr. Chairman, last week, we learnt of the acquisition of land in Forty Acres. Unfortunately, I could not participate in the discussion because of a touch of influenza, but I would wish to ask the Minister kindly to ensure that the persons who acquire those spots, be those persons who need to expand and to leave families in the adjoining communities like Deanes Village, Bridgefield, Hopewell and indeed, in the same Forty Acres.

Mr. Chairman, there is no new project that the Minister has been able to proceed on, that was a request that came through more than five years ago. I am happy that an effort has been made. I like this Government for that. I do not like it for a lot of things, but surely it received on a platter a number of projects that Government has continued to develop, or worked with and I think that is very significant.

Mr. Chairman, if you look at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, another Government carried it on after it was started. It is the same thing with the Deep Water Harbour. Similarly, it is the same thing with the Lester Vaughan School. That was St. Thomas Secondary, which the Barbados Labour Party carried on after the confusion and the draconian measures in the early 1990s. It is the same also with Cane Garden Development where I live and where an Honourable Senator lives who said that the Barbados Labour Party has not built a single house but has been able to acquire one in Cane Garden. That too is a project that was started by the Democratic Labour Party and having met a number of economic challenges, a Barbados Labour Party completed the project.

I have the distinct privilege, Mr. Chairman, to live there and to witness some of the projects that the Barbados Labour Party has done, but I am not going to dwell on that too much except to ask the Honourable Minister, to please ensure that the people of St. Thomas are the beneficiaries and that the project be not any big middle-class project, because there are a number of persons there who are working-class people, who want to be able to own their own homes, who have been unable to do so because of access to buying the land. Indeed, there are janitors and general workers and so in that population who deserve to get an opportunity.

Sir, the Honourable Member spoke in his presentation about Allen View, indeed the Housing Neighbourhood Project. Sir, that too is another vision of the Barbados Labour Party. It is almost 10 years old. I would, therefore, like to ask the Honourable Minister to please speed up the process before we lose those funds from the Inter-American Development Bank.

Mr. Chairman, I know that there were socioeconomic investigations and so, that took place for those 93 householders in Allen View since 2005, this is already 2010. I know that the funds, US\$30 million, have been signed on for the loan and I am still waiting to see what is happening in Allen View. It is the only rural community that is included in the Housing Neighbourhood Project.

Mr. Chairman, similarly, the problems persons living in urban Barbados are experiencing, the nearly 300 people that are residents of Allen View, most of them low income workers, are experiencing as well. Mr. Chairman, I believe they are feeling it more than ever because there are open tracks of land, that are owned by most of the residents in there that they can do nothing with, except for special kinds of agriculture because they cannot use the various pesticides, manure and different things to be able to get the vegetables, or whatever they may choose to grow to come to any level because of the infiltration of the chemicals into Harrison's Cave, the eighth Wonder of the World.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that even though we are developing and redeveloping Harrison's Cave, the people who live on the mouth of the Cave should not be excluded from an opportunity to develop and to expand.

Mr. Chairman, while they are conforming with the instructions for the environmental zonal area in Allen View and the surrounding areas, you would appreciate, that people living in Sturges, Bloomsbury, Bryan's Road, Vault Road, Welchman Hall and so on, have had some restrictions and can only build if the Town Planning Department gives permission.

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Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the challenge that those persons have is that they have the land and cannot do anything with it, except, perhaps, to use it as a playground.

Mr. Chairman, the Housing Neighbourhood Project includes in its specification the need:

a. to provide a sewerage project;

b. to extend houses;

c. to involve the community in small enterprises such as kiosks, to help compensate for persons who are unemployed and to give them a chance to interact with tourists.

Mr. Chairman, I must praise the Environmental Special Unit for its assistance over the years in embracing the people in Allen View and giving them hope. The people of Allen View are disgruntled and so, I believe the project needs to get off the ground.

Mr. Chairman, as I speak, there are still households

that have no running water. The Barbados Water Authority would not make the connections because of the same special zone area for Allen View. Therefore, those persons still have pit toilets. They need, as a matter of urgency, to have waterborne toilet facilities and whatever refurbishment to be given to those houses, so that those people are able to live a better quality life.

Mr. Chairman, there is no point in reopening Harrison's Cave at the end of this week and the people there still feeling disenfranchised.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, this is a new year and I want to be as orderly as possible, and I shall try under the circumstances.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I am giving way for the Honourable Member for St. James South to speak because the hospital problems are so large, that the Honourable Member really has to sit quietly and pay attention to what is happening there.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order please and allow the Honourable Member to continue her speech?

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the residents of Allen View require employment, they require an exit for Allen View. Sir, could you imagine that more than 300 persons live in an area where there is no exit, where houses need to be properly aligned? Sir, I empathise with the people in the Garden Land, Cat's Castle and Greenfield because they too, have a number of serious problems that need to be addressed.

Mr. Chairman, there is no point having BDS\$60 million in the kitty and the necessary works still not being done. I heard that Cat's Castle and other communities should be having their work done, and that an 18-month period is allocated for that completion. I believe that Allen View is just as urgent, and I would wish for the Honourable Member to pay some quick attention to Allen View. I would wish that the Honourable Member would ensure that those people are taken care of.

Mr. Chairman, when I go there this weekend, those people are going to be unhappy when the Harrison's Cave is reopened because there is nothing in it for them. Sir, a few of them get employment, a few of them are able to raise their animals, a few of them are not able to do anything, simply because they are waiting on the Housing Neighbourhood Upgrade Project to be able to move forward.

Mr. Chairman, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy spoke - and I know of the more than 500 acres of land that were acquired through the Barbados Labour Party - I want to make a similar request that I made during the time of the Barbados Labour Party Government, for some of the folks in Allen View who cannot build, or expand, because they have no land to do so, or because they have the land, but cannot put down another house, unless a house was there before.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the Honourable Member could pay attention to my request that the folks in Allen View could get the opportunity, when the \$2.50 and \$5 00 per square foot lands are being offered in other communities. I would want that these people in Allen View be given some preference to be able to purchase some of these lots. Sir, these people also have needs too. Some of them cannot continue living at their relatives, sometimes the economic situation does not allow them to continue living with their relatives.

Sir, because of the type of houses this Government continues to build that are above their reach, they cannot afford to buy a house, and so they will continue with the concept that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy spoke about, which we have always advocated, that is, having acquired the land, Government would put in the sites and services and allow the people to build their houses, from the back and coming forward.

Mr. Chairman, I am recommending to the Honourable Member to give the people in Allen View a chance to buy spots in some of the new developments, as well as to get in and start that project to be able to eliminate some of the anger, bad feelings and fallouts, that have been coming from those residents, who need a chance like anybody else. Sir, that is the reason a Barbados Labour Party included them in the Housing Neighbourhood Project, so that they too could be empowered.

Mr. Chairman, that is my brief comment I would make at this time and I thank you for the opportunity.

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, a few short weeks ago, I made what the Honourable Member for St. Philip North would call a submission to this Honourable House. Sir, of what did that humble submission partake? On that occasion, I made bold to say that Government must be acutely aware of where its assets are, including where its lands are located. Sir, I am not oblivious to the fact that down through the ages, public officers were prepared to work with the political directorate to identify lands and to suggest the best use of those lands, from the perspective of those public officers.

Mr. Chairman, I, therefore, come to a very serious matter, the question of the future of Government-owned property at Lancaster, St. James. The Barbados Labour Party Government, prior to January 2008, had not only acquired Lancaster, St. James, but had developed a policy by which on account of the many constraints, all of Lancaster could not have been done and was, therefore, subjected to basically four phases, Phase 1, Phase 1A, Phase 2 and Phase 3. Mr. Chairman, by the time these phases were completed, we would have been able to add in excess of 300 houses to the particular housing stock of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I note that the Honourable Member for St. James Central is paying close attention. Sir, although I am speaking about Lancaster, St. James, I am not speaking in my capacity as the Honourable Member for St. James North. I am speaking in my capacity as a resident of St. James.

Sir, I have lived all my life in St. James, and even though it would not benefit my Constituency from a narrow political perspective, clearly, I would want to urge that we go back to Lancaster, where the amount of land is expansive and enormous. The Honourable Member for St. James Central can verify that. Sir, it was the policy of the Barbados Labour Party to develop Lancaster, but we did not yet have the \$30 million which is now available to the Other Side.

Mr. Chairman, the residents of the surrounding areas, Orange Hill, Deane Town, Whopping, Greenwich Village, have themselves been looking forward to the project and have been making proposals in relation as how to lay out and develop the project. Sir, Barbadians are saying to us that if you have any major housing development, in addition to housing dwellings, you should have certain amenities and facilities that will enure to the concept of community building.

Mr. Chairman, let me develop that some more. Sir, let us imagine a situation where a Government puts down 10 houses in an area that already is accommodating houses. Those 10 houses and the occupants can easily fall into that pre-existing community, but when you are putting in an entirely new community of houses, beyond the physical houses, you would need facilities such as a supermarket and sporting facilities. Mr. Chairman, there are those who feel that you must have a religious denomination there, so that the type of social solidarity necessary that go towards the building of a community is present.

Sir, it has been empirically shown that where houses are put down without sporting facilities, or without a programme for the youth, that a type of anomaly, a type of normlessness, could easily result because of the absence of community spirit.

H:No. A55(12)12:00 noon.

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Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, there are Honourable Members in here who understand community spirit. There are Honourable Members in here who hail from parishes known for strong community spirit. Sir, I am speaking and note that I am saying from parishes as opposed to Constituencies. There is not everything in life and in politics that is about a Constituency. We have 11 parishes and I do not see why, from time to time, we should not look at the parish as opposed to the constructs that have divided the parish into narrow political enclaves known as Constituencies.

Mr. Chairman, I want to recommend that for the future, when we look to the whole question of housing development, that we take into account the fact that when we build substantial amounts of housing units we make provision for substantial amounts of social amenities, so that those people who end up living there can have some sense of belonging to where they are, as opposed to just holding on to a house and such like.

Mr. Chairman, they can be encouraged to do things that have been part of the Barbadian tradition. They can be encouraged to do kitchen gardens and such like. Certainly, Sir, a future housing programme must take into account

things like the integrity and strength of the house. It must be hurricane resistant and it must be earthquake resistant as well. There must be maximum use of water, certainly based on the premise that water would be available anyhow.

Sir, Government can never build units ever again without adequate water facilities. It has happened, in the history of Barbados, that there were some housing units built 55 years ago and 60 years ago, that lack the types of facilities that would have created comfort for those who occupy those houses.

Mr. Chairman, this debate has not been without partisanship. Let me say the Barbados Labour Party, in its approach to housing, tested and saw that over time Barbadians, as a whole, love to own their houses and that the typical Barbadian who could own a house would not want to rent a house. Sir, what did we do? We encouraged Barbadians to tap into the General Workers' Fund, a Fund with which my friend from St. Lucy is acquainted. We allocated significant amounts of money to the General Workers' Fund, which a lot of people made use of and did not then have to rely on a housing unit.

Sir, the General Workers Fund was activated, a lot of money was made available to people who borrowed and, at the same time, we strengthened the arms of the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company Limited, where today, the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company Limited could tell you, that in the last five or six years, their contribution to financing housing projects has been most noteworthy.

Mr. Chairman, I come now to a matter that cannot escape the attention of this Honourable Committee. It is a question, Sir, of the nature and character of the geographical infrastructure of Barbados and certain peculiarities attaching thereto. Mr. Chairman, we have the phenomenon of Zone 1. Mr. Chairman, I do not know if in your Constituency, if you have to confront it.

Sir, Zone 1 suggests that the water table is high and Zone 1 means that certain types of development are forbidden. Sir, it also means that the proper use for Zone 1 would be a clean type of agriculture. Sir, not even an agriculture involving fertilisers that would interfere with the water table, or with chemicals which are designed to eliminate insects which would then interfere with the quality of water.

Mr. Chairman, I think that we need to look at Zone 1 because, as much as arguments have been sensibly put that to interfere with Zone 1 would lead to excessive contamination of our water supply. At the same time, in a modern era, there could be scientific and technological solutions to this whole question of Zone 1.

Ultimately, Sir, when we look at our housing programmes, we also have to consider substantial financial constraints. We have reached a point in Barbados where, unlike 1965 and 1970, where middle-class people bought property from real estate people, or from private buyers, and went on to build their own houses, we are finding that nowadays, middle-class people are turning to Government expecting Government to be able to provide housing solutions.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, not today, previously looked at the original policy of having a National Housing Corporation, which was preceeded by the National Housing Authority and his view, that originally, the idea was that the State would involve itself in housing more for the poor man than the middle-class man. We are seeing a situation now where people on gross incomes of \$2 500 up to \$4 000 are not able to negotiate against people in a strong bargaining position, who control land.

We are finding that a lot of people with middle income do not feel themselves able, on their own account, to go forward and establish what will be, ultimately, the biggest investment for most of them in their lives. We are seeing a lot of them turn to Government.

Mr. Chairman, at the same time, notwithstanding the fact that middle-income workers are turning to Government for housing solutions and Sir, the very poor are insisting too that Government must help them. Sir, we must find a way to ensure that the suffering poor access housing.

Mr. Chairman, there used to be a time when it was believed that the National Housing Corporation should directly do the building and construction of houses, of course, from a purely political perspective, that paved the way for a number of constituents in Barbados, particularly in Constituencies to be able to access work as masons and carpenters at the National Housing Corporation. Then, eventually, we had to look at a situation where we had to access whether that was economic, or even efficient.

We have come to a situation now, Mr. Chairman, where a lot now has to be placed on an emphasis to evaluate the conditions of the working poor and the suffering poor.

Mr. Chairman, as has been highlighted throughout this week, too many poor people are at the mercy of landlords, who are unscrupulous and too many poor people are at the mercy of landlords, who really and truly are not wicked, but who themselves are unable to assist their tenants, so we have that dichotomy. Sir, we have a dichotomy of the abuse of tenants by unscrupulous landlords, and we have a situation of some tenants not being able to enjoy the homes that they rent from landlords,

who are not at all unscrupulous, but we are cash-strapped and unable to provide the basic facilities.

Mr. Chairman, we have seen a culture magnify itself in Barbados that was foreign to Barbados. We now have a big culture in Barbados where a landlord would rent out rooms, a tenement, or a house, but a landlord would rent out rooms to people who would not be tenants but, as you know, Sir, would be lodgers and where the landlord would reserve to himself the right to come in there as often as possible, would reserve to himself certain other things that I would not mention on the Floor of this House for fear that particular forms of exploitation of certain people would be highlighted, but we need to ensure that the undesirable phenomenon of 21 to 22 people sleeping on the floor in a rundown house in Barbados would lead into that.

H/A55/12.10 p.m. Sequence 13

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Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: The time was when the Press reported a situation, where a stable was converted into a so-called house for accommodation of persons not born here, and persons who ...

Asides.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: A pig pen, I said stable, but the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said it is a pig pen, was converted into a so-called tenement, simply because the persons who wanted to occupy could not bargain, and because of the fact that generally speaking, we are in a severe housing shortage in Barbados. The severity of that housing shortage is not only tested by the frustration that people express in regard to housing, you also get, as has happened to each of us in this House, house fires and the destruction of houses, then the pressure on the politician to mobilise the assistance for people who, having had a house the night before or two days ago, no longer have anywhere and our social services, through the prompt report from the fire service and the welfare agencies, yet complete in themselves, to be able to offer replacement houses for those people who lose their properties to fire.

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: The Barbados Labour Party, along with the Salvation Army, in developing a programme for the rehabilitation for fire victims at Lancaster, the Government has to ensure that one particular facility does not remain alone. We have to have institutions available to Barbadians for the emergencies that arise in consequence of acts of nature and in consequence of arson and fires.

Sir, this brings me to the final point that I will make. All through Barbados preceding the days when the Town and Country Planning Department was established, we have had people living anywhere from the main road and the access ways to their places that were short small and narrow tracks. I may now say that efforts be made to widen these tracks so that an ambulance, or a truck, can enter. These are particular proposals that cannot be cast aside or spurned on.

We on This Side would want the best for Barbadians with regard to houses. We on This Side would want the best in respect of any possibility by which people can own their houses, and we would want that where constraining practice stand in the way of progress of housing, that such factors be obliterated and the problems associated therewith ended.

I thank you very much, Sir.

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

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, I want to, at this juncture, make my contribution and from the outset indicate that I support this Money Resolution. One must be familiar with the basic needs of mankind, food, clothes and shelter. We, today, are discussing the Head on shelter and the Honourable Member for St. Philip North must be complimented for the great job he is doing, by providing one of the basic needs of mankind in the form of shelter, and he is moving with haste to ensure that the housing programme of the Democratic Labour Party bears good fruit, that is what he is doing.

I am happy to see that some of this money is for the compulsory acquisition of land in Walkers, because St. Andrew is the land of my birth. I am glad to see that at least something meaningful is being done in St. Andrew, despite for the last 14 years, or longer, that was under the watch of the Barbados Labour Party. You cannot really look within St. Andrew - when I say St. Andrew I mean hardcore St. Andrew, to see any real housing development.

The housing development on the East Coast Road, those units, under the Barbados Labour Party, needs to be repaired. This Administration ensured that the residents there live in some of the best places in St. Andrew.

I would move from St. Andrew and traverse to St. Michael East. There is some land at My Lord's Hill that goes by the name of Clarke's Land, I hope that the Minister of Housing would look closely at it. It is my understanding that it is in Zone I.

I was present at a meeting where the Barbados Water Authority is looking seriously at the re-zoning of land and

taking certain land out of Zone I. Their proposal is that areas that are 200 metres away would be changed, therefore, it would be possible to look at housing solutions at My Lord's Hill, Clarke's Land, for people within St. Michael East. I have spoken to the Minister and he said that as soon as that Study is completed, he would move fully ahead to look at that area.

Sir, I know for sure that the Government has negotiated by way of Private Treaty to provide land, in order to build houses, in Barker's Road, Haggatt Hall. I am sure that the people in St. Michael East would be happy because every Wednesday when I conduct my clinic, those are the cries of many constituents who are asking for housing.

I would like to see in these housing units, or where houses are being built by Government, that some of these houses are made available for emergency purposes. Sir, we know that very often there are tenants who are evicted by landlords and the courts give them time, sometimes as far as giving them a letter to take to their Parliamentary Representative and National Housing Corporation, to let them know that the landlords need their properties and they are in need, but when you call on the Government they find it extremely difficult to provide accommodation.

One would recognise that Government cannot provide all of the housing solutions. I am asking that at least in every new development, we have at least three or four homes that are allocated for emergencies, fire victims and persons who have been evicted, so that at least these persons would not be on the streets.

Sir, as the Honourable Member for St. James North indicated, over the years we have been bombarded by a culture of rooms which have really depleted the housing stock. It has provided the opportunity for landlords to make great financial gains but, at the same time, provided substandard living conditions for the persons who reside in these places. I am glad to hear the Minister of Housing indicate that legislation would soon be reaching this House, to deal with such situations of substandard houses being put on the market for rental by landlords. We not only need that, we need greater policing.

Sir, the Landlord and Tenant Act is already there, but you find the situation where the tenant has nowhere to turn, and as soon as the tenant complains of the substandard situation, the weapon that is used against the tenant is an eviction notice to leave the property.

H A55 12.20 p.m. Sequence 14

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House A55, Sequence 15, 12.20 p.m.

Hon. K. St.C. BEST: I believe, Sir, that even though the Landlord and Tenant Act indicates that the landlord must provide some place that is habitable and that the tenants must have quiet enjoyment, we have some unscrupulous landlords turning off water and disconnecting electricity. This is not the fault of the tenant because all that the tenant is asking the landlord for, is to provide better living conditions, but is only given punishment that the water is turned off, the electricity is turned off and an eviction notice is issued. The days of that occurring in Barbados must come to an end.

Sir, there are certain offences and you even have unscrupulous landlords who are collecting rent when there is a Rent Registration Act which makes it illegal for landlords to collect rent without registering with the Inland Revenue Department. These problems are not only facing St. Michael East, but throughout every Constituency in Barbados. Sir, I am sure and I will speak to it again and again until things are done for the benefit of the people of Barbados.

Sir, part of this money is going towards the Project Manager and we can see that the Project Manager and his team are doing wonderful work, and some of the money is for surveying. I would want the Minister to look at an issue that I have raised here before.

There are residents in St. Barnabas who have the money and are willing to purchase their lots from the National Housing Corporation, but their only concern is the lack of having the lots surveyed. I am asking the Minister when he goes back to his Ministry, to look seriously at that issue so that those residents of St. Barnabas would be in position.

I am also glad to hear him talk about the in-filling programme. I know for sure that within the Ivy Housing area, very soon at least 44 persons will receive their conveyances. There is an area where a whole block is missing, so there is where we could do some in-filling. Sir, in Clarke's Land at Hothersal Crescent, there is an area of land that I believe we could have duplex houses, where at least three or four families will be in a position to be housed there. In that way, at least every person will be satisfied that they are getting a part of what is happening in Barbados.

Sir, with those brief words, I support this Money Resolution.

On the motion of Hon. R. D. JONES, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the SPEAKER and asked for leave to speak again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

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

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

House A55, Sequence 15, 12.25 p.m.

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RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, this Sitting of the House of Assembly is now resumed. When the Suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply, to that it will now revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. CHAIRMAN resumed the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (RESUMED)

ORDER No. 3 (Resumed)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee of Supply. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West.

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a short intervention to Head 48 with respect to the Supplementary to supplement the expenditures for 2009-2010.

Mr. Chairman, this matter of housing Barbadians is a matter that this House has engaged a number of different debates on, and there has been a lot of back and forth and a lot of charges made, but I think that ultimately, those persons who understand how to use information and how to use information in a modern age, apply one or two elements to information analysis.

One of the critical elements is that of inductive reasoning where you observe, you document and then you compare and contrast looking for similarities and differences. Mr. Chairman, it is from that perspective that you could, therefore, interpret who knows what they are saying, from who does not know what they are saying.

Sir, the other large measure is deductive reasoning, which is a mathematical model. Sir, it is to the point of the inductive reasoning that I would speak today very shortly. Mr. Chairman, I do not mind all the fancy talk. I will make

reference to the Barbados Audit Office Special Audit on the National Housing Corporation where the observations were made - the documentation was laid, and now we could do the comparison and the contrasting, and from that approach we could determine whether what is being said on This Side makes any sense with respect to That Side's failures.

Sir, I go first to page 3 section 13. It is a document of the House, where it says that: "the Joint Venture Programme and the Primary Homes Programme that were touted by the last Administration had a target of 1 600 houses to be made over a five-year period." Sir, out of that 1 600 houses, they were able to produce 45 houses a year over a six-year period from the Joint Venture Programme in combination with the Primary Homes Programme.

Mr. Chairman, let me dis-aggregate that for more clarity. I now go to the Joint Venture Programme itself. On page 21, section 2.53, it says that:

"The Joint Venture Programme was far short of its targets after being in existence for six years. The 1,300 houses, which the programme promised to deliver, have not been achieved. Less than 115 houses were completed... [over the six-year period]."

If you divide 115 houses by 6, what do you get - 45?

I am trying to understand the argument of That Side, it is like the argument posited at a political meeting some place last night, or night before about you may have a concept of a road, is that a reality? You could conceptualize anything. You could take credit for a concept. Well, take credit for a concept, but we are going to take credit for the houses that we built because they are a reality, they are houses that are being given to people. We are not interested in concepts or fancy talk. What is sad about this, is that this is the record that I speak to in the Special Audit on the National Housing Corporation.

I go further, Sir. As part of the documented data, page 21 of 45, Section 3.12 says:

"With respect to the primary homes programmes, that 303 houses would have been constructed on lands owned by the National Housing Corporation."

Mr. Chairman, in the five-year period, 67 houses were completed. In less than two years, we have not concepts, but houses in Six Roads; not concepts, houses in Workhall; not concepts, houses in Constant; not concepts, houses in Greens; not concepts, houses in Coverley. Mr. Chairman, I rest my case.

House A55 Sequence 16

1.40 p.m.

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Dr. The Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, let me go further. Sir, they had at least four Ministers of Housing. I would like to call them the "Useless Quartet." Sir, they were Minister Payne, Minister Thompson, Minister Clarke and Minister Farley. Sir, I just spoke to the record as in the Special Audit of the National Housing Corporation. Therefore, I really do not have a whole lot more to say with respect to that issue.

Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate the Minister of Housing and Lands, because anyone who wants to be honest in Barbados' present cost of living structure, cannot reasonably say that the Minister of Housing and Lands has not tried to produce houses for low income homeowners that are relatively cheap. Sir, why I say that is that the average cost for those wall houses in Six Roads is \$120 000, with 4 000 square feet of land. That is reasonable. There are some wall houses at \$145 000, with 4 000 square feet of land.

Sir, we have to be honest in this Honourable Chamber and not come here with these sorts of outlandish reports, that is why I want to make it quite clear that I would have to get up and support the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, because he is doing a wonderful job. He is not about concepts, he is a working Minister. He is not a Minister who has a bed in his back office, he is a real working Minister. Mr. Chairman, what is important is that I have never heard the Honourable Member for St. Philip North being given the name "Wuck-for-Wuck" yet, but I will leave that alone.

Sir, I take pleasure in supporting the Honourable Member in his Rent-to-Own Programme. I take pleasure in supporting the Honourable Member with respect to the in-filling programme. As I have said earlier, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East indicating that the Rent-to-Own Programme did not start with the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, again, they are into concepts.

We are not about airy-fairy concepts, the reality is that the Minister has put in place a rent-to-own programme. It is in place. It is not in some books some place, or in the thought process of some Minister. It is not in somebody's head. The Honourable Member has made it real. Sir, it bothers me immensely when those persons who seem to have a difficulty in assimilating information and, using the information intelligently, could want to take credit for a concept. It is really a foolhardy position to take.

I also want to thank the Minister for his \$5 00 per square foot programme. There is this programme in my

Constituency, particularly in Woodbourne, where I know there are many persons who are looking for house spots at \$5 00 per square foot, that are being heavily subsidised by this Government. I want to thank this Minister for the opportunity for those persons in St. Philip, to be able to benefit from that \$5 00 persquare foot reality. That is not a concept, that is a reality.

Mr. Chairman, I would say that the Minister with responsibility for the environment, can also speak to the benefits of the in-filling programme in his Constituency. That is not another concept, that is reality, where there was an in-filling programme and persons in that Constituency have now benefitted from homes.

Mr. Chairman, when one looks at the information and starts to apply reason to it, I cannot appreciate how the Other Side could be very critical of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Sir, what was surprising to me this morning was that I was reading the newspapers - not in here, I know it is against the Rules - and I saw a cartoon of the famous George Griffith, laying down with bee stings all about his head. I always thought that the bees were supposed to be a very social group of people, but these stinging bees about here are bad because they are stinging right, left, up, down, their own, babies, children and old men. Sir, this is a serious thing.

Mr. Chairman, I could not, in any way, imagine why they would want to get on the way they are getting on now. Sir, they are being stung by this Minister. Sir, despite all of the rhetoric and with four Ministers, one Minister who had a "Bumble Bee" house.. Sir, the former Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, has felt the bumble bee stings from them.

Sir, what is sad about that is that I read in the Special Audit Report on the National Housing Corporation, where they were supposed to build only 303 houses, where that Minister, the then Honourable Elizabeth Thompson, was able to complete only 47. Sir, that is in the Report. They said that programme could not have been completed because they did not have sites and services, neither did they have the financing.

Sir, even though they did not have those things, I know about the model house that they took 11 000 Barbadians down there to see. I know when they made Barbadians sign up to get a house, when they knew that they could not produce those houses, because they did not have the land, nor the money. Sir, it is here in the Special Audit Report.

Mr. Chairman, this Minister is not about smokes and mirror, nor about public relations, this is a hardworking

Minister. That is why I am not going to sit and allow the Other Side to make statements that do not make sense, in the context of the production of this Minister.

Mr. Chairman, when Minister Lashley was in Opposition, he was very critical and rightly so, as he had a duty to do on behalf of the people of this country. Sir, I want to congratulate him. As a Minister, he has not only taken to his job in terms of his responsibility to the people in this country, he has taken with that responsibility some earnest and a measure of responsibility. Sir, that is all demonstrated in his output. Sir, that output cannot be measured by any of the other Ministers on the Other Side because the Special Audit does not demonstrate, that they were able to produce half the number of houses that this Minister has produced in a similar time-frame.

Mr. Chairman, I am not in any illusion about what this debate is about. I also know that this Minister is concentrating very heavily on re-introducing the mandate of the National Housing Corporation, which is producing houses for Barbadians. Sir, as long as this Minister understands that responsibility, as long as this Minister works as hard as he is now doing to produce low and middle income housing for Barbadians, I will give him my fullest support.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Money Resolution before this Honourable Chamber. In looking at Head 38, I would wish to concentrate on the issue of Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme, which this Democratic Labour Party Administration has pushed forward, in terms of signing the loan agreement between the Inter-American Development Bank and the Barbados Government.

Sir, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas talking about the need for her area, Allen View, to be included within this programme. Sir, the public must know that the track record of the Barbados Labour Party in relation to housing, has been a dismal failure. Mr. Chairman, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip West just mentioned, they made all types of promises and concepts, but the implementation was found lacking.

1.50 p.m.

Tuesday, February 09, 2010

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Sir, in this regard, I can speak with authority about the poor performance of the Barbados Labour Party Government in terms of the execution and the implementation of this Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme.

Mr. Chairman, I remember attending some Town Hall meetings before the last General Election with regard to this project. I remember one Town Hall meeting held at St. Mary's Primary School one evening with the residents of Cat's Castle and members of the media, under the Barbados Labour Party Government at the time, were kept out of that Town Hall meeting. What was the Barbados Labour Party hiding from the general public?

Mr. Chairman, they could not keep me out because I reside in the Cat's Castle area, so I walked in and took my position as a representative of the people, the Democratic Labour Party and the people of the City as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, I learnt with great shock and amazement that under the Barbados Labour Party Government, their plans for Cat's Castle and Greenfield, as part of this Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme, was one in which they were seeking to actually change the Town & Country Planning Act, to allow that wicked Barbados Labour Party Administration to legally build houses even smaller than the current minimum size allowed under the Law. Sir, you know that the Barbados Labour Party's track record in terms of house construction for working-class people has been appalling?

Mr. Chairman, you and I remember that under the Barbados Labour Party Administration, when residents of the City in Church Village, next to the Central Bank of Barbados were relocated to Lower Burney in St. Michael South, they and the Democratic Labour Party's stalwarts like myself and the former candidate for St. Michael South East, highlighted to the public that those replacement houses erected at Lower Burney were awfully inadequate in terms of size, such that the living room and dining room area were so small that if you put your living room furniture in, your dining room set could not fit in, and vice versa.

Mr. Chairman, I saw it myself and it was spread across the pages of the daily newspapers. There were situations in which the kitchen was so small that the door of the refrigerator could not open completely, it would hit against the stove. Sir, the Barbados Labour Party built matchbox houses for the poor people in Barbados. The toilet was right next to the kitchen.

The windows were inadequate and there was no ventilation. There was no backdoor and the woes continued. Sir, furniture that would have fit comfortably in the wooden houses of these residents houses in Church Village, were not able to fit into the replacement house.

Mr. Chairman, I understood very well the line that the Barbados Labour Party Government was taking this country into, in terms of the Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme where, as I reiterate adamantly,

officials in those Town Hall meetings told those of us present, including the residents of Cat's Castle and Greenfield, that the Barbados Labour Party Government was planning under this Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme to change the Town & Country Planning Act, to allow the Barbados Labour Party Government to build houses, even smaller than the current minimum size, under current legislation.

Sir, it was wicked and it was the Democratic Labour Party assuming office that had to put a stop to this, thanks to the leadership in housing of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Mr. Chairman, to show clearly, beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Barbados Labour Party Government was dragging its feet in relation to the implementation of this Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme...

Asides.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, let me say that at those Town Hall meetings that the Barbados Labour Party had planned to relocate the residents from Cat's Castle and Greenfield, into terrace units to be completed in the Country Park Towers. Sir, listen to the logic.

Mr. Chairman, I am trained in mathematics, I think very logically and I invite you and the public to follow this logic. Sir, the Barbados Labour Party was waiting on the construction of the Country Park Towers terrace units to relocate the residents from Cat's Castle and Greenfield in order to start the upgrade of their neighbourhood, yet under the Barbados Labour Party up to Elections, the Country Park Towers project was stalled. The steel was rusting and there was bush all over the place.

Sir, that project was stalled. Clearly, if Country Park Towers was not being taken seriously by the Barbados Labour Party Administration, then God would have had to help the people in Cats Castle and Greenfield because, clearly, it would have been donkey years before their neighbourhood would have been upgraded because they would have been waiting on the Barbados Labour Party, to restart Country Park Towers in order to be relocated temporarily.

Mr. Chairman, it is clear that the Barbados Labour Party dragged its feet to the extent that those residents in Cats Castle and Greenfield, had given up all hope of any serious neighbourhood upgrade. Mr. Chairman, you and I were up there up to Saturday. I took you into Cat's Castle with the Ministry of Housing and the Honourable Member from St. Michael Central, the Minister of Community Development and Culture, and we saw the awful condition which those residents have had to endure for years under the Barbados Labour Party.

There were people with dirt road and pit toilets. The alley between Reed Street and Mason Hall Street was full of dirt and people had to wade through water and mud when there is flooding. There was inadequate lighting and there was inadequate drainage. There was a drain linking Reed Street and Mason Hall Street, just east of the Salvation Army and that was caved in - under the Barbados Labour Party Administration - to the extent that even your humble servant could not get in or out when there was any heavy downpour of rain.

At the top of Reed Street Sir, the whole of upper Reed Street would be flooded out, not to mention Mason Hall Street, the entrance to St. Mary's Primary School, which was a Category 1 Hurricane Shelter under the Barbados Labour Party, would be flooded out. Sir, children would be stranded at school, not to mention those people who would wish to use that as a hurricane shelter.

Mr. Chairman, it is part of the Cat's Castle catchment, and the Barbados Labour Party had those residents of that area suffering for donkey years. Sir, you could imagine that is the only polling district that the Democratic Labour Party has never won in the City of Bridgetown. Sir, some of them are faithful Barbados Labour Party supporters and that is the thanks that the Administration gave them.

They had them wallowing in poverty but, Sir, this Democratic Labour Party is serious about upgrade and that is why we have that loan agreement and the people of Cat's Castle, Greenfield and throughout working-class Barbados can rest assured that this 5-year project is well on its way, and very shortly you would actually see construction to the extent that we will have streets being widened, to enable emergency vehicles access in terms of fire and ambulance.

You will have drainage improved, street lighting improved, toilet and bath facility provided for those with dry pit toilets, repairs where necessary will be implemented as well as improvement in street lighting and the provision of green spaces, because when houses are so closely impacted, there is high risk of fire destroying the entire district, so we need to space those houses out. Sir, where necessary, if people are renting and their houses need to be relocated, one can have, as I understand it, in Greenfield and Cat's Castle, limited amounts of terrace units to accommodate those persons.

Mr. Chairman, help is here and this is a very exciting project, because it is a pilot. Sir, at the official launching of this project a few months ago at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Conference and Cultural Centre, we were having lunch with IDB specialists, who were on the island for the event and they were very excited about the future prospects, in terms of this Housing and Neighbourhood Upgrading Programme spreading to other working-class

districts. Indeed, the officer from IDB was willing to walk through Nelson Street, New Orleans, Bay Land, Dunlow Lane and Henry's Lane, in order to get a good idea of the urgency of neighbourhood upgrade, because he has told us that throughout the developing world, he is accustomed and feels at home in terms of visually and physically visiting these areas, to assist the Government in implementation, and in transforming the landscape of working-class Barbadians.

Mr. Chairman, there is a school of thought that you must keep certain ghetto districts poor as though it was a tourist attraction. Sir, that is not the vision of this Member of Parliament for the City of Bridgetown. Sir, I would have said in another place that the Barbados Labour Party spent millions of dollars in building the new Halls of Justice in White Park Road, but they left Greenfield in abject poverty, so that the Chief Justice and the senior members of the Judiciary would have to be looking down from their offices at people bathing in yards, or using outdoor plumbing.

H/A55/2.00 p.m. Sequence 18

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: I am saying that when you upgrade the infrastructure of commercial Bridgetown you have also, by the same token and by the same and, at the same time, upgrade the surrounding neighbourhood, be it Lighfoot Lane, Sobers Lane, Green Park Lane, Hunte Street, Green Park Lane where Jackie Opel, that great Barbadian son of the soil who introduced Spouge music to the world, was from Green Park Lane, and his neighbourhood is next to the Justice Centre.

Those residents of Green Park Lane, Passage Road, Man's Gap, Brownes Gap, Whitepark Road and so on, they need upgrading and this Neighbourhood Upgrade Programme, having once been completed by this Administration, this pilot project can be duplicated with additional funding internationally and otherwise, to transform all of the other working class districts in our country, to eradicate pit toilets from the face of Bridgetown and the rest of Barbados.

Sir, that is my dream. That is my vision, and I invite the residents of Bridgetown to buy into it because this is happening. Sir, the Minister of Housing has promised it, we have seen the necessary evidence that this is really rolling out, and when it happens you will remember that the Democratic Labour Party promised and we are delivering.

Sir, this matter is very important. Last Saturday I invited you and other colleagues to tour with me throughout the City of Bridgetown, which I am very

honoured to represent in this Honourable House. You would have seen that this issue of poverty is very urgent. I took him to Mason Hall Street, Murphy's Pasture and the Chapman Street area. He would have seen the drain from Baxters Road to the north of St. Mary's School, along Mason Hall Street, along Murphy's Pasture to the north of the Bridgetown Sewerage Treatment Plant on to the sea, via the Pumping House at Pelican.

Sir, you would have heard residents complain that rodents were getting in through their flooring boards and infecting them. That area is flood-prone. That is part of the polling district that the Barbados Labour Party has won each time, and what have they given as thanks to the residents, just flooding, promises and nothing delivered, but this Representative is aware because I am on the ground.

Sir, I have seen for myself, in that same area, Murphy's Pasture, which I showed you, when there is flooding you end up with people having to be rescued by boat. The last flooding we had, children had to be lifted on the shoulders of those young men on the "Block" who braved the torrential rains and flood waters to take those children to safety.

I know the housing concerns of those residents will be addressed by the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, who journeyed with you, me and others on Saturday and spoke to those residents, to the young men at the "Dog Pound" and other "Blocks" in Cat's Castle and Reed Street, because we care about them and we can uplift them and enable them to go along the straight and narrow to be productive citizens of our country.

Sir, I remember those flood waters were so terrible that as they subsided, there were dead rodents all over the place. When I talk about these issues the Honourable Members on the Other Side want to laugh and pooh-pooh these issues.

A few weeks ago, just after Christmas, one of my constituents, the late Tracy Griffith, contracted leptospirosis in that area and has left her little children. I will introduce you to her brother-in-Law. These are very serious issues that are affecting the wellness of the City.

I take this opportunity to call upon Barbadians not to litter. When they throw their garbage out of their Mercedes Benz, ZR buses, or walking along the streets, they are clogging the drains resulting in serious flooding. Sir, let me give you a quick story.

Sir, recently there was flooding in that same Chapman Street area, and the whole of Murphy's Pasture was inundated with water, and as the drains overflowed all the avenues in Chapman Lane, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, were

completely flooded out. I followed the path of the drain and actually found that drain leads to the south of the Drive-Thru' entrance of Chefette, Fontabelle, coming from Fontabelle road.

Sir, behind that wall, if you go into that area, as I saw that night, there is a grill going across the path of the water. That grill was blocked with garbage that would have entered that drainage system and it blocked the passage of that water into the Pumping House. The Pump House, at Pelican, becomes clogged with the garbage and burns out. When that burns out you end up with serious flooding because the water cannot be pumped out to sea. Bridgetown is low lying. We need that pump to pull the water out to sea.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Sir, the thousands of Barbadians who live in that district in Bridgetown, Emmerton Lane, Farnums Lane, Lakes Folly and Chapman Lane, their lives and limbs are threatened by litter. I urge Barbadians not to litter, and of course, it creates a breeding ground for rodents so the rodent control bait stations that you see, even in Parliament Yard, around the Ministry of Education and Bridgetown, the Environmental Health Division of the Ministry of Health is very serious in terms of rodent control.

Sir, if people litter all over Bridgetown and throughout Barbados, then that residue would be food for the rats and they would not, therefore, need to go into their bait stations, so it renders those bait stations not useful. It is very important for us not to litter to ensure that the public health of our country is not in anyway compromised.

Sir, as I conclude, I am encouraging Barbadians to note that this Democratic Labour Party Government, is serious about housing and I look forward to the high-rise multi-storey terrace units to be built by this Administration in the Mason Hall Street area, so that some of those same residents in the flood prone area and Murphy's Pasture, next door, would be accommodated in safer surroundings in that high-rise housing.

I took the Minister on a tour of Bridgetown to identify open spots and we saw land at the bottom of Wharton Gap, Whitepark Road, and 10th Avenue New Orleans, where you can build housing estates of duplex units to house the people of Bridgetown and to house the people of the City. This Democratic Labour Party Government is in action and we will deliver.

I thank you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before I proceed, we do have to enter our 10 minutes. Unfortunately the Minister would have to wind up, but before he does, earlier in the debate there was an issue raised in relation to the veracity of certain elements of the contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. I did ask for the record and I would now read the record for the purposes of all concerned, and for the benefit of the House.

I will read only the relevant section which was disputed. This is the quotation of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy:

"The National Housing Corporation cannot brag of any expertise that would allow them to intervene on behalf of a house builder in this country. The National Housing Corporation has a role to play, but it needs to know its role. The National Housing Corporation cannot build houses for poor people because whenever the National Housing Corporation builds houses for poor people, it ends up for the middle-class in this country and we have to recognise this. Poor people must build houses for themselves and if they get some other kind of help, so be it."

That is the end of the relevant quotation from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy.

The other matter of a procedural nature which I wish to quickly address. I, earlier in this debate, would have requested the withdrawal of a stranger in the Gallery. That withdrawal order was for the remainder of this Sitting, so I just want that to be known that withdrawal was for the remainder of this Sitting.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, as I said, in Committee we have come to the end of our allocated time for the debate.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That allows for the Minister to wind up his speech.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: There is no allocation for the Minister.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister caught my eye and I am permitting him to wind up his speech.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: I mean this is something new in this House.

Tuesday, February 09, 2010

House A55, Sequence 20, 2.10 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am addressing the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, who raised the issue and then is about to walk out, but I am addressing the issue so I wish him to accord the Chair the courtesy.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, it is not a question of let the man speak, and I wish you would not speak in an aside that I could hear. I can hear the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, and I already signalled that I am not going to be accepting that kind of conduct.

I said that in this House the Rules are quite clear in relation to the duration for the debate in Committee. We have practically come to the end of that time. The person who caught my eye was the Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am saying that those are the Rules of the House and I am calling on the Honourable Member for St. Philip North to speak.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Andrew, what you did is not permitted in this House. First of all, the Rules do not permit you to address this House without the permission of the Chair. That is in violation of the Rule and you should know as a senior Member of this House, that is not permitted.

Asides.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, am I permitted to speak on behalf of the people of St. Andrew?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. You are not permitted to speak. I did not call on you to speak. The Rules were made before I entered this House and as long as I am in this Chair, they will be adhered to and that is the way we have to keep order, otherwise there will be chaos.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to wrap up this debate under this Head and there are certain issues that I want to clarify. In fact, Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition made statements to the fact that this Government is not providing a housing policy for the poor in this country.

Mr. Chairman, we have allocated houses at Work Hall and Marchfield. Indeed I can tell you that we provided houses for police officers, clerical officers, teachers, masons and even in the private sector, a customer service attendant, a plumber, a ramp agent from Seawell Air Services, a bartender at the Hilton Hotel, a carpenter, a janitor, a janitor and an electrician together, prison officers, a cashier, a baker, a security officer, a security guard at Lucky Horse Shoe, a customer service representative, a seamstress and an accounts payroll clerk. At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, a supplies officer and general workers, and I could go on and on, so the evidence is there. Sir, it was posited by the Leader of the Opposition that this Government is not providing houses for the poor.

Then, the Opposition went on further to make the point that they established a Rent-to-Own Programme and again, that we are not building houses for poor people. Mr. Chairman, the houses that we are building at Country Park Towers and at Tweedside Road, are for people who cannot afford a mortgage, who cannot afford to purchase a house, who cannot afford to purchase a piece of land. In fact, I can tell you, and it is on file that the former Prime Minister said that when the units are built at Country Park Towers that they should be charged an economic rent, excluding the poor people.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, that is what was said and it is written on the file.

Mr. Chairman, I invite them to go through Work Hall and they will not see any rich people in there, but they will see poor people living in the houses. In fact, we have families, single men and single women too in the houses, and that is to the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition and the others over there.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, Tweedside Road has been built. The fact is that the former Administration constructed a company called, The Hardwood Housing Factory to build houses for poor people. They were supposed to build houses at Four Hill and French Village. They took deposits from people and to this day, we cannot count one house, five or 10 houses that were built by Hardwood Housing Factory. If you go up in Six Roads and the BIDC Building, you will see them laying down on the ground. Sir, this Government had to find \$5 million, in relation to the debt run up by The Hardwood Housing, so I do not understand the argument by the Opposition.

In fact, I want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Thomas who agreed with the \$5 00 per square lot

programme and then pleaded with me and this Government that she hopes her constituents would benefit from the programme of the Democratic Labour Party Government.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: I congratulate her for endorsing the programme of the Democratic Labour Party because her constituents suffered for years and now we are holding out an olive branch to assist her people.

Mr. Chairman, further to that, they were talking about poor people. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East will tell you that around Christmas, three families were housed in Sayes Court in houses that were built for poor people. We had a lady who has five children and was up and down this country looking for housing and begging the former Administration for housing. The Democratic Labour Party came to her rescue and she is now living in a Government unit at Sayes Court, as a result of this Government's policies.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Further, Mr. Chairman, again I congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Thomas because she always assists her constituents. I recall receiving a letter from a Kuran Puran, a Guyanese national and she asked for a house spot for him and I would ask my Ministry to assist her, because she is working very hard.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I speak again to the 500 lots. Cherry Grove, Pool Land, Henley and Towers in the parish of St. John, Easy Hall and Blackmans in St. Joseph, Branchbury, Guinea and Forty Acres in St. Thomas that are all within the \$5 00 lot programme and are vested in the National Housing Corporation to be given to first time homeowners. Therefore people who cannot afford to purchase a piece of land, or purchase a house will benefit from that programme.

Asides.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Sir, the Kuran Purans could come, Sir, once they are first-time homeowners.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that we have put a policy to assist the poor in this country and not only that, we have started a Rent-to-Own Programme because those who do not qualify would benefit from the Rent-to-Own Programme so I do not understand the argument.

House A55, Sequence 20, 2.20 p.m.

Tuesday, February 09, 2010

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Sir, I had to debunk the argument of the Other Side. I was supported by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas who aided and abetted me in my defence, so I thank you Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. Chairman, looking at the record of the Barbados Labour Party, they have no moral authority to speak on housing in this country. Sir, their primary focus was their Primary Homes Programme to assist the poor in this country. That programme was launched in September 2004. Sir, hundreds of Barbadians, janitors, gas station workers and the same police officers that are now benefitting from our programme, went up to the National Housing Corporation begging for a house, a bumble bee house, a centipede house, a grasshopper house and a ladybird house. They said that they had cheap land and that they could build the houses in seven days. They said they could do everything.

Sir, they had the house in the yard of the National Housing Corporation for 50 days. We were looking for it the other day, but it has disappeared, I do not know where it has gone.

Mr. Chairman, it is foolishness for the Barbados Labour Party, even for a certain person who is actually going to run against the Honourable Member for St. Philip West, to get up on a platform and say that this Government has not done anything in housing. I am waiting until I see him in St. Philip, but I believe that we will leave him to his own death.

The reality, Mr. Chairman, is that we have built houses at Workhall. Mr. Chairman, house and land at Marchfield and Workhall start at \$120 000. Sir, you cannot get one of those today on the private market at that price.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if members of the Barbados Labour Party drive around this country. Sir, at Constant, we are building wooden houses for the benefit of poor people. Sir, we have a solid programme with variety to deliver to the masses of this country.

Sir, there is also the infilling programme. We have just received Town Planning permission to construct rental units at Wildey for poor people, not for the rich.

Sir, it is quite evident that the Joint Venture Programme of the former Administration has failed. They are saying that this Government after two years... They had 14 years, but they concentrated on building two office blocks. Mr. Chairman, there are so many low income houses that could have been built out of that money. Mr. Chairman, programme after programme of the Barbados Labour Party failed.

Sir, I am going to repeat it for the last time, because they are up and down this country saying that we are not building houses for poor people. Mr. Chairman, police officers, teachers, clerical officers, electricians, masons, bank clerks, janitors, carpenters and bartenders have all qualified for the houses at Workhall and they are in the houses at Workhall. Sir, I had to repeat it because what they are saying is nonsensical.

Mr. Chairman, persons have also received the keys to the houses at Marchfield. The Honourable Member for St. Philip West would attest to that. Sir, we have a housing policy. We will remain focussed and will deliver our programme. The Barbados Labour Party cannot set an agenda for this Government.

The problem, Mr. Chairman, is that they know that a Government that said in its Manifesto that it would deliver lots to poor people would be doing it for the first time in difficult times.

You know, Mr. Chairman, that when you do your clinics, you have a number of people who come to you asking for house spots and houses. You also know that this Administration is committed to doing infilling in Silver Hill. We toured the area with you, we went there with the Town Planner, and once we get the approval, we will deliver those houses for you, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, we have to take the Barbados Labour Party back down memory lane. Their programmes, Hardwood Housing, primary homes and joint venture programmes, have all failed, so they have no moral authority whatsoever to speak on housing, that is why their argument cannot hold any water whatsoever.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and beg to move that Head 38 stand part.

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

The question that Head 38 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 13 - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

\$296 056

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 13 stand part.

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

The question that Head 13 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE

\$172 050

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 15 stand part.

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

The question that Head 15 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 19 - TREASURY

\$9 033 902

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

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

The question that Head 19 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 23 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH

\$354 128

Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 23 stand part.

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

The question that Head 23 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 63 - MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND IMMIGRATION

\$746 605

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 63 stand part.

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

The question that Head 23 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 65

MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS,
EMPOWERMENT,
INNOVATION, TRADE, INDUSTRY AND
COMMERCE

\$884 260

Dr. the Hon. D. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 65 stand part.

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

The question that Head 65 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 68

MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

\$605 326

Hon. E. G. HUTSON: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 68 stand part.

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

The question that Head 68 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

House A55 Sequence 21

2.30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 09, 2010

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government Business for today. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, February 16, at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

2.32 p.m.

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THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 2009-2010

AS SHOWN IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 7,

2009-2010 WHICH FORMS THE SCHEDULE TO THIS

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SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BEST, His Honour K. St.C. (St. Michael East)
BOYCE, Hon. J. D. E. (Christ Church South)
EASTMOND, Mr. R. C. (St. James North)
ESTWICK, Dr. the Hon. D. C. (St. Philip West)

FORDE, Miss C. Y. (St. Thomas)
HUTSON, Hon. E. G. (St. James Central)
INNISS, Hon. D. O'N. (St. James South)
JONES, Hon. R. D. (Christ Church East Central)
KELLMAN, His Excellency D. St.E. (St. Lucy)
LASHLEY, Hon. M. A. (St. Philip North)
LASHLEY, Mr. H. F. (St. Michael South East)
MOTTLEY, Hon. Miss M. A. (St. Michael North East)
PAYNE, Mr. G. W. (St. Andrew)
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. Committee of Supply, Head 38, opening speech. The Chairman calls 'The Honourable Member for St. Philip North' (the Minister of Housing and Lands, Hon. M. A. Lashley), but the opening speech of about 850 words, which speaks as the Ministry ('the Ministry is, therefore, seeking \$71 026'), carries the heading 'Mr. H. F. LASHLEY'. Hon. M. A. Lashley's heading follows after the take-slip. Printed as in the source; please confirm the attribution.

Q3. Committee of Supply, Order No. 3. The title of the Resolution is broken over eight lines, the first set as a paragraph ('RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$23 347 806 FROM THE') and the rest as separate headings. Page markers 'M - 1' to 'M - 7' from the source appear as paragraphs, some in the middle of sentences. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Committee of Supply, Head 63. After Head 63 is moved, the procedural note reads 'The question that Head 23 stand part was put'. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Committee of Supply, report. The report note reads 'Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to HIS HONOUR the SPEAKER ... and Mr. CHAIRMAN resumed the Chair', presumably Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair. Only a third reading of the Money Resolution is recorded. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Committee of Supply, Dr. the Hon. D. C. Estwick. Dr. Estwick says he is speaking 'to Head 48'; the housing Head under debate is Head 38. Printed as in the source.

Q7. Minutes. Mr. Speaker's announcement of the Minutes is split, with '2010.' set as a separate paragraph, and the PRESENT list runs Rt. Hon. O. S. Arthur and Hon. D. J. H. Thompson together. Printed as in the source.

Q8. Committee of Supply, speaker labels. The Member for St. Michael East is headed both 'His Honour K. St.C. BEST' and 'Hon. K. St.C. BEST', and one heading reads 'His Excellency Mr. D. St.E. KELLMAN'. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 9th February, 2010 at 10.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair; prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of Tuesday, February 2, 2010 were confirmed, Hon. F. J. Stuart laid the Annual Reports of the Anti-Money Laundering Authority for 2003-2008, and Standing Orders were suspended on the motion of Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, acting as Leader of the House.

In Committee of Supply, with Mr. S. A. Lashley in the Chair, the House took the Resolution for \$23 347 806 under Supplementary Estimates No. 7, 2009-2010. Head 38, Ministry of Housing and Lands, for \$11 255 479, was introduced with provision for a project coordinator for the HELP Programme, \$3 million for the National Housing Corporation's operating deficit, \$1 566 954 for street lighting, water mains and tree planting for the 500 lots programme, and \$798 000 for Government rentals. Hon. M. A. Lashley added \$400 000 for land surveying at Cat's Castle and Greenfield under the IDB Housing Subsidy and Neighbourhood Development Programme, and \$9 million to acquire 34 acres at Walkers, St. Andrew by private treaty and land at Six Men's, St. Peter. Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley asked how the \$9 million was split.

When Mr. Boyce spoke, Miss Mottley rose on several points of order to argue that the land acquisitions belonged under Head 19, Asset Management, and not Head 38; the Chairman ruled that the House was dealing with Head 38. His Excellency D. St.E. Kellman argued that poor people should be able to develop and sell land like those with 'fat pockets'. Miss Mottley said the National Housing Corporation was seeking \$4.56 million on top of \$11.8 million and accused him of saying it should not build houses for the poor, which he disputed in repeated points of order. She said the Democratic Labour Party Government had lent \$23 million through the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation between 1991 and 1994, against over \$150 million between 1994 and 2003, and that more than 500 families earning under \$3 000 a month could not depend on a lottery for 500 lots. The Chairman had remarks struck from the record and ordered the withdrawal of a stranger in the Gallery for the rest of the Sitting.

Hon. C. P. Sinckler blamed the Opposition for the shortage of low-income housing. Miss C. Y. Forde recalled criticism of houses at Briar Hall and Apes Hill and spoke of the needs of more than 300 residents of Allen View. Mr. R. C. Eastmond urged the Government to know where its

lands were, and the Member for St. Michael East, His Honour K. St.C. Best, supported the Resolution and spoke of landlords who cut off water and electricity and collected rent without registering.

After the suspension until 1.30 p.m., Dr. the Hon. D. C. Estwick cited the Special Audit of the National Housing Corporation and named four former Ministers of Housing, and Hon. P. M. T. Todd spoke on Cat's Castle, Greenfield and flooding in Bridgetown districts such as Emmerton Lane and Chapman Lane. The Chairman read from the record the disputed words of His Excellency D. St.E. Kellman, that the National Housing Corporation 'cannot

build houses for poor people'. When he allowed the Minister to wind up after the allotted time, Mr. G. W. Payne protested and was told he could not address the House without the Chair's permission.

Hon. M. A. Lashley replied that the Government did have a housing policy for the poor and listed sites for the 500 lots. Head 38 was agreed, followed by Heads 13, 15, 19, 23, 63, 65 and 68, and the Money Resolution was reported and passed. On the motion of Mr. Boyce the House was adjourned until Tuesday, February 16, at 10.00 a.m.