
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(UNOFFICIAL REPORT)

PARLIAMENT 2008 – 2013

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

Pursuant to the Adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, March 02, 2010.

PRESENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN

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, B.Sc., M.B.B.S. (Minister of Economic Affairs, Empowerment, Innovation, Trade, Industry and Commerce)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: Good morning Honourable Members, this House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, February 23, 2010.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Honourable House of Assembly for its Meeting of Tuesday, February 23, 2010, be confirmed subject to any omissions, corrections and/or observations.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, just let me say that we are honoured to have in our presence this morning Mr. Geoff Dubrow and Mr. John Doyle. I understand that they are connected with the Auditors-General Offices in British Colombia and Canada. They were here over the weekend and they were kind enough to assist us with a seminar. Gentlemen, we welcome you and we hope that you find the experience refreshing.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. R. D. JONES, the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010 was read a first time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER No. 3

RESOLUTION THAT THIS HOUSE RESOLVES
ITSELF
INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY TO CONSIDER
THE GRANT OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE
SERVICE OF THIS ISLAND.

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

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

(a) RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$2 040 000 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. 10 2009-2010 WHICH FORM THE SCHEDULE TO THE RESOLUTION

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE

\$2 040 000

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

This Supplementary of \$2 040 000 is to supplement the Contingencies Vote in the Cabinet Office. This arises out of the decision of the Government of Barbados to pledge the sum of US\$1 million, or BDS\$2 million to the relief effort in Haiti.

Since the very devastating earthquake took place in Haiti on January 12, Barbadians from all walks of life have made a contribution to the non-governmental organisations, the private sector and the other appeals that have gone out.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank those non-governmental organisations as well as private sector individuals, who have made a contribution to the relief effort in Haiti.

The relief effort was also supplemented by an offer by CARICOM, to establish a field hospital and other emergency facilities. In addition to that, CARICOM should be grateful to the Jamaica Defence Force and the Government of Jamaica, for facilitating the work which the Jamaican Defence Force had done in Haiti within two days of the disaster taking place.

As we all know, the conditions that obtained in Haiti after the disaster, meant that it was very difficult to get many of those relief supplies into Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, even though they were an outpouring throughout the world of great generosity, the conditions on the grounds in Haiti made it extremely difficult to get some of those items to those who most needed it.

House A58 Sequence 3

10.30 a.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The situation in Haiti seems to have become more organised. Haiti is a Member of CARICOM and as part of that process and as one of the Leaders in CARICOM, I have met with President Preval on three occasions since then. On the first occasion in the Dominican Republic, we discussed the question of a programme to support the rebuilding of Haiti as a whole.

The CARICOM Heads agreed to the appointment of the Honourable Percival J. Patterson, former Prime Minister of Jamaica, as CARICOM's Representative in that longer term process, the objective of which was to raise finance for the redevelopment of Haiti as a whole.

However, in my last meeting, and in the last encounter between both CARICOM Heads, as well as Heads of Latin American countries, Rio Group, in Mexico last week, President Preval, in a very emotional presentation, pointed out that on top of the earthquake, they were facing the great challenge of flood conditions, or rains, as he called them, and that shelter for more than 1.2 million people was urgent and critical, therefore, we were all mobilised to make a contribution. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago started the CARICOM process by offering US\$5 million and in the circumstances I felt that it was better for Barbados to make its contribution.

I pledged, with Cabinet's concurrence, the sum of US\$1million. It is difficult for Barbados in these times to find that US\$1 million, but I am certain that when you consider the overall national budget of Barbados, to find BDS\$2 million to assist our brothers and sisters in Haiti, who have gone through so much pain and suffering during this period, it is money that we can and have to afford. This will assist them in purchasing the tents that are necessary and also provide some additional short-term relief.

Barbados also has to bear the responsibility of the cost of the Regional Security System right now because we have not been receiving contributions at all. I cannot even say that we have been receiving a trickle. We have received no contributions at all from any of the other participants in the Regional Security System process, and therefore, to keep the Regional Security System planes in the air, as well as to deal with the routine operations of the Regional Security System, has fallen into our account, as was predicted only a few weeks ago.

Sir, the Regional Security System aircraft have been integral to the movement of people, CARICOM officials, Heads of Governments, as well as getting the additional units into Haiti. Sir, we obviously have additional cost beyond the US\$1 million. I cannot say what those costs are, because they have not been fully estimated, but they will be within the overall budget that has been approved for the entities that provide those services, for example, the health professionals who are volunteering their services, but essentially they are already in the public health care system.

Sir, to quantify that is a pointless exercise at this stage. The point is that we have a CARICOM sister State that has faced a level of devastation not witnessed before, and in terms of short-term measures, we have to do it because it could happen to us. Mr. Chairman, I am not

doing it because we expect anything in return, but we are doing it because we recognise that should such a calamity befalls any other CARICOM State, we would all be expected to come forward.

Sir, it was quite moving to see President Preval indicated that to return to Haiti without saying, that having come to these meetings, but having attended a few of them, coming back home saying what he has been able to get for the people of Haiti, we felt that as a matter of principle, we had to come up with something tangible, therefore, the purchase of 200 000 tents would ease the situation. It is not going to make it a lot better, but it certainly provides some comfort, in terms of people who are already dispossessed by the circumstances.

Mr. Chairman, there is a second point that needs to be made, and I know that a lot of comments have been generated about the future development path of Haiti. We cannot have it both ways. We cannot say that we acknowledge and honour the fact that Haiti is the first black independent State in the world, and yet believe that in the year 2010, it is for us to substitute our judgment as to what Haiti needs for their judgment.

Even if we think that they may be wrong about what they need, or that they have not addressed what they need, that is their sovereign right. Therefore, as I said, we have seen a lot of commentary which I think does not acknowledge that.

In recent times, I have noticed on CNN, you see a lot of criticism about the taxes that are being applied on relief supplies. Sir, there has to come a point where the relief effort has to end, otherwise your basic commerce in the country would collapse. Haiti is an agrarian society and the farmers are farming still.

There are parts of Haiti in which businesses are still operating, where shops are still opened. Therefore, it is a very difficult situation, and to be criticised for saying that the relief effort is over, that we now have to start to get the economy going again, in a situation where you are only receiving 20 per cent of your usual revenues...

Mr. Chairman, that is the estimate of what they are receiving. They have to pay civil servants. How would they pay them, if they cannot raise taxation? They have to rebuild the infrastructure. How are they going to do it if they cannot raise taxation? How are they going to be able to receive and accommodate, or even start the process of getting the professionals to work and help design the way forward, if they do not have the resources to do it? Therefore, obviously Haiti has found itself, and the Administration in Haiti has found itself in a very difficult position. Therefore, I think that the international media needs to be more sympathetic and sensible, because Haiti

cannot remain a “basket case” as a result of tragedy forever.

Mr. Chairman, the point is that what I have seen on television, the generation of this animus by aid workers who are saying that they cannot get their supplies in, it would have the effect of causing people who otherwise would have made some contribution to the development of Haiti, and to the relief effort, to have second thoughts. Sir, that is not fair because as I said, there is a point at which societies and economies have to start to do the things that normal societies and economies do. I believe that the Government decided that point had come at which it had to do that.

Sir, as I have said, this is Government-to-Government assistance and, therefore, the resources that we gave, the Haitian President did ask that the Central Bank of the Dominican Republic would receive the contributions, so that they can be monitored, so that he does not have the headache of having to administer them. They will then use those resources to purchase the tents and to assist in housing the population.

Mr. Chairman, that is the essential background. I believe that we may later on in the coming months have an opportunity to talk a bit more about the relief effort, and about what has been done in Barbados.

Sir, once again I compliment Barbadians for their level of generosity.

10.40 a.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I received only yesterday a letter from Prince Harry in which he specifically said how happy he was that he happened to be here at the event held to raise funds for Haiti, and he thought it was a very thoughtful gesture by Barbadians to be making a contribution to that effort.

Mr. Chairman, I would say in all fairness that Barbados has pulled its weight. We did not offer a sum of money before because, essentially, we were waiting to see what the Government of Haiti identified as its critical need and, now that has been done, we have assessed that this is the contribution we can make in these economic circumstances. We will then monitor the situation and will make a full contribution to the international effort for the rehabilitation of Haiti, through the international financial institution.

We have heard reports from the IDB, CAFT - I do not remember what the acronym stands for, but it is one of the South American Regional banking institutions - and the

ANDEAN Group, and we have also heard from individual Governments. Sir, many of our poorest countries in the Region themselves made a pledge at that meeting to assist in this process.

Mr. Chairman, I am very happy on behalf of the people of Barbados, and the Government, to be able to pilot this particular Supplementary and to indicate that this is part of our commitment to our sister country Haiti, and to the people of Haiti, that we do it as a token at this stage, but will assist in whatever way we can to continue to assist in the rebuilding process in that country.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 15 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: Mr. Chairman, I would like to second this motion because the Government's position is one with which the Opposition stands firmly, and will support on the occasion of the earthquake in Haiti.

We, I believe, were meeting in this very Chamber the evening and none of us really appreciated the magnitude of that evening of what the Haitian people were facing. Indeed, I think, weeks after, it only started to be fully appreciated largely because apart from the immediate consequences that led to substantial death of biblical proportions, and substantial dislocation, that there is another set of nightmares coming. Therefore, the effort of the Government of Barbados towards the procurement of tents is really to mitigate, as we see it, the circumstances that the Haitians would face in this second wave of trauma.

What is the second wave of trauma, Mr. Chairman? Sir, persons who have nowhere to live, who have nowhere to return to are facing the prospect, with the oncoming rainy season, of being exposed to the elements. It is only when we study it in detail that we truly appreciate the magnitude of what they face. We take even basic arrangements for granted in terms of access to food, water and facilities for sanitation, all of these things but, Sir, with rain, all of those things become perilous.

Sir, possibilities for the outbreak of all kinds of diseases increase exponentially and if all we can do at this stage is to provide some basic level of shelter, then I do believe that would go a substantial way of reducing the number of persons who might otherwise be exposed to the trauma that can ensue. It is almost impossible for us, truly, to appreciate what has transpired.

Mr. Chairman, like the Prime Minister, I am almost incensed with the manner in which the international media has treated to the management of the post-earthquake relief efforts and the efforts of the Government of Haiti, which has been reduced to operating out of a police station and not even a very large one.

Sir, from the looks of it, it might relate to something of the size of Boarded Hall Police Station because the condition of Port-au-Prince, in terms of all the main buildings, related to Government, related to commerce and related even to the non-governmental organisations, which Haiti had in abundance, have all been dislocated. Therefore, to even begin to work out how you treat to the management and the governance of a Government in those circumstances, is mind-boggling.

Mr. Chairman, there are no files anymore. There is no documentary record as who is to do what, or what is to happen, and even in relation to the whole saga in relation to the orphans. Sir, I do not know that there has been the level of empathy displayed, and I do not know if it is because the international media believes that the only thing that can be appropriately sensationalised is life and death and, therefore, they see everything in terms of the starkness of life and death.

Mr. Chairman, that is important, but the reality equally is that there are still millions of people living in Port-au-Prince, whose daily existence has to be taken care of and, in the circumstances, I think that their comments will have a dampening effect of the relief effort, and to those other persons who might have otherwise considered continuing to donate to the relief effort in Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, even if there was no earthquake, the needs of the Haitians were already great. The development needs of that country come, not as a result of the financial crisis of recent times, but come as a result of sustained under-development, and a stance taken by the developed world that has its genesis from since the days of the aftermath of the revolution.

Mr. Chairman, much has been said in recent times and more people are now aware of the extent to which the French Government, and the American Government systematically placed pressure on the Haitian Government, in terms of the extraction of financial resources, for the right to have declared themselves independent.

Sir, for over 90 years, a percentage of the custom dues of the Haitian Government were paid over to the French Government.

Mr. Chairman, this is something with which we cannot even come to grips, because the Prime Minister spoke just now about a sovereign nation having the right to

determine its own development and, Sir, he is correct, but when a sovereign nation, for the right to determine its own development, has to pay another country for no other reason than it asserted its right to self-determination, it is something with which the 20th Century and the 21st Century international diplomacy cannot necessarily come to grips in the same way. Sir, even if it happens, there is usually a more subverted and covert way of achieving those objectives than the bold reality of the transfer of payment of a percentage of custom dues.

Mr. Chairman, the truth is that the Americans themselves occupied Haiti for 20 years too, in the early part of the 20th Century, so that it is not really a case of persons coming to the table with clean hands to borrow a term from equity.

H/A58/10.50 a.m. Sequence 5

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I remember distinctly, in 2001, when we were preparing for the first Global Conference on Racism, we made the point, and it was buttressed primarily from the Haitian experience, but it was one in which all ex-colonies could relate, that the argument for reparations was not necessarily for a payment to a particular individual but, it was as a result of centuries and an extraction of wealth which could otherwise have been diverted for developmental purposes.

It was most strongly reflected in the evidence which we brought to the table of the Haitian payments to the French Government in relation to the portion of the dues, but all of us know what it is to have supported the financing of the magnificent structures that we see in the former metropolitan capitals that were responsible for us, those countries did not acquire that wealth by the dint of their own effort within their own geographical boundaries. That was acquired as a result of the extraction of wealth for centuries.

Sir, the problem was, Haiti then had to integrate into a western economy through the 19th and 20th centuries. Therefore, many of the systems that we take for granted, including, for example, a Treasury - I think that we are familiar with the fact that up until 10, or 12 years ago, the Haitian Government did not have a formal Treasury. Many of the systems that we take for granted in terms of our public service were not there, simply because of the alienation and the under-development of Haiti as a sustained programme for centuries.

It is of note that even the international community, through the IMF, on the eve of the earthquake, was not prepared to give the benefit of the doubt for the last two years, and in circumstances, brought some conditions on

the Haitians that were really out of a sense, I can only assume, a total lack of appreciation of the conditions of the Haitian persons, also an inability to apply to each Haitian the individual human dignity that we believe should be attached to each human being in this world.

Sir, it is sad, I believe that we in the Region have a duty I readily acknowledge that the CARICOM effort in terms of bringing together, not just English speaking, but French and Dutch-speaking persons is an ambitious effort, but the truth is, apart from language, our historical experiences bear commonalities.

Our cultural realities reflect also commonalities, and we have, perhaps, more aggressively, to find ways to allow successive generations of Barbadians and other English-speaking Caribbean persons, to relate to our average Haitian in a way that reflects a day-to-day relationship, rather than the historical and political factors that bind us. We accept that at the governmental level. How do we make that relationship real for ordinary people?

I feel, and I would have said it earlier, that I think a sustained effort for school children to relate to one another is an appropriate mechanism, because children, even at that early age, it is easier for them to learn phrases and speak the language. They find the things that excite them and use that as a basis for going forward. There is still clearly telecommunication and Internet coverage in Haiti, even through sporadic areas.

Sir, I would have met with the Salvation Army leadership for this part of the world about six weeks ago. We recognise as an Opposition Party, our role is limited, but we felt that it was still important to develop a project of tangible means that would make a difference in that respect, and to that extent, we have been working with them. They have now identified five schools.

We are now about to go to the Minister of Education. We have spoken to a few Principals privately first, and we want the blessings of the Minister of Education to allow children in schools in Barbados, who are five to start - the Salvation Army actually has 80 schools in Haiti, which I did appreciate. They have a large presence in Haiti and by coincidence, the persons who are in charge of this Region are both Haitian and, in fact, would have lived in Barbados before leaving a few years ago in respect of their duties with the Salvation Army.

Sir, if we can identify one main teacher in each of the five schools, there are four private and one secondary, and then one Head Teacher we find in Haiti. We can get a project started that initially will be based on contact in a virtual way, but once Haiti starts to develop, I believe that we would be able to host some of the children here and

they would be able to, as things start to improve there through the years, host Barbadians in Haiti.

It is that kind of ordinary contact among school children that we believe would allow the deepening of relations and the full appreciation of what it is that unites us and, indeed, if there are differences at all, where those differences come and to what extent they can be bridged.

Sir, there is nothing here that is immediate, but it is about sustaining that relationship into the future. I think that the Salvation Army, particularly because it is not depending on the Government there in Haiti, in terms of the operations of its schools, makes it particularly possible.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Thank you, Sir.

Sir, the Opposition stands fully with the Government on this matter. We believe this is an issue of moral and it is imperative for us as a country.

I too was heartened by the extent to which Barbadians of all walks of life, irrespective of their circumstances, felt the need to both give as well as to express the empathy and care that showed that this thing really touched them.

Sir, our own vulnerability is made more acute. We sat and watched what happened in Chile on the weekend, and what you saw was the difference between a disaster hitting a developed country as opposed to a disaster hitting a developing country. A developing country whose structures could not withstand the ravages of an earthquake that was in fact weaker, than the one that hit Chile.

The truth is, we ourselves have been blessed now for decades and we do not know what it is to face adversity as a result of natural disasters in recent times. There are two generations of Barbadians who have not had to face that experience. I pray and hope that we would not, but our sense of understanding of the world and who we are as human beings, causes us to feel that our game may well be in the future, and that historically, we have done so every 70 to 80 years, so we too cannot take for granted and become complacent in respect of our own efforts to mitigate the impact of a natural disaster.

Sir, as I said, the contrast between how Chile has been able to deal with it because of its structures and its own form of development, and Haiti shows us that there is merit in proper building codes. There is merit in preparing oneself for the immediate relief effort. There is merit in having the early signals that would make a difference.

Sir, I noted in today's newspaper the meeting that took place yesterday in relation to arrangements that would be in place for tsunamis. The truth is, there is only now in recent years, since the Boxing Day earthquake and tsunami, that we appreciate, perhaps better, that earthquakes come with tsunamis, and that we are in the middle of plates here in the Region. Therefore, it is not only hurricanes that we have to worry about. Our own shakeup, two years ago, Parliament itself received damage. Therefore, these are things that we must be vigilant about.

HA58 11.00 a.m. Sequence 6

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

House A58, Sequence 07, 11.00 a.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I believe that the best form of preparation is community-based preparation and there are those who have worked in the District Emergency Organisation for years, decades, in Barbados, persons well known to people on Both Sides of the aisle. They have really provided yeoman service without any kind of national recognition and even though nothing has happened, they have not reduced their efforts year by year, in sensitising and preparing people.

Those people in my view needs to be praised because there is no monetary compensation. They do it because they feel it is their duty and we are happy for their efforts, but we need now to educate and sensitise a group of young Barbadians who are coming up, that equally they too, have to take over from the likes of a John Haynes, or persons like that, who have done really excellent service in this country, in respect of preparing people.

Mr. Chairman, I support the Resolution.

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

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Supplementary and of course, to associate myself completely with the sentiments expressed by both of the earlier contributions to this particular Supplementary. It is hard to imagine what the people of Haiti are going through. I have had the experience, even though, yes, I am part of those generations that have never really seen a disaster here in Barbados.

I previously did some disaster mitigation work in the Region, and I have seen what a hurricane can do, having been to Antigua and Grenada, days after they suffered their hurricanes. However, I can only imagine what it would be like post a serious earthquake activity, such as what took

place in Haiti. Of course, our thoughts and prayers go with all of those who have been affected.

At the same time, I think we need to be proud of the manner in which Barbados, and should I say Barbadians, have responded, both the nongovernmental organisations and at the individual level. It has been heartening, the way in which people have gone out of their way to try to make even modest contributions. Many work places literally passed the hat to collect funds to get it via some of the many public-spirited initiatives that have been set up for the Haitian people.

Therefore, I think it is appropriate that the Government should respond accordingly, and even though the sum may appear modest in the face of what is needed, it is the gesture that counts and it sends all the right signals. I am sure other people would take the lead of the Government, and we can see some further assistance coming from the private sector that we can in some way, try to mitigate this awful situation in which Haiti finds itself.

I do believe, Mr. Chairman, that we must also pause to see what lessons we can learn, as far as our own experience is concerned here. I think the point has been made that it is not true to say that apart from hurricanes, we do not have anything else to worry about here in Barbados.

The earth tremor of November 2007, brought it home to the reality that there is no such thing as an earthquake zone. Once there are tectonic plates and those plates are in constant motion, you can have seismic activity. That is a fact. There are some areas that are more active than others and the idea that we are not in the earthquake zone, is just not true.

The earthquake of 1690, destroyed most of Antigua. In fact, the Cathedral in St. John's still carries damage from that earthquake. It did a lot of damage here in Barbados. There are others in here who are trained in history and they will tell you about the early 19th Century.

I think there was a terrible earthquake here in Barbados in 1812, or thereabouts, and Port Royal, Jamaica.

Martinique had a volcanic activity, but we have had a lot of serious earthquakes in the Caribbean and even in the Archipelago near Barbados, so it is nothing that we can just look at and say, well, that is associated with San Andreas Fault in Western North America, or Japan and that part of Asia. Yes, the seismic activity is a lot greater there, but we are still very susceptible to it. In fact, in St. Lucia and Trinidad, they have earth tremors every other month. It is a part of life, you just feel a little rumbling and you go on.

I think that we need to be very conscious of the fact that it can happen here and it is not a case of being negative. It is facing the simple stark reality. What happened in Haiti and for that matter in Chile, can happen here in Barbados, therefore, we have to put all of our mechanisms in place.

There are modern methods of construction and so on that you can employ. You would need, of course, to have a building code to start with that you can try to again have greater resistance to certain types of activity, and we need to, of course, put our best foot forward in that regard and proceed accordingly.

I think that when we are looking at that, we should understand that there are other unusual types of disasters that can happen as well. We are a small island and a relatively flat island and tsunami activity could potentially be devastating, if it had to occur here in Barbados, so we also need to consider those possibilities. Then, there are those freak accidents such as Sir, what happened in Arch Cot, so there is a need for us to be constantly on guard to see that we can protect ourselves as much as possible from these situations.

While I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East that the community-based type of disaster preparedness is a good place to start, I also think that should not take away from the fact that at the national level, and for that matter the international level, you also need to have appropriate mechanisms in place to respond to disasters.

In fact, I was particularly attracted to a suggestion Prime Minister Brown made, that the United Nations should actually establish an agency for responding to disasters. I think that it makes a lot of sense. There are some UN Agencies that their relevance has been weighed in the balance, and there is some controversy over how effective are some of these agencies.

I am not going to call the names of them in here. I would not dare do that. It is a noble institution that has served us well, but I think you look at the success, for example, of the weapons inspectorate and the peace keepers, the blue helmet and so on, maybe there is a case for an agency, set up just to provide disaster mitigation relief in the short term.

I also agree that you have to drop the guillotine at some point and allow the country's natural mechanisms to kick back in, so that life can return to normal as quickly as possible. Sir, I think it really does make sense.

Mr. Chairman, it is not even true to say that not only the developing world sometimes can get overwhelmed by these disasters. We all remember Hurricane Katrina and

how that rendered a very proud, large, modern city, in the wealthiest country in the world, hapless, literally nowhere to turn, and of course Japan, as powerful as they are, the Kobe earthquake in 1995, and what that did to that City as well.

House A58, Sequence 07, 11.10 a.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. R. L. SEALY: It is something that I believe that we should push. I am not sure to what extent the Government of the United Kingdom is encouraging it, but we should push it because it is in our interest. As I said earlier, it could happen to us. We could be in a position where our National District Emergency Organisation. It used to be CERO, it has been renamed now as DEMA - the Department of Emergency Management, is overwhelmed, so what do we do? It would be nice if such a structure existed in the international community. I would sincerely hope that idea is looked at with the very real possibility that it could come into being.

Mr. Chairman, I would also just mention that the Caribbean Tourism Organisation has actually been meeting with a view of assisting Haiti in seeing what ways we could facilitate its tourism industry coming back on stream. As I understand it, Haiti is a member and does have a tourism industry.

Sir, in fact, it is not the first thing you may think of when you think of Haiti, but the truth is that they do actually have some very picturesque parks and some islands off the coast there and so on, that the cruise ships and so do go. Naturally, we are just doing our part being our brothers' keeper and we hope that the Caribbean Tourism Organisation would certainly do its small part, in an effort to try to get the regular economic activity going back in place.

Mr. Chairman, as the Prime Minister mentioned, it is for all the Regional institutions as well to kick in, and for all of the people of the Caribbean to also do their part.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard the comments from both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition with respect to the uncharitable comments that we get from the international media, but that has been par for the course where the Haitian experiment is concerned. It is very unfortunate that even now, when they are literally at their lowest ebb, that this tolerance must continue.

Mr. Chairman, I think that the people of Haiti must not be daunted, and the people of the Caribbean must stand shoulder to shoulder with them and see them through this ordeal.

The Haitian people are tremendously resourceful and tremendously talented. Their art is known all over the world as some of the finest that you can have in any collection in any gallery anywhere. We all know the tremendous story of how Toussaint L'Ouverture fought for their independence in the 19th Century. It is a remarkable story.

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

Hon. R. L. SEALY: Of course, we commiserate with the plight that they are going through. We sincerely hope that this effort that this House is signalling, is indeed to send the message that has been occurring with everyone in every house, in every Parent-Teachers' Association, in every 4H Club, and in every office that has been collecting funds, sometimes silver dollars, sometimes bits of change, to lend a helping hand and to be our brothers' keeper, determine to see the Haitian people get through this ordeal.

I am much obliged to you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am very glad to see that this House is in a very sombre and sober mood today, because there definitely cannot be any divide on this most important matter that was brought before this Chamber by the Prime Minister of Barbados.

Permit me, Mr. Chairman, from the bottom of my heart - I suppose I am speaking on behalf of all my constituents in St. Michael South East - to seriously thank the Government of Barbados for sending BDS\$2 million to the people of Haiti. I say that, Sir, because this is a very generous consideration by the Cabinet of Barbados, that they would have sat and contemplated, in these difficult economic times, to take BDS\$2 million out of our budget to send to those suffering people in Haiti, must certainly be commended. Sir, I really believe that this speaks volumes to the spirit and generosity of the Barbadian people to help their brothers in time of need.

Sir, at approximately 2.30 p.m. on January 12, we were in this Honourable Chamber debating a very important Bill, and least in all of our minds, had we been anticipating that a tragedy was occurring of the gigantic proportions that we now know of in the Caribbean. When we learnt of the news, all of us in this Honourable Chamber were shocked and we could not fathom at that time the extent of the damage that occurred.

Sir, when one considers that over 300 000 people lost their lives in this tragedy, and we bring it closer to home, we realise that is more than the entire population of

Barbados who died in this tragedy, so it is a very serious thing.

Sir, Chile just had an earthquake of 8.8 on the Richter Scale and those 53 countries in the entire Pacific Ocean were put on a tsunami alert. All of those countries in the Pacific Ocean were affected seriously, which brings to mind that it is critical that we have a tsunami warning system established in the Caribbean. Sir, as the other speaker before me said, God forbids that such an occurrence occurs in the Caribbean of this massive proportion.

Sir, none of us in the Caribbean would be spared from a Kick-Em Jenny undersea earthquake of the proportion of 8.8. Sir, it would be a tragedy of unparalleled proportions that we would experience.

Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we must put the necessary mechanisms in place now to avert such a tragedy. The technology is coming home to us so real, that I sat at home and watched reporting by CNN the Hawaiian Islands actually anticipating the strike of a tsunami. I brought that home to Barbados, supposed something like that would happen? We probably would have to go to St. Andrew or a higher place of ground, but God knows what the impact would be.

Sir, I want to dedicate the few minutes that I have left to congratulate the Barbadian people. It is the spirit of the Barbadian people in terms of their response to this tragedy in Haiti that must be commended. The Government of Barbados organised a national effort, which was spearheaded by Senator Irene Sandiford-Garner who I believe, should also be seriously commended for the effort that she did in terms of mobilising Barbadians in this effort.

Sir, I also would want to thank the entertainers of Barbados. The entertainers of Barbados are the ones who make some of the greatest sacrifices and contributions towards our society. We could call on them at any time to make a contribution and they do so without asking for monetary reward in advance. When the Prince of England went on stage at the Show at Farley Hill, that was carried throughout the entire world the following day.

House A58 Sequence 8

11.20 a.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, in addition, I believe that Mr. Vic Fernandes, on One Caribbean Media, has mobilised an entire country and certain islands to contribute towards the cause in Haiti. They raised \$1.5 million. Sir, those efforts by Voice of Barbados (VOB), the

Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and the Entertainers Guild of Barbados should be congratulated.

Sir, the people of St. Michael South who organised themselves and made tremendous contribution to this cause in Haiti should also be commended.

Mr. Chairman, there was a specific programme done in St. Michael South for children called “Kids Kicking for Kids.” Sir, almost an entire community came out and supported the effort. We were the last persons to get the contributions to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, but it was well-done, in association with the Embassy of the United States of America, Barbados.

Sir, every maid, janitor, carpenter, mason, the small man, contributed to this effort. Sir, the schools, community-based organisations in Barbados also contributed to this effort. Sir, moreso, it is part of the Barbadian spirit to make these kinds of contributions. I feel proud to be a Barbadian, in light of the efforts that were done by Barbadians.

Mr. Chairman, I wanted to bring a Private Members Resolution to this Honourable Chamber to congratulate the Government of Barbados for the wonderful effort that they have done, in terms of mobilising the Barbadian people and making this sterling contribution to the people in Haiti.

Sir, I believe that on January 12 of every year, that the entire Caribbean Region should observe it as a Regional day of prayer for the people in Haiti. What I fear is that as soon as the lights are turned off on television, CNN, NBC and others, people would believe that the tragedy in Haiti is over, therefore, the enthusiasm to the effort in Haiti will definitely decrease. This is one time that we must now be making our contribution felt to the people in Haiti. The rains are coming and people are still living under some atrocious conditions.

Mr. Chairman, I believe I could allude to my Resolution in a very practical manner. Sir, my Resolution would have said that may it be:

RESOLVED that the Government of Barbados should be fully congratulated for the unswerving contribution and compassion to the people and Government of Haiti.

I would also want to say:

WHEREAS the international community has responded in such a positive manner, and have shown good faith, sympathy, empathy and assistance to the people of Haiti:

AND WHEREAS the entire Caribbean community, through the Governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations, have responded with great haste to the tragedy to bring relief to the suffering of the people of Haiti:

AND WHEREAS the Government of Barbados has responded in such a swift and remarkable way.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that we as a people in this country should feel proud of our efforts. God knows what could happen tomorrow, but at least, I believe that a process has begun. As was said, I believe by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I believe too that we should start a very serious educational programme on disaster preparedness in the schools.

Mr. Chairman, in my view, how we go about disaster preparedness is a seasonal thing. When the hurricane season approaches, we start to sensitise people that there is a hurricane coming, but disaster preparedness goes way beyond that of hurricanes or storm warnings. The way it is looking, as is said in the Book of Revelation, it looks like if we are actually living in the last years. We hear about wars, rumours of wars, earthquakes and other unnatural calamities in diverse places.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, two days ago I saw Europe being struck by hurricanes. Japan also had an earthquake. Sir, the North Eastern States of the United States of America have never seen such heavy snowfall in hundreds of years. Sir, something is seriously happening with our weather system. We call it El Nino, but I truly believe that in some instances we have to start a very serious process of education and sensitisation to the impact and effects of the current disasters that are facing the world. Sir, as soon as we could put that tsunami warning system in place, particularly in the southern Caribbean, the better it would be for all of us. I thank you.

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

Hon. D. O’N. INNIS: Mr. Chairman, I rise to give support to this measure. It certainly is a wonderful continuing effort of Barbados’ commitment to assist our brothers and sisters in Haiti.

Sir, let me say at the very onset that Barbados has shown leadership in response to the crisis in Haiti from day one.

I must commend the Honourable Prime Minister and his CARICOM colleagues for taking to the field right away

and meeting in Jamaica to discuss the response from a CARICOM perspective to Haiti. Sir, that has shown the spirit of CARICOM, and certainly and specifically of Barbados. It has shown our commitment to helping those in the Region who are, from time to time, afflicted by such challenges.

Mr. Chairman, Barbados' response to our brothers and sisters in the Region is not new. History has shown that over the years we have contributed generously, not only in terms of actual cash, but also in terms of material and moral support to those and other islands that have been afflicted from time to time.

Mr. Chairman, in discussing this matter, I thought I should perhaps give this Honourable Chamber a synopsis of Barbados' response to date, particularly since the Heads met in Jamaica two days after the earthquake. Their decision was that a response should be either by the health sector, that there should be a medical response to the situation in Haiti. Sir, from day one, there has been an outpouring support by Barbadian health care workers.

Sir, I want to commend the health care workers in Barbados for stepping up to the plate and volunteering to go to Haiti and assist and also volunteering to assist in other areas. It really and truly was a pleasant surprise.

Mr. Chairman, within the first week of that earthquake, we had 126 Barbadian health care workers who volunteered to assist their brothers and sisters in Haiti, none of whom, to the best of my knowledge, had ever visited Haiti, or had relatives in Haiti, but certainly it is a reflection of that Barbadian culture that says that we have to assist those who are afflicted by such challenges. That large number spans the entire public health and private health care sectors, such as doctors of various specialties, public health nurses and other nurses, pharmacists and other environmental health officers.

Sir, a whole wide range of services personnel stepped up to the plate. We have assisted to the extent of ensuring that such individuals were adequately briefed in preparation for deployment to Haiti and that was done on Friday, February 5, in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital auditorium.

Mr. Chairman, let me say that any briefing done was not only in relation to the immunisation that needed to be done pertaining to the length of stay abroad, but also being cognizant of the fact that care-givers are oftentimes faced with mental anguish when dealing with such circumstances. We ensured that those who offered to go were also given a high level of counselling.

11.30 a.m.

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Hon. D. O'N. INNIS: Sir, to date we have immunised 43 individuals who have expressed interest in going to Haiti and some who have gone and returned. We have also immunised soldiers of the Barbados Defence Force who were deployed to assist in that crisis in Haiti.

Also, at the Regional level, Barbados' Ministry of Health has been very much involved in shaping the CARICOM response to the crisis in Haiti. Not only at the recently held COHSOD meeting in Port-of-Spain did we deliberate over the response in Haiti and actually formalised it but also each day there are constant discussions between CEDEMA, which has been given the mandate to lead the response of the nation, the CARICOM Health Desk in Guyana, and all the Chief Medical Officers of Health, or their counterparts throughout the Region.

Sir, Barbados has certainly been very much involved in all these discussions, often time giving leadership and direction to them, based on our own experience in such.

Mr. Chairman, on February 18, seven medical personnel left Barbados to join the CARICOM Health Response Team. Sir, prior to that the Government of Jamaica shouldered most of the responsibility for CARICOM Health Response, but come mid-February, they were assisted by the team from Barbados and I believe three other CARICOM islands that assisted there.

Those individuals who attended the first round of activities in Haiti through the CARICOM Health Response included an anaesthetist, two public health doctors from the Ministry of Health, one doctor specialising in emergency medicine, one nurse specialising in orthopedic work, a public health nurse and an environmental health officer.

Mr. Chairman, oftentimes people see up front doctors reposing to the crisis in terms of performing surgery and other medical interventions, but Haiti has always been plagued with environmental health challenges.

We in Barbados are very fortunate to have a cadre of well-trained environmental health officers, some of whom have come up with some very novel ways of treating issues involving sewerage and other public health environmental challenges. We believe, certainly, in the Ministry of Health that kind of expertise should be placed at the disposal of CARICOM to assist our brothers and sisters in Haiti. Therefore, at least one environmental health officer has already visited and done some work in Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, last week, February 26, a further three Barbadian healthcare workers left to assist in Haiti. One general surgeon, another doctor specialising in emergency medicine and a public health nurse. They are all

due back home shortly and then we rotate people accordingly.

Mr. Chairman, let me say that from the Regional perspectives, that Barbadian physicians and healthcare workers, coupled with their colleagues from other islands, are averaging between 350 patients to 450 patients per day, as part of the Community Outreach Programme in Haiti. They are providing minor procedures such as dressing changes, suturing et cetera, and also more complex medical interventions.

Mr. Chairman, there is one hospital - the Bernard Hughes Hospital, which is a non-governmental hospital with basic facilities, that is located, I am told, about 10 minutes from the main airport in Haiti where the CARICOM medical teams have been doing some surgeries, maintaining aftercare of patients in the facility and assisting in the outpatients' department there.

Sir, that institution is challenged, but certainly, CARICOM health workers have been able, under very trying circumstances, to treat thousands of Haitians in their own hometown.

Sir, apart from that, we have assisted in the provision of food for the poor.

Mr. Chairman, Barbados and the wider CARICOM Region has stepped up to the plate.

Mr. Chairman, our discussion here today has been focussed primarily on the Supplementary which seeks to provide US\$1 million to our brothers and sisters in Haiti.

Sir, let me say, Barbados' contribution cannot easily be quantified. I do not want people to believe that all we are doing is providing US\$1 million to the people of Haiti. Sir, through our efforts in the Regional Security System which is, in most part, financed by the Government and taxpayers of Barbados, there have been interventions.

Mr. Chairman, we have certainly seen the use of the aircraft for the Regional Security System activity over in Haiti. We have also, through the Barbados Defence Force, assisted therein as well. Certainly, the continuing health interventions from the Ministry of Health and the private sector continues to provide yeoman service, which cannot be easily quantified in dollars and cents. Sir, at the end of the day, Barbados' contribution to the crisis in Haiti is immeasurable.

Mr. Chairman, beyond that, we also realised, when we met in Trinidad recently, that the CARICOM response needed to be more focused and directed. Sir, coming out of that meeting, a Barbadian physician was retained to lead

the health response to Haiti and has been performing admirably today, as far as I have been advised.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that in the next few weeks, we will be moving towards another phase in our assistance to the situation in Haiti, by seeking to embark upon a more long-term sustainable intervention, principally aimed at the primary care setting.

The realisation is that once most of these major medical intervention emergency care situations are over and done with, we have a duty to remain there in Haiti and assist with those who may need issues relating to immunisation, curative care and the rehabilitative care that is needed.

Sir, there is a whole wide range of medical services that have to be continued. Sir, given the fact that Haiti's health care was not the best as it was at the beginning, we certainly recognise that Barbados and the other Caribbean islands can do much more in terms of providing a more long-term sustainable medical intervention there and, therefore, we are looking at the primary care setting.

Mr. Chairman, let me caution that this is also a very costly undertaking, and not all of the Region's public health sector has the excess manpower that can adequately service any long-term activity in Haiti. Certainly, in Barbados, given the challenges we have in our own system, there is some limitation in what we can do, but I believe that all and sundry must admit that we have done reasonably well, given our own constraints in assisting those in Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, there is the cost of financing any long-term arrangements. I am happy to see that most CARICOM countries have actually stepped up to the plate and provided some cash to assist with the intervention there.

We have also got some financial assistance from the Governments of Australia and Japan, and they too must be congratulated and commended for channelling some of their resources through CARICOM and CEDEMA to assist in the short-term, medium-term and long-term interventions there in Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, all of this ought to serve as a reminder to all of us in Barbados that we too, are at risk. I do not need to repeat what has been said before by the Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, the Leader of the Opposition. I think we can all concur in this Chamber and elsewhere, that Barbados must not be complacent.

Yes, we may not have been struck by a major disaster but, certainly, there is no room for complacency and we have to continue to be vigilant. Sir, that is why it is very important that each individual takes some measure of responsibility for their own level of disaster preparedness, whether in terms of your own water storage facility, backup power, food stuff or whatever. I do not think we need to wait until the hurricane season.

Mr. Chairman, there is this mind set in Barbados somewhat that disaster preparedness only kicks in when it is the hurricane season. Sir, as has been shown recently in Haiti and in Chile - there has been a near miss here in Barbados a few years ago - earthquakes do occur and nobody knows the hour.

Sir, flooding will occur from time to time and there are many other disasters that would occur from time to time that no one is able to predict. Certainly, it is extremely important that each and every one of us in our own personal and physical domain, continue to maintain a level of preparedness in the event of any natural disaster.

H/A58/11.40 a.m. Sequence 10

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Certainly at the community level, the District Emergency Organisations have been doing quite a wonderful job. Not all of them are functioning at the preferred level. I certainly have attended the CERO Meeting in St. James, in my Constituency, and I must commend the officers in that DEO for the proactive approach they have taken to disaster management and mitigating against disaster, the negative effects of disasters in my Constituency.

Sir, of course, certainly, I have already discussed this with the Minister of the Environment, Water Resources and Drainage, the need to ensure that the water courses that traverse my Constituency are kept as tidy as possible to avoid any major flooding in that area.

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

Hon. D. O'N. INNISS: Thank you.

Sir, beyond that, there are many other things we have to do in terms of disaster preparedness. From the health sector we have taken a position that all of our health facilities must be assessable and functioning as best as possible in the event of any natural disaster. Therefore, the Ministry of Health in the last two years ensured that the Polyclinics, for example, have standby generators, that the water storage facilities there are augmented and secured,

and there is adequate provision of medical supplies in the event of a disaster.

The Ministry of Health is also periodically reviewing the National Disaster Preparedness Plan, and from time to time, you see what are called "Mock Exercises." These exercises are very necessary if we are to ensure that our personnel continue to stay on the edge, and to be continuously prepared in the event of any disaster. Of course, we are looking at improving and expanding our emergency care training programmes.

The Ministry of Health would like to have emergency care training taken to the communities. Gone must be the days when these things must only be institutionalised. There is no reason why in each village of Barbados there cannot be someone trained in advanced life support programmes. Therefore, the Ministry of Health is intent on taking such aspects of our health care into the communities, so that in the event of a disaster, or just an emergency that may occur from time to time, there is a group of people, or someone you can call on. Sir, we want to apply this through the Constituency Council, through the various youth groups and community groups that are already in place. Sir, I believe that this is one way in which Barbados can seriously mitigate against any disaster that may affect us.

We are cognizant of the fact that everybody cannot get to an institution in the event of a disaster. Therefore, the intent of making health care much more community-oriented than it ever has been in Barbados.

Sir, with those few words I fully support this request for a Supplemental. Once again, I commend the health care personnel in Barbados for their assistance to our brothers and sisters in Haiti to date.

Thank you.

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

Hon. R. D. JONES: Sir, as I rise to support this Supplementary to provide assistance to the Government and people of Haiti, I am moved to recognise the support of the people of Barbados, the Government and the work of individual who have been asked by the Government to coordinate the national effort, the lady who sits in the Other Place, and is part of the Government.

This gesture on the part of the people of Barbados, essentially these resources, come from the people, is a recognition that we are, in fact, our brothers' keeper and we are reaching out to a nation who has inspired so many other revolutionary people over the centuries, because of their valiant efforts in overthrowing a slave-owning dictatorship,

which was essentially placed on the backs of African people living in Haiti.

Of course, this was not the first time one saw the destruction of a people. If Honourable Members remember a bit of their Caribbean history, one would remember the exploits of Christopher Columbus, Christopher Colone as he was called, coming to what they referred to as the new world and exploiting the indigenous people of the new world in their greedy demand for what they called “gold and God”, and it was not the other way around, which was the so-called Christianising influence, and then the greedy grab for gold. It was really gold and God. God was placed second, while gold predominated, and the Tanos people of Hispaniola, the country which is shared now by Haiti, which we refer to as Sandama and the Dominican Republic, so you had on one side so-called French-speaking people, and on the other side, Spanish-speaking people.

Sir, the history between the two countries has never always been the most pleasant. I think one must understand and underscore this as well. On one side you would have Latin-type people and on the Other Side you have by and large people of strong African origin.

Sir, the destruction of the Tanos people, people who numbered on that island somewhere between 300 000 and 400 000 indigenous people, people who they came and found on the island of Hispaniola. In fact, today one cannot find any traces outside of the archeological remnants of that civilisation going back to about 1493/1494 and the complete massacre and the exposure to European diseases and the use of the sword and animals to destroy that civilisation. The implanting of a plantation society within this part of our world, but in Hispaniola, they started a massive enslavement movement where tens of thousands, once proud people, were shipped across the Middle Passage to find a place in Hispaniola in Haiti.

Sir, it was at a time also that this total exploitation of labour to fuel the coffers of Europe, France and Spain was more interested in the exploitation of gold, and Britain, the United Kingdom.

Barbados is an example of agricultural pursuits. After the French was interested in the agricultural pursuits, the planting of sugar cane and the use of mass labour, and the treatment of African people within the Caribbean space for that particular labour, actually embedded within the sub-culture, within the minds and within the souls of many people of African origin, a fear of brutality. Sir, we cannot yet begin to imagine the extent to which the subjugation of a people had taken place through the use of the harshest forms of brutality known to man.

Sir, one has to reach forward from that period into the 20th Century and the horrors of Naziism to start to make a comparison. We pretend that we should not speak to the horrors visited on a people during those 300 or 400 years, but we can speak of the 20th Century horrors on a people through the journey of a second World War.

Sir, what is happening to Haiti today, and I am not talking about an earthquake, I am not talking about a tsunami. I am not talking about a hurricane, I am not talking about things like that, because these things will happen. It has to happen.

Sir, Barbados experienced a hurricane in 1955, Janet.

HA58 11.50 a.m. Sequence 11

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

House A58, Sequence 12, 11.50 a.m.

Hon. R. D. JONES: In 2005, we had another devastating hurricane in Grenada. We have also had a hurricane in Cuba, Jamaica and certain parts of the United States of America, New Orleans that is part of the Louisiana landscape comes to mind, so these things will happen, but there are greater tragedies beyond the tragedies of natural phenomena of earthquakes, tsunami, hurricanes and floods.

Man has lived through time with these disasters and out of the loss of life and the destruction of buildings and roads and that infrastructure, man has always sought to reconstruct his life, as the Haitians, with the aid of CARICOM and the help of other societies, will reconstruct its society.

We cannot view our efforts as now and not later. Haiti is part of the brotherhood and sisterhood of CARICOM, and earlier I was saying to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South that there was a time when even people within the Caribbean were extremely scared of Haitians. The mere mention, without understanding of whom they consider to be part of their religious cultural landscape viewed on, put so much fear in the bosom and the hearts, even of African people bred with the superstitions of the Europeans, fear right through the entire Caribbean Region. So much so that even as we in this part of the world, as part of our religious and cultural landscape had the God Obe, people did not understand who Obe was, bastardised into obeah to create again, fear in the bosom of African people in the so-called new world, without understanding that Obe was the God of Water.

Therefore, you are transplanting a people, who I know visited Central America and parts of North America before, but essentially the majority of Africans had not

crossed the Atlantic, by utilising the God that would give them strength, Obe, they brought their God with them. Again, facing religious pressures, pressures of domination, forced and encouraged to bastardise the same God that was to bring them safely across the middle passage.

Sir, even within our space, a pervasive fear emerged of the God that brought our ancestors safely across the waters.

I want people to understand the significance of these types of things and go through that mental reformation that is needed within our society, that we must not wholeheartedly embrace all that is told to us, within the context of a European construct. I know we have had collisions of culture, the European culture and African culture and Hispaniola, particularly Haiti, have had a terrible collision with the European and African culture in Santa Mang, Haiti, as it is called today.

It is a country and a people that have been so dastardly penalised by conquering powers, Caucasians - do not let us mince around these matters - who, at the height of Napoleon Bonaparte's power of beating everybody across Europe, Haiti was subjugated by the Generals of African origin, Toussaint L'oeuvre, a famous General, because again they want us not to understand that Africa had its Generals, not within the same naming structure, but great men who fought wars, who planned strategies, who understood what it was to fight, because the fight just did not emerge like that. They were planning strategy over time, utilising both historical knowledge and traditions passed down, because they would have passed down through time.

In 1791, slaves would have been in Hispaniola for about a century or two, so it just did not emerge there, but they were people who had to break the bonds of enslavement, who had to break the shackles of exploitation, who had to break the shackles of bondage and the desecration of the soul of Africa, within Santa Mang, Haiti. When those shackles were broken, the fear that permeated the Caucasians in Europe and North America was tremendous, therefore, they had to find a method of subjugation.

Again, what did you do? You used the economic might, the threat of military power of a group that coalesce, to humble the African people within the Caribbean. Therefore, you said to them, you have to pay and when you put on a struggling and emerging nation at that time, I think it was Frs.160 million to pay for plantation owners and slave owners, owning black people, and it took them more than 100 years to pay that bill, from 1805.

Do you know what is 100 years of trying to pay Frs.160 million? There was no love for the Haitians. I want

us to understand that, therefore, our expression of giving a mere \$1 million, one understands that, but I hope that we can come back another time to this Parliament as Haitians and other people with benevolent nature seek to bring that country out of its poverty stricken desperate status, into the light to sit among men in the Halls of Justice, in the Halls of Decency, in the Halls of Human Rights.

They will understand that, yes, the forces of nature intervened and wiped out so far, almost the population of Barbados. That is what we are talking about. If it was something that hit Barbados and took out 300 000 people, it would have been the entire population of Barbados, a debt, Sir, of some \$18 billion.

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Sir, do not mind the pittance called, "Aid" that they have been giving now and then, and withdrawing when they feel that they should punish even now the Leaders of Haiti, but that there will be a concerted effort by international agencies and major powers in the world, not to show their supremacy, or their good nature, because that nature changes based on transient behaviour, but that they would make the investment because of a historical and vicious exploitation of Haiti.

Sir, the \$18 billion should start the foundation for the reconstruction of Haiti. This is what it should be doing, starting the infrastructural reconstruction of Haiti, restarting the education of Haiti, restarting the Health Services of Haiti. There is where we have to go.

Sir, under the leadership of President Obama, one saw a movement not necessarily based on the exploitation again, and the implanting of the feet of the United States of America within Haiti, because that must never happen again.

House A58, Sequence 12, 12:00 noon

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. R. D. JONES: Haiti was annexed by the United States of America just to ensure that their economy might continue to grow, and that the people would remain subjugated, exploited and paid mere shillings for their labour. Sir, a world of the 21st Century cannot continue to endure those kinds of behaviours, and therefore, we call for an enlightened thinking for the people of Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, I saw a photograph of a youngster who could be no more than five years old - hard hat thankfully - and his father, dragging two pieces of wood, and the picture that came to me said they would not allow themselves to be buried under the falling debris of collapsed buildings. To me, that was hope, the phoenix

rising from the ashes to make sure that a proud people, a Haitian people, a people who led the way in the first black successful revolution, are given a chance to survive.

Mr. Chairman, the fear that we have of some of them coming to our space... I met some Haitians, some males and some females. They are lovely people, a people with an artistic ability, as previously mentioned, that captures the soul, the body and the bosom of their place in Haiti, but most of it is sold cheaply across the world because people go in and buy it for what we call in Barbados "next-kin to nothing". Sorry to use that phrase, Sir, but it is understood. It is Barbadian.

Sir, that must cease now. If one would call it the spirit of nature that has intervened, for man to take a more purposeful approach to bringing Haiti, one of the poorest nations in the world... If it takes another decade, or two decades - it might take two decades - we should never again see that kind of vicious denial of the rights of people. Sir, when they get on their boats to avoid the viciousness, which is in Haiti itself....

Asides.

Hon. R. D. JONES: There is some viciousness in Haiti. I do not want to put it all on people. There is a political and economic elite who are aided and abetted by criminal actions, migrating out of the United States of America into Haiti to maintain their supremacy, because they can look down from the hills and see the squalor, and pray that the squalor never reaches them, rather than look down from the hills and say I will liberate you too with whatever resources I have, and whatever political power that I have, to make your lives better, because at the end of the day, what is the purpose of man?

We are born on a journey, Mr. Chairman, which hopefully would take us to the light when we cast off this mortal flesh and see the light, where the spirit truly exists, but that is another discussion for another time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member needs to wind up.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I was hoping that we could have a long debate. I love poetry as you know, Sir, so I want to close on a sonnet by William Wordsworth to Toussaint L'Ouverture. Those who went to school and enjoyed poetry would share this.

"Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men! Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough Within thy hearing, or thy head be now Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den;---O miserable Chieftain! where and when Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do thou Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow: Though fallen thyself, never to rise

again, Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind Powers that will work for thee; air, earth, and skies; There's not a breathing of the common wind That will forget thee; thou hast great allies; Thy friends are exultations, agonies, And love, and man's unconquerable mind."

Mr. Chairman, let us add to that, if I could bastardise the great work of William Wordsworth: Friends in spaces such as Barbados, souls that would rise again from the ashes of the destruction of that earthquake of 7.6 magnitude, we salute thee because of the efforts of the people and the efforts of those who care.

Mr. Chairman, I support this Resolution.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this matter before this Committee and to say that I am very proud that we as a people, have stepped up to the plate to assist our brothers and sisters in our CARICOM neighbouring country of Haiti. They are our brothers and sisters, and I support those Honourable Members who indicated this in their presentations.

I would also wish to say that I note that many of the persons injured in that earthquake in Haiti, have had to have limbs amputated as they suffered bone fractures and other damage to their bodies, due to the weight of debris from falling buildings and other structures, and the lack of basic modern medical attention to reduce the likelihood of what I think they called "sepsis infection", spreading in their bodies resulting in amputations, which I understand had to be emergency amputations, using sometimes no anaesthesia, or other modern medical devices, procedures and medication.

Mr. Chairman, we have the problem now with many young people having the unfortunate reality of having lost a foot, or two, or a hand. Sir, with the current medical assistance from the international community, they can still survive, but they would need prostheses, that is, artificial limbs. As I understand it, the only manufacturing plant which manufactures these artificial limbs in Haiti was completely destroyed by the earthquake.

I know that for many years we had a consultant out of Canada who would come to Barbados yearly, to examine Barbadian patients needing artificial limbs, and at a very reduced cost and he was able to provide these services to these persons.

Sir, I look forward to the international community stepping up to the plate to provide this expertise to assist these people in Haiti who would now have to adjust to a life without all of their limbs. As I understand it, they are

not many elevators currently in Haiti, so as we seek to reconstruct the devastated areas in the capital Port-au-France, the engineers and the planners would have to factor in this, so that the new structures would be friendly to the disabled in terms of having ramps and so on.

Mr. Chairman, as other Honourable Members who have spoken have indicated, we should learn from this experience in Haiti, so that we in Barbados can be proactive. Prevention is better than cure, so that we can do all in our power to reduce the negative impact of any such calamity that, God forbids, may occur here on our shores.

House A58 Sequence 13

12.10 p.m.

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Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, I remember a few years ago when we had the earthquake, I was walking down Tudor Street and fortunately, I did not feel anything. I do not know what is the medical explanation for this, perhaps it is the difference between those persons who get sea-sick and those who get motion sickness while in the air and those who do not, but I really did not feel anything. I remember walking down Tudor Street that afternoon, having just come from a funeral. Sir, I remember seeing people scampering.

Sir, motorists stopped me. I was in the Opposition then but people were looking for leadership, their cellars were not working, they were in total confusion, and they were looking to the leaders in society to guide them.

I remember going over to St. Mary's School where the children were in tears. It was a very horrifying experience. Sir, that day the first thing came to mind was a tsunami and that much of Bridgetown is low-lying. That made me realise that we in this country should seriously look at what the experts call vertical evacuation, to which the term suggests.

Sir, in case of a tsunami, you have to seek higher ground, sometimes they tell you to abandon your vehicle, or to walk fast, or run fast in certain direction to reach higher ground.

Sir, a few hours after the earthquake in Haiti, there was panic, people dropped their few possessions which they were able to salvage and panicked because there was rumour of a tsunami on its way. People had the fear of the Lord in them as they sought to get to higher ground.

Mr. Chairman, in seeking to get to higher ground, people can also be trampled. We saw in Bridgetown where people were running out of stores, in a situation where the

Director of Emergency Services even suffered an injury as a result of that mayhem. Therefore, there must be organised evacuation.

Mr. Chairman, I have seen footage in the international media from that devastating tsunami that killed hundreds of thousands of people. An amateur footage was taken by some of the survivors who were able to go up to the higher floors of hotels, as the ground floors were inundated with rising water. People had to cling on to trees and balconies of buildings, in order to save their lives, while others in lower elevations were swept from the streets into the sea where they perished. Therefore, the issue of vertical evacuation is crucial. You are more likely to go up to the second floor of a building, than to run two miles to higher elevation inland.

Mr. Chairman, let us remember we had a recent calamity a few years ago in the Cayman Islands, which is flat, where water came in from the sea from both directions, and that most of the land was inundated with water, but again, people were able to save their lives by going to the top floors of buildings.

Mr. Chairman, I remember visiting Guyana a few years ago and you will see that Guyana is mostly flat along the coast. They have to have a sea wall as they call it, to keep the sea from coming into the land. Therefore, they traditionally have built houses, even wooden houses on stilts, that is, the ground floor is open and the actual rooms where people reside are elevated, so that if there is any flooding, their lives would be saved.

Mr. Chairman, just last Sunday, as was reported in the Press, Members of the Cabinet were taken on a tour of Bridgetown and the Historic Garrison, to sensitise us in terms of the issues concerning our bid to make Bridgetown and the Historic Garrison a world heritage site. We noticed the historians would have pointed out the traditional historic buildings, be they on Baxters Road, or Bay Street, where on the ground floor were businesses, while the owners of these businesses lived on the top floor. Again, there is this possibility of vertical evacuation.

Mr. Chairman, I know that details increase expenditure on the part of persons who may be constructing their homes so, in my view, persons have an option to ensure that the foundation is sufficiently strong, that there is the possibility of either building stilts, or heavy concrete columns, with rooms upstairs. As more funds are garnered, you are then able to fill in the bottom floor for further accommodation, or in the first instance, keep the ground floor to increase the possibility for parking, especially in densely populated areas such as Bridgetown, where land space is limited and oftentimes there is no place for parking.

Secondly, people can build the ground floor on sufficiently solid foundation, so that as funds become available later on, they can accommodate a second floor on top of that first floor, but if the foundation is not initially constructed in such a secure manner, then this is not possible.

Mr. Chairman, I have heard engineers in Barbados, over the years, lamenting that not enough Barbadians are consulting the services of civil engineers in terms of advising them, in terms of ensuring that their houses are built to withstand earthquakes. As I understand it, it is only the modern buildings with this solid engineering foundation that can be considered earthquake-proof.

Sir, we must advise, in my view, perspective homeowners not to be penny-wise and pound-foolish, but to make the sacrifice. We would advise them to plan ahead and ensure that they have a home that is safe, as far as humanely possible, to mitigate against any destruction caused by hurricane, flood, tsunami, or fire.

Mr. Chairman, these are issues I believe that we as a people must learn from the devastation that has occurred around us. We have been spared, in recent years, but notwithstanding the belief that God is a Bajan, God Almighty has blessed us, but we should not take that as an excuse to be complacent and careless, but that we should really seek to be prepared and to be proactive.

Mr. Chairman, I support the call of the Honourable Member for St. James South and others for the District Emergency Organisations to be mobilised and organised. We have noticed, in recent years, that the interest has waned in this regard. A few weeks after the General Election, I remember attending a meeting of the St. Michael District Emergency Organisation, but a number of them were not functioning.

Sir, as I said, much of St. Michael is low-lying and, therefore, we must have a very vibrant District Emergency Organisation, that can kick into gear as soon as any disaster that may be pending or has occurred. As I said, my experience when that earthquake hit us, is that people need leadership, otherwise there can be chaos and that can cause further injury, or loss of life.

Mr. Chairman, I have taught at a number of schools, at least eight, and I know that as part of their modus operandi, some schools have had emergency drills, but that sometimes a year may go by, new staff may come in, new students may come in and the systems for emergency response are not necessarily well-known. Sir, I would take this opportunity to remind the schools leadership, both Government and private that...

Mr. Chairman, in Haiti, many schools were completely destroyed, teachers and students died. Therefore, any compounds that house large numbers of persons, both the private sector and public sector, hospitals, bus terminals, department stores, business places, even Churches where many persons gather, we must have fire drills where people can be evacuated en masse in a very organised, but swift manner, to reduce the loss of lives and limbs.

12.20 p.m.

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Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Sir, prevention is better than cure and we should not take these things for granted.

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

Hon. P.M.T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, in closing, I would also wish to reiterate the need for us to look at water harvesting because, again, when there is a disaster, there may be a number of days, or weeks before people are able to access the potable water available through the pipe system provided by the Barbados Water Authority.

Sir, electricity may be off, so the pump may not be able to work, and you may have to boil water and so on. For example, if there is an earthquake, you will get ruptures in the main and so on, so individuals need to play our particular roles in terms of having the necessary provisions and, water is one vital product.

Mr. Chairman, you can survive for longer without food, but you need water in order to survive for more than a few days. Sir, individual households harvesting the rain water runoff from their roofs, even if they are not using it for flushing toilets, if they have tanks and systems in place that can harvest water, especially in this kind of drought, then they have that water for emergency purposes, if needs be and, of course, it would help to improve the accessibility of potable water to the general public.

Mr. Chairman, with those few words, I support this Bill.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, as I enter this debate, I want to say from the outset that it is regrettable that it has to take something like this for the world to recognise the problems within Haiti.

One year ago, when I visited Haiti, I recognised that Haiti was a country that still has a lot of talent, yet still,

people could only recognise the negative aspects of the country and were not prepared to put their money where their mouths were.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that there is no doubt that from an environmental point-of-view, that Haiti had a serious problem prior to the earthquake, and one could only understand what it would be now after the earthquake.

Sir, the people of Haiti used nearly every tree to create firewood, and when you pass you can see the wash from the sea and you can see whenever there was a heavy rainfall in the hills where the soil was taken away.

Mr. Chairman, I remember having a discussion with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs about how we could help Haiti, and the fact that solar energy, in terms of solar stoves, would have been the best way to deal with the problem, considering that they were using firewood as energy, and that we had to find a cheap source and a cheap method in moving them away from the habits they had created.

Mr. Chairman, it is difficult to tell a man not to do something, but if that man does not have an alternative choice, then that man will continue to do it even though he knows the negative effects that would occur. Sir, I am hoping that coming out of this, we would be able to source a cheap source of energy, so that they would not have to cut down trees in order to get firewood, et cetera, Sir, that we would find a way that we could seriously tackle the environmental problems that have been created and a serious tree-planting programme be put in place to help those persons in Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, I heard one of my comrades making the comment that Haiti has been a place that has been robbed, and how people have been able to go to Haiti and buy their work at prices that were very reasonable. Sir, I want to concur with that, but I also would remind my comrade that it is not the buyer, that it is the seller, that a man can only purchase something that has been offered and that has been accepted.

Sir, if that is so, I want to plead guilty up-front, because when I went to Haiti, I recognised they had some beautiful art and, Sir, I purchased some and I bought it at the price that was offered to me. Sir, I have no apology to make for that because I have a very fine eye when it comes to good furniture and good art.

Sir, as I travel and traverse, I always look for art and things like that. Sir, when I did that, I thought I was helping to put some foreign exchange in Haiti. I did not realise I was depriving the people of Haiti of a living. Sir, it might be better, if I go back, sooner rather than later, and buy some more art because the truth is, they need our support.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that those who keep their money close to their pockets would not use that excuse not to support the Haitians.

Mr. Chairman, there is no doubt that when you pass through the City one recognises that Haiti, a country that should be 40 years advanced, is probably 100 years behind.

Sir, even though some people might knock the mode of transportation, there is a community and type of cultural atmosphere to the type of transportation that I could appreciate.

Sir, a lot of people believe that because you are driving a Mercedes, or something like that, that you are advanced. Sir, one has to recognise that the mode of transportation in a country like Haiti is more developmental for that country than the behavioural pattern of a place like Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, for example, we have over 100 000 motor vehicles, which is a serious transportation problem. Sir, have we ever stopped to think of the cost of running those vehicles and foreign exchange drain that those vehicles cost us? Sir, my brothers and sisters in here got on what we used to call pick-up vans in the old days. Sir, if you see it, I am not talking about one, or two pick-up vans in Haiti. If you look at the cost saving...

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I am not saying we should go back to those old days. I am saying that there is economic sense to that type of behaviour. The mere fact that Haiti has pick-up vans, does not mean that there are not alternative sources of transportation. I would like to believe they are doing that because they understand that proper transportation should be used and that you should not dump a proper transportation system to pick-up a luxury car.

Mr. Chairman, when one looks at the history, sometimes one has to ask, why that side of Hispaniola? Sir, it is as if you have a quarter, one side of the quarter is good, and the other side of the quarter is bad. Sir, that is the impression that has been created but, Sir, I beg to differ.

Sir, it seems that because one side had a very strong history and one side had nearly the same history, that the Americans had, because when you look at what occurred in America and what occurred in Haiti, you saw two countries who were prepared to fight and to get what they wanted in terms of Independence. Sir, the only thing is that one had to pay for their Independence and the other did not. Sir, this is something we have to question.

Mr. Chairman, here in Barbados we understand quite well that many countries, when they got Independence, some of them were given money, but in Barbados, and especially a country like Trinidad, what was the history? Sir, Haiti had to take their Independence and were not given back their reward as they should have been given.

H/A58/12.30 p.m. Sequence 15

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His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Trinidad for many years had to negotiate and even had to refuse the total given to them by the previous owners.

I am saying that when you look at the history of Barbados, Trinidad and Haiti, one has to recognise that those other two countries could have been in the same position, if they did not use the ability left to them by their fore parents.

I am saying that Haiti now has a good foundation to build on. They now have the respect of the world, not their sympathy because the world neglected Haiti. Haiti has always been the neighbour of the United States and, for some reason, we in the Caribbean must ask how come Haiti is a neighbour of the United States, but yet it is willing and keen to join CARICOM in a bigger way. The same thing for Belize. I guess some people will tell me the same thing for Jamaica, because of their location.

Sir, one would have thought that because of their location, the relationship with North America would be much greater than with that of CARICOM. It shows that we in CARICOM have something worthy, and sometimes we have to respect what we have and work on it. That is why I have always felt that, when I heard people criticising the immigration policy of Barbados I was quick to say that if we are serious about criticising the present Democratic Labour Party's about its immigration policy, well, let us do the natural thing. Let us allow Haitians to come too, not only in Barbados, but right across CARICOM.

Sir, whenever you mention that to anybody, the buck stops. It is alright to talk about being part of CARICOM, but as soon as you mention the free movement of people, as it relates to Haiti, everybody wants to ignore what was said previously.

Sir, that is why I keep saying that the problem within the CARICOM Region has nothing to do with the free movement of people. It is related to the free movement of capital. We have to recognise that Haiti has an advantage. We have to move capital for that advantage and develop that advantage on behalf of CARICOM.

Sir, I have said for many years while in Opposition, that we need to harness of places like Guyana. We do not need Guyanese to move to Barbados, away from resources, we need to take money to the resources to keep Guyanese at home to develop CARICOM, but instead of doing that, we have allowed outsiders to come in and rape CARICOM. They raped Haiti and they are about to do the same thing to Guyana.

What is interesting, instead of people who should know better attracting the investments to keep people at home, they are allowing the people to go out and allowing others to come in and reap the sweets. I am saying that it is utter foolishness.

We have to recognise that if we are to develop CARICOM, we have to develop CARICOM for everybody within the Region. These bilaterals and so, we have to understand that we have gone past the stage of bilaterals within CARICOM. It cannot be Barbados and Trinidad. It has to be a Caribbean Single Market and Economy approach and this belief in this day and age that we must have a right to go into another man's territory and ignore the security threats to it. It cannot be possible. That is why we need to have one common policy within CARICOM, so we can tell persons when they leave our shores to go somewhere else, there must be some process to follow.

Sir, you have neighbours and visitors, but when you put up your guard wall, you are saying to persons that what is within my guard wall belongs to me and my family, and if they need to get through that gate they must consult me before they open my gate to enter, but they are free to walk around the boundaries of my land. I have no objection. That is the same thing for countries.

Sir, I am hoping we will recognise now, that we have a problem with Haiti. It could be Barbados, Jamaica, or Trinidad tomorrow. It could be anybody. One thing we must do, we must put a process in place, at the CARICOM level, to ensure that we know how to deal with it and we should not have to panic.

I am happy to see the approach of the CARICOM Leaders, dealing with the people and not the system. As we know, if we had to deal with the system, there is a possibility that the people will not have dealt with.

We have to recognise that the time is getting late and I am close to the end of my 15 minutes. I appreciate you not pulling the mic.

Sir, we have to understand that we must look after each other, but we also have a commitment to our own countries. We cannot expect to run away from our country, run away from resources while paying no attention to the development of our country. We must appreciate what we

have and we must also appreciate that when we are invited we accept the invitation, but when we are not invited, please stay away.

I thank you very much, Sir.

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

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 sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 1.45 p.m this afternoon.

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

The question that the Sitting be now suspended until 1.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.

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House A58, Sequence 18, 1.50 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$21 604 659 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.11, which form the Schedule to the Resolution and that the Explanatory Notes to Head 62 be amended as set out in Schedule 2 of the Resolution.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, when the Suspension was taken, the House was in Committee of Supply, to that we will now return.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(resumed)

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I would want to join this debate and to support the Government's effort in providing US\$1 million for the Relief Fund for the people of Haiti. Although it is two months since that date, I believe it is welcome news, and we in Barbados must congratulate the Government for this effort. We understand the problems that most developing countries are facing and to find US\$1 million at this time is a hard task, but we support the effort.

Mr. Chairman, there are many natural disasters facing our Region, storms, floods, lightening, earthquakes. In Barbados over the past year, or so, we have had a number of fires in our midst and we would want to congratulate the fire officers and those persons who have tried their utmost to rid our country of this disaster. Apparently, no one knew who started these fires and where they were coming from. In fact, many persons suggested that they may have come out of some of the manmade stuff that has been thrown into the garbage, or into the fields.

Sir, it is important that we were able to do a number of things to prevent the spread of fires across our landscape. Therefore, we understand full well from This Side, the natural disasters that come from time to time in the Caribbean and indeed, across the world, because the world today is so close to us, because we see it on the television, CNN, and the various networks across the world. Therefore we can appreciate what a number of persons are going through, for example, landslides in India, Pakistan and the Philippines.

Mr. Chairman, from time to time, hundreds of persons lose their lives because of these natural disasters. We believe from This Side, that it is always good for us to help our neighbours and help other people in the world to overcome some of these difficulties that they face from time to time.

Haiti, Mr. Chairman, I would think is a very unfortunate country. Historically, Haiti is one of those countries that was divided under the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1492, between France and Spain. In that Treaty of Tordesillas in 1492, Mr. Chairman, the world was divided between the Europeans, France and Spain. Those were the bigger countries at the time and one saw that the country Santa Mang was divided between the French and the Spanish, so that one side went to the Spanish, the Dominican Republic and the part Santa Mang went to the French.

Sir, one wonders why it was that Haiti as we know it, always had this rough time. It was said that the French treated their slaves the worse, as a colonial power, than England, or Spain and one saw that when the Revolution of France broke out in 1791, that it spread to the Colonies, and in quick time, the Haitian Revolution also followed suit, where persons were asking for liberty, where persons were asking for representation, so that the country Haiti itself was worth more to the French, in terms of dollars and cents than any other colony in the whole Antilles. The country Haiti was very worthwhile and France tried to hold on as long as they possibly could, in order to protect this source of revenue.

Sir, one can say that Europe, especially France, accumulated lots of wealth out of the produce of Haiti, and one can say that even after the Independence of 1804, France still held on to the economic wealth of Haiti. Sir, they were independent only by name, but the people of Haiti were never independent in terms of providing for themselves. It was a country that was depleted by the Europeans, especially France, and the economic wealth of the country was still managed and controlled to a large extent by France.

After 1804, the dictators of Haiti raped the society. One heard about Papa Doc and Baby Doc. These persons were no mean dictators. They were ruthless dictators who were not humane at all, so that the struggle of the Haitian people was in such a way that these persons had no hope at all of moving beyond poverty. Sir, their custom for more than two centuries was to remain as a depleted country and a depleted people with a custom of harsh reality.

Mr. Chairman, by world standards today, Haiti is still the poorest country in the world and the per capita which we know is used to measure the standard of index in the Caribbean and in the world, Haiti is regarded as one of the poorest countries. Yet, it is a pocket of wealth. There are still wealthy persons within their midst but the vast majority of people suffer, Mr. Chairman, because of the long history of dictators raping the society.

House A58, Sequence 18, 2.00 p.m.

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Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, there is a need for all of us in the world to provide money, labour, food and building materials. We salute all those persons who have helped in this rebuilding process.

Mr. Chairman, this rebuilding process will take time, and we are hoping that the countries of the world would pull together to pour more funds into Haiti over the coming months to systematically rebuild Haiti, because it is going to take some time and a lot of effort.

We have seen through the media that most countries of the world are responding, but I believe that the Europeans should make it a serious effort at this time over the next quarter century, to try to rebuild Haiti. It is going to take more than two decades, to move the capital from where it is at this point in time, to rebuild Haiti as a new society.

It is going to take a lot of money to pour into health services. We would hope that the Europeans who have devalued this society, would gather all the resources that they would have taken over the centuries and pour funds into Haiti to rebuild it. There needs to be a shift in terms of a new nest for Haiti, and France must lead this charge.

We in the Caribbean try our best whenever we are called upon, but the islands in the Caribbean are still looked upon, as developing countries. We are developing countries with limited resources, and if we could find US\$1 million, I believe that the Europeans could find many, many, more times this sum.

Mr. Chairman, the Third World countries in the Caribbean did not take any of Haiti's resources. Most of the resources, as I said before, were taken by France and the European powers, so the time has come for these powers now to put more resources into helping to develop, not only Haiti, but all of the countries that are now suffering, because of the lack of proper infrastructure.

Mr. Chairman, we are calling on our Prime Minister, and on the leaders of the Caribbean, that whenever they have an audience, especially in these conferences by the United Nations, to remind the super-powers that it is they who got the largesse out of the Third World countries.

When we look at what has happened to the Caribbean, history has shown that it is these super-powers that have a lot to loose, whether it is in terms of drilling for oil, drilling for gold and coal, or providing the natural resources. These international countries, multinational countries and multinational corporations, have raped the Caribbean and the Third World of all of its resources, and the time has come for them to start putting back something. One million dollars is a lot of money for these countries.

There are some countries in the Caribbean that cannot afford it today because they do not have the revenue to afford it. Many of them would want to give. In fact, many countries will pledge because they have to pledge, but some of them will not be able to find the money. We know the reality is that even though we have pledged US\$1 million today, this million dollars may never get to Haiti within the next two to three months, but it is a pledge. It is a promise and we are hoping that we can honour our pledge in the nearest possible time. We are also hoping that most of the European countries and most of the industrialised

world can pledge, and not only pledge, but make sure that the aid actually gets to these people.

Mr. Chairman, another problem that must be stated is that we want to know how these agencies are actually handling the funds, so that the funds can get to the people that really need them. Who will handle the funds? Who will handle the equipment and the materials? Whenever we see the photographs on the television and whenever we see slides, we are horrified about what is happening in some of these poor countries. Up to recently, the people in Haiti are eating mud cakes, not because there is any historical, or nutritious value in the mud cakes, but because it is what they have to eat to survive.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: We believe that there need to be more foodstuff. We believe that persons from the Region need to invest in agricultural output, so that the country can now grow some of the food that they need. We are hoping that the country can get back on its foot again. We are hoping that this new reality can help the Haitian people to move forward, and we are hoping that by the end of this present century, Haiti will not be the poorest country in the Region, because it has a lot of wealth.

In the beginning of the 17th Century, Haiti was one of the richest countries in the Caribbean. Today, it is the poorest. If Barbados, with a population of over 250 000 persons can submit US\$1 million, we are saying that countries, based on their per capita, should be able to submit many, many more times what we have been able to achieve with our small amount of money.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that we have to appeal to the international community, especially the Europeans, to do more, because it was them who took more from us and from the people of Haiti.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome this opportunity to add my voice in support of this Resolution, by which the Government and people of Barbados undertake to contribute US\$1 million to the Haiti relief effort. To fully grasp the scale of human devastation that befell Haiti on January 12, this year, one only has to imagine a tragedy that wipes out the entire population of Barbados, because that is precisely what happened in Haiti.

House A58 Sequence 19

2.10 p.m.

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Hon. F. J. STUART: Mr. Chairman, in fact, a larger number than is the population of Barbados was wiped out by the earthquake in Haiti, therefore, on January 12, 2010, another sad chapter was written in the troubled history of Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, Haiti was a French colony like Barbados was an English colony. In the same way that Barbados was also regarded as the brightest jewel in the British crown when it came to the production of sugar, Haiti was regarded as the brightest jewel in the French crown when it came to the production of sugar. The French valued Haiti as highly as the English valued Barbados.

When the Emancipation Act was passed in 1833, freeing slaves in all the English-speaking islands in this Region, one of the initiatives the British Government took as part of the post-slavery settlement, was to vote a sum of £20 million for the compensation of English planters in this Region.

Mr. Chairman, the British Parliament voted that and the British taxpayers committed themselves to carrying out that Act of compensation. Sir, it was not so with the French, after the Haitian Revolution that emancipated that country from being a slave society that led to its Independence as well. The colony had to pay France for its freedom. That penalty resulted from the fact that Haiti was highly valued by its former colonial masters. Sir, at the heart of colonialism has always been the subordination of colonial interest and the promotion of metropolitan interest.

Mr. Chairman, that is the best example of how colonialism worked, that a country that fought for and won its Independence had then to turn around and pay the metropolitan, the Mother Country, for that Independence.

Sir, Haitian Independence must not be underestimated. When the War of Independence was fought in Haiti, it was being fought after the American War of Independence between 1776 and 1783.

Sir, even after the Americans became independent as a result of their War of Independence, one-half of the country was still enslaved. The entire southern parts of America were still a slave society. That slave society was not dismantled until a second war had to be fought in the middle of the 19th Century between 1861 and 1865, which is well-known in American history as the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Haiti went the full route and not only got Independence, but also abolished slavery at the same time.

Sir, there is a line of distinction that has to be drawn between what happened in the United States of America between 1776 and 1783 and what happened in Haiti between 1791 and 1804.

Sir, ever since Haitian independence, there have been crude interferences in that country's politics, because whenever leadership emerged in Haiti that looked as though it would have consolidated Haitian Independence, there were interferences both by France and by the United States of America, to ensure that leadership did not survive.

Mr. Chairman, the leaders who survived in Haiti for any length of time were leaders of whom the United States of America approved and of whom France approved.

Mr. Chairman, that is why when people talk about the Duvaliers, I do not join the debate because the Duvaliers had the approval of the relevant European powers and the northern neighbour. Let us get that very clear. If the northern neighbour did not want the Duvaliers to survive, they could not have survived. They survived because they had approval in the right places. Those who did not have approval in the right places did not survive, and of course, we have very recent examples of that.

Mr. Chairman, one of the big ironies of Haitian history is that countries that interfered in Haitian politics, for the wrong reasons ever since 1804, now have to accept the responsibility of rebuilding Haiti.

Sir, as the Honourable Member for St. George North has made clear, much money and much time would have to be spent restoring Haiti to some state of viability. It was scarcely viable before January 12, but now I think that we are talking well upwards of a decade of rehabilitation, if Haiti is to be restored and to be made viable.

Mr. Chairman, we confidently expect that those countries that have been responsible for Haitian instability and for Haitian impoverishment, will now, as it were, step up to the plate and do what is required to be done, to ensure that Haiti is repaired and restored to some state of viability. The Haitian people have had a rough time ever since Independence and it is time that they were allowed some reprieve from the harsh experiences, which have bedevilled their history, ever since 1804.

Mr. Chairman, I am heartened by the spirit of cooperation, and certainly by the spirit of the empathy, which has come from the English-speaking Caribbean ever since January 12.

Only last week in Antigua, at a meeting of the Ministers of National Security and Law Enforcement, a commitment was given by the Ministers of National Security and Law Enforcement to continue military efforts

in Haiti. Sir, our military is in Haiti, not to fight anybody, or not to perform national military service, as the Minister of Health has indicated this morning, we have medical workers there. Our military is in Haiti for the protection of our medical establishment, to ensure that they are protected.

The military Chiefs said in Antigua last week that they are prepared to broaden that remit, but of course they cannot get it until they get the permission of Heads of Government so to do. Therefore, our military involvement in Haiti is limited to the protection of our medical personnel there, who are doing some commendable work in trying to assist with the relief effort in Haiti.

2.20 p.m.

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Hon. F. J. STUART: Sir, the involvement of CARICOM in Haiti, as the Prime Minister said this morning, and as it has been repeated ever since then, is not limited to the US\$1 million which the House is being asked to vote today. We have been involved before today providing assistance in kind, as it were, since we have medical personnel and military personnel on the ground in Haiti, assisting with the relief effort there.

Mr. Chairman, the attention of the world was brought to, and focussed on Haiti as a result of what happened on January 12, 2010. Sir, Haiti needed the attention of the world long before then, but it took a tragedy of the scale of the earthquake of January 12, to focus the attention of the international media on Haiti. Mr. Chairman, it looks as though that country is so unfortunate that it now has to share that attention with another country in the Region. Sir, I speak of the hapless people of Chile who are suffering their own misfortune over the weekend.

Mr. Chairman, over the last few days, international gaze has been shifted away from Haiti and is now focussed on Chile, but the problems of Haiti are very much there, still very stubborn and in need of all the assistance that we, in this Region, can render but, certainly, in need of the resources available to the wealthier countries of the world.

Mr. Chairman, I sincerely hope that while we focus attention on Chile, and while we sympathise and empathise with what has happened in Chile over the weekend, that we do not take our gaze off the people of Haiti, because they have suffered for too long.

Mr. Chairman, Haiti is a member of CARICOM. It is a sister island of Barbados and there is a kind of physic unity between the people of Barbados and the people of Haiti. The area where Haiti is now located was supposed to be the first area that Columbus reached when he came to

the Caribbean, when European historians began to say that Columbus discovered the new world. Thanks to the Guyanese historian Dr. Ivan Van Sertima. He was able by his researches to establish that there were people who came here long before Columbus in his famous book "They Came Before Columbus", is moving testimony and evidence of that fact.

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sir, Haiti started its history in this Region as a front page kind of example, of what European exploration was intended to uncover at the coming of Columbus. Of course, it was Hispaniola then and other historical events, resulted in that area being divided between the French and the Spanish.

Sir, by one of those curious ironies of history, and people still comment on this, the earthquake, as though it had demarcated Haiti for its violence, went to the very border of the Dominican Republic, but did not affect the Dominican Republic. It stored its rage up for Haiti, as if the conscience of the world was supposed to be pricked by that event, so that we could all mobilise what resources we have to reverse the troubled history of that great country.

Mr. Chairman, Haiti has a very talented population. They are very proud and resilient people, and I am very pleased that the Parliament of Barbados today is taking this initiative, to ensure that some relief is brought to the people of Haiti. It will take much more than we are offering today, but this is a start.

Sir, as the Prime Minister said this morning, we are doing this now, but as time passes, we will become better informed on what the people of Haiti really need, and would then be able to quantify those needs and determine how best, we as a country as part of CARICOM, will respond.

Mr. Chairman, I give this Resolution my full support and I think the Government is showing by this initiative, that we are tuned in to the right frequency in terms of Regional events and that we are in synch with the expectations of the people of Barbados, who in their own way, have expressed themselves on this matter in their calls on the radio, in their support of events and so on, to show that when all is said and done, we are all part of this Haiti experience.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

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

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to very briefly add my support to that of my colleagues on Both Sides of the House, who spoke before, in commending this action on the part of the Government of Barbados to support the effort of Haiti and to say that it joins with other efforts, as the Honourable Prime Minister would have said in his opening, by a cross section of the Barbadian society who would have, at the earliest call, responded to the needs of the people of Haiti who faced the very catastrophic event only a few weeks ago.

Mr. Chairman, it demonstrates the level of caring of Barbadians, not just for themselves, but certainly, for their fellow Caribbean citizens.

Sir, many times we get a bad knocking in some quarters in the Region. This is not a mystery, or this is not unknown because people believe that Barbadians are aloof, that we are uncaring and that our success is to be grabbed and held only for ourselves, but the fact that a Barbadian Government and a Barbadian Parliament, on both sides of the House, can come together to join with Barbadians, in their private capacities, to support this effort to help stabilise and then, eventually, to rebuild Haiti is a mark of our maturity, our openness, and our deep commitment to Regionalism and Regional integration, as one of the original architects of the modern-day integration movement in the Region.

Mr. Chairman, I want to speak on two points. Sir, one from my experience, having led a non-governmental organisation for a number of years, and have had the opportunity, sadly so, but had the opportunity nonetheless to mobilise teams in various countries to respond to natural disasters, predominately hurricanes but some flooding as well.

I very well recall the major one we had in Grenada. Sir, when the hurricane struck Grenada, it opened my eyes to various things in relation to disaster preparedness in the Region. We often speak about it very eloquently, we talk about how much we need to do, why we need to be organised and all these things, but the reality is that you can never be fully prepared for a disaster. Sir, you never know how well prepared you are until that disaster occurs.

H/A58/2.30 p.m. Sequence 21

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Hon. C. P. Sinckler: The event is the event and these events happen, catastrophic some of them are, but how much it becomes a disaster is really determined by how well you are prepared, how well you are organised to respond to the difficulties created by that particular event.

I think somebody drew the reference to what has happened in Chile and what happened in Haiti, even though the Chile earthquake was of a greater magnitude. It was offshore, and perhaps a little further down from the surface than the one in Haiti.

Having visited Chile on a number of occasions, I know, as a matter of fact, that since the big earthquake in the 1960s, or early 1970s, they have put in place a tremendous response mechanism to earthquake events in their own country.

In fact, while I was there a few years ago, there was a tremor, and the highly intensification of the drill for those of us who were in that hotel property - a number of Barbadians were there and a number of labour leaders, some of whom have now retired and moved on to other things. The tremendous level of organisation and the drill, the consistency and clarity with which they went about that, which suggested that they obviously would have put a tremendous amount of planning and adjustment into their own plan.

When I speak about the neighbours, when that hurricane struck Grenada, many years ago, I was able to visit in the fortnight later, and the level of disorganisation that I saw was mind-boggling. Indeed, we who had put together a project with the Caribbean Policy Development Centre, working with the European Union and the Canadians, CEDA, to go in there and do some rehabilitative work were just startled by the complete lack of systems. It begs the question, even though we are talking the talk, the question really is, are we walking the walk in relation to disaster preparedness?

The responses of some of the Regional institutions, CEDERA in particular, was not as impressive, certainly not as well coordinated as we would have thought - that is not a criticism of them - because I think they themselves have identified a number of weaknesses in their own systems.

Sir, even more startling was the number of foreign groups who descended on that island, almost like ants, each having their own piece of operation, not properly tacked into what the Government is articulating, in terms of what should have been the national response, the priority areas, the issues to be dealt with and so on, but each having almost an identical programme.

In other words, there were many groups who had projects for rebuilding schools, and thousands, and even millions of dollars were raised for schools to be rebuilt, and to this day, we are still trying to account, if not for where the money went, where the schools are. That happened in many areas.

Sir, many agricultural-type projects were supposed to be started, but yet not properly accounted for.

There is, in many of these disaster situations, an unseemly grab for donor resources, to be used in the rehabilitation and stabilisation of these disaster areas that is troubling. I am only hoping, perhaps against hope, in the case of Haiti that this situation is not allowed to happen, to the extent that we have seen it in other parts of the world. Sir, I am saying that because we have very little leeway for error, if any at all, in Haiti.

If fact, I will tell you this. There is even a Barbadian company called Hardwood Housing, the principals of which were supposed to be building houses and would have constructed, we are told, close to 500 houses.

I am saying that we have to be very clear about how we deal with this issue of both the first, second and tertiary responses to disasters as they happen in our societies.

We have to be properly organised, first, to ensure that citizens are able to cope at least in a minimum way, in their first response when a disaster strikes. We have to be properly organised when that event has closed and the aftermath has begun, and what we have seen in Haiti is another example of us not getting it absolutely right.

I fear in many ways that as Haiti opens up, and as a lot of groups go in, the State of Haiti faces a particular threat of capture, if it has not already been captured before the earthquake.

Sir, there is this view internationally that Haiti really was a failed State, a country being administered largely by international NGOs. Even though I am a NGO person myself, Government needs to be drawn from the people, by the people of the people. Therefore, we have a golden opportunity as CARICOM to work with our brothers and sisters in Haiti to ensure that we establish and reestablish the State of Haiti to an extent where they can truly take responsibility for their own affairs.

I think that regardless of whoever it is, Barbados, France, or even the United States of America, this must not be seen as an opportunity for some kind of pseudo re-colonisation of Haiti, but that it must be seen as an opportunity to help recompose an authentic genuine Haitian State, led by the people of Haiti, designed by the people of Haiti and administered by the people of Haiti, if only with assistance from those of us who come from outside. I think that is the greatest tribute we can make, perhaps, to reverse hundreds of years of damage which has been caused by a number of persons, including some of us in this Caribbean Region.

Sir, the other point I want to make is this. We have known that over the years Haiti has suffered a tremendous blow economically and politically. Some of it, if we are honest, is due to their own making, not the people of Haiti, but in terms of the people who have had the opportunity to administer the State affairs in that country. We cannot turn a blind eye to this. We all recognise what happened in history. We all recognise the role of the United States and France, we know that, but we also know that internally they have had their issues.

Sir, I am going to close here. The point that I want to make in this regard is, as Haiti re-emerges from this catastrophe, the international community - I think CARICOM has to drive this matter internationally - The international community needs to give Haiti the requisite space to allow it to reconstruct its economy in a fashion, that would allow it to become a properly placed cog within the wheel of economic activity. That will include not only the abolition of debt, but it also means that where serious resources have to be placed in Haiti, it has to be given a cessation of its obligation, both at CARICOM, but equally as well in the World Bank and in other trading

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House A58, Sequence 23, 2.40 p.m.

Hon. C. P. SINCKLER: arrangements, to allow its vulnerable economic sectors to resuscitate themselves, and be able to provide employment and generate income to help rebuild the country. I think these are critical measures that need to be taken now, and I believe that the CARICOM Secretariat needs to be at the forefront. I hope that I would get an opportunity to expand on these at a later occasion.

I am obliged to you, Sir, and I support this measure 100 per cent.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I am going to seek to wrap this up. I do not think there were any issues of significance. I want to thank all Honourable Members who contributed to the debate. I am certain that the people of Haiti will be happy to know that on Both Sides of this House, as well as the Independent Member, full support was given to this particular Resolution. I want to assure the Honourable Member for St. George North that the funds will be remitted to Haiti as a matter of urgency, because this particular need is urgent. Therefore, within the next few days, we are hoping that these funds will be in the

relevant account to assist with the purchasing of those tents.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 15 stand part. Hon. R. D. JONES: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

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

On the separate motion of Hon. R. D. JONES, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the Resolution was read a first time and a second time and passed.

ORDER NO. 4 – RESOLUTION TO MOVE THAT THE HOUSE RESOLVE ITSELF INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY TO CONSIDER THE GRANT OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE SERVICE OF THIS ISLAND

On the motion of Hon. R. D. JONES, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the House resolved itself into Committee to consider the Resolution, Mr. S. A. LASHLEY in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

(A)

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUMS OF \$21 604 659 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. 11 WHICH FORM THE SCHEDULE TO THE RESOLUTION AND THAT THE EXPLANATORY NOTES TO HEAD 62 BE AMENDED AS SET OUT IN SCHEDULE 2

TO THE RESOLUTION

HEAD 40 - MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS

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\$21 087 000

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, the sum of \$21 087 000 is to supplement the Estimates provided for 2009/2010 under Head 40 of the Ministry of Transport and Works. It is a significant amount and therefore, bears some explanation to this House and to the people of Barbados.

Sir, the mandate of the Ministry of Transport and Works is one which includes the planning and provision of technical services, planning, design and development of a comprehensive road network system, making for the maintenance and rehabilitation of highways, tenantry roads, residential roads and other public access. Of course, this is only part of the mandate and objectives of the Ministry.

In this regard, Sir, we have from time to time to set priorities to ensure that our road work infrastructure is maintained and indeed, that our road work infrastructure matches other developments that may be occurring, by way of either commercial development, or housing development. We sometimes have to respond to areas of this sort.

Sir, the feature of the work at the Ministry besides its day-to-day maintenance programme, over the last two years, can be divided into three sections. One was, of course, the completion and handing over of the ABC Highway, which at the end of August last year, was handed over to the Ministry of Transport and Works and we have dealt with that in the other places. Of course, we are still feeling the effects of some of the financial arrangements under which this project was conceived. Indeed, one of the very impactful results of the way that project was done, and of course, the matters being dealt with by the Attorneys.

Mr. Chairman, there are road construction contractors in Barbados who are being held back because of large quantities of monies. My estimate is that \$18 million is still owed to them by the 3S main contractor and which, of course, has to await the outcome of the complete resolution of that matter, but it is a large sum of money and, therefore, has impacted on the ability of these contractors in a very significant way.

House A58, Sequence 23, 2.50 p.m.

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Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, the ABC Highway has been completed. Even as we consider our options to deal with the modifications required at the Warrens area to accommodate the two office developments at the south-eastern end and the north-western end of that Warrens area, we are detecting a sense of appreciation, and one could appreciate the improvement in the flow of traffic.

There are Barbadians who, of course, have difficulties with some of the new arrangements, especially

at the Wildey Triangle. We recognise this in the Ministry and it is something which we are promoting in respect of how the public should use this area. Of course, there is the question of the pedestrian foot bridge, one which has been identified for the St. Barnabas area, although I must indicate that the traffic light arrangement at St. Barnabas, is now back in place and working well. It was previously on the old ABC Highway arrangement.

The other pedestrian crossing was destined for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation area in the Pine. These installations are imminent. They are awaiting only the design, finalisation and acceptance of tenders. Sir, that has been and continues to be an important part of the Ministry's technical work.

Sir, we also inherited an arrangement, which was labelled a public/private partnership between the two major road contractors in Barbados, Rayside Construction Limited and C. O. Williams Construction Limited. These contracts were born at the tail-end of the Barbados Labour Party Administration, and started sometime around August 2007. There are those who feel that it may have even been designed as a way of trying to make up lost ground, and as they say, to try to hurriedly repair some roads in tenancies and small access roads for Election purposes.

Mr. Chairman, that is evident from the way the initial programme was concentrated, or contemplated and carried out. These are areas like Ruby Park, Vault Road, Crane Park, Crane Haven, Travellers Avenue, Fortesque, Diamond Valley and Brereton to Six Roads in St. Philip; Sobers Junction Dr. Kerr Land, Greenidge Road, Taylor Gap and Brathwaite's Gap in St. Michael; Ellerton Gardens to Waverley Cot, and Workmans in St. George; Laynes Road off Highway 1 and Wanstead in St. James, Laynes Road in Maxwell, Amity Lodge, Enterprise, Enterprise Road, Enterprise A, and Lisbonville in the Constituency of Christ Church South. Again, we are grateful for any road improvements in Christ Church South.

Mr. Chairman, the selection process for the PPP project by the Barbados Labour Party raised these questions in the minds of Barbadians. As a matter of fact, the project envisaged Rayside Construction and C. O. Williams Construction Limited totalling something like \$35 million each.

Mr. Chairman, to put it in perspective, by August 2008, the Rayside project had already consumed \$18 million in roadworks out of the \$35 million that was envisaged.

Sir, the other point to be made, and this is important about the Rayside Contract is that it was never tidied up. That is the best language one could use. It was obviously one where we used funds from Central Government, but

there was no proper allocation and no arrangements to make sure that the contract was fully tidied up and signed on. Mr. Chairman, this Administration has had the task of dealing with that anomaly, and as they say, bringing all these costs to account.

Mr. Chairman, when we say these things, Honourable Members on the Other Side get uptight, but it is a fact. We have had to bring all of these things and they want to say that we should not do this, we should do the other. Mr. Chairman, you cannot keep the contractors out there on a limb, you have to settle the arrangement. In the case of the C. O. Williams project, the arrangement was, and continues to be, one in which we pay some \$418 000 per month for their side of the contract.

Sir, under my tenure as Minister, we also changed the emphasis of the work in the PPP because the work was a surface approach to doing this job. I felt, and discussed with the technical team, that we could not carry on with just taking the surfaces off and replacing them. We need to make sure that what we do is substantial and has some order of permanency.

Sir, we re-looked the project and made sure that the contractors were aware that drainage had to be addressed, because if you build roads and do not provide access and adequate drainage, you are in fact using the road as a drain. The technical experts at the Ministry have informed me that when you do that, it is a disaster waiting to happen, because the road will crack and the surfaces would go with them and you would have to start from scratch, and the money has gone down the drain. That would not have been a consideration in August, or September of 2007.

Sir, we have had to make sure that we re-adjust the projects and, therefore, you would see that most of the paving works that we carried out under these contracts, with Rayside Construction Limited and with C. O. Williams Construction Limited, have been done with an added attention to drainage.

Mr. Chairman, I invite the public to observe what is happening on Highway 5 at Windsor going toward Brereton, where we have surfed the rock-side to allow for drainage. There will be further works to make sure that these drainage areas are adequately provided for, so this would have affected the details of the programme. In some cases, it would have apparently slowed the programme, but certainly in many cases it would have adjusted the cost of the per road contract, if we may, because of the new attention to detail in drainage along with the surface preparation and surface rendering.

House A58 Sequence 24

3.00 p.m.

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Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, under the Public/Private Sector Partnership, along with the additional work we have been able to do, along with the correction of the payments to the contractors which we had to do, because of the untidy work that had been done by the Barbados Labour Party Administration, we have estimated that we would require \$7 million under Programme 510: Sub-programme 511 to complete this work. This includes an estimation of spending some \$1 million between now and the end of the financial year, March 31.

Mr. Chairman, that takes care of the Public/Private Sector Partnership programme. Sir, once the ABC Highway was completed, we recognised that there would have been very little work for the major contractors to do. Therefore, it was put to Cabinet and it was accepted that we should enter into a stimulus programme for a period September 2008 until. This programme was envisaged to cost \$32 660 442 and was to be completed by March 2010. Of course, like construction and road building, there are certain details which you encounter. There are certain changes which you have to carry out which would sometimes delay, or protract the work as we attend to these details.

The Cabinet was asked, therefore, to note the programme undertaken by the Ministry of Public Works and the private sector. Most of the projects would be done by the private sector to ensure that the construction industry maintains its vibrancy, having regard to the sector's contribution to employment.

Mr. Chairman, let me pause here for emphasis, because this is a deliberate decision taken by the Democratic Labour Party in Government, to ensure that these major contractors were able to provide employment for Barbadians, along with doing important, useful and much-needed work, and to make sure that during the softening of construction activities, especially in the private sector, that we could offer some opportunity to maintain employment. Employment is something which is at the bed-rock of the policy and approach of the Democratic Labour Party during this economic crisis. We have made it clear that we want to see absolutely no jobs being lost.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make the point that, whereas some employers have been extremely cooperative and have worked with this Administration, there are some employers who have already started to put their workers on week-on and week-off. I want to say this is not in keeping with the understanding which we want to put out there, with regard to the contract between Government and contractors who provide this service.

Sir, I can only echo the words of one such contractor, without zeroing in on a particular name, who admitted that the last 10 years have been years of plenty for him and that he does not have a problem. He has recognised that he has to work hand-in-hand with the Government of Barbados to maintain and sustain employment at a level that would allow all Barbadians to be able to be comfortable during this crisis.

Mr. Chairman, we want to congratulate those employers who have so far worked with us. Sir, we look forward to their continued participation in this very important programme. We intend to ensure that as we ride out these difficult times, and that even though we can see a ray of sunlight ahead of us, even though there are improvements being seen in both the construction and tourism markets... Sir, I do not want to speak for the Minister of Tourism, but he made the point recently that the numbers have begun to lift again.

Mr. Chairman, I was at the airport on Sunday evening and I saw for myself the arrivals in Barbados. I live in an area and I represent a Constituency which has, as a large part of its economic activities, tourism activities. They have reported an increase in activity. Sir, the dollar-spend has decreased a bit, but the important thing is that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that by putting this stimulus package in place, we have contributed to the maintaining of employment, that is why today we can talk about a 9.4 per cent rate of employment in Barbados, which is now down from the double digits, 10.9 per cent, a while ago. Sir, we are not thumping our chests, we are saying to Barbadians to join with us on this crusade. We are saying to employers to join with us on this crusade.

Sir, there are also more acts to come, the stimulus package was one. There are many more acts that this Administration has put in place to ensure that this situation is maintained.

Sir, I am happy to be part of an Administration which has taken such a stand for this programme, including outstanding works, including two roundabouts at Coral Ridge and Boarded Hall. I know that Honourable Members Over There are going to get up and say that they conceptualised these roundabouts, but we are driving around them. We are using the roundabouts, so we are building the Coral Ridge Roundabout, we are building the Boarded Hall Roundabout as we speak, therefore, Barbadians are experiencing what we are talking about.

Sir, Barbadians are also experiencing the improvements in the Barbados road network and they are calling the Ministry of Public Works and me about the improvements they are seeing, feeling and experiencing

every day. Sir, I want to take time to congratulate the staff of the Ministry of Public Works for a job well-done.

Mr. Chairman, we are talking about holding hands with our workers. There are certainly situations which have to be improved and we have taken on, for instance, our workshop. We have introduced a consultant. Sir, that is not part of this Supplementary, that is under "Professional Services" and is already allocated for. Sir, we have seen us reaching the stage where equipment again is moving out of the workshop.

Sir, there was a time when equipment only went in but equipment is now coming out of the workshop and providing service, so that there can be better coordination, better management, better achievement and better productivity.

Sir, I want to congratulate the members of that sub-department for a job well-done and I look forward to working with them, going forward in this regard.

3.10 p.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, then there are human resources. As we keep pointing out here, there is a difference between the Personnel Department and the Human Resource Department and a Ministry that employs 2 800 must have a human resource department. Sir, even if they call it a personnel department, I term it a human resource department, so you have to get involved in the day-to-day management of people. Sir, you have to find out why work attitudes are what they are and seek to improve them by way of staff meetings, by way of management meetings, by way of getting together in celebratory occasions like Christmas and birthdays.

I was talking to the Permanent Secretary only this morning and I know that we have Barbados Action Day, the activity day, coming up and we are already making plans for this.

Mr. Chairman, one of the beautiful things about the Ministry of Transport and Works is that we have a lovely playing field, which is maintained by the sports club, and we are already making plans to utilise that area on that day and introduce activity into the bodies of many of our employees. Sir, I look forward to taking part in that event myself.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central assures me that he will be the instructor.

Mr. Chairman, there is another important part of this Supplementary that I want to refer to and, Sir, that is to do with the road marking and signage. When I went to the Ministry of Transport and Works I was shattered at the standard of road marking in Barbados, and I felt it could not continue for one day longer in the state it was in.

We must understand, as an international island, and as a tourism destination, that we owe it to people to be able to find their way around this island and, Sir, not only visitors, but to Barbadians. We owe it to each other to be able to anticipate and respect a major stop. We owe it to the drivers of Barbados to be able to identify the centre of the road, but some of us do need assistance because our roads are small at best.

Sir, road signage was abysmal, but I want to report today that I am heartened, and that Barbadians are heartened, by the tremendous paradigm shift in terms of road marking in Barbados and the ability of the drivers of Barbados to negotiate roads.

Mr. Chairman, we are not sitting on our laurels. We have already purchased new equipment and we have been through training courses at the Ministry to make sure that the programme is sustainable.

Mr. Chairman, I must compliment the staff too because they have introduced new kinds of alert mechanisms and markings. They have introduced the traffic light marking and have introduced the same thing as you approach major roads so you have that anticipation.

Yes, you will have your critics and those persons who do not agree with the way it is done, but I like it, I believe Barbadians like it, and I know it has improved the way we drive in Barbados.

Sir, I look forward to enhancement, and once there is money, we will continue to make sure this is one of the priorities going forward by way of the work of the Ministry of Transport and Works.

Mr. Chairman, the other items in the Supplementary are to do with the Buildings Department under Sub-programme 513, and this includes the repairs to Government property, our offices. Again, Sir, this is an area that needs deep study and some level of rationalisation and, Sir, we are actively looking at this.

Mr. Chairman, the amount being sought under this Head is some \$400 000 to carry us through to the end of the Financial Year.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, thank you.

Sub-programme 519 - Vehicle and Equipment Workshop. The amount required under this Head is some \$400 000 and then there is traffic lighting. Sir, a lot of people may not be aware that all street lights are paid for by the Ministry of Transport and Works, and some \$2.5 million is being sought under this Head.

Mr. Chairman, as I have said, the satisfaction of the Ministry is not derived by selfish motive, or is not derived by any kind of opinions formed in private corridors by myself, the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Technical Officer. Sir, it comes from the comments of the public.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, I want to read one of many letters of appreciation.

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: I can make it a document of the House, if so required and the Chairman will direct me. Sir, it reads as follows:

"Dear Sir,

I wish to express....

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. My understanding of the Rules, is that the Honourable Member cannot read from it unless he makes it a document of the House. I am asking if that is to be done.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the Honourable Member making the letter a document of the House?

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am going to make it a document of the House. I am sure the Honourable Member would be delighted when he reads it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: So done.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, let me read the letter. It says:

"Dear Sir,

I wish to express sincere thanks to you and your staff in response to the request to cut the rock at Fortress Hill in St. Thomas.

It was a great privilege to witness the heavy equipment removing the large portion of rock that was protruding, thus making access to the area dangerous. The road is now wider and safer for the numerous locals and visitors who travel there daily.

This action demonstrates the Ministry's commitment to ensuring safety on our roads.

Thank you for your kindness.

Signed Cynthia Y. Forde

J.P."

Mr. Chairman, with those words, and in making the letter I just read a document of this House, I am grateful to you.

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

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, the correspondence that the Honourable Member has just made a document of the House is well known to us and we believe it typifies the experience of the people of St. Thomas because they are able to see that acknowledgement is given to the significant hard work that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has been putting in.

Mr. Chairman, it is something that amuses me when a Minister of Public Works in a Supplementary to the tune of about \$22 million, will trumpet as perhaps their most significant achievement, the painting of the roads, and putting some very creative representations of traffic lights and so on in our streets.

Sir, I do not consider that a matter which is so ordinary, that it is almost axiomatic that it be done, that the Minister really should consider that road painting is going to be the area in which he will highlight the crowning achievements of his Administration, especially when all across Barbados - I can speak of my Constituency - the roads are falling into a serious state of disrepair.

Sir, I am happy that the Honourable Member has finally started Joe's River Bridge.

H/A58/3.20 p.m. Sequence 26

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: To say that the Honourable Member has started the work at Joe's River Bridge to add an additional span, the fact of the matter is, the materials for that Bridge have been in the Depot since 2007. I say materials, because what used to happen at Joe's River Bridge, is that the addition of a span there is prefabricated, and the materials were purchased from Canada. In 2008, after Elections, we understand instructions were given that it was not to be touched.

Sir, I am very glad to see that the work is being done. Sir, I worry that with the coming rainy season, that work would soon come to a halt and be put off until the next dry season.

Sir, Joe's River Bridge is not a favour by the Honourable Member for the people of St. Joseph. Joe's River Bridge is traversed every day by a large number of tourists, by Transport Board buses and heavy duty vehicles. The people of St. Joseph too will stand to benefit. It is being done for the people in Barbados.

Sir, all across Barbados...

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber to suggest that any person in the Ministry...

Asides.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: The Honourable Member can take a leaf out of the pages of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, and thank the Government for the work that is going on at Joe's River.

Last night on my way home, I met a senior employee from the Ministry and he was going home with books under his hand to continue working on Joe's River, so I do not know what is worrying the Honourable Member.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Sir, I believe that the Honourable Member should not start to sit on his laurels so early in the day. In the Constituency of St. Joseph, there are a vast number of roads falling into a state of disrepair, and St. Joseph is not alone in that issue. The Honourable Member may feel comforted because he has painted new signs, but I would like the Honourable Member to tell this Chamber how is it, in a road programme where contracts were awarded to Rayside and C. O. Williams, a road programme which would have meant about \$30 million, and that is per contractor, for what he described as just for resurfacing. The Honourable Member has said he considered that the resurfacing was just that, superficial, and he felt that it was important to go down further.

I presumed the extent of the road works would have been significantly increased, so what is the increase in the contract sum? It stands to reason, that if the original contract was \$30 million for resurfacing, but they were now going to have to do more than just scarifying the upper layer, then the Honourable Member is under an obligation to tell this Honourable Chamber, how much more money have these two contracts been extended by, and not just tell us glibly that he felt more work should be done.

I am not asking the Honourable Member to take this Honourable Chamber in his confidence, because I do not

believe that matters of public expenditure are matters that would be kept in the bosom of any Cabinet Minister. It is not a matter of taking us into his confidence. It is a matter of giving the public their due. They are entitled to know.

Sir, I recollect that when the matter of these two contracts were first discussed in this Chamber, there was a great hue and cry that the Barbados Labour Party was giving two big fat contracts to C. O. Williams and Rayside. I want to know how much fatter these two contracts have been made, based on the admission of the Honourable Minister.

In relation to the stimulus package, \$10 million in Supplementaries is being sought now for the stimulus package. Sir, I do not know if the full extent of the monies that have been voted and are being sought, will be spent before the end of the financial year, but it certainly speaks to a stimulus package, that was more likely than not, hastily put together, than a stimulus package that only a year ago was announced by this Minister, and in less than a year we discovered that we need a \$10 million Supplementary. I would like to remind the Honourable Minister that the rest of Barbados cries out for a stimulus package.

It is certainly clear to us that contracts have been awarded, but now we are seeking an additional \$10 million and we have to question whether the contracts as they were originally awarded, were awarded with their eyes opened, or whether these two represent areas of cost overruns, or as the Honourable Member often says, on a rolling basis.

In the Estimates of last year, we were given the list of roads for these special projects, in St. Lucy, St. George and Christ Church. There was no doubt where these roads were. I venture too, that there would have been no doubt, to the extent of the road works that would have been required. How is it that we now come for an additional \$10 million?

Sir, when we consider what was voted originally, \$11 million was only originally and now...

Asides.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Not the first year. That was in the Estimates for the 2009-2010 year. We are now seeking a Supplementary of near 100 per cent.

Sir, the concept of a Supplementary is one that perhaps we may misuse in this Chamber. A Supplementary, one would venture, is an amount of funding that is required as an addition. We have to add on, but when the addition is almost as much as the original amount that has been voted, I think to call that a Supplementary is to debase the English Language. That is not a Supplementary, Sir.

Sir, you cannot increase the cost of something by almost 100 per cent and call it a Supplementary. We have Supplementaries where you need a little \$30 000 to add on a million. What this speaks to is the fact that the Ministry of Public Works grossly underestimated the amount of works, that would have been required for this stimulus package, or the Honourable Minister did not have due regard to the proper costing of these works.

The people require an explanation. You cannot just say in here that it is going to be an extra \$10 million. We want to know on which specific road this \$10 million will be used. We want to know why \$10 million. It is scandalous when a Minister in this Chamber says that he needs almost 100 per cent more to execute a programme, that he originally said to us was well-thought out and almost precisely conceived for the purpose of a stimulus package.

Sir, we understand and we have called for a stimulus package. We supported that, but we have ...

Asides.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: The stimulus package was never an issue. We called for it, but we need the details from the Minister to explain to us how it is we are now asking, almost at the eve of the financial year, for a further \$10 million, almost 100 per cent.

Sir, the Honourable Minister responsible for this area has talked about human resources and equipment in the workshop. We will not allow ourselves to be distracted by the small matters. If the Honourable Member believes that these few things he is trying to achieve, will represent a turnaround in the situation on the roads of this country, he is sadly mistaken. If the Honourable Member feels that this stimulus package is all that there is, then he is sadly mistaken.

HA58 3.30 p.m. Sequence 27

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

House A58, Sequence 28, 3.30 p.m.

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: There are numerous issues which still present themselves in the Ministry of Public Works, and I believe, Sir, that today, we are seeing the tip of the iceberg.

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

Mr. D. D. MARSHALL: Thank you, Sir.

These require explanations from the Honourable Member, Sir, and I will speak again when the opportunity is required.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Supplementary and to say that if I were on the Other Side two years ago, I would have said that the Minister made an error and he read it as Barbados dollars when it was US dollars.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Joseph would know exactly what I am speaking about because we are not speaking about any BDS\$120 million that turned out to US\$120 million. We are now only speaking about \$11 million, so the Honourable Member is on good footing, when the Honourable Member speaks in the language that he was speaking in and in the tone that he was speaking in because he understands well, Sir, what is cost overrun to the magnitude of \$120 million.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that what you are now seeing in Barbados, is not contractors paving asphalt on mud but you are seeing roads that are being properly done.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: If you want to get a good example of this, Sir, all you have to do is come and look at the road coming from Nesfield to Crab Hill, and you will see that you are not speaking about mud, but you are speaking about a road that has side walk and it has been properly dug out, and all the mud has been taken out. I know the Honourable Member for St. James North can speak to this matter because he has traversed it and he has monitored the construction of this road.

I want to say, Sir, that when this road is completed, it will not sink because based on what has been placed there, you will find a road with boulders, proper footing and proper bedding so if you hear anything about cost overruns, Sir, it is not cost overruns. It is a recharge, because instead of going and doing a road and finding mud, and paving the mud, what has occurred is that the mud has been taken out, the road has been widened and people want to know, Sir, how rural Barbados can now have roads looking like these, so if the Honourable Member for St. Joseph does not understand how roads have been done previously, I am sorry for him because he cannot now try to compare those roads that we have spent more than \$100 million on, trying to catch votes at Election time paving mud, to roads that are now properly constructed.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: This is exactly what has occurred and that is why the cost is like this because we are now getting proper roads and I want to congratulate the Minister, Sir, for not behaving like the last Government.

I was happy to hear the Minister acknowledging that he has received a letter of congratulations from the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, who is a very gracious person and who would not hide her feeling and when work is done would acknowledge the work. I am very happy that the Honourable Member is not like the others, who would get the work done and would not acknowledge it. I want to compliment the Honourable Member who represents the parish where I sleep sometimes.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: I also want to say, Sir, that I represent the only parish that has a female name and I believe that once you have a female, she should be treated properly but, I still have 115 tenantry roads that I would like to see some work done on, and I would like to write to the Minister and congratulate the Minister like how the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has done, Sir, because I have many bluffs that want cutting.

Asides.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, we are hearing that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas did not write to the Minister. That Honourable Member wrote the Minister's Permanent Secretary. This is the difference and I congratulate the Honourable Member for her honesty.

One thing that is clear, there was some writing and it was done so that the Minister could get a copy to bring before Parliament as a document of the House and he is being congratulated also.

Sir, what I am saying is that we have a scenario in here today that we have some money that has been voted and I am begging the Minister of Finance to also give the Minister of Public Works some more money so that those roads in St. Lucy could be started. We have many of them and we look forward because I know there will be a programme between the Minister of Public Works and the Minister for Rural Development, so that those roads can be tackled and we too can look after each other as has occurred previously by the Other Side.

Sir, you have heard how much money was spent just before Election. I do not want this money to be spent just

before Elections. I want it to be spent early, so that I would not be accused like the others, for trying to capture votes.

I want Members of Parliament to know that paving a road just for Elections, you lose votes and not gain votes because Barbadians are not fools. They know exactly what you are about to do and they punish you for it. Sir, I saw when it occurred in 1998, that this same road which the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is now quarrelling about, from Colleton to Content, the work was started just before Election and we are now still discussing this same road.

We are now in 2010, and it is the longest road I have known to be taken to be completed. People would talk about cost overruns, but you will have cost overruns, because it started in 1998, and it is now being completed in 2010, so you would expect to have cost overruns because the cost has gone up.

Sir, I want the Honourable Member for St. Joseph to tell me why this road from Colleton to Content would have taken more than 12 years and he does not expect cost overruns to be incurred.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to hear the Minister of Public Works is also not only looking after 20 Constituencies, plus one, but he is also looking after all the Constituencies, and I thought that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph would have joined the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in congratulating the Minister for bringing proper roads to Barbados, so if this is the quality of the roads we are talking about, Sir, we cannot be disputing \$10 million, when you are getting a road that you might not have to come back to for the next 20 years.

Mr. Chairman, I have seen that the road leading from Combermere School to Hindsbury Road has been paved three times. I have also seen Maynards Road paved twice already, and if you travel Maynards Road, you would ask the question, has this road been paved since 20 years ago?

Sir, we do not expect that when we do roads now we would have this same type of condition. We are expecting that when a job is given now, we do not get the same problems that we have seen on the Station Hill road and the Maynards Road, and those are just examples.

It is clear that previously roads have been paved on mud. What I would also not expect to see anymore, are roads being paved, water mains need replacing and you pave the road and then replace the water mains. I would expect that there would be some relationship between the Ministry of the Environment, Water Resources and Drainage and the Ministry of Transport and Works.

House A58, Sequence 28, 3.40 p.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: Sir, I look forward to the day when the fixing of holes in the road caused by the Barbados Water Authority is fixed again by the depots. It does not make sense. I will repeat it in here again, for those roads to be given out to private contractors.

Sir, previously all you had to do as the Member of Parliament was to call the depot and ask them to come and fix the holes. Now, when there is a burst main, sometimes the hole is left opened for days waiting for a private contractor to come and fix the hole, whereas previously all you had to do was to call the depot and that would have been fixed and no problem. That is now creating headaches.

Sir, so bad was it that one night I was going to a meeting and saw a car in one of the holes and some people trying to pull out the car, and I told them to leave it, to call the Ministry of Transport and Works and the Barbados Water Authority to solve the problem, because the lady could not drive into something like that. That was before the change of Government. I spoke about that in here already.

Sir, because of the change of policy, these are the things you get. You need to use the depots for what they are placed there for. Sir, once you had a problem like that and the main has been fixed, all you had to do, once you cover it, was to ask the depot to come and mend the road, but not now. You cannot touch it because they are told that this is not their job.

Mr. Chairman, as a Member of Parliament, I do not think that is something I want to live with. It takes too long because the contractor has to accumulate work, because if the contractor is in St. Philip, he is not going to drive from St. Philip to St. Lucy, or anywhere else in Barbados just to fix one hole. What you need to do is to leave that work to the depots, because they know how and they are located in the right location to fix those things.

Today, Sir, \$10 million is now a big issue. One hundred and twenty million dollars, and sometimes \$750 million is not a big issue, but \$10 million is now a big issue. How things have changed. Mr. Chairman, it is clear that you should keep governments in government. It is clear that you should keep the Democratic Labour Party in Government because all of a sudden what people did not know in Government they now know.

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have just a few words and a few questions for the Minister. The

Honourable Member who just spoke indicated that he has a difficulty with the private contractors doing the work because he feels that the depots should be responsible. I heard him. I do believe that the depot has a responsibility, irrespective of who builds the roads, and therefore, I am not sure of the logic of that.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is misleading the House. It has nothing to do with building roads. It has to do with the repairing of water mains.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am happy to hear that. I did not know we were discussing the Barbados Water Authority and water mains, but if the Honourable Member wants us to go there, we can go there.

What we are discussing, Mr. Chairman, relates to a programme called Highway Construction and Maintenance Services. An amount of \$12.2 million was voted at the beginning of the financial year for this programme, and \$7 million more is being requested now. The Addendum differs from what has been supplied in the Estimates, and I, therefore, go with the Estimates. The Addendum refers to \$8 million being requested, but what is here is \$7 million, so I assume it is the \$7 million, because the Addendum is literally to explain what is asked for, so that is the first mistake.

The second mistake relates to the question of a simple response requested from the Minister, what is now the contractual amount to each of these two contractors for each of these two contracts. As I understand it, the initial amount was on, or about \$35 million.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I do not have the documents, and therefore, the Minister has a duty to provide the contractual amounts to this Honourable Chamber. In addition, the Minister would have been heard saying that roads which were initially a part of these contracts, have been changed.

Mr. Chairman, if the roads that were initially awarded to be repaired have changed, then the Minister has a responsibility to this Honourable Chamber, as well as to the people of Barbados, and in particular to those districts where the roads have been removed, to let them know that those roads have been removed, why they were removed and what they have been replaced with.

Mr. Chairman, it is his prerogative to amend the contract as part of the Government so long as the Other Side does it, but our prerogative is to know. We have a duty to know, that is why these funds come to this

Honourable Chamber for approval. This Committee of Supply, unlike a debate in Second Reading, allows us to ask questions. That is why we are allowed to speak as many times as possible without limit, because it is about the extrication of information for the benefit of the Members of the Chamber, to be able to make decisions whether they can, or cannot support the matter that is before this Honourable Chamber.

My simple question to the Minister is: Could you please provide us with the list of the roads that have been removed from the two contracts with C. O. Williams and Rayside Construction? Could you also indicate to me whether Friendship Terrace in St. Michael, an area in my Constituency, otherwise known as "Behind Bim", which consists of about 10 to 12 avenues, North Lowland Terrace, South Lowland, North Friendship Drive, South Friendship and Lowland Terrace, where the roads have not been paved for some time and which were in this contract for paving, is still part of the work which is to be done in the Rayside contract, or not - these people live just above the headquarters of Rayside - and if it is still to be done, when does he anticipate that it would be done and if it has been removed, when does he anticipate that the residents of that district, who count just over 500, would have the opportunity to be able to see it? Those people would have benefitted from the Government previously putting an additional...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: It was very much there. Friendship Terrace was very much a part of the contract. It is part of what came to Cabinet in the residential roads.

In the circumstances, Mr. Chairman, having had the additional exit built for them, which comes out just by the Warrens Polyclinic... Prior to that, all of those residents were forced to come out there by Manor Lodge in circumstances that if there was a disaster, they would have been in trouble. The back of the development is in fact the gully, which comes down from Jackson and goes right down to Rayside Quarry, and therefore, the people cannot get out from the back and Manor Lodge was the only exit.

A couple years ago we built the exit by Warrens Polyclinic and what was then to be done was the repaving of the road for the development which was established in the early 1970s. I need not say anymore.

Mr. Chairman, in respect of what the Minister is asking this Honourable Chamber for on March 2, let me say that I am a little uncomfortable with the fact that these documents were circulated less than two hours ago. We are now debating it so we have had no notice on it, but such is life.

House A58 Sequence 29

3.50 p.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: However, the reality is that you are asking for \$10.7 million on the stimulus package, otherwise referred to in here as Special Projects: Roads Improvement. The initial amount was \$11.5 million at the beginning of the financial year. There is no way that \$10.7 million can be spent in three weeks' time, hence it must be understood that the majority of this money is, in fact, for work already completed.

Mr. Chairman, this means that the work was undertaken without the level of funds being provided for, or voted for by this Honourable Chamber.

Sir, road works are certified and quantified at periodic stages, so that almost 100 per cent more work would have taken place, even though the funds were not voted for by this Honourable Chamber. Sir, if ever there was a definition of cost over-run, this would be it, but the Honourable Member for St. Lucy tried to dismiss it by saying that we are quarrelling about \$10 million.

Mr. Chairman, I say to you that you cannot have it both ways. There is no figure of \$750 million in cost over-runs. That has become part of the political mythology, but this is not political mythology. This is political reality. This is reality. Today is not September 2. Today is March 2. The financial year comes to an end in three weeks' time. Even though the end of the financial year is March 31, every Honourable Member of the Front Bench knows that you stop payments about four, or five days before the end of the financial year, so that the paper work, in any event, that would be required for payments to be made, will, in fact, have to be done within the next 17 days at most. Therefore, could the Minister just admit that this money would have to be for past work?

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, in the circumstances, it meant, therefore, that one of two things either occurred. It meant that what was brought to this Honourable House last Estimates was fiction, and that it was always intended to be this amount of work, or that alternatively, there has been a cost over-run of almost 100 per cent on this matter.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

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

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member knows that we have changed the basis of accounting in this Honourable House from cash accounting to an accrual accounting basis.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make my contribution in light of the fact that I am not a bellyacher, but ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order please? Let us hear the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I am not a bellyacher, but I love to give credit where credit is due, therefore, I think it is very significant that the letter I wrote to the Permanent Secretary would have been read in this Honourable House. Sir, Members of the Barbados Labour Party were accused of being arrogant, we were accused of treating civil servants bad and all of that.

Sir, any Permanent Secretary in any Ministry within the last 15, or 16 years, would speak of letters coming from your humble servant. These letters would have expressed concerns, gratitude and requests. Sir, I thought that was a common courtesy to write the Permanent Secretary and not the Minister, because the Permanent Secretary is someone with whom I can have dialogue. He is someone who follows through whenever that opportunity comes, because that Permanent Secretary clearly understands that he cannot play political football with the resources of the Government of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South read the letter, because it conveys to the public of Barbados that there are decent people in this Honourable Chamber who are politicians. Sir, we keep making the public believe that all of us are snobs, that we all have come here to get big money and that when we get here, we do not look after the interest of the people.

Sir, I want to thank the people of St. Thomas for the privilege to put forward concerns and to express gratitude in no other way than a true St. Thomas person saying from the heart, that I thank you for what you have done and that wherever possible, please do more.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member has indicated that I have good manners. Sir, I am happy that one from the Democratic Labour Party has given me praise. I cannot say the same thing about all of them. There are one, or two who I can cherry pick who display that. Sir, I am not referring to you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And you are not referring to the Honourable Members on the Other Side either?

Miss C. Y. FORDE: No, Sir, I am referring to the Democratic Labour Party. Sir, in my conversation with the Permanent Secretary about eight to 10 months ago, we spoke about a bridge called the “Endeavour Bridge” which joins Lion’s Castle, Endeavour and Hangman Hill.

Mr. Chairman, when the Permanent Secretary recognised the rehabilitative cost of putting back that bridge, for which the Barbados Labour Party would have in the Estimates of 2007/2008, included an amount of almost \$300 000 to have that bridge restructured. That never happened. Therefore, when I spoke with the Permanent Secretary, I said that I appreciate that there was some work being done, but he said the Ministry did not have the money to complete that work. I said I appreciate and respect that.

Mr. Chairman, there is another project I have been writing on for the last four years. Sir, I would wish that some urgent attention would be paid to Fortress Hill. Mr. Chairman, at the end of the day, if Fortress Hill, like Stoney Gully and a number of roads in the parish that are hilly and dangerous, do not get immediate attention, it would mean that the Government would have to spend \$10 million for visitors and locals alike, who may very well exit that road and drop more than 30 feet on to Barker’s Corner. That was the reason for which I did it with such urgency.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I cannot say that the Honourable Member is behaving childish. I remember in March 2009, I had reason to write the Honourable Member for Christ Church South in relation to Bloomsbury Road. It is another excellent link road, Fortress Hill and Bloomsbury Road.

His Excellency D. St.E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, the Honourable Member said earlier that you cannot write to a Minister, that you must write to a Permanent Secretary, yet the Honourable Member is now saying that she has written to the Minister, when everybody knows the person who does the day-to-day work is the Permanent Secretary.

Asides.

Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the reason I wrote the Permanent Secretary and copied it to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, was because I recognised the tremendous dangers on Bloomsbury Road, which were similar to those of Fortress Hill, of which the Honourable Member made mention and made a document

of this Honourable Chamber. The urgency with which I sent it also included my personal concerns, not only for the people of St. Thomas, but for any other individual who would have passed that way in a vehicle.

Mr. Chairman, I would like the Honourable Member to indicate to this Honourable Chamber what plans he has in this large amount that is being requested in the Supplementary for Bloomsbury Road?

Sir, last month I had to write again because the road is sinking. Sir, you must recognise that St. Thomas has heavy rainfalls. Sometimes the seasonal rains wreak havoc on our roads because of poor drainage and so on, and a road like those in St. Thomas that have been mentioned would require, at least every two years, some measure of road rehabilitation in order to keep them serviceable.

4.00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Therefore, I am happy to have had the opportunity to write to the Permanent Secretary and thank him and the staff at Bagatelle depot, under Mr. Marshall’s management, for the excellent work that they have put into projects in the parish, not only in 2009 and 2008, but previous to that. Sir, I believe they will continue because I find them to be decent people.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, and any other Member, that the people of St. Thomas are taxpayers too, whether they are working in Mangrove Landfill, teaching in a classroom, working in the Police Force, working as the Attorney-General of Barbados, whatever role they are playing, they are taxpayers, who deserve a piece of the cake.

Mr. Chairman, there are other roads, because when you look at the whole layout of St. Thomas, those two roads I mentioned, Fortress Hill and Bloomsbury, lead the locals and the visitors to no less than eight places of interest, including Mount Hillaby, where a Barbados Labour Party Administration sought to pave the road leading to Mount Hillaby, of which I have written to the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated, on three separate occasions within the last two years, and there was not even a response of courtesy to do with Mount Hillaby.

Mr. Chairman, every tourist who comes to this island seeks to find out what is the highest point in Barbados and they trek up to Mount Hillaby. Sir, there are large potholes, the road was prepared for paving, the Government changed and the road has gone on the back burner and, Sir, the people of Mount Hillaby are people too.

Mr. Chairman, I did not intend to speak, but when the Honourable Member chose to make an approach like this in a very immature way, I really had to make my comment, because it does not bring me to the end of what I want to say because there are tremendous needs.

Mr. Chairman, a Barbados Labour Party Administration would have done Padmore Village and Rock Hall, and cut down all the rock and numerous other roads in the parish. If we are to serve the people of this country and bring in the millions of dollars in Harrison's Cave, it means that our network of roads in the parish must be so designed, that people would not be having accidents, breaking a tire off, or damaging anything on their way to these various places.

Mr. Chairman, Stony Gully is another road. The Honourable Member may have read his files. I am glad that he had the opportunity to read his files in the Ministry of Public Works, because I do not know how long he will read them. I am glad that the Honourable Member is reading his files, because he will see that Stony Gully is another area that is now a bus route, has been for the past five years and the residents of Lion's Castle and Dukes Tenantry have to walk for nearly a mile and, therefore, that bus service has saved them but, Sir, there are protruding rocks again that merit urgent attention. I believe that the Honourable Minister would want to attend to that, as well as the Bloomsbury Road that will go down for about 50 feet. Sir, that is the road that is to the north of the Flower Forest.

Mr. Chairman, I will wrap-up. Sir, Jack-in-the-Box Road. Sir, a caller called the call-in programme and the mouthpiece of the Democratic Labour Party on the call-in programme chose to say to the person who drew to his attention that the Jack-in-the-Box road is a bad road, said to the caller that he should speak to the Member of Parliament.

Sir, he was a former university lecturer and he could not even remember who the Member of Parliament is, but then he made the comment "Do you think they will get it fixed between now and 2013, or should it stay to 2017?" Sir, he said it as though the people in St. Thomas are nobody.

Mr. Chairman, I want this Government in the same way that it speaks in its Manifesto about equity, transparency, good governance, accountability and all the other things to treat the people of St. Thomas as taxpayers. They are not non-nationals that you can tell them, ever so welcome, wait for a call. They have helped to develop this country in all forms and fashion, and I believe they deserve to get the credit.

I do not want them to get anything different from anybody else, but we want to get some of the services that

this Government is offering as the Barbados Labour Party never singled out the people of any parish, to ill-treat them when it came to road works, school repairs, bus services, or whatever the facilities were. I have a tremendous difficulty...

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

Miss. C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, thank you. I am not going to mind the asides from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, because the people there will deal with him too.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that I would wish that the Honourable Member, who, for the first time in a long time, spoke coherently on the issue of the road works, to be reminded that Warrens and what we call Warrens Bottom, is a terrible disaster waiting to happen. There was trenching going on to facilitate the real highway that the Barbados Labour Party should have called the "Tom Adams Highway", but I am not going to get into that now.

The Honourable Member must be reminded that when people come through Jack-in-the-Box, Canewood Road, Lears and so on, to get back on to the highway at Warrens, that road was never properly re-paved, or anything, and it is one of the most dangerous roads. If you come from Simpson Motors to make the left to Warrens Bottom, the road has been narrowed and a large sidewalk - a car can almost hold on to it has been put there, and when people are jambusting, it is creating a few problems.

Mr. Chairman, I do not have time to refer to half of a lollipop by Simpson Motors, that when you come from Clermont to come onto the highway there is a little thing. Sir, I do not know what to call it, but it is one of the most dangerous things I have ever seen. I have seen a container truck squeezed some tourists in a little van on the highway some time last year. I do not want to speak to that now.

I want the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to indicate to me when Fortress Hill that I wrote thanking the Permanent Secretary for his assistance thus far in cutting the rock, when will that be completed and what funds are here in this large amount of over \$10 million, that will be put into projects in the parish of St. Thomas that is the heart of Barbados, that people too are Barbadians and taxpayers who deserve, like anybody else to have proper roads to drive on, to walk on, and so on and so forth.

Mr. Chairman, if the Honourable Member could satisfy my mind and eloquently express to this Honourable Chamber what plans they are for the parish, ever so little, I would much appreciate it.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the privilege.

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

His Honour K. St. C. BEST: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this money Resolution in respect of the road network service. I want to, from the outset, congratulate the personnel and the Minister from the Ministry of Transport and Works for the excellent work they are doing in relation to road maintenance and road improvement in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say how happy I am to see that Mayers Road in My Lord's Hill has been paved and this stretches on to Odessa McClean Road. Sir, I have had constant complaints from some constituents. They have written me and they said they have also written to the Ministry, in respect of Olive Road and the junction at the Ivy Road which is narrow. They are requesting that it becomes one way between the hours of 7.00 a.m. and at least 9.00 a.m. or 10.00 a.m. to allow the free flow of traffic.

Mr. Chairman, I can say with certainty that the roads in the Ivy are heavily used every morning, because it is the area where persons try to avoid the stretch of road on Government Hill because there are at least two schools in that area - the Charles F. Broomes School and the Springer Memorial School.

Sir, we are fully aware of the traffic that goes in and out of Charles F. Broomes School as well as the Springer Memorial School.

H/A58/4.10 p.m. Sequence 31

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Persons coming from My Lord's Hill and Government Hill traverse through the Ivy. Sir, I would really like to see, at least with that road being made NO ENTRY its junction with the Ivy Road and Olive Drive, will alleviate some of the problems we see occurring every morning. Sir, I traverse that road every morning and I see the difficulty in moving when two vehicles meet on that narrow stretch.

I am also calling on the Minister to pay special attention to "Brek Neck Hill". The condition of that hill and the road is in a bad state of disrepair. One understands the economic crisis that we are in. Looking at it, it just needs scraping and, at least, some anti-skid along the road, because the road is heavily used on mornings.

Sir, before I wrote the Honourable Member for St. George North, but got no assistance from him. I am now asking the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to please assist in having that road fixed.

Sir, I am now like the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, who clearly indicated that it is easy to get work done now, that the Democratic Labour Party is in power. I heard her on many occasions indicating that she has written for certain roads and certain things to be done in her Constituency without any success. I do not know of the relationship between herself and the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Asides.

His Honour K.St.C. BEST: One recognises that, and there will never be any.

Asides.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: Sir, let me move to a section of Barker's Road, which is closer to the Belle Gully Road. When the Highway was being constructed, the heavy traffic and equipment caused the entrance to Barker's Road, near the Belle Gully Main Road, to be in a state of disrepair. I visited that area with the Minister and also questioned it. I was told that we need to construct curves. One section of Barker's Road has been completed and the residents would be very grateful to have the other section done.

The residents of Barker's Road do not wait on the Government when it comes to the Debushing Programme. There is a particular time of the year that they decide that. This has been going on long before I became the Parliamentary Representative. They continue to ensure that road, even though some part of it is in a state of disrepair, at least the overgrown vegetation does not impede the progress of motorists who travel that road.

Sir, another heavily used road is Cutting Road, which stretches from Salters on to Mapp Hill. That road is heavily used. It falls within the Constituencies of St. Michael East and St. Michael South East. Persons from St. George and St. Philip use that road as a short cut. That road is in a serious state of disrepair and I am urging the Minister to have some remedial work done there at least very soon.

Sir, as I speak to the issues of the roads in the Constituency, I believe that constituents have a responsibility as well. Government does not have all the responsibility.

Sir, one of the disturbing features as you traverse through the Ivy, there is a lot of water from residents running on to the road. I believe that residents should take responsibility to prevent that water from running on to the road. That water runs on to the roads and causes serious problems to the decay of the roads. I am saying that if Government is to play its part in respect of road

maintenance, the residents and citizens of Barbados must play their part. They must work hand in hand. The money that Government spends does not belong to them. It is the taxpayers', so you must, at least, protect your investment and not destroy it.

Sir, this whole concept and mindset that the Government has to do this and the Government has to do that, the Government does it, but with your money, so you must treat your money and resources with tender care.

I am asking not only the residents of St. Michael East, but throughout Barbados. Sir, it is easy to say this road is in a state of disrepair, but we must ask ourselves why and how it came into that state, and what are we as a nation and a people willing to do for the Government of this country? This is the question we need to ask. Having asked those questions, I am sure that the Government's expenditure, with the help of the citizens of Barbados, will be greatly reduced.

Sir, there will be no talk of excessive taxation from this Government or the other Government because Government is continuous. What must happen, citizens of Barbados must play a part.

If you are travelling on a small road, it is your responsibility to call, or write, do like the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, and make sure that it is drawn to somebody's attention, because as a responsible citizen, you will be playing your part for the betterment, not only of yourself, but for Barbados as a whole.

I believe that this money - they spoke about highway construction and maintenance, not only roads, whatever you invest in, must be paramount.

I must congratulate the personnel from the Ministry for the road markings. At least we are seeing some improvement. Despite these markings, we need to start a serious education programme of the way people drive in Barbados. That has to happen. You can have all the laws and markings, persons must act responsibly in respect of the use of the roads in Barbados. We are seeing too many incidents of road rage. Persons do not want to be patient for half of a second to allow another person to enter in front of you. That is the reason we have all of this congestion.

Sir, what can happen, somebody emerges from a side road, you allow one vehicle to exit, then move along, the other vehicle allows another vehicle to exit, and I am sure that will help to eradicate some of the congestion on the roads on mornings and afternoons. It is the inconsiderate driving of many Barbadians that is causing the problems.

Sir, if you go to a roundabout, everybody wants to get out of the roundabout first. I am saying that people keep

complaining that when you come out of the roundabout there is a Zebra Crossing. Sir, that is something universal. If you go to England there are many roundabouts. As soon as you come out of the roundabout the crossing is there. The simple thing is, when you come out of a roundabout, you must proceed with caution.

HA58 4.20 p.m. Sequence 32

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

House A58, Sequence 33, 4.20 p.m.

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: It is not like you are out of the roundabout and that is the start of the racing track. This is not the start of the race where two cars are lined up and want to go. You must proceed with caution.

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

His Honour K. St.C. BEST: I would be grateful for those two minutes, Sir.

I am saying, Sir, that there must be a serious educational programme, and it cannot only happen from the Government Side. The NGOs, the Churches and everyone must play their part in educating Barbadians how to use the roads.

I am calling further, Sir, for the revamping and repainting of more Highway Codes and, that at least one day a week in the schools, starting from primary schools, persons should be taught about the Highway Codes of Barbados, for the simple reason that at age 16, we allow young persons to start to drive on our roads and the only time some of them see, or understand what is in the Highway Code is when they prepare themselves for the road test. I believe that if we start in the primary schools to identify what is "NO ENTRY", what is "Not Overtaking", Sir, what will happen is, that sometimes when the children are driving and they recognise the double line, they say, "Mummy or Daddy you cannot overtake there because I learned in school that it is not right to overtake in solid double lines." We have to start somewhere, Sir.

Sir, we are slowly losing our society and as lawmakers, we must start the fight. The people of Barbados look to the lawmakers for guidance. They look to the adults for guidance, and if we are elected to serve, we must serve the people with every ounce of blood in our hearts.

I thank you, Sir.

Asides.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

I really did not want to participate in this debate but obviously I was forced to do so by the Honourable Member for St. Michael East because we have similar geophysical and geopolitical traits in our Constituencies. St. Michael South East and St. Michael East share boundaries, and I think that when you look at the boundaries in St. Michael East, St. Barnabas and Haggatt Hall, they are virtually attached.

In St. Barnabas, he is one side and I am on the Other Side in the Pine. He is on one side in Cutting Road, and I am on the Other Side in Roberts Road. The road that he was talking about, Mr. Chairman, is one that we have to put under serious consideration for urgent repairs and it is against that background, I want to congratulate the Minister to whom I made a request to have a visit in the two Constituencies, to look at the roads that need to be done and right away the Minister responded. I must tell you that he visited Plum Tree Road which is obviously in need of urgent repairs, with a technical team from the Ministry of Transport and Works and he could clearly see that the road the Honourable Member for St. Michael East is speaking about which is adjacent to Plum Tree Road and Robert's Road, is urgently in need of repairs.

Sir, since the repairs cannot come in this current financial year, we agreed that we would look at the possibility of having these roads fully done in the financial year 2011-2012. I also want to congratulate the Minister again for starting the road, Phase 2 of the Lower Burney Road.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, it is not just the road, but the quality of the work that is being done by the workmen at the Ministry of Transport and Works. I am a novice when it comes to these things, but I could see that there has been tremendous excavation being done and a whole refilling programme has started on Phase 2 of that road, which leads directly on to Mapp Hill, which has terrible congestion on mornings.

Mr. Chairman, Phase 3 of that road will go into Mount Friendship. As you know, Mr. Chairman, Mount Friendship is also heavily used on mornings and in order to avert some of the congestion in Mount Friendship, Phase 3 of that road would see a slight expansion, which means that the residents in that area could be inconvenienced, but will be inconvenienced temporarily for the better development of Lower Burney and Mount Friendship.

Then, Sir, we paid a visit to St. Anne's Road to look at the problems there of drainage and expansion of the road which is directly in the heart of the Pine. Most of you travel along Sixth Avenue, North Wildey, which is clearly adjacent to the Errol Barrow Park. There is an urgent need in that area for a lay-by for residents of Sixth Avenue, so that on evenings when they come in from work and on weekends, they can park their vehicles conveniently in a lay-by area in the Errol Barrow Park.

Then, there is Shepton Lane which clearly needs to have minor rehabilitation work done, since the entrance to the gap off Stafford Hill, there is a clear need to have that road done. I do not expect that all these things can happen by waving a magic wand, particularly now that we are in difficult economic times but I am asking that particularly Shepton Road in the Pine, Sir, because of the minor work that has to be done, we could prioritise that and done as a matter of urgency.

Sir, because of the heavy vehicular traffic that is now on the road in Mapp Hill, also the road opposite the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation coming down, and Mount Friendship, Sir, I believe that every person in Barbados who has invested their money into a property, that those persons' rights must be protected, hence the persons that live in Fort George, since this is more of a parochial matter.

Sir, because the money that is being asked for is for road improvement throughout the entire country, hence, I believe that I have a right as Parliamentary Representative to defend those people in Fort George and Upton, since they have invested their money in their properties which is lifetime investment, I believe that their investment, should be protected and the value of their properties should continue to be appreciated, rather than depreciated.

It is against that background, I am asking the Minister to make sure that no traffic off those two Highways flow through Fort George and the Upton area, because obviously, those persons' properties would be devalued, and considerably so.

Sir, this is not the first time I am making such a request. The Honourable Member for St. George North, when he was Minister, I also made such a request of him, but now that he is a resident of the area, I am sure that he would fully understand the position of which I speak.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, I also believe that this is a very serious debate from the perspective that small roads like a lay-by and small projects like foot-paths is the role of the Constituency Councils.

House A58, Sequence 33, 4.30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Sir, small community programmes and projects like this is obviously the role of the local Constituency Councils, which takes that pressure from off the central Ministry, so that they could concentrate on full capital works programmes. In actual fact, the role of the Constituency Councils in terms of local governance in Barbados has been enunciated in this Honourable Chamber for quite some time.

As you know, Sir, Jamaica has a system of Local Government. What is being proposed by the Government of Barbados, is a system of local governance which in a sense empowers the people of Barbados to take corrective action and the necessary action in circumstances like these, which could be done at the community level.

There is no reason whatsoever that a Constituency Council, let us say with \$150 000, cannot expedite a small project of building foot-paths and lay-bys and have it contracted out to community persons. This is actually the role of an efficient functioning Constituency Council.

Sir, unless we understand that there is a serious role of partnership with those persons within the communities - the community organisations, which are the CBOs and the Non-Governmental Organisations in Barbados - then we would not fully understand the worth of the whole concept, the precept and the orchestration of the Community Councils across Barbados. However persons scoff at them, or however they look at them. In my view, it is one of the greatest pieces of social legislation and revolutionary introduction for poor people, who would be empowered through this system of governance.

In addition, Sir, if you check the history of the Pine Housing Area, it is a great thing. It was formed out of the floods that occurred in Barbados in 1948, where many people from across Barbados were thrust into that one area.

When one checks the history of the Pine Housing Area, one would realise that many of the houses and roads that were constructed in those earlier periods, were constructed out of a bagasse component mixture at Hanson Plantation, which is still in the Constituency of St. Michael South East, and this is still interesting history. The entire Pine Housing Area is named after trees, I supposed by the persons, the technicians, the technocrats, or whoever designed it. Pine is a tree. Oakway Lane is named after the oak tree. Birch Path is named after the birch tree.

Sir, with the systematic social development of the community, there have been some outstanding community practitioners and sportsmen. I promised the Minister ever

since that I would forward the recommendations to him to have some of these gaps that have been named after trees renamed after people who have made outstanding contributions to the community. Sir, for instance, it is proposed that Newton Crescent be renamed after Reuben Bailey and be called "Reuben Bailey Terrace". Everyone remembers Reuben Bailey.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: He was an exceptional gentleman. He is deceased now. I think he still holds the national record.

There is also the roundabout in Regent Hill which we proposed to name after Mr. Rawle Clarke. Mr. Rawle Clarke represented Barbados at the 1973, I think it is, Montreal Olympics. When these persons have departed, we still want that the community recognise their worth.

Sir, the Parkinson Community Centre is a novel community project, which was formulated at that time by the late Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow and a gentleman named Mr. Granville Foster, who came together and mobilised a community and built the Parkinson Community Centre, using the labour resources of the community.

There is also a gentleman by the name of Mr. Michael Newton. Sir, it is our intention to change it from the Parkinson Community Centre because the Parkinson School is named after Rawle Parkinson anyhow, and name it after these two outstanding community practitioners. This letter would have to be directed to the Honourable Minister of Community Development and Culture.

Asides.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Exactly. We are proposing that it be renamed the "Foster and Newton Resource Centre" after two serious community practitioners.

Sir, a lot of Honourable Members would remember that we used to call him "Cheetah". His real name is Levi Layne. He was an exceptional dancer. Mr. Chairman, if you had lived in the Pine and you could not dance, you would have to be a dance dunce because every mistake that you made, those fellows used to hit you on your ankle, so you had to hop, skip and dance properly.

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

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY: Levi Layne was also a boxing referee. When the downstairs part the Parkinson Community Centre was constructed, he used to train young men to box. Sir, we cannot forget our history. It is these

kinds of people that we have to recognise. Fortunately for us, the old peoples' home in Golden Rock is named after Mr. George Dunner and the Golden Rock Day Nursery is named after Ma Worrell. Sir, the whole idea is that we create a community monument, a hall of fame, for these outstanding community practitioners.

One of the first projects that we want to have done is to rename Princess Mary Lane in the Pine. I do not know how Princess Mary Lane got into the Pine at all. I am glad for the royalty touch, but my God, to have the grand old Princess Mary who is deceased living in the Pine and not have John Holder, who made a sterling contribution to the development of that community is certainly, to me, a travesty of community justice. Mr. Chairman, I will move forward with swiftness to make sure that this is changed.

Mr. Chairman, I am not destroying the relics of the colonial era in St. Michael South East. We will still maintain Princes Royal Avenue, because you do not want to destroy the relic hence the bourgeois in Barbados would turn up their eyebrows. Sir, sufficient to say, it is the preservation of the historical relics and those outstanding community practitioners who would have made a tremendous contribution to the development of the community.

With those words, again, I think we must commend the Minister. He is one of the few Ministers I see that put an ad on television, if you got any problem and you want to meet me, come to my office. He has taken a tremendous chance, because I am sure that his office floods, but that is what you do when you talk about caring and understanding the plight of people and really want to bring a solution to it.

Mr. Chairman, I may come back, but thank you very much.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I would just want to let the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East know that I am not a resident of his Constituency. I still reside very much in St. George and he must not distort the records of this House.

Mr. Chairman, I want to comment on this Supplementary here before this Honourable Chamber. I must say from the outset that when I got to the Ministry of Transport and Works, the traditional way of doing roads was always there. To hear the Honourable Member for St. Lucy say that for the very first time the Ministry of Transport and Works is digging down to bedrock is far from the truth, because before my time, the Ministry of Transport and Works had undertaken large projects. The

ABC Highway was before my time, since 1985, and they surely went down to bedrock.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is deliberately misleading the House. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is not in his seat so...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He cannot be deliberately misleading the Chamber.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: He is misleading the Chamber, I withdraw the reference to the deliberateness, but I hear him do it so often...

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is not in his place, but I heard him speak to the private/public partnership overlay programme where he said in the quest for political advantage, the Honourable Member who was the Minister then, supported a programme which did not look at proper and total repair of the roads, but looked at resurfacing for cosmetic purposes only. That was the point the Honourable Member made.

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3.50 p.m.

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Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, if that were the case, I would also want to say that the Honourable Member did indeed mislead this Honourable Chamber because that is not true. Sir, we had two programmes in the Ministry of Public Works.

Mr. A. D. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, it is inaccurate for the Honourable Member for St. George North to say that is not true. Sir, for example, I can speak of Heddings, where the road was done late in 2007 for political purposes, where we now have to refurbish that road. We now have to do it properly.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, this programme about which the Honourable Member is speaking started in 2006. That programme was a Public/Private Sector Partnership programme, which was conceptualised for the very first time.

Sir, traditionally the Ministry pays for all the road programmes that we had. We introduced, for the first time, a Public/Private Sector Partnership. Sir, I learned from the Government that there is no legal arrangement for such an arrangement with the private sector.

Sir, we felt that at the time it was necessary because of the fact that we wanted to have a large number of roads done, not for Election purposes, because it was in July

2006, that the contract with C. O. Williams Construction Company was signed. The contract with Rayside Concrete Works was signed a year after, July 2007, so it was not done for political purposes.

Sir, the C. O. Williams Construction Ltd. programme was to resurface, construct, widen and excavate new roads, especially the highways, whereas the programme with Rayside Concrete Works was mainly to resurface residential roads. Sir, the two programmes were for \$35 million each. They were done in such a way as to improve the road structure for Barbadians and not for Election purposes. Sir, we signed the contract for a number of highways as well as residential roads.

Mr. Chairman, I believe when we left office in 2008, most of the road programmes for C. O. Williams Construction Company were completed. I think we had done more than \$20 million of that up to 2008. Sir, for the Honourable Member to say that the roads were only for cosmetic purposes is not true. Sir, it is putting the lie that Rayside Construction and C.O. Williams only do cosmetic work. It is not true. Sir, I know that the two companies of which I speak have always seriously undertaken to do proper roads, not only in my time, but even before my time. They have always done good work.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, no one on This Side has sought to impute that the contractors mentioned, Rayside Construction Company Ltd., or C.O. Williams Construction Ltd., do bad work. In the case of Rayside Construction Company, the programme was called "mill and pave" and in the case of C.O. Williams, it was called "foam bitumen."

Mr. Chairman, what we are saying is that the Honourable Member for St. George North oversaw a programme which rushed the way this work was done, for political purposes.

Sir, the Honourable Member admits at the onset that the C.O. Williams Construction Ltd., programme started in October 2006 but that the Rayside Concrete Works programme started in 2007, the date being three or four months before the Election.

Sir, we are not saying that Rayside did bad work, or that C.O. Williams Construction Ltd., did bad work, but that the Minister pushed those contractors to make sure that his political purpose and his agenda were satisfied. That is all we are saying.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, on my way back to this Honourable Chamber, I heard the year 2007, being mentioned. Sir, I sought to correct that because the records will show that the Minister said that the contract was signed a few months before Election.

Sir, I took particular pains to note that the C. O. Williams programme was signed in 2006, whereas the Rayside programme was signed a year after. Sir, that is the point I want to make.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, a few months ago, the Honourable Member for St. George North admitted in here that he did not know when the ABC Highway contract was signed.

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

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. The Honourable Member does not know the details. He told us that. He does not know anything about the ABC Highway contract and that he had nothing to do with it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Honourable Member. That was not a point of order.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, we are not talking about the ABC Highway contract. We are talking about two contracts that were done by the Government of Barbados to rehabilitate roads across Barbados. Sir, the point must be made that there are serious and experienced engineers within the Ministry of Public Works and that those engineers had identified those roads to be done.

Asides.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, the Minister is saying it was Government who identified those roads. I am saying that the majority of roads were identified by the staff of the Ministry of Public Works. Sir, the staff not only had to identify the roads, but had to ensure that those roads were properly done.

Sir, if the Minister would look at the Paper that went to Cabinet, not only were the staff to identify the roads, they were supposed to put in place an arrangement where an engineer was to oversee the work that was done, therefore, for the Honourable Member to say that these roads were only done for cosmetic purposes is not true. I am saying that the Martindales Road, from the roundabout at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital right across to Halls Road, went down to bedrock. The road from Hindsbury Road was also done in a proper way.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that it is not true to say that the roads were not done in a proper manner. I am saying to you that before my time, during this time and after the Minister became Minister, the Ministry of Public Works has always done good work.

Sir, the Honourable Member must not come here and try to make people believe that for the first time the Ministry of Public Works is now doing good work.

Mr. Chairman, the second point I want to make is that we provided the Ministry with a lot of equipment, including excavation equipment. This was provided, not only to widen roads, but to help in the excavation process.

I am sure when the Minister first came here, one of the very first speeches I made to him was that he has inherited a good Ministry because we were doing a lot of work.

Sir, over the last 14 years, not only were we able to look at the Bridgetown Road and Safety Project... Sir, the records must not be shown that we did not do good work within the last 14 years.

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is misleading this Honourable House. Sir, I am not speaking about the officers of the Ministry of Public Works, I am talking about the Minister.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas was at pains to point out that for five years she has been writing to the Ministry of Transport and Works and that she wrote the Honourable Member for St. George North about roads that she wanted done.

Sir, I have only been in the Ministry for two years and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said that five years ago she wrote for something to be done about Fortress Hill and that she has never gotten that dealt with. Sir, I am talking about the Minister. I am talking about the Honourable Member for St. George North. He is the only person to whom I am referring.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, the records will show, as the Minister has the files, that never before in the history of this country were any more roads done than were done under my term in office. We did more roads than any time before and not only for Cricket World Cup, 2007.

4.50 p.m.

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Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the

Chamber. The only person he has to convince of that is the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, we did not select roads. We did roads in Christ Church South because the Minister came in here and said that I did work for his predecessor, but that he still won the seat. We did work in St. Michael South and we did work in St. Philip. In fact, the only road that was left to be done in St. Philip was the Well House road.

Mr. Chairman, our Government was spending between \$10 million and \$20 million in St. Philip.

Hon. M. A. LASHLEY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The road leading from Well House to East Point was done under this Administration. In fact, I sent a petition to the Honourable Member for St. George North when he was Minister and it was not done. Sir, the road from Eastbourne to Well House was done under this Administration. Sir, I just want to correct the Honourable Member.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, what the Honourable Member is saying is correct but the road was under this same Public Sector Programme. It has nothing to do with the Honourable Member. This road was part of a package.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, you have exactly two more minutes.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I understand that every Constituency wants roads, and that is the reason I thought Government was bringing a new private sector programme, but I have not seen anything new. I have not seen anything new about the signage programme, because it was started under us and we did a lot of improvement for the World Cup. Sir, we did a lot of work under the two programmes that he talked about and equipment was bought. Sir, I am happy to see that the Minister has continued the programme. He has changed some of the roads, but I am happy to see that he has continued.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to see that he continued the Bath Road that we started in St. John. Sir, the Bath Road was started before the last Election and it was done to help the present Prime Minister too and he got more votes because of that. Sir, let us talk about that because roads were done in St. John.

Mr. Chairman, we did work in Christ Church, we did work in St. Philip, we did work in St. John, we did work in St. Lucy, and we did work all across Barbados. Mr. Chairman, in your Constituency work was done on the road

between Foundation School and Lodge Road, and work was done all across Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy that the Government has continued the work. I would hope that they start a new public sector partnership with a new programme. Sir, that is all I want to ask the Government to do.

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

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Resolution for these road works. Sir, I would want, on behalf of the residents of St. Michael West Central, to encourage the Minister in the works which he is undertaking. Sir, anyone who travels about this country and see the amount of road works which this Government is undertaking, even at a time when we are in difficulties, would have no choice, but to congratulate the Minister of Transport and Works for what is happening.

Mr. Chairman, what is to my mind, sometimes startling for me is the fact that even where we have got substantial criticism in terms of the building of roads, we are focussing, in an even way, in areas where we do not have Parliamentarians. Sir, as a matter of fact, I passed Hinds Hill this morning going to my Constituency and I saw work being undertaken in Hinds Hill, which is a Constituency held by a member of the Opposition.

Asides.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Sir, when you look at the experience of previous years, you have to ask what is happening.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House because Martindale's Road, which is in St. Michael South Central was done under the Barbados Labour Party's programme. We did work in St. John and in St. Lucy, so it is not true to say that we did work only in the Government programme because the depots are there to provide work across Barbados. Sir, we did work across Barbados and the programme is continuing.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, did you say a Barbados Labour Party programme or was it a Government programme.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Sir, it was a Government programme under the Barbados Labour Party Government.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please proceed, Honourable Member.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: Mr. Chairman, note that I did not say there was any bias at that point in time. I pointed out that on the basis of my observation, I see work going on in that particular Constituency.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that any road works programme should seek to address some of the problems that residents are having in their Constituency. One of the things I have observed within St. Michael West Central is that certain things are required in terms of the road works programme. Sir, I would be happy if we could get some resources there to address some of those problems.

Mr. Chairman, I would first like to address the question of the road humps, or sleeping policemen.

Sir, I understand that the reason they are not put on major roads is because you would not want to put them there.

Sir, the residents of St. Michael West Central, in certain areas are experiencing tremendous problems where vehicles pay no attention to the fact that there are in a residential area, that they are limited sidewalks, and because of the nature of residences in that area, that you are likely to have a lot of pedestrians and children in the streets.

Sir, because of the physical plan of the area, we did not allow for the fact that you needed to have that space between the house and the road.

Mr. Chairman, the areas are Allamby Gap in Spooner's Hill, Clarke's Road in Spooners Hill, Parkinson Road and Yearwood Road, just off Black Rock. Sir, residents find that there is a problem where you have vehicle and motor- cycles racing through the area without paying attention to the fact that they are endangering the residents of these areas.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make it clear that I have written the Ministry of Transport and Works on this matter already, but I have not received a reply. Sir, I would ask the Minister to speak to his technical personnel in terms of dealing with this matter. I fear that one of these days we might have a serious accident as a result of these reckless drivers who are actually terrorising residents in some cases on these roads. Sir, this is something that we need to do something about.

Mr. Chairman, there is another issue I would like to draw to your attention. It is the whole question of drainage in these areas. Sir, there is Fairfield Cross Road and there is Fairfield Road, and the Ministry of Transport and Works is constantly repairing those roads. As a matter of fact I was by the Nursery two weeks ago and right in front of the

Nursery, you have a situation where every day, it is not raining, but there is a puddle of water in the road each day.

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Mr. J. D. PAUL: Sir, it reached the point where in some cases the Chairman at the Nursery is being threatened. When traffic drives down that road, they pay more attention to the fact that there is water in the road. Children are splashed in some cases and have to be taken away from the fence because there is a situation where water is actually running on to the fence. The continuous splashing has created a serious situation.

On further investigation, I recognised that some residents did not have wells to take the water that flowed from their baths and kitchens and on to the road. In this regard I would really ask that we work very carefully with the Ministry of Health. If that is the case, I am really asking the Government for a programme which seeks to either find a way to dig wells in the area, first of all, to take that water off the road. I believe it is a Ministry of Health issue.

I am also going to ask the Government to see if we can find some way - I know at the moment funds are scarce, but I am saying that if we can provide some incentives to householders - or actually subsidise the digging of a well to take the water, flowing from those homes.

The other point, and I am referring to this particular road, Fairfield Cross Road. It is very dear to me. That is a road that is regularly traversed. In terms of St. Michael West Central, it is one of the most horrible roads that you will find in St. Michael West Central. The problem is, we have to fix that road. If we do not fix it, under the current conditions, water will flow on to the road and undermine the foundation of the road.

I want to recommend a two-step process. I call on the Black Rock Polyclinic officials to offer some assistance to the residents to prevent them from running water on the roads. Secondly, I am calling upon the Minister to let us move swiftly to solve the problems on that road. The St. Ann's Kindergarten and the Pottery are located there. It gives no credit to the previous Representative. The residents are saying that it has not been fixed for a long time. They cannot remember the last time that road has been fixed.

Asides.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: I am saying we cannot allow that situation to continue on that particular stretch of road. The residents actually feel that they are being punished for

some reason or the other. I really believe we need to move quickly.

Sir, another area I wish to bring your attention to is the Seclusion Gardens, around the area of 1st and 2nd Avenues, Fairfield. Those roads have not been fixed for some time and have eroded. As a matter of fact, I am afraid that when the next rainy season comes in, we are going to have severe problems. Before I go any further, I really want to compliment the staff at the Richmond Depot. They have been working under serious limitations trying to ensure the maintenance of those roads. I want to compliment them.

Sir, people are not aware of the tremendous challenges employees face. I am very pleased to hear the Minister confirm they are getting the equipment out faster. Again, you have to compliment the Minister for the foresight in recognising and identifying the problems. He also wishes to identify the areas where those problems should be addressed. Within Fairfield and Seclusion Gardens, we must recognise something has to be done.

Sir, on Smith Road, again a similar situation obtains in relation to the water running on the road. In the area of Odle's we need to offer some assistance to the residents to provide wells to control the water running on to the road. I am really asking for a serious partnership to be undertaken between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Transport and Works in order to resolve those particular problems that are being faced by the residents.

Sir, one of the other issues I wish to draw to your attention, we must recognise that when we have outstanding individuals in the community who have made, by any measure, outstanding contributions, we need to recognise them.

I am drawing to your attention the whole question of the renaming of a stretch of road along Woodstock Road, in honour of a resident who actually is the oldest resident in that area. I do not think she would mind my mentioning her name. She is still alive. Her name is Abertina Thompson. She is a lady who celebrated her 100th Birthday last year. That road was to be built in her name. If you sit and talk to her you would be amazed at her ability to recall the facts of things that happened. If you want to know the history of that area, I believe you can speak to her. She is a very respected lady in that area.

Sir, I am calling upon the Minister to look into the possibility of renaming that stretch of road where she lives, the "Abertina Thompson Road."

Asides.

Mr. J. D. PAUL: I want to thank you very much. In fact I can say it is done. I have the assurance from the Minister that it will be done.

I want to assure the residents of St. Michael West, that there is no need to worry about representation on this occasion, because when I represent St. Michael West Central, it will be for the correct things and it will be to ensure that the safety of residents are taken into consideration.

Sir, one more matter I want to draw to the Minister's attention. I admire the Minister for accepting the challenge of the Spooner's Hill area. For instance, from Popular down to Tudor Bridge is a very difficult area. I do not know how the Minister is going to deal with it, but I know it is giving tremendous problems, that particular area. As you go up Spooner's Hill to Popular, there is limited sidewalk. That problem has to be tackled. That is not the only one. Along Grazettes Main Road, there is also limited sidewalk.

I really want to encourage the Minister, and I know he has been making attempts recently. First, there was a drainage problem. It seems they have got that solved. We were wondering if there was a leaking pipe in the road. I want to thank the Minister for the work that he did with regard to trying to solve that problem.

Sir, there are others, for instance, along Grazettes Main Road there is a nursery at the bottom. Recently there have been at least three or four accidents, minor, but we have to be very careful of what is happening. I really believe that the Minister needs to examine the possibility of at least providing sidewalks for pedestrians who happen to be walking along that particular road. That is something I want to encourage him to do.

Sir, again, I want to express appreciation to the Minister for the work he has undertaken to encourage him to address those areas that I have noted. I want to say thanks for what has been done, but I am saying to him that I am looking forward to more.

Sir, I want to thank you very much for the opportunity and indicate my support for the Resolution.

Thank you very much.

HA58 5.10 p.m. Sequence 37

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

House A58, Sequence 38, 5.10 p.m.

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

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to make a brief contribution to this debate, because it is the first opportunity I am getting really, since the completion of the Station Hill Road to congratulate the Minister and the Ministry for the stellar work they have done on that road, and the roads across the length and breadth of Barbados.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, that road was left undone after the completion of the road between Harmony Hall and Hindsbury Road and the residents in that area had been complaining about the incomplete state of that road, and I want to thank the Minister and the Ministry for the completion of that road. It is now velvety smooth running from Hindsbury Road to the Combermere intersection.

While that work has been done, it also created the sidewalk leading from Leinster Road to the Combermere junction, facilitating, of course, a sidewalk in that area at the bus stop and it is now making easy accommodation for the students of Combermere School and the residents in that general area. Again, thanks to the Minister and the Ministry's staff.

Mr. Chairman, while this road was being refurbished and reinstated, the Buckingham Road was also re-paved to accommodate the traffic that would have been using that road as an alternate route, while that road was being reinstated, but that left, of course, the surrounding roads looking quite naked.

I do not want all, but certainly with the re-pavement of that stretch of road on Buckingham Road, the Barracks Road is now left in an unfinished state. I have made representation to the Minister already and I am just reinforcing it that this road should really be completed to make that entire area quite good for traffic.

There is some remedial work being done at Savannah Road, as we speak. This road is also heavily used by the Public Service Vehicles in the area, traversing the Bush Hall/Waterford area, and I am pleased to see that intersection at Bush Hall Yard Gap and the Savannah being fixed, and that would certainly accommodate more traffic and better facilitate the traffic movement in that particular area.

I have already made representation to the Minister on the widening of certain roads leading on to Bush Hall Main Road because as I have said before, they are heavily used by the Public Service Vehicles in that area, such as Military Road, Park Road, Review Road, Industry Road, Quarry Road, Hill Road and First and Second Avenue in Bank Hall. Those are very narrow roads leading on to Bank Hall Main Road, and we should really move with some

haste, of course, as the resources allow us to widen those intersections leading on to the main Bank Hall Road to facilitate easy access to that main road.

There is a section in St. Michael Central, bordering St. Michael Central and St. Michael North East, and that is the intersection by Combermere School and the Stadium Road. It is an intersection where, at least three or four accidents occur at that intersection on a weekly basis. I believe that there are some plans for a roundabout at that intersection and I am hoping that the Ministry would move with some alacrity to have that roundabout constructed at that section of Codrington Road and the Stadium by the shooting range. This is an intersection that is heavily used and accidents occur there almost on a weekly basis.

The paving of Worrell's Avenue and some of the roads in Waterhall Land. I have also asked the Minister to look at that for me because those are some of the roads that were left undone during the lead up to the General Election. Some of the roads were rushed and those were left languishing, therefore, I am asking the Minister that during the next financial year, he can look at them because the residents in those areas have asked me to make representation on their behalf, and I am sure that we will be accommodated in that request.

One other area, I do not know if it falls directly under the Ministry of Transport and Works but I see here that the sum of \$250 000 is requested to assist the Ministry with the repayment of outstanding debt to continue work on some existing projects. Of course, this project does not fall under this particular segment, but that is the fencing around the Treasury Building. There was a hue and cry when this fencing was proposed over the last number of months, but when we see the completed work at this stage of the fencing around the Treasury Building, I want to congratulate whichever agency was responsible for the construction of this fencing.

Asides.

Hon. S. D. BLACKETT: Sir, it has blended in very well with the decor and the natural ambiance of this area around the Public Building and the Treasury Building. Like I said before, on the call-in programmes and across Barbados, you heard criticism that this fencing would have disfigured the natural ambiance, but it has fitted in very well and I want to congratulate whichever agency was responsible for the planning and execution of that work around the Treasury Building.

Mr. Chairman, just on Sunday, while we were having a tour of Bridgetown and its Garrison, I noticed that the picket fence in this general area is in dire need of repair. It has fallen into disrepair and I do not know if it is the Ministry of Transport and Works, or if it would fall

under the Ministry of the Environment, because the fence really is now an eye sore and we ought to be moving with some haste to have that picket fence around the Cenotaph reinstated. It is looking very badly. It all would fall in sync with what we are trying to do in the Ministry of Community Development and Culture, and that is to have Bridgetown and its Garrison inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Certainly, if we are to have Bridgetown and its Garrison in tip-top shape, when it comes our turn for inspection, we must have all the amenities and all these areas in Bridgetown in tip top shape and looking really fine.

Generally speaking, Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate the Ministry of Transport and Works, its Minister and the Staff, for the excellent job they are doing in bringing the roads back to the standard where it ought to be, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for the City.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Resolution before this Honourable Chamber, and continuing from where the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central left off, I would view these road matters from the perspective of a pedestrian in the first instance, therefore, I would wish to congratulate the Minister of Transport and Works and his Ministry, for implementing this programme at Waterford, just as you leave Combermere School going towards Hindsbury Road.

The road did not have any sidewalk for pedestrians because it would have been built under the old traditional way of cuttings, where years ago, the workers without modern technology would have used drills to drill into the limestone to keep the roads flat to make transportation of the canes, be it by oxen, or what have you, more feasible, so that for years we would have suffered this situation, as pedestrians on either side of the barbergreen, had no sidewalks because of the wall of the limestone that would have been cut into to make the road. Sir, it was very dangerous for pedestrians because they would have nowhere to escape vehicular traffic.

House A58, Sequence 38, 5.20 p.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: This Administration is a caring Administration. This Ministry of Transport and

Works saw the problem and they were able to cut into that limestone on the western side of the road to create a very wide footpath, thereby ensuring that the leaders of tomorrow, from the Combermere School and the surrounding areas are able to walk the road in greater safety, and so they must be congratulated.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage the Minister of Transport and Works and his Ministry, to look around Barbados to see other roads where there are no sidewalks, so that we can put them in for the safety of the pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Chairman, this is an ongoing process. In the past, there were no Town and Country Planning regulations, to require guardwalls to be at least five, or so feet away from the road. Sir, in many of our urban districts, you have guard walls right at the edge of the road and no sidewalks for the pedestrians to pass. Sir, I know that over the years we have sought to acquire land compulsorily, to push back those guard walls so that sidewalks can be provided.

Mr. Chairman, this work is very important and I encourage the Ministry of Transport and Works, to press ahead in terms of the provision of sidewalks, because our streets are narrow and really and truly when tourists come here they are very scared to use the roads because there are no sidewalks, so this would help, not only the tourists, but locals alike, and make the maneuvering of vehicles along the roadways so much easier, thus reducing the likelihood of serious accidents injuring, or even killing persons.

Mr. Chairman, in that regard as well, we find that in some districts, you still have a few drains that are not covered. Under a Democratic Labour Party Administration, the drains in Baxters Road were covered so that you have lovely sidewalks for people to walk across.

Sir, Kensington New Road is a narrow road. It was made one-way for the Cricket World Cup. It is currently the location of the largest Muslim Mosque in Barbados. You have little children who go to the Mosque for lessons on evenings and other residents and pedestrians who traverse that road, so with the drains not covered, there is no sidewalk for persons to walk along, so I look forward to those drains being covered at Kensington New Road, and other areas such as Mason Hall Street and uptown in Spruce Street and the neighbouring streets in the Nelson Street area.

I would also wish to congratulate the team of the Ministry of Transport and Works at its depot in Richmond Gap, which is headed by Mr. Brathwaite. I was able to tour with him on a previous occasion where he went with me for several hours throughout Bridgetown, where we identified areas where his Ministry could assist in terms of improving the road network and drainage. His Department

has been able to improve sidewalks that had been damaged over time, in areas such as Constitution Road, just east of the entrance to Queen's Park and the exit from the River van stand, as well as lower down by the entrance of the van stand itself, and just east of the Central Bank, as in lower Broad Street and the area by Mose Alley and Milk Market, on the perimeter of Trident House where we had drain covers that were protruding out from the sidewalks where many pedestrians would have twisted their ankle and then had to sue the Government because of these impediments to their safe travel.

Mr. Chairman, these simple, but important issues have been addressed by the Ministry of Transport and Works team at Richmond Gap. They replaced these drain covers and did the necessary concrete restoration, to ensure that the covering of the drains is at the same level as the sidewalk, so that there is no protruding metal, or other areas that could cause people to stumble and hurt themselves.

Mr. Chairman, this Democratic Labour Party Cabinet undertook a number of visits. We do not sit in our offices and make decisions alone. Notwithstanding the empty criticisms of Opposition forces, we actually go into the field, meet the people and see for ourselves the issues that concern Barbadians. We make no apology for going out there.

One such occasion, the entire Cabinet actually ended up, as part of a tour of the Barbados Tourism Investment Incorporated projects, in the heart of the River van stand where the Prime Minister and the rest of us noticed that the Barbados Labour Party had left the road leading from the River van stand in total shambles, with lots of huge potholes to destroy the suspension of these ZRs and minibuses and, of course, making it difficult for pregnant women and for old ladies and gentlemen with arthritis who may be on those public service vehicles.

Mr. Chairman, in short order, that road was completely resurfaced under the Democratic Labour Party and the Minister of Transport and Works, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Mr. Chairman, we are not just talking, we are acting and addressing these basic issues that affect Barbadians.

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

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would wish to make a suggestion in terms of comfort to the pedestrian traffic. I am the Member of Parliament for the City of Bridgetown. I am very happy to have been chosen by the people of the City. The City is the nation's capital

and there is heavy pedestrian traffic traversing the streets of Bridgetown.

Many years ago, I was fortunate, Mr. Chairman, to travel to Mexico City where I actually travelled across overpasses that is for pedestrian traffic, over the major highways.

Mr. Chairman, a few years ago, an old lady was actually killed as she tried to cross the road from the Cenotaph over to the Swing Bridge area. That was gruesome. I remember visiting the site. She was crushed by that big ten-wheeler truck to the extent that the surface where the corpse was, was greasy from the adipose tissue being squeezed, so it was really horrendous.

I look forward to the day, Mr. Chairman, maybe through public/private partnerships, or what have you, where initiatives are being taken to have a few overpasses, or tunnels where necessary, in these heavily traversed streets, where pedestrians have to negotiate their way across streets that are heavily used by vehicular traffic.

Mr. Chairman, as you go up Swan Street, a lot of traffic is kept back leading from Broad Street up Coleridge Street, at that junction between Coleridge Street and Swan Street. Shepherd Street between Norman Centre and Cave Shepherd is a public street. This was called Rocker's Alley.

Mr. Chairman, through the private sector initiative, that top Floor of Cave Shepherd runs from the Cave Shepherd main building over Shepherd Street to Norman Centre. Mr. Chairman, there is actually an overpass connecting the old Plantation's Building to the City Centre Car Park, so it is not farfetched through the private sector initiatives.

I know that the Barbados Chamber of Commerce is very interested in redeveloping Bridgetown. They have a whole committee looking at this. I believe that we can look at the crossing from there above what used to be Mannings crossing over the Wharf Road to the Boardwalk.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member's time has expired.

Hon. P. M. T. TODD: Mr. Chairman, there is more I could say, but I would stop at this point and congratulate the Honourable Member for Christ Church South for a job very well done.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South will speak for five minutes.

House A58 Sequence 39

5.30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I would wish to apologise to my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, but I am sure that all he would have been planning to say would have been previously discussed.

Sir, like a good representative like yourself, though you are not allowed to speak in this debate, we have talked about the priorities that he would like to see happening in his Constituency.

Sir, we discussed the number of areas around Christ Church West Central where attention will be paid, where we will make sure that there is fair distribution of the road pie, as they say.

Mr. Chairman, my friend the Honourable Member for St. James Central, in spite of his mild capacity, only last week we toured his Constituency, looking at Risk Road and Chapel Roads Nos. 1 and 2. We talked about what kind of repairs we can do in those areas.

Mr. Chairman, let me say "thank you" to Honourable Members for their contributions. I take on board the questions and concerns in respect of supplementaries. Sir, supplementaries are things that are never looked at lightly and this Supplementary is not one of them. We had to spend a lot of time at the Ministry, going through the details of what was involved in this Supplementary.

As I said, the pace at which some of the work has been done, especially in the stimulus package, has caused us to be in a position where we need to make payments now, which would have ideally been budgetted for a little further on. That basically has taken up a large amount of the budget.

Mr. Chairman, if we were to have some kind of a metre registering the contributions in this debate, of course, the metre would have taken a sudden slump when the Honourable Member for St. Joseph made his contribution. It was really a very, I would say, ingenious contribution, because the things which he was asking about, the things about which he has been asking to have done, we are seeking not for the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, but for the residents and the people of Barbados and to the visitors of Barbados. Sir, St. Joseph, St. Andrew and St. Thomas are treasures to the Barbados tourism sector and so we recognise the importance of making sure that these areas are dealt with properly.

Mr. Chairman, I wish there were funds available to be able to announce to this Honourable Chamber, that there was a road programme to deal with the entire Scotland District and to make it more easily traversable.

Sir, as we move away from these tough times, I look forward to one when funds would be more available to be able to bring such a package to this Honourable Chamber for support.

Mr. Chairman, I take on board the comments of Honourable Members who, especially represent the Constituencies of urban Barbados, particularly their constant complaints about congestion. Sir, in these areas, because of the way that business is done in Barbados, the centralisation of a lot of our activity to the City area: our schools and business places, morning and evening congestion is a way of life almost for these people. Sir, the Ministry of Transport and Works, through its Traffic Department and its team, have been looking at ways in which they could help to alleviate some of these situations.

I have made the point before and it bears repetition. Sir, in appreciating their position, one has to recognise that we do not want to put in place a solution today that we have to lift tomorrow.

Sir, it is all well and good to talk about experimentation, but if you are going to experiment with 30 000 vehicles for a period of one week and then change that experiment next week, it does not work like that. I am sure that you would have more criticisms than you would have appreciation for the efforts that are being sought.

Mr. Chairman, the question of traffic-calming devices on our roads are being constantly requested. Sir, there are certain measurements by which decisions are taken in the Ministry in that Department and one has to listen to these recommendations. At times, however, I must admit the measurements that are made do not always include the specific requests of the residents.

I think once a community has settled upon a course of action, which does not significantly interfere with the accepted order of business, and it can be accommodated, then I think it would be a reasonable policy for a Minister to support that kind of activity, therefore, things like speed humps or traffic “calmers” as is the term being used to describe the different kinds of interventions that can be made to bring about better control of speed.

The best traffic “calmer” that I can recommend at this time would be for Barbadian drivers to respect the use of our roads. Let us respect the fact that we are not on a highway all the time, but that we are in villages where people live, where children are growing up. Therefore, the need to insert these kinds of changes would not be as high if people had greater respect for our roads.

Mr. Chairman, there is a growing trend of lawlessness which sees persons at nights, either in vehicles driving, or on motorcycles riding up and down villages for

absolutely no apparent reason other than to make noise, to keep the elderly awake and to disrupt the community. This is not right and this kind of thing has to be spoken out against, so that you should not need to have traffic “calmers.”

Sir, the kind of stunts that these guys can perform, traffic “calmers” may not be of any use anyhow. We need that human consideration and intervention. We need that humane approach to all of what we do in the Ministry. The Ministry can only do so much, but then the rest is up to the citizens to make sure that they cooperate, and that we are able to put in place the kind of solutions we know that would best benefit our country.

Mr. Chairman, I need not go back to the Honourable Member for St. George North, the former Minister of Transport and Works. He has indicted himself. He is not in his seat, but he was holding his head very tightly, I believe it is hurting him. I believe that he has a bad headache since his contribution and since the kind of criticisms he received from his colleague Members, both the Honourable Member for St. Joseph and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, who were at pains to point out the number of times they wrote letters to him, where those letters were not answered.

Sir, this is something to which we need to speak, even if for a moment. We need to make sure that in our Ministries and indeed, the Ministry of Transport and Works, that we respond to the letters of the public. Sir, too many letters go unanswered and not responded to. Sir, a gentle acknowledgment of a letter is a requirement and I do not believe it is something that cannot be emphasised anymore.

Mr. Chairman, as was mentioned, in our Ministry we put in place a programme every second Wednesday. We encourage members of the public who have ideas, suggestions or even irritations, any issues that have not been dealt with, issues that they may have written about and have not received answers, we want them to come and sit with the senior technical management of the Ministry and with me as their Minister, and let us listen to what their submissions are and to see in what way we can improve their situation for all Barbadians.

5.50 p.m.

Tuesday, March 02, 2010

Hon. J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, this is the policy which we are going to take forward. We will have more opportunities in the coming weeks, as we discuss the Estimates for 2010/2011, to talk more about the programmes of the Ministry of Transport and Works.

Sir, in wrapping up, again I want to thank Honourable Members for their contribution and also to thank the members of the team at the Ministry of Transport and Works for their support. I look forward to being able to make sure that these programmes we have in place and those programmes which we have planned could be executed in a timely fashion.

Mr. Chairman, with those words, I beg to move that Head 40 stand part.

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

HEAD 62 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE, INVESTMENT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY - \$604 572 00

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

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

Hon. F. J. STUART: I beg to move that the Explanatory Notes to Head 62, as set out in the Schedule, stand part.

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

The question that Head 62, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. R. D. JONES, seconded by Hon. F. J. STUART, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS NOTICES

1. Hon. Miss M.A. MOTTLEY:

WHEREAS the people of Haiti were struck by a devastating earthquake and whereas it is estimated that more than 100,000 persons have died and hundreds of thousands have been left homeless and struggling to survive:

AND WHEREAS because of the continued impoverishment of the Haitian people; triggered by decades of neglect on the heels of deliberate retaliatory policies to extricate sums of money from the Haitian Government because of courageous acts that led to its establishment as the 2nd oldest Republic in the Western

Hemisphere the scale of loss of life and suffering has been exacerbated:

AND WHEREAS, as a Member State of the Caribbean Community, the Government of Barbados has shown solidarity along with the Barbadian people and pledged to play whatever role it can in conjunction with the fellow Member States of CARICOM to provide assistance to mitigate the suffering of the Haitian people and to aid in their efforts to rebuild:

BE IT RESOLVED that this House stand unified in its solidarity with the Haitian people in this most difficult of times for them and extend its prayers and condolences to all who have been affected by this tragedy in Haiti:

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this House encourage the Government of Barbados along with Barbadians in civil society to develop a long-term strategy of support and assistance for the Haitian people that goes beyond the immediate efforts of recovery from the earthquake.

Notice of this Resolution was given on January 19, 2010.

2. Mr. H. F. LASHLEY:

WHEREAS the people of Haiti suffered a devastating and catastrophic earthquake of unforeseen and monumental proportions on January 12, 2010:

AND WHEREAS over two hundred thousand (200,000) persons, the vast majority of whom were Haitian Nationals, but also others from the International community lost their lives in this devastating earthquake:

AND WHEREAS the people of Haiti have endured and are still enduring with singular and remarkable resilience the effects of this tragedy and other devastating natural calamities over the past three years:

AND WHEREAS the International community has responded in such a positive manner and has shown good faith, sympathy, empathy and assistance to the people of Haiti:

AND WHEREAS the entire Caribbean community through its government NGO's and CBO's have responded with alacrity to this tragedy to bring relief to the suffering:

AND WHEREAS the people and the Government of Barbados have responded in such a swift and remarkable, humane and compassionate manner to this tragedy:

BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable Chamber note and congratulate the contribution by the people and Government of Barbados, and that they should be fully

congratulated for the unswerving commitment and compassion to the people and Government of Haiti:

AND BE IT FURTHER resolved that January 12, of every year be observed throughout this Nation as a day of International prayer for the people of Haiti.

Notice of this Resolution was given on February 2, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. R. D. JONES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

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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 15. The motion that Head 15 stand part has been run into a speech label: the source reads ‘Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 15 stand part. Hon. R. D. JONES: I beg to second that, Sir.’ as a single heading line, so the Prime Minister’s closing words appear as a speaker’s name. Printed as in the source; please confirm.

Q3. Committee of Supply, Heads 40 and 62. After Hon. J. D. E. Boyce moves that Head 40 stand part and Hon. F. J. Stuart seconds, no question is recorded on Head 40 before Head 62 is taken. Head 62 is headed ‘\$604 572 00’; since the Resolution is for \$21 604 659 and Head 40 is \$21 087 000, Head 62 would be expected to be \$517 659. Printed as in the source.

Q4. Committee of Supply, Head 15. Members give different figures for the deaths in Haiti: Mr. H. F. Lashley says ‘over 300 000 people lost their lives’, Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley’s notice of Resolution says ‘more than 100,000’, and Mr. Lashley’s own notice says ‘over two hundred thousand (200,000)’. Printed as in the source.

Q5. Committee of Supply, Head 40. Hon. J. D. E. Boyce refers to ‘a 9.4 per cent rate of employment in Barbados’; the context suggests the unemployment rate. Printed as in the source.

Q6. Committee of Supply, Hon. C. P. Sinckler. After the take-slip at 2.40 p.m. Hon. C. P. Sinckler’s speech resumes under a new label beginning mid-sentence (‘arrangements, to allow its vulnerable economic sectors ...’). Some words may be missing at the join. Printed as in the source.

DEBATE SUMMARY

(Editorial summary — not part of the record.)

The House of Assembly met on Tuesday, 2nd March, 2010 at 10.15 a.m., with Mr. Speaker, His Honour M. A. Carrington, in the Chair; prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood. The Minutes of 23rd February were confirmed. Mr. Speaker welcomed Mr. Geoff Dubrow and Mr. John Doyle, connected with the

Auditors-General Offices in British Columbia and Canada, who had assisted with a seminar. The National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2010 was read a first time on the motion of the Prime Minister, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, and Standing Orders were suspended.

Under Order No. 3 the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. S. A. Lashley in the Chair, on a Resolution for \$2 040 000 under Supplementary Estimates No. 10, 2009-2010, Head 15, Cabinet Office, to meet the Government’s pledge of US\$1 million to Haiti after the earthquake of 12th January. The Prime Minister described his meetings with President Preval, the work of the Jamaica Defence Force and the Regional Security System, and CARICOM’s field hospital. Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley, the Leader of the Opposition, supported the Resolution, recalled the indemnity paid by Haiti to France and the American occupation, and proposed that schoolchildren be invited to contribute. Hon. R. L. Sealy spoke on earthquakes in the region, and Mr. H. F. Lashley proposed a regional day of prayer each 12th January. The Minister of Health, Hon. D. O’N. Inniss, said 126 Barbadian health care workers had volunteered within a week and 43 persons had been immunised before going to Haiti.

Hon. R. D. Jones traced Haiti’s history from the destruction of the Taino people and the revolution of 1791, and Hon. P. M. T. Todd and Mr. D. St.E. Kellman also spoke before progress was reported and the Sitting suspended. On resumption Mr. Jones gave notice of a Resolution for \$21 604 659. Mr. G. A. Clarke, Hon. F. J. Stuart, who contrasted Haitian independence with the American War of Independence, and Hon. C. P. Sinckler, who spoke on disaster preparedness, supported the measure. The Prime Minister thanked both Sides and the Independent Member and said the funds would be remitted promptly. Head 15 was agreed to and the Resolution passed.

Under Order No. 4 the Committee took the Resolution for \$21 604 659 under Supplementary Estimates No. 11, Head 40, Ministry of Transport and Works, \$21 087 000. The Minister, Hon. J. D. E. Boyce, said some \$18 million was still owed by the ABC Highway’s main contractor to local road contractors, criticised the public/private partnership with Rayside Construction Limited and C. O. Williams Construction Limited, and described the road stimulus package. On a point of order from Mr. D. D. Marshall he made a letter from the Honourable Member for St. Thomas a document of the House before reading it. Mr. Marshall questioned a near 100 per cent increase in the special roads vote and asked which roads the extra \$10 million would cover. Mr. D. St.E. Kellman defended the cost of proper roads such as

the one from Nesfield to Crab Hill. Miss Mottley asked for the contract sums with the two contractors and the list of roads removed from them, noting that the documents had been circulated less than two hours before.

Miss C. Y. Forde thanked the Ministry's Permanent Secretary and the Bagatelle depot for work in St. Thomas and asked about Fortress Hill and Endeavour Bridge; His Honour K. St.C. Best spoke on roads in St. Michael East and road safety; Mr. H. F. Lashley proposed that small works be left to Constituency Councils and that local landmarks be named after community figures. Mr. G. A. Clarke defended the former Government's road programmes and contracts signed in 2006 and 2007, amid

repeated points of order from Mr. Boyce and one from Hon. M. A. Lashley; Mr. Boyce withdrew the word 'deliberately'. Mr. J. D. Paul, Hon. S. D. Blackett and Hon. P. M. T. Todd also spoke, and Mr. Boyce replied. Head 40 and Head 62, with its Explanatory Notes as amended, were agreed to, and the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

Notices of two Private Members' Resolutions on Haiti were printed, from Hon. Miss M. A. Mottley (given on 19th January, 2010) and from Mr. H. F. Lashley (given on 2nd February, 2010). On the motion of Hon. R. D. Jones the House was adjourned at 5.50 p.m. until Tuesday, 9th March, 2010 at 10.00 a.m.